

November 12, 2024: Wisconsin Non-Driver Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

Contact: Maryne Taute, WisDOT Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives

About the Event

Wisconsin Non-Driver Advisory Committee (WiNDAC) members met virtually on November 12, 2024. The meeting ran from 9:00am to 2:30pm. This was an open/public meeting; observers could view the proceedings via a YouTube livestream.

The purpose of the meeting was to develop an understanding of the experiences that foster non-driver allies and advocates, and the tangible steps members are taking within their work.

Twenty-eight committee members participated in the meeting. See Appendix A for attendance information. There were two breakout discussions, during which time committee members were grouped with a WisDOT facilitator and notetaker.

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Remarks from the Secretary Office – WisDOT Assistant Deputy Secretary Joel Nilsestuen

- WisDOT Assistant Deputy Secretary Joel Nilsestuen welcomed WiNDAC members and thanked the WiNDAC co-chairs for planning and organizing the meeting. During the committee meeting, members would be in small discussion groups where rich and robust conversations could occur. The Assistant Deputy Secretary closed by thanking the WiNDAC members for their continued efforts and looked forward to another productive meeting of WiNDAC.

Welcome Back and Preview of the Day - WisDOT Division of Budget & Strategic Initiatives (DBSI)

Administrator Lea Collins-Worachek

- WisDOT DBSI Administrator Lea Collins-Worachek thanked all members for their engagement on the committee. She also thanked Representative Dave Considine for his service as he retires from the Wisconsin Legislature. She continued by previewing the events of the day.

Context Setting for Small Group Discussion #1 – WiNDAC Co-Chair Tami Jackson, Public Policy Analyst, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

- Tami Jackson introduced the upcoming small group activity. WiNDAC members were asked to reflect on their own experiences, the organizations they represent and/or the clients they serve as they answered the small group questions.

Small Group Discussion 1

Small group discussion questions included:

1. How do non-drivers interact with your organization?
2. How do the policies and programs that you run impact non-drivers?
3. How does your organization think about non-drivers in the work that it does?
4. How can or has your organization shifted its programs and policies to reflect more non-driver centric thinking?
5. When other stakeholders aren't thinking non-driver centrically, how does that impact your organization?

Report Out Question: How are you thinking about non-drivers and what changes have you made to accommodate them?

Following the discussion, each small group highlighted their breakout room conversation to the whole committee. Themes and takeaways from the small group discussions can be found in Appendix B.

Context Setting for Small Group Discussion #2 – Denise Jess, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired

- Denise Jess introduced the second small group discussion and asked members to reflect on how to develop allies and advocates and the importance of change agents to advance non-driver support.

Small Group Discussion 2

Attendees moved into small group breakout rooms. Discussion questions included:

1. Identify some of the people you would consider potential allies?
2. From your list of potential allies, who would you prioritize first?
3. How do you transform a potential ally into an actual ally?
4. What are tangible steps to create an organizational shift toward non-driver thinking?

Report Out Questions: How is your exposure to the non-driver experience influencing your worldview, work, and/or personal life? How does this influence your work with potential non-driver allies?

Following the discussion, each small group highlighted their breakout room conversation to the whole committee. Themes and takeaways from the small group discussions can be found in Appendix B.

Capstone Report Out:

Committee members were called on to share their main takeaways from the meeting and asked to respond to the questions below:

1. How will you advance non-driver centric thinking within your sphere of influence?
2. What tangible steps can you commit to?

Closing Remarks – WisDOT Secretary Kristina Boardman

- WisDOT Secretary Kristina Boardman provided closing remarks, thanking WiNDAC members for participating in the meeting. She closed the meeting by discussing the importance of the committee's insights and WiNDAC's work.

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Appendix A: Meeting Attendees

Members in attendance

Tami Jackson, Public Policy Analyst, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities
Denise Jess, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired
Lea Collins-Worachek, Administrator, Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives
Sandra Villiesse, Transportation Specialist, Federal Highway Administration
Dave Considine, Wisconsin State Legislature
LaTonya Johnson, Wisconsin State Legislature
Jennifer Jako, Director, Aging and Disability Resource Center of Barron, Rusk, and Washburn County
Chris Hiebert, Chief Transportation Engineer, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC)
Holly Keenan, President, Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers
Kirsten Finn, Executive Director, Wisconsin Bike Fed
Susan De Vos, Secretary/Treasurer, Wisconsin Transit Riders Alliance
Adam Lorentz, Transit Manager, La Crosse Municipal Transit
John Hersberger, Board President, Union Cab
Bobbi Craig-Hegna, Transportation Program Director, Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin
Patrick Daoust, Transit Manager, Bay Area Rural Transit
Beth Ann Richlen, Executive Director, Judicare Legal Aid
Jeremy Lyon, Division Administrator, Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs
Iris Jacobson, Education Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Rebecca Smith, Transportation Director and Chair, Janesville Transit and Wisconsin Public Transportation Association
Susan Gaeddert, Community Programs Director, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
KJ Hansmann, Assistant Professor, UW Madison School of Medicine and Public Health
Kerri Sabin, Transit Manager, Namekagon Transit
Dave Steele, Executive Director, MobiliSE
Jay Tucker, Administrator, Wisconsin Community Services
Jenna Fogarty, Director, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
John Tuohy, Executive Director, Wisconsin County Human Service Association
Kevin Coughlin, Policy Initiatives Advisor, Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Lisa Hassenstad, Public Policy Manager, Disability Rights Wisconsin

