

MINUTES

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, January 7, 2009
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI

Warren, chair of the Technical Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:34 am. He asked the Committee members to go around the table and introduce themselves.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Steve Warren (<i>Chair</i>)	<i>Proxy for</i>	Kent County Road Commission
	<i>Tim Haagsma</i>	Gaines Charter Township
	<i>Wayne Harrall</i>	Kent County
	<i>Bob Homan</i>	Plainfield Township
Jerry Alkema		Allendale Township
Alex Arends		Alpine Township
Patrick Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Ron Carr		City of Grandville
Timothy Cochran		City of Wyoming
Scott Connors	<i>(Vice Chair)</i>	City of Walker
Sandra M. Cornell-Howe		MDOT
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Roy Hawkins		GRFIA
Russ Henckel	<i>Proxy for</i>	City of Wyoming
	<i>Bill Dooley</i>	City of Wyoming
Jim Holtrop		Ottawa County
Brett Laughlin		OCRC
D. Dale Mohr		Georgetown Township
Terry Schweitzer		City of Kentwood

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Roger Belknap	Kent County Road Commission
Mike Brameijer	GVMC Staff
Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Sarah Koepke	FHWA
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	WMEAC-RWBC
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff

APPROVED

George Yang
Mike Zonyk

Voting Members Not Present

Sandra Ayers
Mike Berrevoets
Mike Bouwkamp
Dick Davies
Sharon DeLange
Dan DesJarden
Mike DeVries
Bill Dooley
Steve Groenenboom
Tim Haagsma
Wayne Harrall
Dennis Hoemke
Bob Homan
Jim McIntyre
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Steve Peterson
Dan Strikwerda
Toby VanEss
Conrad Venema

**APPROVED
Item II: Attachment A**

GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff

Village of Caledonia
City of Cedar Springs
City of Rockford
Cannon Township
Village of Sparta
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Township
City of Wyoming
Ada Township
Gaines Charter Township
Kent County
Algoma Township
Plainfield Township
Courtland Township
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Cascade Charter Township
City of Hudsonville
Tallmadge Township
The Rapid

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Warren entertained a motion to approve the November 5, 2008 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Carr, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to approve the November 5, 2008 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma said that he read an article in National Geographic that discussed a new program whereby people would receive a \$20 per month allowance for riding their bikes to work and asked if the committee had any additional information about this. Dewey responded that this \$20 allowance was a tax credit proposed by a congressman from Oregon and that it is not yet law.

IV. NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL CLASS SYSTEM AMENDMENT

Speaking on **Item IV, Attachment A**, Belknap informed the Committee that the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) was seeking to upgrade the current functional classification of Belmont Avenue from an Urban Local Road to an Urban Collector on the segment between Post Drive and Jupiter Avenue. This segment was once classified as an Urban Minor Arterial prior to the construction of Jupiter Avenue. In 2000, the minor arterial designation was changed to Jupiter Avenue. Since that time, traffic volumes on

Belmont have increased steadily. Belknap provided data and justification, including land use patterns and traffic counts, detailing why Belmont needed to be added on the Functional Classification System as an Urban Collector in order to be eligible for federal funds. Itani added that the traffic volume on this stretch of road is between 7,000 and 8,000 vehicles per day. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Warren entertained a motion to upgrade the current functional classification of Belmont Avenue as identified by KCRC staff.

MOTION by Laughlin, SUPPORT by Conners, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval to upgrade the current functional classification of Belmont Avenue from an Urban Local Road to an Urban Collector on the segment between Post Drive and Jupiter Avenue. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. **FY2008-2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS**

Speaking on **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee of two requests to amend the TIP for FY2009, FY2010, and FY2011. The first request, from the Kent County Road Commission, was to change the phasing of their 4 Mile project currently located in FY2010 and FY2011 in the TIP. The project will now be implemented in two phases instead of three, and the cost will increase from approximately \$3,200,000 to \$4,000,000. Discussion ensued.

Itani stated that the TIP could not be amended unless the KCRC could determine where the additional \$800,000 would come from. Warren responded that he was not requesting additional federal funding at this time, and that the additional \$800,000 would be provided through a local match. Koepke asked if the developer was going to provide any additional funding for the project. Warren responded that they have an agreement with the developer that they would cover part of the local match.

Itani asked if there was a date-specific deadline whereby if Cabela's did not commit to coming to Walker, the project would be dropped. Warren said that there was not a deadline, but that if the project isn't moving forward come FY2010 or FY2011, the dollars set aside for the project may be better spent elsewhere. At this point, however, he is still confident that the project will happen. Conners added that the project appeared to be moving forward, as the City of Walker was continuing to receive phone calls from fire protection engineers from Cabela's who are working on the project. Discussion ensued.

Warren entertained a motion to amend the FY2010 and FY2011 TIP to include the KCRC request identified by Staff.

