



Feasibility Study of Intercity Bus Terminal in Madison Area

Professional Project Submission

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Cover Photo Credit

ITC Design Concept Looking South on Bedford Street (ITC on the right), Chapter 1, Final Report: SOUTH CAPITOL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the increase of the opportunity and population growth, Madison Area is attracting more and more people to the area for various of reasons. Intercity bus service serve as the primary tool connecting Chicago, Milwaukee, Twin Cities, and other cities nearby. The intercity bus terminal in the City of Madison closed in 2009 and no physical structures to accommodate users ever since. Currently, the service uses the city's sidewalk to load and off-load the passenger. This kind of curbside operation has become popular all around the country because of the low-cost of operation to the bus company and cheaper services the customer can get. Although with these benefits, the service has incurred some problems. Safety, congestion, and service issues are the main problems the service in Madison is facing. Because of these downsides, more and more voices advocate for the construction of an intercity bus terminal. The city has responded to the voice in 2014 by hiring consultants to study the project and published a report. The project didn't come true because of the financial concern from the developer. After this, there is no effort dedicated to this issue. This study is based on the finding of the 2014 report, but update it with recent information and different approaches. Through observation, interviews, and GIS mapping, the current service issue has successfully identified as well as the future site selection and design of the intercity bus terminal.

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INTRODUCTION

Intercity bus was once the primary way for Americans to move around the cities, but the service was struck by the popularization of personal vehicles and highway expansions. Until recent years, as technology progresses, the curbside bus service became popular because of the characteristics of cheap, reliable, and convenient (Marshall 2015). The service user can use their phone to easily track the schedule and buy tickets online; the bus company can take advantage of the technology to reduce the cost on terminal maintenance and personnel. Although with these advantages, there are some downsides of the service which include the uncomfortable waiting environment, the complicated online ticketing, and the influence to the traffic. These problems can be worse in places with bad weather and congested traffic. For the elder and people with disabilities, the problem is even more severe. Many cities are thinking ways to alleviate the problems and the construction of the intercity bus terminal (IBT) is one of them.

Background of the Madison Region

The Madison area¹ is the fastest growing region in Wisconsin and one of the faster growing regions in the US. According to the 2010 Census, Dane County and the City of Madison had 488,073 and 233,209 respectively. In 2016, Dane County's population has grown to 516,818 and Madison has grown to 246,034². In addition to the city's population, Madison is also the home of the University of Wisconsin (UW), which has average more than 40,000 enrollments yearly. Along with the population data, the opportunity scores calculated by the Opportunity Index Organization for 2017 in Dane County show that the region is above National and State's averages in term of opportunities in economy, education, health, and community³. These data show that the region will continually grow and will attract more people to visit the area for business, leisure or other purposes. Concerning about points above, transportation issue will become more and more important in the future as congestion, safety and other traffic problems intensified.

Intercity Bus Service in Madison

Madison connects to other cities in several ways: airplane, intercity bus, and personal vehicle. Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA) provides longer distance services to cities in the US which include New York, Chicago, and Denver. The intercity bus service provides services to cities within smaller radius that include Minneapolis/St. Paul, Milwaukee, Chicago and other smaller cities. Badger Bus, Greyhound, Megabus, Jefferson Lines, and Van Galder are the five companies provide the service in downtown Madison (Table 1).

Madison lost its intercity bus terminal in 2009 due to redevelopment. Since then, there is no physical structure to accommodate the intercity bus user traveling to or from Madison. Currently, bus riders need to use the sidewalk as the platform to wait and get off the bus. Langdon Street across from the UW Memorial Union and University Avenue in front of the Chazen Museum are the two primary downtown pickup and drop-off locations for the intercity bus service in Madison. The third location is on the south side of the city called the Dutch Mill which serves mostly park-and-ride customers. These three locations don't have basic services

¹ The Madison Area refers to the Madison, WI Metropolitan Statistical Area defined by the US Office of Management and Budget. The area had a population of 568,593 according to 2010 Census.

² 2016 American Community Survey (ACS).

³ Dane County average opportunity score: 63.1; Wisconsin: 58.1; Nation: 52.4.

such as heating, seating, and ticketing. Bus riders would use the University's buildings or the Wisconsin Historic Society for their services. Without a shelter, bus riders don't have a place to hide from wind, rain, and snow, especially for people with disabilities, the elderly, and children whom need to face the inconvenience and unsafe environment. Furthermore, the two downtown locations are close to high pedestrian volume corridors which have incurred safety concerns. The two streets where the bus stop located at have high traffic volumes: the 800 Langdon Street segment has average weekday traffic volume of 7,949 and the 800 University Avenue segment has 25,356⁴ which create an unfriendly environment for the intercity bus service; on the other hand, the intercity bus service also worsen the traffic near bus stops.