WisDOT staff in attendance

Kristina Boardman, Secretary, Wisconsin DOT
Joel Nilsestuen, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin DOT
Andrew Levy, Wisconsin DOT Southeast Region Systems Planning Unit
Chuck Wade, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Planning and Economic Development
Katherine Patterson, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors
Ian Ritz, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors

Katrina Wheeler-Floyd, Wisconsin DOT Office of Workforce Development
David Dahms, WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety
Brian Elliot, Wisconsin DOT Electric Vehicle Unit
Joy Loomis, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance
Evelyn Bromberg, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Carter Angelo, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Brad Basten, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Ethan Severson, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Johanna Schmidt, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Maryne Taute, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
June Coleman, Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Performance Improvement, Research and Strategic Initiatives
Mike Denruiter, Wisconsin DOT Office of Public Affairs
Jennifer Fedie, Wisconsin DOT Office of Public Affairs

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Appendix B: Small Group Discussions Addendum

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 the small group report out sessions.

Small Group Discussion 1

WiNDAC members responded to a series of questions for discussion. Group responses are summarized below by question. Some responses may have been mentioned multiple times.

1. How do non-drivers interact with your organization?

Interaction with the organizations vary: voting and voting access, direct contact with non-drivers (those who do not drive by choice, those who can't drive, and those who choose to walk or bike, or use transit), resources, transportation services and assistance, connecting non-drivers to resources, and other organizations.

2. How do the policies and programs that you run impact non-drivers?

Long-term plans tend to be multi-modal, with recommendations for infrastructure that accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians after completing a sidewalk inventory. Financial support, including grants, can expand the types of resources available for intersecting needs (housing, employment, drug/alcohol addiction, etc.). Many organizations do not focus on non-drivers only and do referrals to other agencies and organizations to meet their clients' needs.

3. How does your organization think about non-drivers in the work that it does?

Non-drivers use the transportation system too and the planning needs to accommodate all modes. Non-drivers may not be their primary focus but most have to use transportation in order to access work, child-care, education, resources, health-care, etc. Comments were made that accessing data and information specific to their scope of work, provided serviced, and clients, such as the Non-Driver Mapping Tool, benefits their work and assists decision-makers. Worries about insecure funding may limit the way organizations spend their resources in order to sustain options as long as they can. Can't rely on only virtual options to support non-drivers and organizations and agencies must address complexity of needs.

4. How can or has your organization shifted its programs and policies to reflect more non-driver centric thinking?

- Include the perspective and experiences of non-drivers and using data that helps identify areas for change/support.
- Solutions need to be state-wide for rural and urban areas.
- When considering organizations' work and options, consider how people access those.
- Plan for non-drivers as part of the need to serve the target audience.

5. When other stakeholders aren't thinking non-driver centrally, how does that impact your organization?

A lack of non-driver investment in infrastructure is a quality-of-life issue for all. Inadequate funding is an issue for all as well – limited and insecure funding results in fewer options, less

complex solutions, and a fear to take a risk on new or different strategies. Legislature is not thinking about non-drivers and the public's assumptions about what non-drivers have access to, what they need, and who they are is limited.

Report Out Question: How are you thinking about non-drivers and what changes have you made to accommodate them?

- Virtual meetings and telehealth appointments can fill in gaps.
- Assessing what affordability means for non-drivers who are struggling financially
- Expanding the mental framework of who a non-driver is to include elderly population and those with disabilities.
- Need to educate on non-driver needs, funding, options, and infrastructure.
- Need to consider not just clients those organizations are trying to serve, but also how their own volunteers and employees are navigating transportation – this is not a secondary issue, but rather one that can intersect with the work already being done.

Small Group Discussion 2

WiNDAC members responded to a series of questions for discussion. Group responses are summarized below by question. Some responses may have been mentioned multiple times.

1. Identify some of the people you would consider potential allies?

Anybody can be an ally. Need to work with local units of government, legislature, and state agencies such as DOT. Tribal communities are often overlooked but need to be included. Include 2 year colleges (faculty staff, students), school districts, local businesses, elected officials, and community members.

2. From your list of potential allies, who would you prioritize first?

Federal and state agencies should be prioritized due to funding. Elected officials and those with ability to amplify needs of non-drivers should also be prioritized. Working with veterans and tribal nations should be a standard practice.

3. How do you transform a potential ally into an actual ally?

Need to match data and story-telling and can do that using the WiNDAC non-driver mapping tool. Committees such as WiNDAC – and extending the invitation to others such as tribal nations, rural agencies, etc., provide spaces to transform into allies and advocates. Create handouts and flyers or a resource kit to share with stakeholders.

4. What are tangible steps to create an organizational shift toward non-driver thinking?

Thinking about non-drivers in our work benefits everyone (everyone will be or has been a non-driver). Challenging ourselves and members of our teams to experience our communities as non-drivers – travel via bus, walk/bike to understand some aspects of a non-driver experience. Need to expand thinking from health equity to include transportation equity. Create resource kit for organizations to use for non-driver planning. Identify non-driver and car-centric examples and language to clearly demonstrate the perspective shift needed.

Report Out Questions: How is your exposure to the non-driver experience influencing your worldview, work, and/or personal life? How does this influence your work with potential non-driver allies?

There is a need for quick and tangible wins when long-term planning and project implementation can decenter the non-driver. Considerations for safety when a bicyclist and pedestrian need to be offered – what are safe ways to get where you need to go? How does behavior change when you use different modes of transportation? Access to constitutional rights can be limited when no transportation options are available to non-drivers. The non-driver experience can include being a caregiver for a loved one, accessing mental and health services, education, or work, and more. Education about these experiences need to be provided and promoted.