MOTION by Schweitzer, SUPPORT by Carr, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of amending the FY2010 and FY2011 TIP to change the phasing of the KCRC's 4 Mile project and increase the funding from \$3,200,000 to \$4,000,000, keeping the federal funding at the same level, with the additional \$800,000 to be funded by a local match. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Robinson continued, explaining the second request, from the City of Lowell, to amend the FY2009 TIP to include a Federal Safe Routes to School program project. The project is located on Gee Drive from Creekside Park to Alden Nash and will include the

construction of a 10' wide path. The grant total is \$269,700. Lowell is the only entity in the area to receive funding through this program.

Warren entertained a motion to amend the FY2009 TIP to include the City of Lowell's request, as identified by Staff.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Cochran, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of amending the FY2009 TIP to include the construction of a 10' wide path on Gee Drive from Creekside Park to Alden Nash that is to be funded through a \$269,700 grant through the Federal Safe Routes to School program. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Itani stated that he had recently learned from MDOT that GVMC had made a clerical error for one of the City of East Grand Rapids' projects. This project was an advance-construct project, and the conversion part was to take place in FY2009. However, the project was listed in FY2008 for conversion. The City has submitted all of the appropriate conversion paperwork; however, the funding was not there. The total project cost was \$90,000. Approximately \$61,000 of this amount was federal funding. Since there was only a \$22,000 balance in the FY2009 TIP to cover the project, Itani agreed to deobligate the congestion management part of the planning study, which has a total cost of 75,000 of which 63,000 is federal funding, to cover the \$60,000 for East Grand Rapids. Itani stated that he will be able to use previously obligated unspent funding so that the congestion management program will not be impacted. He needed to amend the FY2009 TIP to reflect this. Cornell-Howe clarified that a motion would need to move the City of East Grand Rapids project from FY2008 to FY2009 and delete the planning part of the Congestion Management Study in 2009. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Warren entertained a motion to amend the FY2009 TIP to include the items identified by Staff.

MOTION by Conners, SUPPORT by Bush, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of amending the TIP to include moving the City of East Grand Rapids' project from FY2008 to FY2009 and deleting the Congestion Management Study in FY2009. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A** and a handout, Snell updated the Committee on the status of the Pavement Management System. He stated that this past year, using the Pavement Condition Assessment Van, Staff covered 1,576 miles of the federal aid system and determined the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for each segment of federal aid eligible roadway in the study area. On average, the system condition improved slightly over a year ago. However, while it has improved, the system itself is still sliding, which is a direct reflection on current funding levels. There were some technical difficulties in completing the local system. Snell is currently working with REGIS to get the data out. Itani added that the Pavement Condition Assessment Van is headed to Florida for repair. Snell asked the Committee if they had a preference as to when they want their road surveys to be done. Carr responded that time of year didn't matter so much as the data being collected in a consistent manner from year to year. Discussion,

comments and questions ensued.

VII. INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS)

Snell continued, speaking on **Item VII: Attachment A** and a handout. He informed the committee on the status of ITS deployment in the area, stating that in the last federal transportation bill, the region received a little over \$10 million to expand ITS deployment. Actual expansion of ITS in the area will begin in spring of 2009 with completion by the fall of 2010. Highlights of this expansion include the installation of 5 additional dynamic message signs, and instrumentation of several major arterial corridors including 28th, 44th, Division, Kalamazoo, and Alpine Avenues. The expansion in conjunction with another project planned in 2010 by MDOT will complete the instrumentation of all the area's freeways with the exception of M-6. The project will also improve and maximize the efficiency of how the ITS elements communicate by installing several miles of new fiber optic communications cable to make the transfer of additional video to the traffic control centers at MDOT and the City of Grand Rapids. For the first time, the system will track specific speeds and monitor sudden changes that may indicate a problem.

The project also represents a unique partnership between local road agencies, MDOT, the Kent Intermediate School District (KISD), Kent County, and potentially GVSU, Davenport, and GRCC. The Kalamazoo Avenue corridor in Kentwood will be using communications fiber owned by the Kentwood School district. Through a regional agreement with KISD, school districts will be able to "hop on" the regional transportation ITS network and share school information with KISD. As the system matures other school districts will also be allowed to join. The partnership will allow everyone to share in the cost of development and maintenance of the core communications system in the region. Security measures have been designed into the project to assure the data carried on the system remains secure.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani updated the Committee about the status of the proposed stimulus package. He stated that there are many unknowns about the stimulus package at this time, but that it appears that the package will be for FY2009 and FY2010. Itani had heard that the stimulus money will go to the state, and the state will decide how the money is going to be spent. Cochran asked about local matches, and Itani responded that the stimulus package is expected to be 100% federally funded. Koepke added that the bill will be passed in February or March, and all anybody can do is speculate until that time.

Itani asked the Committee members to develop a list of projects that were important to them and to forward that list to Grand Valley Metro Council. He asked for only reconstruction and preservation projects for the first year of the stimulus package, since they're the quickest, and that all projects be sent before Friday. Once completed, the final list will be sent on to Representatives Hoekstra and Ehlers. Stypula added that there may also be water and sewer components to the stimulus package, but that the state wants to run this all through the revolving loan fund. Discussion ensued.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Warren adjourned the Technical Committee Meeting at 10:34 am.