

May 24, 2022: Wisconsin Non-Driver Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

Contact: Ryan Spaight, WisDOT Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives

About the Event

Wisconsin Non-Driver Advisory Committee (WiNDAC) members met virtually on May 24, 2022. The meeting ran from 9:00am to 3:30pm. This was an open/public meeting; observers could view the proceedings via a YouTube livestream.

The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Discuss land-use, development planning, and effects on non-drivers
- Engage land-use planners at regional and state levels during panel discussions

The meeting included updates from WisDOT on non-driver related topics. There was one small group discussion, during which time committee members discussed five questions about land-use, development planning, and non-drivers.

Of the committee's 46 member organizations, 26 participated in the meeting. See Appendix A for attendance information.

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- **Welcome Back and Preview of the Day** - WisDOT Secretary's Office & Aileen Switzer, Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives Administrator, WisDOT

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Deputy Secretary Paul Hammer welcomed WiNDAC members and thanked the WiNDAC co-chairs for planning and organizing the meeting. He said that the focus of the meeting would be land-use planning and non-drivers, because this was identified as a committee priority in past meetings. He discussed that today's meeting would help WisDOT think more creatively about how the transportation projects that WisDOT builds will serve the needs of all Wisconsinites. The Deputy Secretary closed by sharing some of the impacts of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and said that the committee's input will help shape the future of transportation in Wisconsin.

Aileen Switzer previewed the events of the day and welcomed two new members of WiNDAC: Union Cab of Madison Cooperative and Milwaukee County Division on Aging and Disability Services. She said that the committee will focus on identifying ways to better include non-drivers in land-use planning.

- **Operating Assistance Performance Metric Pilot Update** - Ian Ritz, Transit Section Chief, WisDOT

Ian Ritz provided an update on WisDOT's public transit operating assistance performance measure pilot. As part of the pilot, WisDOT is now collecting the following data from pilot participants to analyze performance: ratio of denied rides to rides provided, number and type of requests for accommodation, and number of denied rides including justification. Ian shared that WisDOT convened a workgroup with the pilot program participants and developed a draft reporting template for the new data to be collected. The pilot effort is underway and will run for two years.

- **Non-Driver ArcGIS Online Application Update** - Ryan Spaight, Strategic Initiatives Officer, WisDOT

Ryan Spaight provided an update on WisDOT's Non-Driver ArcGIS Online Application. The application is a geographic analysis that produces estimates of Wisconsin non-drivers by city, village, town, census tract, and census block group. He said that the goal of the application is to increase understanding of where non-drivers are located to inform regional planning and local/state government decision making. He shared that the application was published in January of 2022 and demonstrated how to access resources related to the application, including a YouTube video tutorial series, user guide document, and methodology and assumptions document. He showcased a new layer in the application of DMV service center locations.

- **State Land-Use Planning- Panel Discussion**

The state land-use planning panel discussion was moderated by Emily Lindsey, WisDOT's Budget Section Chief. Panelists included:

- Michelle Brokaw, SW Region Bike/Ped Coordinator, WisDOT
- Michelle Ellias, Programming Supervisor, WisDOT
- David Schmidt, US 51 Project Manager, WisDOT

The presentations explained how WisDOT scopes projects along the state highway system that include pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities and gave information about the ongoing U.S. 51 Corridor (Stoughton-McFarland) project as an example. At the close of the presentations, panel moderator Emily Lindsey facilitated a question-and-answer session between panel speakers and WINDAC members.

- **Regional Land-Use Planning- Panel Discussion**

The regional land-use planning panel discussion was moderated by David Hubbard, WisDOT's Business Relationship Manager. Panelists included:

- Bob Gollnik, Senior Planner, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
- Cole Runge, Planning Director, Brown County & Green Bay MPO Director
- Eric Anderson, Senior Planner, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission & Chippewa-Eau Claire MPO Director
- Kevin Muhs, Executive Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The panel conversation focused on the strategies and tools planners use to serve non-drivers and the challenges and opportunities related to meeting non-driver needs during land-use/development planning. Panelists shared some examples of improvements that have been made recently in their communities and identified persisting challenges, including a lack of funding and revenue flexibility at

the local level and a misaligned incentive structure for land-use decision making. At the close of the presentations, panel moderator David Hubbard facilitated a question-and-answer session between panel speakers and WiNDAC members.

