

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2008
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Conners, vice chair of the Technical Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:32 am.

Per Conners' request, those present introduced themselves to the committee, including their name and the organization that they were representing. Conners welcomed Mike Zonyk to the committee. Zonyk is a new transportation planner for Grand Valley Metro Council. He is replacing Chris Dingman.

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

Scott Conners	<i>(Vice Chair)</i>	City of Walker
Roger Belknap	<i>Proxy for Steve Warren Tim Haagsma Wayne Harrall Bob Homan</i>	KCRC KCRC KCRC Kent County Plainfield Charter Township
Mike Berrevoets		City of Cedar Springs
Patrick Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Ron Carr	<i>Proxy for Dick Johnston</i>	City of Grandville City of Rockford
Sandra M. Cornell-Howe		MDOT
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Bill Dooley		City of Wyoming
Jim Fetzer		The Rapid
Steve Groenenboom		Ada Township
William Holland		Georgetown Township
Dennis Kent		MDOT
Jack Klein	<i>Proxy for Brett Laughlin</i>	OCRC
Ken Klomprens		GRFIA
Sarah Koepke		FHWA
Steve Peterson		Cascade Charter Township
Dan Strikwerda		City of Hudsonville

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

CORRECTED AND APPROVED

CORRECTED AND APPROVED

Item II: Attachment A

Andrea Faber
Abed Itani
Darrell Robinson
Jim Snell
Don Stypula
Mike Zonyk

GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff
GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Steve Warren (*Chair*)
Sandra Ayers
James Beelen
Marta Brechting
Dick Davies
Sharon DeLange
Dan DesJarden
Mike DeVries
Ken Feldt
Tim Haagsma
Wayne Harrall
Russ Henckel
Don Hilton, Sr.
Dennis Hoemke
Jim Holtrop
Dick Johnston
Brett Laughlin
Jim McIntyre
Gerald Mears
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Terry Schweitzer
Bill Wiersma

KCRC
Village of Caledonia
Allendale Township
Alpine Township
Cannon Township
Village of Sparta
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Township
City of East Grand Rapids
Kent County Road Commission
Kent County
City of Wyoming
Gaines Charter Township
Algoma Township
Ottawa County
City of Rockford
OCRC
Courtland Township
City of Wyoming
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
City of Kentwood
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Conners entertained a motion to approve the January 2, 2008 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Dooley, to approve the January 2, 2008 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. FY 2009 SAFETY AND HIGH RISK RURAL ROAD PROGRAMS ENDORSEMENT

Referencing **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the committee that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has sent a notice of a call for applications for FY2009 Safety and High Risk Rural Road Programs. Thus far, the cities of Grand Rapids and Walker, along with the Kent County Road Commission and the Ottawa County Road Commission, have submitted several projects for consideration.

Robinson commented that the process for determining safety projects is different this year because the list also contains high risk rural road projects, which are funded through a different source. Because funding is limited, not all of the projects listed will be selected at this time. Robinson requested the committee's endorsement in order to bring these projects to MDOT, where they will be entered into MDOT's grant selection process. All applications must be submitted to MDOT by March 28, 2008. All projects selected by MDOT will need to be amended into the TIP at a later date. Therefore, Robinson asked the committee to inform him if committee members have any FY2009 Safety projects that are selected.

Conners entertained a motion for the committee to endorse the list of safety and high risk rural road projects discussed by Staff above.

MOTION by Carr, SUPPORT by Bush, to endorse the safety and high risk rural road projects outlined in Item IV: Attachment A, and to send them on to MDOT for the grant selection process. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. STATUS OF FY 2008 TIP PROJECTS

Robinson passed out current copies of the FY2008-2011 TIP, which reflects all of the recent TIP amendments, and updated the committee on the status of many TIP projects. It has taken Robinson until this date to add these amendments into the FY2008-2011 TIP because he had to wait for the document to be approved. After the TIP was approved, there were several formatting issues that needed to be resolved which further delayed the process. These formatting issues were a result of a new undertaking by MDOT, MPOs, and FHWA to develop a uniform TIP template. Robinson was pleased to announce that, after many hours of work, the FY2008-2011 TIP is now in working order.

Robinson was also happy to report that all of the Local Jobs Today projects submitted by local agencies have been obligated and that every jurisdiction met the February 29 deadline to submit programming to MDOT.

Finally, Robinson asked the committee to be patient with the many changes that

are already being planned for the TIP and to let him know if they find any errors in the document.

VI. FY 2008-2011 S/TIP

Cornell-Howe added to Robinson's TIP Project status update and reiterated that the FY2008-2011 TIP has been approved. She also stated that all of the amendments through January have also been approved. MDOT staff will begin working on addressing the February amendments later this week.

Cornell-Howe informed the committee that one of the most important issues that have come to light recently is that of CMAQ funding. Due to a change in the federal law, all CMAQ projects for 2008 and 2009 will be 80/20 matched and have no cap. This law was part of an energy bill and will expire after 2009. It currently affects the entire nation.

Itani asked for clarification on the lack of a funding cap and provided an example. Cornell-Howe said that this change was so new that it is yet to be determined if MDOT will be the watchdog agency to make sure that everybody does what they say they will do. Itani responded by asking if CMAQ projects were still "first come, first served." Cornell-Howe said that they were, which brought her to her next point: recommending that agencies get their projects in as soon as possible.

Itani said that in the past, his first priority has been to use all the available funds. Knowing that not every MPO always gets all of their projects in on time, he said that there is sometimes money left on the table. Since there is no cap, he suggested that the committee take advantage of that. Cornell-Howe responded that whether or not there is money left over depends on who is in the door first. She also stated that if SEMCOG feels that they should also use all of the available funds, nobody in the rest of the state would get any projects at all. She suggested that Itani discuss this issue with MTPA directors.