Table 1 Intercity Bus Service Connections and Operations in Madison

Company	Services	Maximum Number of Trips Per Day (From Madison / To Madison)
Badger Bus	Brookfield Eau Claire Johnson Creek La Crosse Menomonie Milwaukee Minneapolis – St. Paul Whitewater	9/9 1 on Friday/1 on Sunday 9/9 1 on Friday/1 on Sunday 1 on Friday/1 on Sunday 11/9 2 on Friday/2 on Sunday 1 on Friday/1 on Sunday
Greyhound	Milwaukee Minneapolis – St. Paul	2/3 2/1
Jefferson Lines	Milwaukee Minneapolis – St. Paul Baraboo – Sparta – La Crosse	1/1 2/2 1/1
Megabus	Chicago Milwaukee Minneapolis – St. Paul	4/4 4/4 4/4
Van Galder	Janesville – Chicago	24/26

Past Efforts and Future Visions

On August 2014, a report about the intermodal transit center (ITC) in downtown Madison was published by the City of Madison and prepared by the Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2014). The report is very detailed about the planning which includes the collection of public input, site selection criteria, and the final design draft. The proposed recommendation recommended the site close to the Kohl Center just south of the UW Campus and to develop the parcel as a mixed-use development (Figure 1). The proposal didn't come to real because the developer didn't want to be in the bus industry which to build the terminal could cost \$10 million and up-keep maintenance fee is expansive (Tarr 2015).

Although the plan didn't come true, many reports and articles suggest to build a downtown IBT in the future. The UW Long Range Transportation Plan stated clearly that establishing an IBT near campus is a need because of the current traffic problem and the conflict

⁴ Source: 2015 City of Madison Traffic Volume Report

with the bus route 80 (University of Wisconsin - Madison 2015). In the City of Madison's Downtown Plan of 2012, though not explicitly states the need for the IBT, a recommendation for the intercity bus service is to integrate it with other modes of transportation options (Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development 2012). Madison in Motion: Transportation Plan Background Document of 2017 states that Madison is an important hub for intercity bus services in Upper Midwest and should keep pushing and improving the development and growth which include the intercity bus terminal. About 25 articles on the Madison Area Bus Advocates' (MABA) website started before the shutdown of the Badger Coach Bus Depot in 2009 studied and advocated for the IBT in Madison. These indicate the importance of the intercity bus service in Madison and the public's value on establishing the IBT; the future plan should focus on improving and expanding the intercity bus service.



This project also study a precedence which is the Grand River Station in La Crosse. It is the most mentioned intercity bus terminal on articles and studies through the research of the project. It is also being mentioned by the city planner through the interview of the project. The terminal opened in August 2010 after two years of construction. It is a six-story IBT with 8 bus transfer station, 13,000 square feet of commercial space, and 92 apartments which costed about \$30 million to build (Marcus 2010). Aside from the capital cost, the maintenance fee of the terminal is huge to make the facility safe and comfortable through years,



Figure 2 Grand River Station. Source: La Crosse Tribune

which means the commercial space and apartments can serve as financial sources for the terminal. Although the IBT that the City of Madison is planning to build would be a modal larger than the La Crosse one, the design and the amenities would be similar.

METHODS

This project used three methods: on-site observation, interviews, and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. These three methods helped in different ways to make the report comprehensively present the issue and possible solutions by understanding the background of the IBT project, the community input, and the site selection and design elements.

Observations

The observation happened on February 28, March 15, and March 23. The main purpose for this activity is to gather more information on current intercity bus services and to understand the degree of severity of the issues related with the curbside bus service in Madison.

Interviews

This will be a big project and potentially will influence many of the city's citizens and the service users. Due to that, a comprehensive outreach effort is a must to include as many voices as possible. The stakeholder's and the partner's (table 2) input is important to determine whether to build the IBT and which kind of IBT to build. This project used interviews to gather information from four of them from different interest groups to know their thoughts.

