

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 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.

Warren asked that the Committee members go around the table and introduce themselves to the committee.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Steve Warren (Chair)		KCRC
Alex Arends		Alpine Township
Mike Bouwkamp		City of Rockford
Patrick Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Dan Carlton		Georgetown Township
Ron Carr		City of Grandville
Timothy Cochran		City of Wyoming
Scott Conners		City of Walker
Sandra M. Cornell-Howe		MDOT
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Tim Haagsma		Gaines Charter Township
Wayne Harrall	<i>Proxy for Mike DeVries</i>	Kent County
		Grand Rapids Township
Roy Hawkins		GRFIA
Russ Henckel	<i>Proxy for Bill Dooley</i>	City of Wyoming
		City of Wyoming
Jim Holtrop		Ottawa County
Kent Rubley	<i>Proxy for Brett Laughlin</i>	OCRC
		OCRC
Terry Schweitzer		City of Kentwood
Dan Strikwerda		City of Hudsonville

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	RWBC-WMEAC
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Sarah Van Buren	FHWA
Steve Waalkes	Michigan Concrete Paving

George Yang
Mike Zonyk

Assn.
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema
Sandra Ayers
Mike Berrevoets
Dick Davies
Sharon DeLange
Dan DesJarden
Mike DeVries
Bill Dooley
Steve Groenenboom
Dennis Hoemke
Bob Homan
Taiwo Jaiyeoba
Brett Laughlin
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Steve Peterson
Chuck Porter
Toby VanEss

Allendale Township
Village of Caledonia
City of Cedar Springs
Cannon Township
Village of Sparta
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Township
City of Wyoming
Ada Township
Algoma Township
Plainfield Township
The Rapid
OCRC
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Cascade Charter Township
Courtland Township
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Carlton noted one correction to the minutes. Warren entertained a motion to approve the June 3, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes with Carlton’s correction.

MOTION by Holtrop, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to approve the June 3, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes with Carlton’s correction. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma stated that he had heard on the radio that August 5th was the 25th anniversary of the Pere Marquette, the Amtrak train that brings passengers from Grand Rapids to Chicago. In light of this, Sevensma asked if there were any plans to extend the tracks to the Transportation Center and for an update on the progress of the high speed rail initiative. Itani responded that he had talked to MDOT about extending the tracks, but whether they can do this depends on a number of variables. Kent added that ITP obtained a grant on behalf of MDOT to replace the rail line. The next step will be convening several engineers to look at how the train could fit under the US-131 bridge.

Sevensma asked if the size of the transportation center would need to be increased. Kent responded that the plan he saw indicated that a separate Amtrak structure would be created south of the Wealthy Street Bridge. Kent also provided an update on the progress of the Midwest Rail Initiative and stated that Michigan is hoping to develop a high speed rail corridor between Detroit and Chicago. Discussion ensued.

Warren explained that, as part of the stimulus package, Congress allocated \$1.5 billion nationally for extra projects, including high speed rail. MDOT is already working on determining projects. Van Buren added that the deadline for applications for the \$1.5 billion discretionary pot is in September and provided additional guidelines for project eligibility. Warren asked for examples of projects on MDOT's list. Kent responded that MDOT is still looking at criteria and determining projects to submit, but their project list may include additional work on I-196 or US-31 in Ottawa County. Warren asked that Kent provide the Committee with an update on this at the next Technical Committee meeting.

IV. FY2008-2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee about several FY2008-2011 TIP amendment requests from MDOT and Staff.

MDOT requested to move projects on US-131 at West River Drive, US-131 at 10 Mile, M-44 at 7 Mile, M-121 at 40th Avenue, and M-21 over the Flat River from FY2010 to FY2009 as a TIP modification. They also requested to amend several General Program Accounts (GPAs) into the FY2010 TIP list, including CPM and CSM Bridge Trunkline, CPM Road Trunkline, EPE/PE/ROW – Trunkline, Highway Safety – Trunkline, and Enhancements – Local. Lastly, MDOT requested to amend several project phases into the FY2008-2011 TIP, including M-11 from M-37 E to I-96 for PE, M-44 from I-96 to Airway St. for PE, M-44 from I-96 to Airway St. for ROW, and I-96 at M-44 for construction. Kent provided additional clarification on these projects.

