

Madison East-West Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Planning Study

Public Meeting #3: Working Locally Preferred Alternatives Workshop

6:00-7:30 PM, August 29, 2019
Madison Senior Center, 330 West Mifflin Street

Total Participants: 86 signed in

Video Recording: <https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Play/1077ade1bfb347389fe6ba2999da42d11d>

Format

The meeting began with a presentation by city staff and the consultant team to share information about the project background, goals, planning process, funding opportunities, and the working locally preferred East-West BRT route alternatives. A video recording with sign language translation is linked above.

Following the presentation and Q&A, participants dispersed into three breakout rooms with maps and additional information about the east, west, and downtown segments of the proposed East-West BRT route. Members of the project team were available to answer questions, and participants were able to provide input regarding route segments.



Presentation Q&A

- Will this presentation be available online?
 - Yes; meeting materials, including the presentation are available online at: <http://www.madisonbrt.com/>.
- Did the project team account for individuals who have had their license revoked during demographic data gathering?
 - No; unfortunately, we did not account for that.
- What do you mean by "Alternative 2 will require approximately 110 parking spots"?
 - Parking would be eliminated on some streets, such as Wilson Street. The spots would also not be relocated or reallocated.
- What are "Locally Preferred Alternatives"?
 - It is a term used by the Federal Transit Administration to specify routes decided upon by the community.
- If a bus lane is put on West Washington Avenue, will that be solely for BRT?
 - It will simply be a metro bus lane, which could help make space for BRT on State Street by potentially rerouting existing State Street Metro routes to West Washington Ave.
- You mentioned BRT is scheduled for 2024; when will the bus lanes and other infrastructure changes happen?
 - Some infrastructure enhancements and changes to existing Metro routes may occur prior to the BRT system being put in place, in preparation for BRT. There is a possibility we start construction in 2022, with BRT implementation in 2024.
- Do average travel times shown include the time BRT buses are stopped at stations?

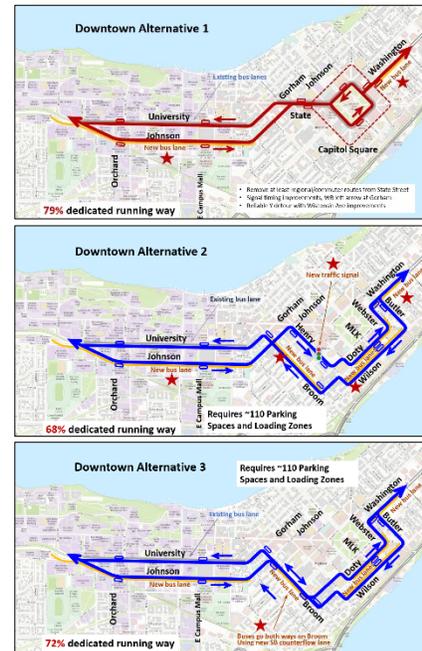
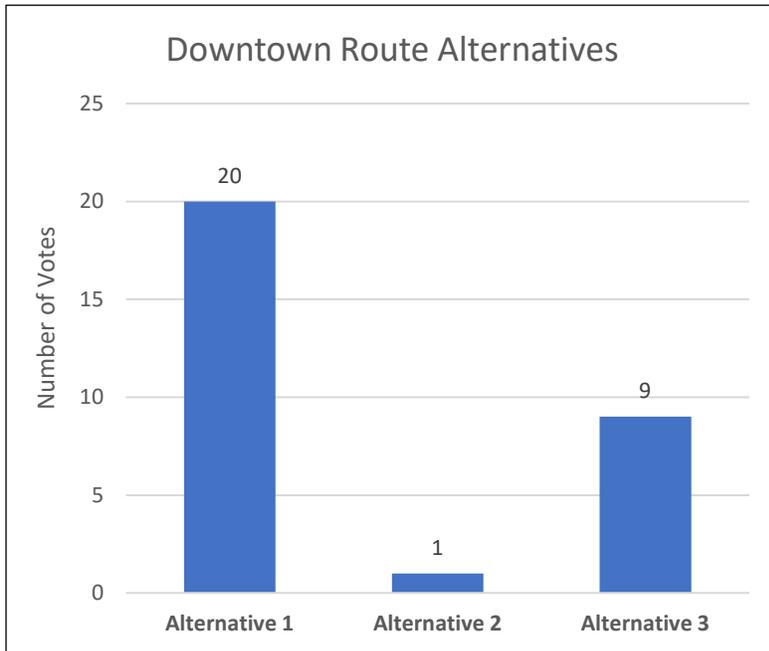


