

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, July 11, 2012
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Harrall, chair of the Technical Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. The Committee members, staff, and guests present introduced themselves.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Wayne Harrall (*Chair*)
Timothy Cochran
Scott Connors
Ken Feldt
Jim Ferro
Tim Haagsma
Jan Hoekstra
Jim Holtrop
Dennis Kent

*Proxy for
Mark Howe*

Brett Laughlin
Ray Lenze
Dave Pasquale
Steve Peterson
Terry Schweitzer
Dan Strikwerda
Phil Vincent
Steve Warren
Chris Zull

Kent County
City of Wyoming
City of Walker
City of East Grand Rapids
Ada Township
Gaines Charter Township
ITP-The Rapid
Ottawa County
MDOT
City of Lowell
OCRC
MDOT
Grand Rapids Township
Cascade Charter Township
City of Kentwood
City of Hudsonville
City of Rockford
KCRC
City of Grand Rapids

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey
Andrea Faber
Abed Itani
Erick Kind
Darrell Robinson
Norm Sevensma
Rick Sprague

GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
MDOT
GVMC Staff
WMEAC-RWBC
KCRC

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema
Alex Arends
Roger Belknap
Dan Carlton
Ron Carr
Dick Davies
Mike DeVries

Allendale Township
Alpine Township
City of Cedar Springs
Georgetown Township
City of Grandville
Cannon Township
Grand Rapids Township

APPROVED

Rick DeVries
Bill Dooley
Roy Hawkins
Dennis Hoemke
Bob Homan
Mark Howe
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins Weiss
Chuck Porter
Martin Super
Toby VanEss

APPROVED

Item II: Attachment A
City of Grand Rapids
City of Wyoming
GRFIA
Algoma Township
Plainfield Township
City of Lowell
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Courtland Township
Village of Sparta
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Harrall entertained a motion to approve the May 2, 2012 Technical Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION by Schweitzer, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to approve the May 2, 2012 Technical Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma asked when the Musketawa Trail would be connected to the White Pine Trail. Harrall provided an update on the project and guessed that it would be completed the end of next year.

IV. FY2011-2014 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A** and several handouts, Robinson informed the Committee that MDOT and GVMC Staff are requesting several TIP amendments/modifications for FY2012-2014, including the addition of several approved FY2013 and 2014 CMAQ projects, several updates to project costs and the addition of several projects to the TIP. Referring to a handout, Kent provided additional clarification about MDOT's TIP amendment and modification requests.

Warren asked for clarification on the US 131 S Kent County Line to 76th St. project. Kent replied that MDOT is designing a reconstruction project that will cost approximately \$20 million.

Under the 2013 new projects, Harrall asked if the safety projects recently submitted by Haagsma were listed. Haagsma responded that GVMC staff is waiting for a formal letter before adding the projects to the TIP.

Harrall entertained a motion to approve the requested TIP amendments.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by Haagsma, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the TIP amendments/modifications to FY2012-2014 of the TIP requested by MDOT and GVMC Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR PROGRAMMING PROJECTS

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson noted that GVMC and MDOT staff have been working on updating the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document that exists in the TIP and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) document to make some much needed improvements. There are two areas of concentration in the Policies document: “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” and “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility.” Clarification, definition and documentation were necessary in several areas of these two sections of the document being that some of the information was out of date.

Staff presented the section titled “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” to the Transportation Programming Study Group (TPSG) Committee for more discussion and approval. The TPSG Committee reviewed the draft text, suggested some changes, and recommended that the Tech Committee approve the document with the changes. Robinson noted that one of the most significant changes was that “New projects using Federal Aid funding not impacting other Federal Aid Funded projects (ie-MDOT, ITP, TE, Bridge, Safety, HPP (earmarks), or other discretionary sources” can be added to the TIP without going through the formal Committee amendment process. However, these amendments still need to be approved by FHWA and MDOT. He noted that this new process was also outlined in the matrix. Kent clarified that this would still constitute an amendment, but that there would be a different approval process for amendments for these types of projects. Robinson also noted that, with the revisions to the Policies document, there will be a new web procedure for public participation.

Itani noted that the changes to the Policies document would expedite the process and give staff more maneuverability room with projects. He said that all changes will go back to the Committees for reaffirmation. Discussion ensued.