Table 2 List of the Project Stakeholder and Partner (red-marked have been interviewed)

Category	Stakeholder or Partner
Government	Federal Government The State <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wisconsin Department of Transportation Regional Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital Area Regional Planning Commission• Madison Area Transportation Planning Board The City <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development (DPCED)
Service Provider	Intercity Bus Company <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Badger Bus• Greyhound• Jefferson Lines• Megabus• Van Galder
Service User	Citizen Group <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Madison Area Bus Advocates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Associations <p>School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UW – Madison • Madison Area Technical College • Edgewood College • Madison Metropolitan School District
Other Groups	Dane County Regional Airport Downtown Madison Inc.

Four stakeholders or partners were interviewed for this project, and each to some extent represents their own group interests. They are: Ian Ritz, Chief of Transit Section, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT); David Trowbridge, City of Madison Planner; Allen Fugate, General Manager of Van Galder Bus Company; Susan De Vos, President of Madison Area Bus Advocates. The questions the project asked and the topics discussed with them were different based on the institutions they work for and their influence on the IBT project.

The interview with David Trowbridge took place on March 2, 2018 at the DPCED office on 126 South Hamilton Street. David oversees all the transit projects in the City of Madison and is the person in charge of the intercity bus related project. The city would be the most influential member of the IBT project since they are the one to plan, design, and build it. The questions asked were broad but closely tied to the terminal (Appendix 1).

Susan De Vos is a researcher for the Department of Sociology of UW and has lived in Madison for more than two decades. Although Susan doesn't use the intercity bus service, she uses the local bus service frequently to work. She is very enthusiastic and serious about the IBT project and has great visions and recommendations. The interview happened on March 14, 2018 in Susan's office at the Social Science Building of UW. Nine questions of four categories were asked to Susan regarding the IBT and the MABA (Appendix 2).

The interview with Allen Fugate took place on March 16, 2018 at the Van Galder Bus Company's office in the City of Janesville. The interview was recorded and an email reply to the question is saved (Appendix 3). Allen's input is important to the project since bus companies are the one to provide the intercity bus service and are close to the customer. This project had difficulty reaching the other intercity bus company since most of the them are national-sized companies and don't have a suitable contact. It was fortunate that Allen reached back and the interview happened.

Ian Ritz was contacted through emails and questions and replies were exchanged (Appendix 4). A total of five questions were asked to Ian regarding the State's attitude and thoughts about the project and the intercity transit in Wisconsin. State's attitude toward intercity transit service is important since this could determine the future provision of the service which will influence the service of the IBT.

GIS Mapping

GIS mapping is a method to get more in-depth understanding of the potential IBT site which is the current State Street Campus Garage and to compare it to the former recommended site of the 2014 report. The comparison and analysis required to consider the decision criteria of site selection based on the 2014 report, which was developed by the Planning Committee and the consultant group with the input from the public. These criteria are: 1. Location of the site; 2. Accessibility; 3. Size and configuration; 4. Context and urban design considerations; 5. Cost of

development; 6. Potential for economic development. This report would focus on the first three criteria due to the lack of ability to access the information and time constraint.

The location of the site takes the proximity to the clientele, proximity to attractions, and safety into consideration. Students are the primary clientele currently for the intercity bus service in Madison based on the interview with David and Allen. Thus, proximity to the campus and to the student housing is important. Capitol Square, State Street District, UW Campus and other downtown attractions are listed on the top 15 things to do in Madison on TripAdvisor. Thrillist also recommended these downtown attractions for the visitors (Muszynski 2017). The IBT project should consider the location to be near these attractions to attract more people to use the service. This project used the buffer method on GIS to identify the proximity of potential sites to the client and to the attraction. The distance of 0.25 miles is often set as an acceptable walking distance in the US (Yang 2012) and the project used the distance to create the buffer. Accessibility of the IBT considers the connectivity of the location to other modes of local transportation (BRT, Metro, Bike-Share). The study used walking distance as buffer range and identified the connectivity of the sites. Size and configuration determine the design of the IBT. GIS helped calculating the size of the site and laying out the configuration. All GIS data were provided by the city of Madison through the open data website.

RESULTS

Observations

The current intercity bus service uses 800 Langdon Street as the primary stop to load and off-load passengers (Figure 3). Sometimes if the primary location has events such as construction, the service would use the space in front of the Chazen Museum on University Avenue as bus stop (Figure 4). These assignments are directed by the city to ensure the safety and avoid chaos around the stop. If it's on the peak time of service (Friday night), the city would restrict parking of another segment of Langdon Street to accommodate more buses (Figure 5).



