

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, May 17, 2023
Rapid Central Station Conference Room
250 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503**

Van Wyngarden, Vice Chair of the Policy Committee, called the May 17, 2023 meeting to order at 9:37 am. Those present introduced themselves to the Committee.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Mark Bennett
Karyn Ferrick
Jeff Franklin
Francisco Garcia
Lisa Golder
Dennis Kent

*Proxy for
Mike Burns and
Casey Ries*

Greg Madura
Darrel Schmalzel
Terry Schweitzer
Rick Sprague

*Proxy for
Michael DeVries*

Justin Stadt
Kris Pachla
Cameron Van Wyngarden, *Vice Chair*
Steve Warren
Kevin Wisselink

Tallmadge Charter Township
City of Grand Rapids
MDOT
Ottawa County Road Commission
City of Kentwood
MDOT
City of Lowell
GRFIA
Alpine Township
City of Walker
City of Kentwood
Kent County Road Commission
Grand Rapids Charter Township
Georgetown Charter Township
Kent County
Plainfield Charter Township
Kent County Road Commission
The Rapid

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Scott Alsgaard
Clover Brown
Paige Brodeur
Andrea Faber
Romeo Ferrer
Mara Gericke
Dru Hajec
Laurel Joseph
Peter Kimball
Tim Mroz
George Yang
Mike Zonyk

Hope Network
GVMC
MDOT
GVMC
GVMC
GVMC
GVMC
GVMC
GVMC
GVMC
The Right Place
GVMC
GVMC

Voting Members Not Present

Thad Beard
Terry Brod

City of Rockford
Cannon Township

Mike Burns
 Michael DeVries
 Dennis Durham
 Adam Elenbaas
 Kevin Green
 Jerry Hale
 Bryan Harrison
 Doug LaFave
 Matt McConnon
 Josh Naramore
 Tom Noreen
 Rob Postema
 Casey Ries
 Dean Smith
 Dan Strikwerda
 Julius Suchy
 Ben Swayze
 Jeff Thornton
 Don Tillema
 Rod Weersing
 Blaine Wing
 Mike Womack
 Member Awaiting Appointment
 Member Awaiting Appointment

City of Lowell
 Grand Rapids Charter Township
 City of Grandville
 Allendale Charter Township
 Algoma Township
 Lowell Charter Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 City of East Grand Rapids
 Courtland Township
 City of Grand Rapids
 Nelson Township
 City of Wyoming
 GRFIA
 Jamestown Charter Township
 City of Hudsonville
 Ada Township
 Cascade Charter Township
 Village of Caledonia
 Byron Township
 Gaines Charter Township
 Village of Sparta
 City of Cedar Springs
 Ottawa County
 Village of Sand Lake

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Referring to Item II: Attachment A, D. Kent noted corrections (bolded below) to the March 15, 2023 Policy Committee minutes in the VIII. Other Business section under MDOT updates:

- o “D. Kent provided updates to the US-131 Planning **and** Environmental Linkages (**PEL**) study. The **Local** Advisory Committee meeting for this is scheduled for March 24, and will meet again in April.”

Van Wyngarden entertained the following motion:

MOTION by Schmalzel, SUPPORT by Madura, to approve the Technical and Policy Committee minutes dated December 7, 2022 as presented and the Policy Committee minutes dated March 15, 2023 as corrected. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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 five S/TIP line items. The line item amendments are due to added phases, added cost, and a change in fiscal year.

- The Fruit Ridge over I-96 bridge replacement project is being reactivated.
- The region wide traffic safety project is being abandoned due to added cost.
- The M-6/Holstege wetland mitigation project budget has increased over 25 percent, and MDOT has added culverts and PE phase funds.
- The US-131 reconstruction project has had a budget increase and a length reduction.
- The Leonard Street project is being delayed to a future S/TIP cycle to balance the budget in the current S/TIP.

D. Kent added that the US-131 project is a large, statewide project that is part of the Rebuilding Michigan program. This project reflects the current cost and the modified limits to meet those costs.

