

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 9, 2011
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Conners, chair of the Technical Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:31 am. The Committee members, staff, and guests present introduced themselves. Conners congratulated Sprague on his new position at the Kent County Road Commission.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**Voting Members Present**

Scott Conners	<i>(Chair)</i>	City of Walker
Jerry Alkema		Allendale Township
Timothy Cochran		City of Wyoming
Jamie Davies		City of Rockford
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Tim Haagsma		Gaines Charter Township
Wayne Harrall	<i>Proxy for Mike DeVries</i>	Kent County
Russ Henckel	<i>Proxy for Bill Dooley</i>	Grand Rapids Township
Taiwo Jaiyeoba		City of Wyoming
Fred Keena	<i>Proxy for Brett Laughlin</i>	City of Wyoming
Ray Lenze		ITP-The Rapid
Terry Schweitzer		OCRC
Steve Warren		OCRC
Chris Zull		MDOT
		City of Kentwood
		KCRC
		City of Grand Rapids

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Paul Egeler	Observer
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Steve Redmond	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Rick Sprague	KCRC
Thomas Tilma	GGR Bicycle Coalition
Steve Waalkes	Michigan Concrete Assn.
George Yang	GVMC Staff
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Mike Berrevoets	City of Cedar Springs

APPROVED

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ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

Dan Carlton
Ron Carr
Dick Davies
Sharon DeLange
Dan DesJarden
Mike DeVries
Bill Dooley
Ken Feldt
Jim Ferro
Roy Hawkins
Dennis Hoemke
Jim Holtrop
Bob Homan
Brett Laughlin
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Steve Peterson
Chuck Porter
Dan Strikwerda
Toby VanEss

Georgetown Township
City of Grandville
Cannon Township
Village of Sparta
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Township
City of Wyoming
City of East Grand Rapids
Ada Township
GRFIA
Algoma Township
Ottawa County
Plainfield Township
OCRC
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Cascade Charter Township
Courtland Township
City of Hudsonville
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Connors entertained a motion to approve the January 5, 2011 Technical Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION by Cochran, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to approve the January 5, 2011 Technical Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Connors entertained a motion to elect himself and Harrall to serve another one-year term as chair and vice chair of the Technical Committee, respectively.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Haagsma, to elect Connors to serve another one-year term as chair of the Technical Committee, and to elect Harrall to serve another one-year term as vice chair of the Technical Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. FY2011-2014 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Speaking on **Item V: Attachment A**, and referencing two additional handouts, Robinson informed the Committee about several requested amendments/modifications to the FY2011-2014 TIP.

First, ITP-The Rapid requested to amend the FY2011-2014 TIP to reflect several changes to Activity Line Items (ALI's) in section 5307 and 5309 in FY2012.

Second, the KCRC requested to add an awarded Transportation Economic Development Fund Category A project (state funded) to FY2011.

Third, the City of Grand Rapids requested to move a FY2012 project: 6th Street Bridge over the Grand River, to FY2011.

Fourth, the Village of Kent City requested to add an awarded STP Enhancement project for streetscape of South Main Street from Spring Street to M-46 to FY2011 of the TIP. The total project cost is \$443,808 (\$315,494 federal; \$128,314 local).

Fifth, the City of Lowell requested that the two STP-Small Urban Programs grants that they received be added to the TIP. The first project is Bowes Road reconstruction with sidewalks west of Valley Vista Drive for a total cost of \$417,501 (\$334,000 federal; \$83,501 local). This project is for FY2012. The second project is Bowes Road milling and resurfacing with sidewalks from west of Valley Vista to West Main Street for a total cost of \$223,311 (\$178,648 federal; \$44,663 local). This project is for FY2014.

Sixth, Hope Network requested to add their 5310 program to FY2012 in the TIP.

Seventh, MDOT requested an administrative modification to a FY2011 project: US-131 at Burton, Hall, and Franklin Streets. The request is to split the project into two job numbers and add approximately \$200,000 to the project and construct the Franklin Street Bridge in FY2012.

Redmond also explained MDOT's request to amend the TIP to begin the Preliminary Engineering (PE) process for the I-96 at Cascade Road project. Because the cost estimate for construction is over \$5 million, federal guidelines require the PE phase to be listed separately in the TIP, not as part of a General Program Account (GPA). Construction of the bridge is planned for FY2015.

Lastly, Senior Neighbors asked that their funding request to MDOT for section 5310 capital funding in FY2012 to purchase ADP hardware be included in the TIP. The funding request total is \$5,422.

Connors entertained a motion to approve the requested TIP amendments/modifications.

MOTION by Cochran, SUPPORT by DeVries, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the amendments/modifications to the FY2011-2014 TIP requested by ITP-The Rapid, the KCRC, the City of Grand Rapids, the Village of Kent City, the City of Lowell, Hope Network, MDOT, and Senior Neighbors, as identified. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FINAL COMMENTS

Speaking on **Item VI: Attachment A**, Dewey explained that the draft Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is nearly complete. During the public comment period, which took place from January 1-30, 2011, GVMC staff invited comment on the document, project list, and Air Quality Conformity Analysis results and also held eight public meetings from January 17-20. Dewey noted that Staff received zero additional comments from the public in addition to the six previously submitted to the Committee for review at the January meeting.