Figure 3 Intercity Bus Stop on Langdon Street



Figure 4 University Avenue



Figure 5 Additional Space on Langdon Street

Through three observations, safety and congestion issues have emerged. The intercity bus run through four pedestrian crossings, which all have high volume during school hours and only the one on University Avenue is signalized. Intercity buses are normally heavier than local buses which means they take more time to start and stop. This is not only creating a dangerous

environment for pedestrian but also reduce the efficiency of the intercity bus service. Moreover, cars would stake behind the bus to cause congestion and create pollution.

Interviews

Through the four interviews, different perspectives were gathered and summarized. Some key issues were asked to all respondents and some issues were asked specifically. Key issues include the current operation of the intercity bus service, the future site selection, terminal design, and the connection to other modes of transportation. From the reply Ian returned, the State doesn't have many voices on the IBT kind of project of a city. Rather, the State focus on bigger picture such as the overview of the intercity bus service of the State and provide funding to support smaller market cities to develop the service. Ian still gave some recommendations on the site, which should be convenient and connective to other modes of transportation.

The city has more power to decide the direction of the IBT project, but since it is still 4 to 5 years away, the reply from David wasn't very detailed. David gave some input about the current situation, the future site selection, and the future design of the IBT. The location the city will possibly develop the IBT is the current State Street Campus Garage (Figure 6). The site is bigger than the 2014 ITC site (Figure 7) which would provide enough space for the development. The advantage of close to the campus and downtown attractions is to have higher possibly attracting more users and has more potential to develop other uses.

Moreover, the property is a city's property, so it will be easier to do redevelopment for the IBT project.

Susan provided input as herself, but as the president of the MABA, she has more insights for the topic than the general public. She thought the current intercity bus service is not ideal because of the poor service and the traffic safety concern. The future IBT should be designed to have at least the inclusion of the basic function which includes heating, comfortable seating area, restrooms, and vending machines. The location of the IBT should be connective with other modes of transportation. A second terminal outside of the downtown should also be considered to satisfy more people's need.



Figure 7 The design of the 2014 ITC



Figure 6 State Street Campus Garage

The first three respondents' attitude toward the IBT project were either supportive or neutral which makes the input from Allen very valuable for this project to consider. Allen didn't think it's necessary to build a terminal for the intercity bus service mainly because of the potential extra charge to impose on the company and to the customer. The curbside service not only reduces the ticket price but also provides customers to local businesses to encourage the downtown economy which the IBT may have adverse impacts on. If the IBT will be built, Allen think some important elements are designing a good configuration and providing enough space for buses to safely

maneuver and queue. Furthermore, the operator of the IBT should be neutral to ensure the service is not partial to any bus company.

GIS Mapping

The first decision criteria is the location. 219 units of commercial and 85 units of residential are within walking distance of the Lake Street Site; 101 units of commercial and 641 units of residential are within walking distance of the 2014 ITC site (Figure 8). Although the 2014 ITC site have more residential units by tax parcel, some parcel near Lake Street site are high density apartments with more than 100 bedrooms. According to the tax parcel data layer, 9527 bedrooms are within the walking distance of the Lake Street site and 5593 bedrooms are within walking distance of the 2014 ITC site. Lucky, Hub, James...etc. are newly built high-rise student housing which are mostly situated near the Lake Street Site.

To analyze the accessibility, the walking distance is being used again. A total of 31 local bus stops are within the buffer of the Lake Street site; 21 stops are within the buffer of the 2014 ITC site. Both sites are close to the potential BRT lines on University Avenue and Johnson Street (Figure 9).

Calculated by GIS, the size of the Lake Street Site is about 92,000 square feet and the 2014 ITC site is about 45,000 square feet. The design of the 2014 ITC only had 5 islands and limited space for buses to wait and queue (Figure 7). The size is obviously not big enough for the city as current service is facing congestion issue with around 6 standing spaces provided for the bus. In terms of the configuration, the Lake Street site has Lake Street on the West and Frances Street on the East, which could be utilized to create smooth traffic flow for the IBT. Moreover, the site is away from the four high volume pedestrian crossings of the block, better performance and safety can be expected.