D. Kent also noted that on the S/TIP Exempt List, the US-131 project replacing joints from 28th Street to Pearl Street that was originally a FY2025 project has now been moved to FY2024. The Plaster Creek Bridge project south of Burton Street has discovered issues and this project has also been moved to FY2024. The bridge issue will be corrected; however, there will be full lane closures as it stands currently.

City of Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids is taking advantage of the federal buyout program for their Fuller Ave. from Kalamazoo Street to Adams Street reconstruction project, resulting in the construction phase being abandoned.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by M. Bennett, to approve the TIP amendments requested by MDOT and the City of Grand Rapids. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. FY2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT (UPWP)

Referring to Item V: Attachment A, Joseph introduced the amendment to the FY2023 UPWP.

Joseph stated that staff is requesting to amend the FY2023 UPWP to add budget and work activities for a Kent County Area Mobility Study. This project was

proposed by Kent County with their Mobility Task Force, and MDOT requested that GVMC be the grantee administering the project. This study will aim to evaluate mobility options, needs, and solutions for folks in the region, but will be informed by and coordinate with other regional mobility planning efforts such as GVMC's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan and The Rapid's Transit Master Plan (TMP). Work for this study is expected to begin in the fall of this year, but the study has to be included in the FY2023 work program because the grant is FY2023 funding. The Mobility Study will not change anyone else's funding or any other tasks in the work program. This Mobility Study will be funded through a Service Development New Technology grant awarded through MDOT's Office of Passenger Transport, which is funded with FTA Section 5304 funds and state match. The total budget for this project is \$402,500. No additional local match is required.

Madura asked if this study would have to do with disability mobility, such as the Go!Bus. Pachla answered that the study will be a comprehensive needs analysis and an existing resources analysis. Joseph added that since GVMC is now the grant holder, they are focused on making sure that this effort is informed by and coordinated with both the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan and The Rapid's Transit Master Plan (TMP) to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

Schweitzer offered support for the Kent County Area Mobility Study and stated that he believes this is an important study for Kent County.

Joseph stated that if the Policy Committee recommends approval of these amendments, the amended draft will go before the Executive Committee and GVMC Board for final approval.

MOTION by Pachla, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to recommend approval of the FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. FY2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Referring to Item VI: Attachment A, Joseph introduced the discussion on the work activities for the FY2024 UPWP.

The FY2024 UPWP will contain many similar planning tasks as the FY2023 UPWP, but new work items in FY2024 include the development of a Regional Safety Action Plan utilizing SS4A grant funds awarded to GVMC and staff work on supplemental safety action planning activities using STP funds set aside for planning tasks. A task area has also been added to accommodate staff time needed to implement strategies that will come out of the Transportation Demand Management Plan, and a task under Technical Assistance was added for GVMC to assist/coordinate where appropriate on steps toward implementation of the Airport Access Study recommendations. Additionally, staff will utilize the required 2.5% PL set-aside for Safe and Accessible Options to work with partners on regional complete streets policy, guidance, and tools.

Wisselink added that any recommendations that come out of the Transit Master Plan will be ongoing.

MOTION by Madura, SUPPORT by Wisselink, to recommend approval of the FY2024 Unified Planning Work Program. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. PAVEMENT, BRIDGE, AND RELIABILITY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Referring to Item VII: Attachment A, Joseph presented the MDOT performance targets for the federal Pavement, Bridge, and Reliability System Performance Measures. Unlike the safety performance targets, targets for these measures are not approved on a yearly basis.

The final rules for the Pavement, Bridge, and Reliability System Performance Measure Targets became effective on May 20, 2017, with the bridge performance targets updated and approved by the Committees in 2020 based on a mid-performance period review and adjustment.

Because the first performance period has been completed, GVMC must set targets again, with the deadline for approval on June 14th, 2023. Joseph noted that GVMC has been involved in target coordination meetings and working groups throughout the development process and that the newsletters included in the meeting packet outline the data the state uses to set these targets.

GVMC staff recommends that the Policy Committee take action to support the state targets for Pavement, Bridge, and Reliability Performance Measures for this reporting period.

Schweitzer asked if the Technical Committee recommended the support of the state targets. Joseph confirmed that they did recommend supporting state targets at their May 3 meeting.