Schweitzer noted that the Policies document stated that “Amendments require the *review and recommendation* of the *Technical Committee*.” However, based on Robinson’s explanation and the information in the matrix, TIP amendments for new projects using Federal Aid funding not impacting other Federal Aid Funded projects (i.e., MDOT, ITP, TE, Bridge, Safety, HPP (earmarks), or other discretionary projects, didn’t need to go through the traditional committee approval process. Harrall stated that an exception should be noted for new projects using Federal Aid funding not impacting other Federal Aid Funded projects since they do not require the approval and recommendation of the Tech Committee. Robinson stated that he would make a notation regarding this. Discussion ensued.

Robinson also drew the Committee’s attention to the section entitled “Technical and Policy Committee Quorum,” which described how amendments would be handled in the absence of a Committee quorum.

Robinson noted that the Asset Management Committee discussed the “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility” section of the document at length. Itani explained that the Committee recommends moving from using PCI data to PASER data in the future for project selection criteria. He noted that flexibility would be allowed based on data projections. For instance, if a project today is a 6 but in a couple of years is expected to be a 4, there would be flexibility for that project to be programmed in the later years of the TIP. He noted that appropriate fixes based on PASER score were also included in the agenda. He also stated that, as time

continues, he hoped to collect a library of data, including life cycle and deterioration curves, etc. Robinson asked if the Committee would like to handle these two items separately or together. Itani recommended handling the items together and asked for questions.

Harrall asked if, by using PASER, jurisdictions would have flexibility in determining the fix for a project. For example, he asked if a jurisdiction has a project that receives a 5 on the PASER system and they want to do a structural overlay 3 years out but it only qualifies for a thin overlay at this moment, if they would have flexibility to choose the fix they wanted in the future. Itani said that if data projections show this decrease, a structural overlay would be allowed. Warren added that, with the historical data available now, there are reliable curves. Itani noted that the next report that Committee members receive will have 4- or 5-year projections. Discussion ensued.

Itani noted that, with the new transportation bill, the TIP and the LRTP will be performance based, and the MPO will be obligated to write a report on how TIP projects will improve the transportation system from an operations and maintenance perspective. There will be some changes to make sure we can meet the new requirements. Discussion ensued.

Harrall entertained a motion to approve the Policies and Practices document, including the Condition Deficient Project Eligibility requirements.

MOTION by Conners, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the revised Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document, including the change indicated by Schweitzer, and the Condition Deficient Project Eligibility requirements. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Kent noted that MDOT is currently working on a minor update to their 2035 State Long Range Plan. He added that there will be a series of webinars and public meetings statewide about this.

Kent added that the Complete Streets policy draft was passed by the Transportation Commission. MDOT was directed to develop procedures to implement this policy. There is still an implementation phase to go through. This policy will probably be acted on by the Commission in August. Dewey added that it's a strong policy statement compared to other states and is a good start, although certain elements, such as performance measures and best practices and design standards, are currently missing. Ferro asked if Suzanne Schulz could present on this topic at a future meeting. Discussion ensued.

Itani stated that Congress has approved a new 27-month transportation bill, MAP-21. Itani provided an overview of the new transportation bill and noted that very little has changed. Many of the previous funding categories (STP, CMAQ, freight, etc.) will continue. However, many programs have been condensed. Two noteworthy changes are that the TIP and Plan will now need to be performance-based, and the Enhancement and Safe Routes to School program will be condensed, along with possible other fund sources, and moved from the State to the MPOs. The Committee will need to decide on a process for programming such funds. Funding received in this category will be based on population, but it is too premature to know the official amount. Discussion ensued.

Conners suggested that a Committee be set up to start working on project selection criteria for competitive grant projects. Itani noted that GVMC already has a regional Nonmotorized

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Item II: Attachment A

Plan that's part of the Long Range Transportation Plan. He suggested that the projects in this plan be the highest priority. Robinson added that the State may already have selection criteria in place for choosing projects. Dewey added that the Nonmotorized Committee has already looked at developing project evaluation criteria. Discussion ensued.

Itani added that once the Feds have a chance to interpret the bill, he will ask them to come and give the Committee a presentation on it.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Harrall adjourned the July 11, 2012 Technical Committee meeting at 10:11 am.