Lastly, Staff requested that, due to the delay in the development of the FY2010-2013 TIP, the proposed changes to the FY2010 and 2011 project costs, scope, and additional projects added to these years be incorporated into the current FY2008-2011 TIP.

Robinson added that for FY2010, there weren't many changes, except for the change in the federal/nonfederal percentage splits, due to projects being moved around. This resulted in an increase in federal funding for everyone, and a reduction in the amount of the local match, excluding advance construct projects. Robinson noted one significant project move—4 Mile from Baumhoff to Old Orchard—which would be moving from FY2010 to FY2011. Robinson also noted that the Cannonsburg Road from Meyers Lake to Giles project was added as a new STP-Rural project in FY2010. Connors noted that the limits for the City of Walker's 3 Mile Road project from Bristol to Alpine were incorrect and that the correct limits are Bristol to Cornelia. Holtrop added that the City of Hudsonville's 32nd Avenue project from Highland to Hudson Trails should be taken off the FY2010 advance construct conversion in FY2010.

For EDFC, Robinson stated that there were no changes to FY2010. Connors said that the limits of the 3 Mile Road project would change from Elmridge to Walker to Indian Creek Road to Walker, but the listed project length was correct.

In FY2011, Robinson added that any advance-construct projects would stay the same. He added that there were some changes to this year, including the addition of the 4 Mile Road project from Baumhoff to Old Orchard, and then 4 Mile Road from Baumhoff to Peachridge will be moving to FY2012. Robinson also reviewed the FY2011 EDFC and STP-Rural projects for the Committee. Strikwerda pointed out a math error for the

FY2011 EDFC 10 Mile Road project.

Itani stated that there will be additional ARRA funding, since many bids have been coming in lower than the estimates. However, the exact amount of funding that will remain is unknown. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Warren asked to be informed when ARRA projects were bid and let so that the MPO and Committee members are kept informed as to what MDOT's finance department sets as the lump sum for federal funds. Cornell-Howe stated that she would print this information for distribution. Bush stated that there should be follow through from MDOT to issue an addendum or update based upon the bid amounts and the lump sum. He added that he signs contracts to receive federal funding, and the lump sum payment could possibly be less than what was listed on the contract. Cornell-Howe stated that she would investigate this. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Henckel asked what would happen if construction costs for an ARRA project came in over and above what the bid amount was due to unforeseen work and questioned why the community can't keep funding up to the amount obligated for a project to cover surpluses. Cornell-Howe stated that if an MDOT project goes over the bid amount, a project would be pushed back elsewhere to cover the surplus. She added that the cost can't be up to the obligated amount because of auditing reasons. Itani responded that the MPO process works by communities giving estimates, and if there is funding remaining, that amount will be recirculated among the members in order to do more projects. If a community finds that they need additional funding for a project due to unforeseen circumstances, Itani stated that there is nothing that the MPO can do, unless the community decides to wait an additional year to see if additional funding is available, and if the process allows it. Henckel stated that if he were to run out of funding for a project before it was finished, he can't leave it uncompleted. Discussion ensued.

Warren suggested handling all of the TIP amendments and modifications in one action item, and entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP.

MOTION by Conners, SUPPORT by Arends, to recommend to the Policy Committee amending/ modifying the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the amendments identified by MDOT and Staff, including the changes in project limits for the 2 City of Walker projects, and removing the City of Hudsonville's 32nd Avenue project from the FY2010 STP list. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. **AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) PROJECTS**

Robinson stated that he has been researching ARRA projects significantly. Based on a local agency balance report, the Ottawa County Road Commission, the City of Wyoming and the City of Walker had projects with bids that came in lower than what was programmed in the TIP. Thus far, Robinson explained that just over \$8 million in projects have been obligated out of the approximately \$12 million available. Itani stated that in essence, there is \$300,000 available in ARRA funding to be recirculated through the MPO process. Robinson provided Committee members with a handout that included B-list projects.

