



# Madison Beltline

## Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Corridor Study

September 2013

Project ID 5304-02-01

### Beltline public meetings scheduled

*Your input is needed*

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has initiated a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) corridor study to identify and evaluate a range of potential strategies that address local and regional safety and mobility issues along the 20-mile Beltline corridor from US 14 in Middleton to County N in Cottage Grove. WisDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will work with the public, local officials, businesses, residents, and state and federal agencies to:

- Identify key objectives.
- Develop and evaluate long-term solution strategies.

Multiple corridors and strategies will be investigated to understand whether and to what extent they meet the objectives. WisDOT and FHWA are seeking public input on issues on, along, and across the Madison Beltline and are holding five public meetings in September. Each meeting will cover the same content and have presentations that outline the preliminary corridor issues and study objectives. Meeting dates and locations are listed below.

#### Monday, September 9, 2013

5:30 to 8:00 PM

Presentations at 6 and 7:15 PM

**Savannah Oaks Middle School - Fitchburg**

5890 Lacy Road, Fitchburg

#### Thursday, September 19, 2013

5:30 to 8:00 PM

Presentations at 6 and 7:15 PM

**Westport Kennedy Administration Building**

5387 Mary Lake Road, Waunakee

#### Tuesday, September 10, 2013

5:30 to 8:00 PM

Presentations at 6 and 7:15 PM

**Monona Community Center Main Hall**

1011 Nichols Road, Monona

#### Monday, September 23, 2013

5:30 to 8:00 PM

Presentations at 6 and 7:15 PM

**Middleton City Hall Council Chambers**

7426 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton

#### Wednesday, September 18, 2013

6:00 to 8:30 PM

Presentations at 6:30 and 7:45 PM

**Boys & Girls Club Gym**

4619 Jenewein Road, Madison

#### The Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) process

A PEL Study is an FHWA-recommended planning initiative and is also part of MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) Act legislation. The PEL process is used as an effective and efficient way to integrate early planning into the highway development process and reduce delays in meeting transportation needs. The Beltline PEL Study allows for early development, evaluation, and screening of broad regional solutions. Potential solutions that are determined to be unreasonable will be dismissed. Those that show promise for addressing Beltline issues, along with other pertinent PEL Study results, will form the foundation for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental analysis, such as environmental impact statements.

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**Beltline corridor information**

The Madison Beltline links southwest Wisconsin to the state and region and connects area neighborhoods and communities. Constructed in the 1950s as a 2-lane rural highway bypassing downtown Madison, it has been foundational in the growth of Dane County and surrounding counties. The economic benefits of the Beltline to Wisconsin are considerable.

- In 2011, \$14 billion of freight traveled on the Beltline, much of it to destinations outside of Wisconsin.
- In 2012, almost 100,000 employees worked within 1 mile of the Beltline.
- Up to 123,000 vehicles per day use the Beltline to travel to jobs, school, shopping, and businesses.

The Beltline is now a central urban artery that carries much more traffic than it was designed to safely and efficiently handle. The Beltline can be difficult for bicycles and pedestrians to cross, creating a barrier for alternative transportation. Unreliable travel times reduce its value as a dependable route for transit.

A 2008 Madison Beltline Safety and Operational Needs Assessment documented that the Beltline regularly operates at unacceptable congestion levels. Numerous sections have crash rates higher than the state average. With Dane County projected to add about 150,000 residents by 2035, there is no capacity remaining on the Beltline to serve this growth.

WisDOT and FHWA anticipate that the PEL Study's collaborative and comprehensive planning process will identify effective solutions that address needs for all stakeholders. The study process will identify and evaluate multiple strategies and corridors throughout the Madison metropolitan area to understand if and how they address Beltline issues.

**Study schedule**

The PEL study is expected to last two to three years. It will start by investigating broad strategies and multiple corridors. Strategies and corridors that meet objectives will advance to the Corridor Concepts stage where they will be further refined and evaluated. A draft and final report is expected in 2015. NEPA studies, such as environmental impact statements and environmental assessments will follow the PEL study. A series of public meetings, a project website, and social media will keep the public informed during every stage of the study.

**Madison Beltline Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study Corridor**

*Many strategies, corridors, and travel modes will be investigated.*