The committee discussed the logic behind the change in CMAQ funding. Koepke stated that the overriding assumption is that, nationwide, there is a massive amount of unobligated CMAQ money. This is likely congress's way of spending it down. Discussion continued.

Cornell-Howe added that the approval is conditional until April 15, but the message is to still submit projects.

VII. TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM

Robinson informed the committee that he will no longer be the traffic count person, as Zonyk will be taking over this task.

Zonyk updated the committee about new developments in the traffic count

program. Many of these developments were discussed at a traffic count meeting for maintenance jurisdictions that had occurred on March 3, 2008. At this meeting, the 2008 traffic counts were delivered and the proposed 2009-2010 traffic counts were announced. Changes include the cost of each traffic count going up from \$50 to \$60 beginning in FY2009 and the possibility of developing an internet portal for maintenance jurisdictions to view and upload their traffic counts on the Internet. This year, the \$20,000 allocated for traffic count equipment may be used for the purchase and production of this software. Conversations with vendors regarding this software will take place in the near future.

Itani thanked the committee for their participation in the traffic count program and for their willingness to tap into resources that lessen the cost of the program for Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) and its members. Itani informed the committee that this program is so important because GVMC needs the data attained from traffic counts to support its travel demand model and complete the air quality conformity analysis. Itani continued to state that Staff have determined approximately 1800 locations that need to have new traffic counts conducted within the next three years. Some of these locations may have the deadline extended to up to five years.

VIII. PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Snell gave an overview of the 2007 pavement management season to the committee. Last year, Staff covered approximately 2,400 miles locally, which is about the average number of miles they cover every year. Staff also spent much of 2007 working on new ways to get the pavement data out. They added the option of PASER ratings in 2007, which were well received, and began working on a pilot program with Regis in order to make pavement data available on their system.

Staff are currently getting ready for the 2008 pavement management season. They have already contacted various jurisdictions and scheduled between 2,400 and 2,500 miles to cover this year in the van. However, the rough winter will likely mean that Staff will have to wait a few extra weeks to start their data collection efforts as the roads still need some time to heal.

Belknap asked if Staff would collect data into Roadsoft if communities requested that. Snell said that it could be done, but he would not recommend it at this point, as there are still some issues that need to be worked out regarding data exchanges.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- **GOVERNOR'S ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE**

Kent brought two items to the committee's attention. The first item was a request to Amend/Administratively Modify the FY2008 – 2011 TIP and the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan to include a project at I-196 and College Avenue. This project includes replacing the existing bridge, providing additional turning lanes, and related approach and ramp modifications at this location. No additional through lanes will be provided, consistent with College Avenue north and south of the bridge.

This project was included in the Long Range Transportation Plan for the years 2019 - 2025. Now because of the Governor's Economic Stimulus Package, the proposed project will be let this year and preliminary work will begin this summer, with the majority of the work to take place in 2009.

Itani stated that, for this project, two motions will be needed: one to administratively adjust the plan by moving the project to FY2008-2011, and one to amend the TIP. Cornell-Howe explained that this was acceptable as long as the project is in the right year for air quality. Discussion continued.

Conners entertained a motion to administratively adjust the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) by moving the I-196 College Avenue bridge reconstruction project as described by MDOT staff from FY2019 - 2025 to FY2008-2011.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval to administratively adjust the LRTP by moving the I-196 College Avenue bridge reconstruction project from FY2012-FY2018 to FY2008-2011. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Conners entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to also include the I-196 College Avenue bridge reconstruction project for FY2008.

MOTION by Carr, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the I-196 College Avenue bridge reconstruction project as described by MDOT staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Kent also requested that the Committee adjust the FY2008-2011 TIP to include several projects on US-131. These projects include rehabilitating and maintaining the existing state trunkline highway system, restoring concrete pavement, and replacing freeway lighting. The pavement restoration will take place on US-131 between 28th St. and Wealthy.

Kent stated that two of the three projects are already on the TIP list for 2009. However, the plan is now to let the projects in July of 2008, which will make them all 2008 projects. He continued to say that the cost of pavement restoration went

down, so the money saved will be shifted to the General Program Account (GPA) capital preventative maintenance for 2009.

The committee discussed what the official language should be for a motion to approve these projects. Kent said that the appropriate verbiage is “adjust” for the plan and “modify” for the TIP. Koepke clarified that the official language in the regulations is “administrative modification.”

Itani asked if the three projects were modifications. Cornell-Howe clarified that the first two were modifications. However, the third project was an amendment because it was added and does not currently exist.

Kent said that the first action is to modify the TIP to move the two 131 projects as described by staff from FY2009 in the TIP to FY2008. Itani added that the TIP should also be amended through this motion as well.

Connors entertained a motion to modify the TIP to move the two 131 projects as described by MDOT staff from FY2009 in the TIP to FY2008 and to amend the TIP to add money to the FY2009 GPA .

MOTION by Belknap, SUPPORT by DeVries, to recommend to the Policy Committee to modify the TIP to move the two 131 projects as described by MDOT staff from FY2009 in the TIP to FY2008 and to amend the TIP to add money to the FY2009 GPA . MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Schweitzer asked if this project would include both northbound and southbound lanes. Kent confirmed that both lanes would be involved, but he couldn't say for sure if repairs would take place on both northbound and southbound lanes this year. Kent left 2008 construction maps, new state maps, and construction brochures for M-37 and the Baldwin interchange for the committee.

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

Connors adjourned the committee at 10:05 am.