As part of the consultation outreach, Dewey said that GVMC received official correspondence from three state and federal agencies, and a phone call from the Grand Rapids Audubon Club regarding the impact of widening projects on reducing bird habitat.

Conners entertained a motion to approve the draft LRTP update.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Alkema, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the draft 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan update, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. POLICIES & PRACTICES NON-MOTORIZED SECTION UPDATE

Referring to **Item VII: Attachment A**, Dewey stated that, in December, the Technical Committee had approved updating GVMC's Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document, with some minor modifications, to reflect current practice with regard to non-motorized transportation funding. Dewey explained that, while federal surface transportation funding is very flexible, it is the local practice/policy of the MPO to restrict federal funds for non-motorized transportation to the Transportation Enhancement program only. The local policy is to prohibit the expenditure of federal funds on sidewalks, and sidewalks are generally ineligible for Transportation Enhancement funds.

At the December Policy Committee meeting, some members expressed concerns about the eligibility requirement that "Projects must demonstrate potential mode shift from the automobile and are not purely recreational in nature," as well as how complete streets projects would be funded. Therefore, the Committee recommended that the Technical Committee discuss this revision further. Dewey noted that, in the meantime, staff has worked to address the issues brought up at the Policy Committee meeting with modifications to the new Non-Motorized section. Dewey stated that the new and current non-motorized sections of the Policies and Practices document were included in the agenda packet for the Committee's review. Dewey then provided the committee with an overview about the recommended policy/practice for non-motorized project eligibility requirements and non-motorized facility funding requirements.

Harrall strongly recommended that "for its projected lifespan" be removed from the fourth eligibility requirement: "All project recipients must demonstrate the ability to maintain the facility for its projected lifespan." He explained that an agency may decide not to maintain a path down the line if it is not used in order to fund more prioritized needs. DeVries noted that the meaning of "for the productive lifespan" is not entirely clear, but if it were to be removed, then the fourth eligibility requirement would close with a loophole.

Harrall also suggested that "potential" be removed from the first eligibility requirement, which read: "Projects must demonstrate a potential non-recreational modal shift from the automobile." Harrall stated that the word "potential" would be enough to justify any trail anywhere. Warren added that removing the word "potential" would not detract from the intent of the sentence. However, Schweitzer disagreed, stating that keeping the word "potential" would justify the project receiving CMAQ funding. Discussion ensued.

Conners stated that the first and fourth eligibility requirement, as they are currently written, should give the Committee a lot of flexibility in the future and suggested leaving both requirements as they are for the time being.

Warren stated that the second funding requirement, which read: "Federal Transportation Enhancement and Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Funds are permitted for the construction of new non-motorized facilities that meet project eligibility requirements," should not apply to enhancement grants. He added that, historically, communities have applied for enhancement grants, and the final decision about the project is made at the state level and based on the project's merit. Therefore, Warren stated it should not be up to the MPO to determine whether an enhancement project is a worthy project. Itani responded that there is currently only \$8 million available per year to maintain the system, so the Committee will need to determine which projects have priority. He also added that the Committee could decide to require communities to bring enhancement grant applications through the MPO process for approval and to ensure that the projects meet the non-motorized eligibility requirements before they are submitted to MDOT. Redmond noted that enhancement funds would not be awarded for purely recreational projects. Discussion ensued.

Due to a lack of consensus, Conners suggested that the Committee revisit this issue at the next Technical Committee meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Snell distributed a copy of the 2010 Pavement Condition Data Report. This report is similar to the pavement report covered at the January meeting, but includes additional data, such as PCI. Snell also passed out a graph entitled "Projected Pavement Condition 2005-2015." He explained that the number of roads classified as "good" or "fair" are decreasing, while the number of roads classified as "poor" are increasing. Itani added that, last year, 100 miles of the federal aid system went from "good" to "poor."

Robinson stated that the committee is now back on the bimonthly TIP amendment schedule. Therefore, Committee members will need to get TIP amendments to Robinson on or before Monday, March 28 to have their requests included in the April Technical Committee agenda packet.

Itani added that he has created a proposal to stop the approval of TIP and LRTP amendments at the Policy Committee level instead of bringing them all the way through to Metro Council. However, Metro Council would still continue to approve the final TIP, budget, Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the final LRTP. This proposal is expected to go before the Executive Committee this month or next.

DeVries stated that, for road diet projects, MDOT has a specific process that needs to be followed. He questioned if there was a way that this process could be rolled into the public hearings that are already conducted for the TIP. Itani asked DeVries to send him information about this, and said that if it is possible to roll the processes together, Staff will do so.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Conners adjourned the February 9, 2011 Technical Committee meeting at 10:50 am.