- **Small Group Session**

Attendees, along with WisDOT facilitators and notetakers, moved into small group breakout rooms. The small group session consisted of five discussion questions about land-use, development planning, and non-drivers. Discussion questions included:

1. *What would be beneficial for land-use planners to understand about the needs of non-drivers?*
2. *What ideas do you have to increase collaboration between state and local governments, MPOs, RPCs, land-use planners, and non-drivers?*
3. *How do we ensure that non-driver needs and community needs are met in land-use planning?*
4. *What would an ideal plan that considers both non-driver needs and community needs look like?*
5. *What recommendations do you have related to land-use planning and meeting non-driver needs?*

Themes and takeaways from the small group discussions can be found in Appendix B.

- **Round Robin Session**

Committee members were called on and asked to share their main takeaways including what they found valuable from the meeting.

- **Budget Update** - Jim Donlin, Budget Director, WisDOT

Jim Donlin provided a budget update for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and gave information about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). He shared some highlights from the 2021-2023 Biennial Budget, including 2% increases each year for General Transportation Aids, 2.5% increases each year for Paratransit Aids, 2.5% increases each year for Elderly and Disabled Transportation Capital Aids, and a \$100 million Local Transportation Grant Program. He provided information about new federal-aid highway formula programs and new competitive discretionary grant programs through BIL, including Safe Streets for All and the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program.

- **Closing Remarks** - WisDOT Secretary's Office

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Secretary Craig Thompson provided closing remarks, thanking WiNDAC members for their input throughout the day. He discussed the importance of including non-drivers in the land-use planning decision making process and said that when we improve mobility options for non-drivers, we're making improvements for everyone in the community. He closed by thanking members and guests and said he looked forward to continuing the success that we have had so far with WiNDAC.

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Appendix A: Meeting Attendees

Members in attendance

Tami Jackson, Public Policy Analyst, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (Committee Co-Chair)
Denise Jess, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired (Committee Co-Chair)
Aileen Switzer, Administrator, Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives, Wisconsin DOT (Committee Co-Chair)
Tim Cornelius, Insurance Examiner, Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
Curtis Lemke, Program and Policy Analyst, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
Mitch Batuzich, Community Planner, Federal Highway Administration
Sandra Villiesse, Transportation Specialist, Federal Highway Administration
Tim Focchi, Chief of Staff, Sen. Jerry Petrowski's office, Wisconsin Senate
Representative Dave Considine, Wisconsin Assembly
Jen Jako, Director, Aging and Disability Resource Center of Barron, Rusk, and Washburn County
Barbara Beckert, Director of External Advocacy SE WI, Disability Rights Wisconsin
Nick Musson, Transportation Specialist, Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR)
Jesus Ochoa, Planning Manager, Milwaukee County Transit System
Kevin Muhs, Executive Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC)
Bob Schneider, Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning, UW-Milwaukee
Holly Keenan, President, Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers
Kirsten Finn, Executive Director, Wisconsin Bike Fed
Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities
Susan De Vos, Secretary/Treasurer, Wisconsin Transit Riders Alliance
Adam Lorentz, Transit Manager, La Crosse Municipal Transit
Tom Winker, District 6 Director, Wisconsin Towns Association
Sallie Anna Steiner, Driver & Board Director, Union Cab
Kevin Coughlin, Policy Initiatives Advisor, Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Bobbi Hegna, Transportation Program Director, Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin
Karen Melasecca, Manager, Namekagon Transit
Joy Neilson-Loomis, Transit Superintendent, Ozaukee and Washington County Transit
Patrick Daoust, Transit Manager, Bay Area Rural Transit
Becca Smith, Transit Director, Janesville Transit

Guests in attendance

Bob Gollnik, Senior Planner, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
Cole Runge, Planning Director, Brown County & Green Bay MPO Director
Eric Anderson, Senior Planner, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission & Chippewa-Eau Claire MPO Director

WisDOT staff in attendance

Craig Thompson, Secretary, Wisconsin DOT
Paul Hammer, Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin DOT
Ryan Spaight, Wisconsin DOT Strategic Initiatives Team
Brad Basten, Wisconsin DOT Strategic Initiatives Team
Ethan Severson, Wisconsin DOT Strategic Initiatives Team
Hannah Brown, Wisconsin DOT Strategic Initiatives Team
June Coleman, Director, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Jim Donlin, Director, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Budget