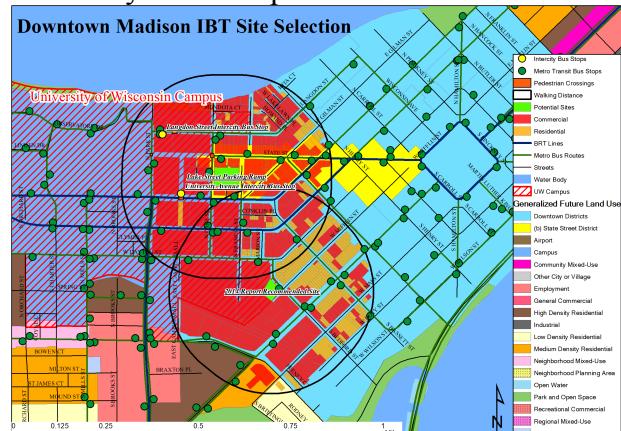


Figure 8 Location Analysis

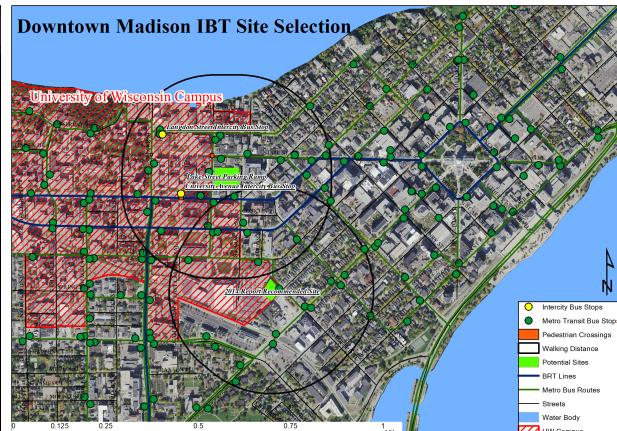


Figure 9 Accessibility Analysis

DISCUSSION

Based on the information gathered through the interview and the sources from the internet, the City would possibly build the Intercity Bus Terminal. Although it could take four to five years to wait for the capacity for the project, but it will be on the city's schedule. This project is in line with the city's plan and recommends the construction of the IBT because of the

high expectation from the public and the severity of problems of the current service. To some citizens, the terminal is also a symbol of modern city and embarrassed of not having one (O'Neill 2015).

If the IBT will be built, the site should be centrally-located to ensure the ridership, provide convenient services to the service user, and attract visitors. The Lake Street site is a great site based on the GIS mapping analysis which its location and accessibility are good. In addition, the site is bigger than the 2014 ITC site so supposedly can provide more bus storage and maneuver spaces to ensure ample supply of the service and safety. The size of the site could also create larger potential parking and commercial spaces to increase the financial sustainability to the terminal.

The design of the IBT and what amenities should be included can be drawn from the input of stakeholders and partners. The public hope the IBT can not only be a station but a local destination. It should be a sustainable mixed-use development including housing, parking, and retail. The IBT should also be a comfortable and safe space for the service user as well as the intercity bus service provider. The operator of the IBT should be assigned neutral to ensure all the bus companies can receive equal services. No matter what kind of commercial use the future IBT will include to support the terminal's finance, the terminal should fit with the neighborhood and the city coordinately and shouldn't influence the existing local business too extremely.

This project recommends more outreach effort such as questionnaires and more meetings be held to different group in the planning process to avoid conflicts and to build more trust with the community. An additional study to predict the future intercity bus service's clientele change is recommended because this could influence the design and the operation of the terminal. If carefully planned and communicated, a more robust Madison can be expected. The terminal could provide residents, students, and visitors a safe, comfortable and environmental-friendly way of travel and create an additional place to enjoy downtown Madison. The city should also consider replacing or improving the Dutch Mill park-and-ride to attract different customers and could potentially serve as the intra-regional transit terminal if more bus routes from the suburb being developed. Madison Area should think big and eye on bigger picture by developing a fundamental way to alleviate the transportation issue to create a more livable region.

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APPENDIX 1: Questions to and Answers from David Trowbridge, Planner of the City of Madison.

A. Question about planning phase:

1. Which name does the city use? Intercity Bus Terminal or Intermodal Transit Center?
A: Either way, intercity bus terminal is more appropriate for the study.
2. Is there a clear timeline that the city will start planning and building the terminal? What are the other priorities the city has?
A: There is no clear timeline for the intercity bus terminal project. The city has no capacity to build the IBT for at least 4-5 years later and wouldn't expect anything opens for business at least 6 years from now. The city can possibly start planning after two parking structures done. The planning phase of the project can start early, but the staff doesn't have the capacity to do currently. The city will hire consultants for the project.
3. Does the city have good precedent studies of this project?
A: The Grand River Station in La Crosse, WI.

