

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
COMBINED TECHNICAL AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, July 19, 2023
Rapid Central Station Conference Room
250 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503**

Naramore, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the July 19, 2023 meeting to order at 9:30 am. Those present introduced themselves to the Committee.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Sue Becker		Alpine Township
Kristin Bennett		City of Grand Rapids
Mark Bennett		Tallmadge Charter Township
Tim Bradshaw		Caledonia Charter Township
Scott Conners		City of Walker
Dennis Durham		City of Grandville
Karyn Ferrick		City of Grand Rapids
Shay Gallagher		City of Kentwood
Francisco Garcia		Ottawa County Road Commission
Lisa Golder		City of Kentwood
Wayne Harrall		Grand Rapids Charter Township
Brian Hilbrands	<i>Proxy for John Said</i>	Cascade Charter Township
		Ada Township
Dennis Kent	<i>Proxy for Mike Burns</i>	MDOT
		City of Lowell
Jim Kirkwood		City of Kentwood
Doug LaFave		City of East Grand Rapids
Greg Madura		Alpine Township
Robert Miller		City of Hudsonville
Josh Naramore, <i>Chair</i>		City of Grand Rapids
Clint Nemeth		GRFIA
Terry Schweitzer		City of Kentwood
Rick Sprague	<i>Proxy for Kris Pachla</i>	Kent County Road Commission
		Kent County
Justin Stadt		Georgetown Charter Township
Julius Suchy		Ada Township
Jeff Thornton		Village of Caledonia
Cameron Van Wyngarden, <i>Vice Chair</i>		Plainfield Charter Township
Luke Walters	<i>Proxy for Jeff Franklin</i>	MDOT
		MDOT
Steve Warren		Kent County Road Commission
Rod Weersing		Gaines Charter Township
Kevin Wisselink		The Rapid

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Paige Brodeur
Clover Brown
Andrea Faber
Romeo Ferrer
Mara Gericke
Dru Hajec
Tyler Kent
Peter Kimball
Tim Mroz
George Yang
Mike Zonyk

MDOT
GVMC
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MDOT
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The Right Place
GVMC
GVMC

Voting Members Not Present

Thad Beard
Terry Brod
Mike Burns
Michael DeVries
Rick DeVries
Adam Elenbaas
Jeff Franklin
Kevin Green
Tim Haagsma
Jerry Hale
Bryan Harrison
Russ Henckel
Nicole Hofert
Bill LaRose
Brett Laughlin
Matt McConnon
Tom Noreen
Kris Pachla
Rob Postema
Casey Ries
John Said
Darrel Schmalzel
Dean Smith
Rick Solle
Dan Strikwerda
Charles Sundblad
Don Tillema
Phil Vincent
Blaine Wing
Mike Womack
Member Awaiting Appointment
Member Awaiting Appointment

City of Rockford
Cannon Township
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Charter Township
City of Grand Rapids
Allendale Charter Township
MDOT
Algoma Township
Gaines Charter Township
Lowell Charter Township
Caledonia Charter Township
City of Wyoming
City of Wyoming
City of Cedar Springs
Ottawa County Road Commission
Courtland Township
Nelson Township
Kent County
City of Wyoming
GRIA
Ada Township
City of Walker
Jamestown Charter Township
Plainfield Charter Township
City of Hudsonville
City of Grandville
Byron Township
City of Rockford
Village of Sparta
City of Cedar Springs
Ottawa County
Village of Sand Lake

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action will be deferred until the Technical and Policy Committees meet individually.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

IV. TIP AMENDMENTS

Referring to Item IV: Attachment A, Zonyk introduced the amendments to the FY2023-2026 TIP that were described in the agenda package. They are as follows:

MDOT

MDOT is requesting approval for the addition of a 2023 project that will include enhanced wrong-way detection and warning devices, as well as other projects on the S/TIP exempt list.