- Yes; there is a 40 second “stop time” for each BRT factored into average travel time. BRT stops are much quicker due to features such as, off-board fare payment, level-boarding, and an additional entry/exit door.
- Are the average travel times shown referring to one-way trips, or round-trip?
 - They refer to a one-way trip.
- Does the working LPA preclude moving towards dedicated lanes?
 - About 55% of lanes are dedicated in the current working LPA. There are places where we simply cannot take a dedicated lane, so those segments will likely have traffic signal priority with queue jumps.
- Are the numbers shown solely capital expenses, or are there operating expenses?
 - Current operating expenses are approximately 3.5 million dollars per year, which could be reduced if we start making changes to the current system.
- You mentioned a 40-second stop times for BRT buses; does that apply even for handicap passenger boarding?
 - Yes – all stations will be accessible and have level boarding, allowing riders (including those with accessibility issues) to get on and off the bus quickly.
- How many BRT buses will there be?
 - We are planning for 11 electric buses.
- Why wasn't there anything in the presentation about making Madison a more active transportation city?
 - In our comprehensive plan, one of the City of Madison's main focuses are active transportation. However, this meeting is focused on BRT.
- Seems like we are trying to get cars off the road; why aren't we engaging more people who drive? Why don't we talk about park-n-rides?
 - We need structured parking, which would be ~\$35,000 a space. It is currently a regional problem; it is difficult for the city to pay for these parking spots for regional demands. We are trying to understand the problem, and brainstorming ways to address it.
- Is there a way to utilize electronic communication for project information?
 - All materials will be available online at <http://www.madisonbrt.com/>. There is also contact information available online if you would like to give any additional input.
- Will non-BRT buses be allowed to use the dedicated bus lanes too?
 - Yes; a bus lane is a bus lane, so all buses will run on it. Some routes will need to be restructured.



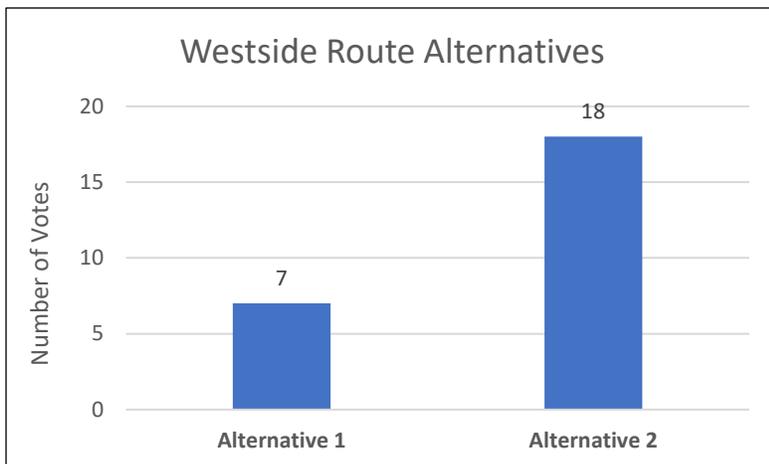
Downtown Route Alternatives Worksheet

The following responses were collected from worksheets that asked participants to choose which Downtown route option they preferred.



Westside Route Alternatives Worksheet

The following responses were collected from worksheets that asked participants to choose which Westside route option they preferred.



Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Comments

The following responses were collected from worksheets that asked participants to comment on the working locally preferred alternatives presented.

- I think on the downtown alternatives, using the capitol square is too crowded and slow, and Henry St is probably not good either. West side: I like the idea of going past the West transfer point, but the route is a bit slower. However, it probably serves more businesses via Odana.
- I hope BRT will extend into Sun Prairie; the gray arrow gives me hope! Really excited to see MATC included in BRT.
- Would like to know more about how to reach a more diverse population to help determine decisions for placement of routes in these early stages.
- BRT should be located on the square so that riders transferring to regular buses don't have to walk blocks to connect, particularly in winter. Capitol Square is the de facto downtown transfer station and should remain so.
- The 40-second stop sounds like an issue if you have a stroller or pull behind suitcase, wheelchair or walker.
- I prefer dedicated BRT lanes down the length of East Washington – currently shown as not dedicated near East High School. We will need planning and investment for bicycle alternatives if bike lanes are displaced.
- Prefer west side alternative #1 plus moving West Transfer Point.
- Downtown alternatives 2 & 3 are not worth the benefit of standardizing a capitol square detour just because there are a handful of non-farmer-market riders. The beauty of BRT or rail is that it can be detoured when needed.
- This looks great! Protected bike lanes are cool. Hopefully we can make more of them in tandem with this project.