Bush questioned whether the City of Hudsonville's project was going to proceed, or if it would be dropped. Itani responded that the mayor of Hudsonville is discussing the issue

with one of the commissioners who voted down the contract for the project, but if the project can't be brought back to the table for another vote, Hudsonville will forfeit the funding. Discussion ensued.

Conners suggested that the Committee select the City of Rockford's project from the B-list and allow it to proceed, since the TPSG Committee had promised the City of Rockford that they would be first on the B-list. Henckel stated that this promise to the City of Rockford should not apply in this instance, since they were promised to be first on the B-list should stimulus money be received from other states, and no redistributed money is available. He added that since the City of Wyoming's two projects contributed \$120,000 to the pot of available funding, he would rather not give up this funding. Van Buren stated that the money does not go to the jurisdiction, but to the MPO.

Bush asked if it would be possible to add the remaining amount of ARRA funding into the TIP to cover overages on projects. Cornell-Howe responded that this can be added in the TIP, but contractually, it is impossible to do. Carr asked if the remaining ARRA funding can be used to amend the dollar amount for projects in the TIP that cost more than expected. Itani stated that he would research this issue. Discussion ensued.

Schweitzer suggested reconvening the TPSG Committee to determine how to spend the remaining \$300,000 before the Policy Committee meeting. Bush suggested waiting to reconvene the TSPG Committee for a few weeks until there is a better idea of how much funding remains. Warren suggested reconvening the TPSG Committee around the 1st of September.

Itani stated that the TPSG Committee has already promised the City of Rockford that they are first on the B-list and added that, in light of this, he would like the Committee to recommend to the Policy Committee to move the Rockford project forward into the TIP. The TPSG Committee would then determine how to spend the remaining funding at a later date. Bouwkamp added that the bid estimate for the City of Rockford's project is now \$128,000. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Warren entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the City of Rockford's project, with the TPSG Committee to meet and determine how to spend the remaining ARRA funding.

MOTION by Rubley, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to recommend to the Policy Committee amending the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the City of Rockford's project from the B-list of stimulus projects, for a total cost of \$128,000, and to reconvene to TPSG Committee the first week of September to determine projects for the remaining funding. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**VI. 2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) UPDATE
SOCIOECONOMIC (SE) BASE YEAR DATA**

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Itani stated that GVMC is currently developing the new 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. He explained that this plan is different because GVMC is expanding the transportation travel demand model to cover an additional area in Ottawa County. He clarified that while GVMC is expanding the model, it is not expanding the MPO boundaries.

He added that the first step in developing the new LRTP is to adopt a base year, which will be 2009. Itani stated that he was told that traffic counts will be available by the end of the FY2009 fiscal year, and he used the FY2009 census estimates for population and purchased the Claritas database to look at employment numbers. He explained that the data was an estimate. Itani also informed the Committee that, according to the census, there was an increase of approximately 50,000 people between 2000 and 2008 within the MPO area.

Itani asked the Committee for conditional approval to move forward with this data to develop the future years of the plan. If there are any changes to the data, he asked that they be sent to GVMC by August 12. He added that GVMC staff would be contacting committee members for meetings based on their subregions starting in September, and for individual meetings with jurisdictions at some point after that.

Warren entertained a motion for conditional approval of the 2035 LRTP socioeconomic base year data.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to recommend to the Policy Committee conditional approval of the 2035 LRTP Update Socio-Economic 2009 base year data for population and employment, with the understanding that individual jurisdictions will review the data provided and return any adjustments or comments to Staff by Wednesday, August 12, 2009. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani announced that the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition will be sponsoring a show on PBS about national parks. The show will air on September 27 and October 24 at 8pm. For more information, he suggested that the Committee members visit www.pbs.org/parks.

Itani also announced that there will be an onroad bicycle training workshop on September 11, 2009. It is being organized by MDOT, the Department of Public Health and the City of Grand Rapids. There are 10 spaces available. Itani asked interested Committee members to contact Andrea Dewey if they were interested in attending.

Van Buren added that SAFFTEA-LU will expire the end of September. She stated that the Committee should expect to have a 12-18 month continuing resolution of the bill. Cornell-Howe said that STP projects must be obligated by September 30, before the bill runs out.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Warren adjourned the August 5, 2009 Technical Committee meeting at 10:55 am.