- D. Kent added that MDOT received a grant for wrong-way driver detection and warning devices. These warning signs and lights will be installed on interchanges and ramps on US-131 between M-11 and Ann Street. This ended up not being an amendment, but part of the traffic safety general program account. MDOT is combining the grant money received with internal funds. D. Kent noted that wrong-way crashes are often serious crashes that do not end well, and MDOT is trying to figure out why these crashes are increasing.
- D. Kent added that another project on the S/TIP exempt list is signal upgrades on M-37 between 68th and 52nd Street. He added that for FY2024, there is a joint repair project on US-131 between M-11 and Pearl Street, and work on the Plaster Creek bridge which will result in short closures along US-131 next year.

Kent County

Two sidewalk projects are being added on behalf of Kent County following their navigation through the MGS process. These are TMA funded projects previously recommended by the Nonmotorized and TPSG committees. These additions have triggered the need for an amendment to the 2025 Local Livability and Sustainability GPA.

City of Lowell

The City of Lowell has a year change and grant funding additions for their River Valley Rail connection requiring an amendment needing committee approval.

City of Grand Rapids

Based on the most recent engineer's estimates, the City of Grand Rapids is requesting budget changes on two of their 2023 regional TAP projects, one of which has triggered a federal amendment to the FY2023 Local Livability and Sustainability GPA.

The Rapid

The Rapid has been awarded a discretionary Low or No Emission award for the purchase of replacement 40-foot Compressed Natural Gas vehicles and is requesting to add the project to the TIP in FY2023.

Wisselink added that this past spring, The Rapid applied for the 5339(c) discretionary grant for \$7,746,475 to purchase 11 CNG buses. These CNG buses will be run with compressed natural gas from the City of Grand Rapids' biodigester.

City of Walker

Using the regional emergency amendment policy, allowing Tech and Policy Committee chair/vice-chair approval and a week-long public review period for urgent project amendments that do not impact any other TIP projects, the City of Walker's Bristol Street bridge project was submitted for federal approval on July 13 following budget changes that increased the total project budget by more than 25%. No change to the amount of federal funding was requested. This was expedited due to the potential of losing obligation authority in the context of previous complications with losing Covid relief funds.

Conners added that after MDOT jumped in to replace the Covid funds, the City of Walker discovered that their estimate was higher, which increased the overall cost. This is just to increase the overall cost and does not change the funding.

MOTION by Madura, SUPPORT by Suchy, to approve the TIP amendments requested by MDOT, Kent County, the City of Lowell, the City of Grand Rapids, The Rapid, and the City of Walker. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. 2050 MTP NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES ANALYSIS

Referring to Item V: Attachment A, Faber introduced the discussion of the 2050 MTP needs and deficiencies analysis.

As part of the 2050 MTP development process, GVMC staff has completed a series of needs analyses for air travel, freight movement, nonmotorized, passenger rail, pavement condition, traffic congestion, transit, and safety.

To determine current and future transportation needs by mode, GVMC considered public comment, input from stakeholders and Committees representing various transportation modes, and performance measure targets the Committee previously supported. Once approved, these analyses will be the basis for proposing solutions to meet the current and forecasted transportation needs by mode for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

To enhance public participation, GVMC launched a bingo game that asked the public to participate in a variety of transportation-related activities to earn a bingo.

The game ends with the participants submitting their bingo card with a comment that compares their experience with the transportation system to the results of GVMC's needs analysis. The bingo game, along with the public comment opportunity for the needs analysis, launched on June 15. Both will conclude on July 12. All participants will receive a summer fun safety kit from GVMC, and larger prizes will be awarded through a drawing. At the time the agenda packet was sent out, GVMC had received 13 bingo cards and 13 comments on the needs analysis. Since then, GVMC has received another bingo and 2 additional comments. Faber distributed one comment to the committee and shared another verbally. Staff is evaluating the feedback received and will address comments as applicable in the MTP and include them in the document's appendix.

Staff is requesting approval of the needs analysis which will allow staff to move forward with the next phases of MTP development. Next steps include selecting preferred alternatives to address current and projected system needs and deficiencies and creating a financially constrained project list.