Emily Lindsey, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Budget
Rodney Saunders, Jr., Wisconsin DOT Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives
David Hubbard, Wisconsin DOT Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives
Dan Arneson, Wisconsin DOT Office of Public Affairs
Mark Knickelbine, Wisconsin DOT Office of Public Affairs
Kaleb Vander Wiele, Wisconsin DOT Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives
Katie Patterson, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors
Ian Ritz, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors
Andrew Levy, Wisconsin DOT Division of Transportation Systems Development
Clare Michaud, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Kaitlyn Daul, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Sarah Osborn, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Budget
Michelle Brokaw, Wisconsin DOT Division of Transportation Systems Development
David Schmidt, Wisconsin DOT Division of Transportation Systems Development
Michelle Ellias, Wisconsin DOT Division of Transportation Systems Development

Addendum

This addendum summarizes the small group discussions. The content of this addendum is based on the notes taken during the small group discussions and on the round robin session, during which time discussants shared highlights from their small groups.

Understanding the needs of non-drivers

WiNDAC members were asked the following question: *What would be beneficial for land-use planners to understand about the needs of non-drivers?*

Responses are compiled and categorized below:

Modal choice:

- Planners need to understand all transportation modes are important when planning.
- Consider more micro transit initiatives.
- Planners and communities should hold developers accountable to ensure infrastructure is accessible for all modes of transportation.

Universal design:

- There is a need to strive for universal design upfront; retrofitting is more difficult.
- Transit is currently a secondary thought before a neighborhood/development is planned and built.

Service needs & design:

- People's lives don't conform to municipality lines, and they need to cross boundaries on a daily basis.
- Consider involving civic and church groups to provide rides for non-drivers.
- Planners need to understand that non-drivers are non-drivers at all times of the day and the year, and therefore need amenities such as bus shelters, well-lit corridors, etc.
- Planners need to understand how difficult to maneuver parking lots are for visually impaired individuals. The lot is often designed for vehicle efficiency, but that efficiency may make it difficult for some users.

Non-driver lived experience:

- Planners need to understand the ability of non-drivers/disabled community to cross highways. Concerns may not be obvious to people without disabilities.
- Non-drivers without options – important to realize that they don't have other options to get from Point A to Point B.

Ensuring non-drivers are represented in the planning process:

- Planners need to solicit and actually get input from non-drivers specifically.
- Involve stakeholders early and often.
- Developers often miss the mark when they look at a map and see what look like nearby transit stops. If they want to make sure the bus stops in front of the building, they need to include transit planners/policymakers in the planning.
- Some of the public participation meetings/presentations are held during the day when transit services may be operating less frequently. The meeting venue can be in an accessible location but there may still be the issue of getting to the venue.
- Go beyond asking for feedback through surveys and meetings. Offer opportunities for groups to become ongoing members of groups or planning committees.

Ideas to increase collaboration

WiNDAC members were asked the following question: *What ideas do you have to increase collaboration between state and local governments, MPOs, RPCs, land-use planners, and non-drivers?*

Responses are compiled below:

- Community Conversations – inviting lots of groups together on solution-based discussions (90 minute meetings, 2-3 solution-based questions to frame the discussion)
- Community Action Teams – a concept to bring together community leaders and emphasize an issue, such as non-driver transportation.
- Currently, it is difficult for local communities to make economic, benefit case for interjurisdictional corridors and projects; the state should help support planning efforts.
- Writing out grant requirements for funds would better facilitate participation from all partners.
- Changes in funding for local government (shared revenue). State grants for consolidated services/efforts that provide mobility. Start-up costs can prevent local action, so grants may help.
- SE Wisconsin has strong advocacy groups, and representatives have been incorporated into the planning process. Example: SEWRPC Environmental Justice Task Force. Collaboration on implementation can be a struggle. Collaboration is challenged due to the staffing and work required to be successful.
- Push more coordination in the permitting and zoning guidelines that are established in one community to the next (city to city, county to county).
- Allowing more virtual meeting options and other accessibility considerations for non-driver input (meetings or surveys).
- More coordination between state and locals to align budget priorities

Meeting non-driver needs in land-use planning

WiNDAC members were asked the following question: *How do we ensure that non-driver needs and community needs are met in land-use planning?*

Responses are compiled below:

- Focus more on “non-driver” and/or “community” planning vs. simply “land use” without consideration of the people using it.