B. Questions about stakeholders and partners:

4. Does the Federal or the State provide funding or support to such projects?
A: State doesn't provide funding to this kind of project, but they support intercity bus company to provide services to smaller market cities such as La Crosse and Green Bay. Federal could possibly provide funding. Madison has used the TIGER (Transportation Infrastructure Generating Economic Recovery) grant on the Kimley-Horn's intermodal transit center report in 2014 and will use TIGER for constructing the bus maintenance facility of METRO.
5. How would the city reach out the students and citizens?
A: One data shows that students and the elderly use the intercity bus service the most. The city would work with the University of Wisconsin and the Madison Area Bus Advocates.
6. How does the intercity bus service operate in Madison?
A: The bus company currently parks on the street, the city could regulate their uses if they create dangerous environments around the area, but they can always find another curbside site for loading and off-loading. No precedent for regulating them.
7. Would the city reach out to other possible stakeholders (Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA), Madison Area Bus Advocates) and how important are their input?
A: DCRA sometimes is a competitor to intercity bus services, so the city doesn't reach out to them much on the project. The city values the input from the public and meets frequently with the Madison Area Bus Advocates.

C. Site Selection

8. What potential sites does the city currently has in mind?
A: Lake Street site is the only site currently in mind.
9. What key factors does the city consider?
A: Safety, traffic, accessibility, visibility, proximity to campus, and the connection with other modes of transportation (local bus, future BRT, bicycle).

D. Design

10. Talk a little bit about the old Badger Coach Bus Depot and how you wish the design of the future bus terminal should be?

A: The city likes the facility because it provided the simplest service which includes seating and ticketing. Badger Bus charged other intercity bus companies of the terminal then. As Online ticketing and curbside service getting more popular, the Badger Bus decided to sell the property and move the service to curbside. The future design of the IBT would have the bus to drive in the structure, so the bus rider would get on and off the bus in comfortable environment.

11. Can you tell me more about the TOD recommendation on Intercity bus prepared by Kimley-Horn in 2014? What services would it provide if it happened?

A: A developer had a proposal including bus services with housing and offices, but the property couldn't have underground since there's a giant electric line runs underneath. 15-foot clearance was required which made the developer to give up the idea. Furthermore, the city think the site was too small and hard to get circulation. The project need to be more profitable to attract private investment. Up front and maintenance are both should be considered. Lake Street site would be a better alternative, since it's much closer than the campus and to the students.

E. Future Plan

12. Will the city bring more regional intercity bus services to the area? Connecting the surrounding cities.

A: This would depend on the bus company.

13. How to integrate with BRT and commuting rail?

A: BRT routes are still an open question. The city is expecting to have growing congestion and density in the future which should the future traffic should be carefully planned. BRT will firstly extend to Sheboygan Ave. but eyeing on connection between west towne and east towne mall. The city can't see commuter rail coming because of the size of the city, BRT is a better fit.

F. Last Questions:

14. What other report I should read?

A: The Intermodal Transit Center Report prepared by Kimley-Horn.

15. Who else should I contact?

A: The Intercity Bus Company.

APPENDIX 2: Questions to and Answers from Susan De Vos, President of Madison Area Bus Advocates

A. Questions regarding Madison Area Bus Advocates:

1. What area is “Greater Madison” area mentioned in the strategic plan?
A: Places nearby and influenced by the City of Madison, but basically the Dane County.
2. How do you engage with the public?
A: The Madison Area Bus Advocates has monthly meeting. Susan thinks it’s hard to reach out to the city citizen. She connects to her own neighborhood, but doesn’t know if other board members do.

B. Current Situation:

3. Do you know who uses the intercity bus service in Madison?
A: Students, low income residents, the elderly who has difficulty drive at night. Current service provides mainly for the student, so if the terminal service improved, wider clientele can be expected.
4. How do you think about the current location?
A: The current environment is unsafe to the pedestrian and the bicyclist.

C. Future Intercity Bus Terminal:

5. What location do you prefer or think is feasible?
A: 1. Lake Street site is ok. But need to think about the future connection with train; 2. Johnson and 1st Street might be a good spot since the future public market will be near; 3. The U-Haul site.
6. Have you experienced the old intercity bus terminal (Badger Coach Depot)? How do you think about it? What additions you hope can be added?
A: There wasn’t enough parking on site.
7. How do you envision the intercity bus terminal in Madison?
A: The future IBT should have heating, seating spaces, vending machines, restrooms, lockers, and places for luggage.

D. Last Questions:

8. Do you have precedent studies for the project?
A: The intercity bus terminal in Champaign, IL.
9. Who else should I contact?
A: Other board members of Madison Area Bus Advocates and the Downtown Madison Inc.