Faber thanked the Committees for their support and for sharing the bingo game with the public. GVMC received more public comments this time than for the previous MTP needs analysis. Not only was there an increase in participation, but GVMC also received many thoughtful comments from the public.

MOTION by Thornton, SUPPORT by Van Wyngarden, to approve GVMC's modal needs analysis. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

K. Bennett asked what the timeline is with the next steps for the MTP. Faber answered that the next step is to conduct the financial analysis. Faber will be contacting everyone about financials via email within the next few weeks. The financial analysis will then be compared to the needs analysis to determine shortfalls. Then the MTP steering committee will meet, and priorities will be discussed. GVMC is looking to have the 2050 MTP completed by June 2024.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

- MDOT Updates

D. Kent noted that MDOT has a few ongoing long-term projects. One is the M-37 project from 92nd to 76th Street. MDOT is still working through the environmental assessment and the resource analysis for this project. There is also a public involvement plan that is currently being reviewed by MDOT internally. The goal is to have the project under construction in late 2024.

T. Kent added that MDOT is working with Conners on the Fruitridge interchange access change request. MDOT is also working on a Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) grant application. This grant will be for replacing the pump station at 28th Street and Division Ave. because the current pump station is approaching its lifespan. MDOT

may reach out to communities for letters of support for the pump station, road reconstruction, or road drainage projects associated with replacing the pump station.

Walters gave an update on obligation authority. As of mid-last week, roughly 90% of obligation authority had been used for the year. Currently, 20 of the 36 local projects have been obligated. Walters reminded the Committees to get their projects obligated as soon as possible, and if the obligation authority runs out to continue to submit projects. MDOT is expecting to receive an August redistribution, which will be given on a first come first served basis.

- SS4A Action Planning Grant Update

Faber announced that GVMC has received and signed the final grant agreement from FHWA for the Safe Streets for All grant and are waiting for the fully executed copy. Staff is working on drafting the request for proposals to hire a consultant to help develop the action plan. This planning effort will be led by the Safety Committee. Staff will likely send the draft RFP to the entire Safety Committee for feedback and then look to form a smaller subcommittee to assist in proposal evaluation. Staff plans to advertise this prior to the end of the summer, so that selection and work can begin as soon as possible around the start of the next fiscal year. Faber asked if the Committees had any feedback on this plan.

K. Bennett asked what the budget is for the plan. Faber noted she believes it was \$240,000, and then Joseph would like to look at adding additional funding to that budget. Naramore added that the City of Grand Rapids would bridge a small gap if needed and emphasized the benefit of a regional application for this plan.

Harrall asked what the timing is for the plan. Faber answered that the majority of the work will take place in FY2024. Naramore added that Joseph planned to ask FHWA how much of the process needs to be completed before jurisdictions can begin applying for the grants.

- Updated FY2024 Funding Estimates

Faber noted that GVMC has received updated funding estimates for FY2024. A few programs went down slightly, but there was a net gain of funding of about \$494,000. Currently, the majority of projects programmed with STP-Urban funding have a federal share of about 70% and it would take more than the \$494,000 available to get projects to 80% federal. Staff will set up a TSPG Subcommittee meeting in August to discuss programming recommendations, which could include proportionally increasing the federal share on underfunded STP-Urban projects across the board, moving a project or projects from the Illustrative list into the TIP with this funding, etc. Then these recommendations will be brought through the Committees at the September meetings. Faber asked if the Committees had any

inclination of the direction they would prefer so that staff can prepare meeting materials and information accordingly.

Faber added that the August Technical and Policy Committee meetings will most likely be cancelled, but TPSG will meet. Then the Technical and Policy Committees will meet in September.

- Harrall announced that the September Policy Committee meeting will be Steve Warren's last Policy meeting. Harrall reached out to Joseph and this meeting will be held at the new Kent County Road Commission building. KCRC will be fully moved into this new building by the end of the first week of August.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Naramore adjourned the July 19, 2023, combined Technical and Policy Committee meeting at 9:56 a.m.