- Region authority over land use decisions does not exist, advisory only. Increased regional authority could be helpful, since planning is often done at the regional level.
- Planning commissions have to facilitate non-driver stakeholder participation.
 - Be proactive about reaching out to non-drivers.
 - Make sure that when they attend, they're heard.
 - Promote virtual/hybrid meetings to allow non-drivers to participate.
 - Remember many non-drivers are low-income. Access to resources, day or evening hours. Multi-modal engagement.
 - Consider existing non-driver coalitions, for example, Fox Cities Coalition.
- Communities should perform a review of the requirements they have for developers.
 - When developers come in, what requirements does your community have and how are they enforced?
 - Some communities have a matrix (if you want to build x you need a, b, c). Could ask whether the project meets the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, healthy equity, etc.
 - Consider incentives
- Work with developers to understand how site design can provide better transportation.
- WiNDAC can share information about how to provide for transportation needs.
- Often the ideas that get brought forward to address the needs of non-drivers are designed to also be beneficial to others. The situation often gets framed as drivers vs. non-drivers. It is WiNDAC's job to reframe that conversation. If there are more pedestrian and bike lanes, that may decrease traffic on the roadway. The goal should be to show the benefit for all.

Ideal plan to consider non-driver needs

WiNDAC members were asked the following question: *What would an ideal plan that considers both non-driver needs and community needs look like?*

Responses are compiled below:

- The plan should be collaborative—perhaps via MOUs between municipal units.
- The plan should have universal design in mind – so that it is a win-win-win plan, that there are driver winners, non-driver winners, business winners, etc.
- Consider non-drivers and community needs.
- Consider various needs from the start instead of adding at a later stage (impacts cost, schedule).
- It should include community input, especially from non-drivers.
- The plan should be marketed; the community should be aware of the plan.
- Takes account of where non drivers are and where they need to go, on user's schedule.
- Should include short term actions that agencies and businesses can partner together to do.
- Reframe planning process to reflect diversity of community voices.
- Need to consider local conditions and balance service provision across the state.
- Coordinated funding across silos. Funding across multiple agencies (DOT, DHS, Etc.). Anticipate efficiencies.
- Some people give primacy to cost when considering projects, but quality of life is just as if not more important.
- The plan should factor in accessibility for all community members.

- Completing PEL studies in some recent projects; incorporating non-driver input at the project level instead of just at the study level.
- Example - Hilldale mall area in Madison – has a Target, hardware store, grocery store. Some of the apartment units have first floor access to outside. Much of Wisconsin could have a better walkable grid pattern. Having a mixed environment (business) and physical infrastructure that facilitates non-drivers and drivers. Bring in the housing developers as well, such as affordable housing. The area needs to be available to everyone, not just those that can afford it.

Land-use planning recommendations

WiNDAC members were asked the following question: What recommendations do you have related to land-use planning and meeting non-driver needs?

Responses are compiled below:

- Ensure plenty of public and community coordination, input, and communication from the start.
 - Robust process to have input at the starting stages and not once a plan is ¾ complete and is only just reactionary or to “tick off a box”
 - Once decisions are made, to say “we listened to the community and decided to do XYZ”
- Ensure that all stakeholders are at the table throughout the process, including non-drivers.
- Land use planning should plan to move people (by walking, biking, car, bus, shared rides, etc.) instead of focusing just on cars/automobiles.
- Outcomes from the plan should be measured.
- Land-use plans should set out to rearrange where access to jobs, services exist – and make them closer to where people live.
- Less regulation of density to allow developers to take advantage of market demand.
- Density, population mix will support a variety of mobility options.
- Create a centralized database for transportation service provisions to assist with information sharing / collaboration.
- Make sure there’s an option to respond via paper or the phone. Need multiple modes of feedback.
- Planners need to believe that they have the right and responsibility to ask developers the hard questions.
- There should be disability representation on planning bodies. Their experiences could broaden peoples’ perspectives.
- There has to be the right blend to incentives and requirements. We have been good at throwing money at businesses. There is the money to draw but not an incentive for performance. The initial incentive to draw them in may be the wrong way to go about it.
- Planners should create a regional contact list of who specifically to reach out to in project planning/design phase with various input options available to participants; these lists should be shared throughout levels of organizations, so it is clear who to reach out to.