Capital Costs for Working LPA Comments (Odana and Broom/Wilson Options):

The following responses were collected from worksheets that asked participants to comment on capital costs for the working locally preferred alternatives presented.

- Unless electric bus technology improves significantly, (particularly for performance in cold climates) I would prefer to see investment in conventional or hybrid busses. A number of BRT projects (Albuquerque comes to mind) have stumbled due to dependence in electric buses that aren't meeting expectations
- Please retain parking especially in neighborhoods that are already challenged with parking
- I'm curious about electric buses range per charge- how often, running buses every 15 min, would batteries need charging/switching?
- How do 14,000 daily units create 120,000 daily trips? Almost 10 trips per day? Do non-BRT buses get to run on BRT lanes?
- What are expected costs for more machines? Have we looked are fare-less BRT for all riders?



Breakout Room Map and Discussion Comments

General Comments

- With the existing lack of resources for traffic enforcement, how will you prevent people from violating the bus only lanes/queue jump areas?
- I have safety concerns with stations at night.

Downtown

- Why not get rid of parking on Johnson Street? The City would save money on towing parked cars at rush hour.
- I will be in favor of using State Street when we have more alternate venues for events. More have gone up but we're not there yet.
- Support for Downtown Alts 2 or 3. We should avoid Alt 1 (State Street) and the Square. Too many events and pedestrians for Alt 1 to work well. BRT = train, not bus. John Benton, 608-772-3299.
- Preferred downtown route depends on how other routes interact. If routes like Middleton will no longer run downtown (which I don't like), route BRT to State street and the Square.
- Prefer east-west routes along Broom Street. Consolidates bus traffic - brands street as transit route.
- If Alt 1 (State Street), can we make sure there is a non-intrusive indicator at all stops when the alternate off-square routing is being used?

East Side

- Happy to have dedicated bus lanes in parking lane area on East Washington Avenue in the area of Breese Stevens field. There are usually temporary no parking signs there anyway.
- Propose maintaining bicycle capacity on East Washington Avenue or improve the parallel street bicycle boulevard with dedicated BRT lanes.
- Would highly prefer dedicated bus lanes on East Washington Avenue east of First Street near East High School, even at the expense of on-street parking.

West Side

- Why does the Odana Road alternative seem to be favored?
 - The decision has not yet been made, but (according to the modeling) due to the fact that it connects to the West Transfer Point (WTP) it does draw higher ridership.
- Mineral Point Road alternative has bus lanes, it seems to make more sense.
- Keep the current WTP and find a route up to Mineral Point Road that serves the research park.
- Positive comment regarding the shoulder running on Campus Drive.
- Why extend service to High Point Road? It seems unnecessary to include the area west of West Towne Mall.
 - This is just the working LPA recommendation. The final limits of service are TBD.
- How will the buses turn around at the west end? Will they use Big Sky Drive and High Point Road?
 - Possibly. This is TBD.
- There should be some sort of Park and Ride and/or transfer point for regular buses from Middleton at or near Madison Yards at Hill Farms/Hilldale area.
- Support for dedicated bus lanes on University Avenue between Segoe Road and University Bay Drive, even at the cost of slowing auto traffic.
- A stop on Campus Drive between University Bay Drive and the ones near Orchard Street should be included.
 - There is a possible future stop proposed there. The area is very challenging due to grades and the railroad tracks, however, it would be desirable to have something serving the middle of the UW campus.



Comment Cards

The following comments were submitted on individual comment cards and were not addressed during the Q&A session.

- Stops need to be at/near intersections with easy crossing- it is not reasonable to ask pedestrians to walk an additional block, cross 6-8 lanes of fast Washington traffic (very dangerous even with lights) and walk back. This isn't how people and bikes use roads- I have stopped taking any buses on E Wash (and I go from Atwood to UW so that is my most convenient route) because of the danger.
- Downtown Alternative 1 is most reasonable.
- I would strongly favor having a dedicated lane on 100% of the system. In light of the climate crisis, we need to be more aggressive in discouraging car travel and making transit an attractive option.
- Please preserve canopy trees.
- Have you considered the fare-less options for all riders? Otherwise – looks great!
- I am impressed with your community engagement and your thorough analysis.
- Very excited.
- Thank you all for all this work and all these options!
- Make it happen.
- Please do the Wilson bike/bus lane modifications regardless.