APPENDIX 3: Questions to and answers from Allen Fugate, General Manager of Van Galder Bus Company.

A. Questions about current situation:

- 1. How did your company choose current stop (on Langdon Street across from the Memorial Union)? Did the stop need to get approved by the city? And does the city charge for curbside stops?**

A: Historically the location for buses had been on Langdon Street, on the North side of the street, opposite where they are now loading which is the South side of Langdon. Even when Badger owned their own terminal on Bedford Street, they still operated some of their UW-specific routes from Langdon Street. The location has changed recently due to construction activities on Langdon Street. For a while we were temporarily moved to University Avenue during the extent of the construction. These changes were under the direction of the City. The stops are selected in conjunction with City Administration, Engineering, and with input from UW, Metro Transit, and other stakeholders such as the intercity carriers and community members. The City does not charge for curbside stops.

- 2. What do you think are the most problematic issues of curbside stop?**

A: A curbside stop is only limited by the perception and expectations of the public using the service. Many communities have adopted and embraced the curbside locations as an efficient improvement over some of the dreary bus depots in some communities. Across the country, consumers are more interested in safe, reliable, low cost transportation. And across the country, customers have voted with their wallets loudly and clearly that they are more interested in saving a couple of bucks to ride a low-cost curbside bus operator over an operator that has expensive fixed terminal costs. A successful bus service needs to be convenient for customers, often near city centers, college campuses, or other intermodal connecting services. These locations can be cost prohibitive for a bus operator running only a few departures daily from a city. Most bus operations are operating on small margins. We are a capital and labor-intense service. Many customers consider bus service a commodity and are not willing to pay a few extra dollars for unneeded amenities. Today's bus passenger simply wants safe, reliable, and inexpensive transportation. Many of today's customers wish to avoid a dreary bus station, often located away from the heart of a city, and which are sometimes used as a "hangout" for people not necessarily waiting for a bus. I believe the challenge is matching the expectations of what is needed, with what can reasonably be provided. In other Cities, expectations of what is needed have changed with the more nimble and responsive bus carriers that serve the market. Some of the old models are no longer relevant.

The problems associated with the curbside stop are alleviated by technology in today's market. The Van Galder and Badger local services are extremely reliable and timely. There is no need for a waiting area because there is no advantage for a bus to dwell at a location. The buses are not allowed to idle, so ideally the bus pulls up at its scheduled time, loads, and promptly departs at the posted departure time. The longer distance carriers like Megabus offer an app that will show a bus' location, and even send an alert to the customer with a reservation if their bus is running off schedule. Passengers

are able to support the local businesses such as a coffee or convenience shop while waiting for the bus. If a customer has a short wait for a ride or connection to a local bus, then a bus shelter is appropriate for those short-term periods. We do not need huge facilities that most people will choose not to hang out in.

3. Who are your main customers?

A: The main customers of Van Galder are local community members, surrounding area community members participating in regional transportation, students, leisure travelers, business travelers, commuters, and intercity passengers.

4. What are the main purposes for the customers to use your service?

A: Some are regular commuters going to Janesville, Beloit, Rockford, or even Chicago on a weekly basis. Some customers use us to get to O'Hare or Midway airport for certain flight options possibly not available locally. Some customers are making connections with Amtrak in Chicago, which is a major hub for train connections nationwide. Some customers are value customers taking advantage of less expensive airfare, and some customers value the convenience of the frequent connections.

5. Is your company satisfied with your current on-time rate?

A: Van Galder and Megabus have extremely high on time performance, and strive to maintain the highest standard of on-time performance possible every day, within our control.

6. Is your company content with current ticketing? Online, on-board, and if other.

A: Van Galder is continually evaluating our systems for online ticketing to ensure the greatest convenience and simplicity for customers at the greatest value, given the fact that we operate from remote locations. We are currently looking at several options in fact, to improve our customer experience in this regard.

7. Has your company ever did customer satisfaction survey in Madison area on bus stop related topic? How did the public respond?

A: No such survey has been administered to my knowledge.

B. Questions about future bus terminal:

8. What kind of bus terminal would your company like to see? From a shelter to a mixed-use building.

A: We are content with a curbside location. In our opinion, an ideal location would have ample space for buses and other vehicles to pull up and safely load and unload passengers. There would be amenities nearby for the passenger convenience and a large volume of passengers would support many small businesses in the area. To be successful the location would need to be centrally located, with easy access for passengers and large buses to navigate.