MOTION by Ferrick, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to support the Pavement, Bridge, and Reliability Performance Measure state targets. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VIII. AIRPORT ACCESS STUDY FINAL REPORT

Referring to Item VIII: Attachment A, Joseph presented the Airport Access Study Final Report. The study has been going on for over a year, with several rounds of engagement, surveys, and open houses taking place during that time. At this point, it has gone through multiple rounds of alternatives analysis with a large amount of feedback and input from the public and stakeholders, which was critical.

Joseph presented the “Preferred Projects” list that came through the study process. All listed projects require more study, engineering, design, funding, etc. before they would be ready for implementation. Project details are included in the report.

While the document does not require formal committee approval, staff asked for recommendation of acceptance and acknowledgement of the study results to document regional support of the study.

Joseph thanked all involved, including the TAC, consultant team, and the committees.

Warren noted that the effort to improve access to the airport has a long history dating back to the 1990's. Kent County Road Commission was a "champion" for the effort back then, and Warren added he thinks there needs to be a follow up with the stakeholders to identify who the next "champion" is for this project to take it to the next level. He would encourage a motion to not only support or adopt the study, but to also request staff to possibly assemble the stakeholders in order to see where to go from here. With the new federal authorization bill and potential funding, it would be something to pursue. He added that the airport authority is key in this effort.

Joseph added that Ries from GRFIA couldn't be at the meeting today, but he did express support and thanked the group.

Madura asked how Cascade Township fit into this effort. Joseph noted that Cascade Township has been involved since the beginning of the study. Staff went to a Cascade Township Board meeting and held a well-attended open house in Cascade Township. Joseph added that it seemed the township's main concern was the potential interchanges along M-6, but none of those options are in the preferred projects list.

D. Kent added that he thinks there was initially a lack of understanding about the process, which is understandable. There was the expectation that the results of the Airport Access Study would be implemented next year, which is not the case. There are still steps that need to occur, and once that was understood, it appeared everyone was more comfortable with the study. Joseph agreed that there was initial confusion, but communicating more about the process helped.

Madura asked if in the future the M-6 proposed solutions were to come back into the picture, would property then have to be bought back if development had already happened. Joseph noted that her understanding is that previously the Township's land use plans did designate future land use as industrial, but recently those priorities have changed and they want to have that land be preserved as agriculture and green space.

D. Kent added that MDOT owns a fair amount of property along M-6 and 48th street, but the focus right now is on preserving what they have. He added that for advanced acquisition, MDOT does not typically buy property until there is a committed project and funding for it, which at this point there is not either.

Schweitzer added that it is important that planning for access to the airport is incorporated into the master plans of the various communities surrounding the airport and noted that Cascade will be key in this in terms of preferred alternatives.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Pachla, to accept the results of the Airport Access Study Final Report. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- GVMC
 - Joseph introduced GVMC's two new summer interns, Romeo Ferrer and Dru Hajec.
 - Joseph reminded the Committee that GVMC is in the process of updating the MTP and announced a new public involvement exercise related to the needs analysis, which is a MTP bingo game.
 - Joseph reminded the Committee that there are two subcommittee meetings happening next week – Safety and Non-Motorized.
 - Joseph noted that Golder, Sprague, Haagsma, a representative from the Kent County Health Department, and herself attended the Walkability Action Institute last week. One thing they must do is find good and challenging things related to walkability in the region. Joseph asked if the Committee has specific examples that they would like to be reviewed, to let her know.
- MDOT Updates
 - D. Kent noted that the US-131 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study is continuing and there will be an in-person survey of the public in June or July. MDOT has funding from the state to continue design impact assessment around the Wealthy Street interchange.
 - D. Kent gave updates on the M-37 environmental assessment for the Caledonia project. MDOT has received a letter of initiation from the FHWA and they are continuing work on it.
- Schweitzer added that since the implementation of the MDOT safety service vehicle, he has personally seen it several times and thinks it is a great service, and he thanked MDOT and the Committee for their efforts on this.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Van Wyngarden adjourned the May 17, 2023, Policy Committee meeting at 10:13 a.m.