9. How much will your company willing to pay for the terminal service?

A: In many cities we operate, the community appreciates the access to a cost-effective transportation option for residents. A community can tout the connectivity to other cities in the region. Many communities are asking us to consider serving their community. We

bring a high value connection to a community. Any fees charged to an operator should be commensurate to the value of the services provided by the municipality. If the operator is merely pulling up to a curb in a city, no fee would be imposed. Any fees that were imposed to the bus operator would have to be absorbed in the fares charged, which could make the service not viable. The intercity bus market demand is extremely elastic. When fares increase, ridership is directly affected negatively. Some of our fares are as low as \$5.00. How much can we impose a fee on that or even a \$30 bus ticket to support the infrastructure, staffing, and maintenance of a bus terminal? Van Galder would not be interested in a bus terminal if it meant that we would be required to pay for a terminal. We are not demanding such a facility. Outside of a few people demanding a bus terminal, (who we don't know if they are even bus customers in reality) our average customers are content keeping fares reasonable and the service convenient over an expensive facility. If a government entity wants to build a facility for the public good, then that is something that will have to be subsidized by non users of the facility.

10. Are there any other concerns you have regarding the bus terminal?

A: Our greatest concern is access. In other words, who will control the access? When we need to add extra buses to our service in order to accommodate a high volume of ridership, I need to freely be able to take care of my customers. If I have to be granted permission by a public authority, or an outside contractor that is hired to run the facility, in order to add extra service, then I am divulging potentially sensitive, competitive, or proprietary information that could be detrimental to my business. As a private for-profit business, why would I want to make my ridership data available to my competitor? He will run buses five minutes ahead of me if given the data. I also cannot put myself in a position to be denied access to a facility, and unable to serve my customers.

C. Last questions:

11. Will your company expand services to other cities or increase frequency to current routes?

A: Yes, we are continually evaluating opportunities and looking for ways to grow our business.

APPENDIX 4: Questions to and Answers from Ian Ritz, Chief of Transit Section, Wisconsin Department of Transportation

1. What is the State's attitude toward intercity bus service? Will the State provide financial or planning support for infrastructure such as the intercity bus terminal in Madison?
A: The state has an intercity bus program statute (Wis. Stats. § 85.26) that instructs WisDOT to "...develop and administer an intercity bus assistance program to increase the availability of intercity bus service in this state." The state currently invests over \$2 million in federal funds annually to support intercity bus operations throughout Wisconsin. Currently, our priority is to support operational projects over capital projects. WisDOT also has a transit planning program that makes funds available for various planning projects such as feasibility studies, transit development plans and other activities.
2. Intra-regional bus services such as Sun Prairie to Madison, Stoughton to Madison, or Oregon to Madison is one of the elements I am studying which can possibly incorporated with the future intercity bus terminal. My question is: to deal with peak-hour traffic, how will the State do? Will you seek this kind of transit to alleviate congestion issue?
A: The type of service you describe would be considered more commuter service rather than intercity bus service. Intercity tends to be longer distances to connect individuals to broader regional and national transportation networks. Commuter service would be a local level decision and WisDOT would have limited involvement in service planning of these routes, schedules or fares.
3. I've talked with Allen Fugate who is the general manager of Van Galder bus company. He stated their position clearly is hoping to remain curbside services and not willing to pay fee for the future terminal service. How can State do to help with the cost issue the bus company concerns?
A: Whether an intercity bus operator chooses to pay fees to access a bus terminal or provide curbside service is not under the purview of WisDOT. Under existing statutes, neither a city nor the state can compel an intercity operator to utilize a terminal. In addition, the state would have limited involvement from an ongoing cost perspective.
4. Susan De Vos, the president of Madison Area Bus Advocates, visions the possibility of integration of the local bus, intercity bus, and rail service. She hopes the city can plan for the future and find a location for the possible multimodal terminal. In the future, is it possible for the State to bring in intercity passenger rail service to Madison?
A: There are many possibilities related to intercity passenger and unfortunately, I am not in a position to predict what any outcome may be.
5. Do you support the intercity bus terminal? Where do you think the terminal should be located? Safety, congestion, and service issue are the three main issues I identified from the current bus stop. What else do you think is important?
A: I have no comment about the specific location of an intercity bus terminal in Madison. It is a local decision for Madison to determine where a terminal may be located. More

generally, it would be important for the project to be cost effective and the terminal to be convenient and accessible both for passengers and other modes of transportation (e.g. local bus, bike / pedestrian, etc.).