

MINUTES

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMMING STUDY GROUP
Monday, March 16, 2009
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI

Conners, Chair of the TPSG Committee, called the meeting to order at 8:34 am. Those present introduced themselves to the Committee.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Scott Conners (<i>Chair</i>)		City of Walker
Jerry Alkema		Allendale Township
Roger Belknap		KCRC
Patrick Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Ron Carr		City of Grandville
Tim Cochran		City of Wyoming
Sandra M. Cornell-Howe		MDOT
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Bill Dooley		City of Wyoming
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Dennis Kent	<i>Proxy for Dan DesJarden</i>	MDOT-Grand Region
		City of Lowell
Brett Laughlin		OCRC
Terry Schweitzer		City of Kentwood
Dan Strikwerda		City of Hudsonville
Steve Warren		KCRC
Michael Young	<i>Proxy for Mike Bouwkamp</i>	City of Rockford
		City of Rockford

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Jeff Dood	City of Rockford
Tom Ecklund	GRFIA
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Tim Haagsma	Gaines Township
Roy Hawkins	GRFIA
Russ Henckel	City of Wyoming
Rich Houtteman	City of Kentwood
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Erick Kind	MDOT-Grand Region
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Vicki Weerstra	MDOT

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George Yang

Voting Members Not Present

Sandy Ayers
Mike Bouwkamp
Christine Burns
Sharon DeLange
Dan DesJarden
Mike DeVries
Jerry Hall
Jan Hoekstra
Steve Peterson
Jared Rodriguez

**CORRECTED AND APPROVED
ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A**

GVMC Staff

Village of Caledonia
City of Rockford
City of Cedar Springs
Village of Sparta
City of Lowell
Grand Rapids Township
City of Cedar Springs
The Rapid
Cascade Township
GR Chamber

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Conners entertained a motion to approve of the February 6, 2009 Transportation Programming Study Group Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Cochran, SUPPORT by DeVries, to approve the February 6, 2009 Transportation Programming Study Group Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. PRIORITIZATION/PROGRAMMING OF ILLUSTRATIVE/ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROJECTS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Itani stated that the purpose of this meeting was to finalize the project list for the stimulus package and determine which projects were to receive funding. He explained that the current stimulus project list of \$13.1 million will need to be divided into an "A" list of projects ensured funding, and a "B" list of projects that will be funded should money become available from other states. Itani also referred to a letter from MDOT that he had distributed, which stated that MDOT and Federal Highways have agreed to limit the funding for financial constraint to 1.022 billion dollars statewide.

Itani explained that GVMC had several discussions with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) about whether the funding should be split 75/25 or 70/30, and that they had reached a consensus. Kent continued, stating that MDOT will move their \$6.9 million ITS project to their "B" list of projects, and that project will be replaced with the 28th Street project. MDOT will also contribute \$800,000 for the John J. Oostema Blvd. airport project and fund the rehabilitation of four bridges in the MPO area. Weerstra provided additional information.

Itani stated that the City of Rockford was requesting to add their Main Street project from Division to Courtland to the "A" stimulus list and added that the Committee will need to decide to either accept this request or leave the project on the "B" list. Young explained the importance of this project to the Rockford community, and Dood added that while he submitted this project for consideration, it never made it to the list seen by the Committee.

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CORRECTED AND APPROVED ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

Itani responded that the project originally submitted was deemed ineligible for federal funding. However, the project does qualify, and therefore is open to consideration by the Committee.

Itani continued, updating the Committee as to where they stand regarding funding. Itani stated that Rockford's project had an estimate of \$127,000. He reiterated that the target for the A list was \$12.264 million dollars, which meant that in order to fit in Rockford's project, all of the communities would need to take a 4% across the board cut on their projects after the John J. Oostema project was removed from the stimulus list. The list would then be over the target by approximately \$146,000, which would be acceptable. However, he stated that a "B" list would also need to be developed, the amount of which would be the difference between the A list and \$14.795 million dollars, which was the total amount available to program. Warren added that the A list was overprogrammed without the addition of Rockford's project. The list included \$12.8 million in projects, and needed to be cut down to \$12.264 million. Discussion ensued.

Conners suggested that the Committee designate Rockford's project as the first priority on the B list. He also asked if the communities will have the flexibility to change limits for projects. Cornell-Howe stated that limits could be changed during the meeting, but that the official list will go to the Policy Committee on Wednesday for approval.

In order to trim down the list, Warren looked at every community's proportional share of projects that have been approved already and gave a recommendation as to the dollar amount that every community needed to cut in order to make the list financially constrained. He stated that every community should be able to decide whether to take the money out of one project or take an across-the-board cut.

Itani explained that he believed that all of these projects would be funded and that it wasn't necessary for everyone to take a 4% cut, even if it meant that the project costs would be over the target amount. Itani suggested that every community take a 2% cut. The resulting list would be \$12.5 million dollars. Itani stated that he would be comfortable adding Rockford's project on top of the \$12.5 million dollar A list as well. Weerstra stated that the Committee should not program over the target amount of \$12.264 million in case no additional funding is received. Discussion ensued.

Cornell-Howe stated that after the Policy Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 18, she would need a list of the projects with their 100% cost, plus the air cost, to program job numbers.

Warren declared that he'd rather leave the A list "as is" at \$12.8 million dollars as to not reduce the cap. According to Federal Highways and MDOT, that list is still financially constrained. However, this could mean that a project could be left out because it wasn't obligated quickly enough. Warren made a motion to approve the \$12.8 million dollar A list. The motion was not supported.

Schweitzer offered another perspective, stating that approving the \$12.8 million dollar list would mean that the City of Kentwood could run the risk that the second phase of their project, which was on the B list, would not get funded. Itani added that keeping the list at \$12.8 million is pushing the limit; however, with a project list of \$12.5 million, it is very realistic that every project on the list will get funded. Cornell-Howe added that if only \$12.2 million dollars is received, then the last project in the door will get cut. Discussion ensued.

CORRECTED AND APPROVED

CORRECTED AND APPROVED ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

Itani stated that if the Committee wants to take a risk-free approach, then they should keep the list to \$12.2 million dollars and take the 4.18% cut. He reminded the committee that projects could still be added to the B list. Bush added that since commitments had been made to Kentwood and East Grand Rapids, the Rockford project could not be first on the B list. Discussion ensued.

Dooley stated that the Committee cannot program the list to the dollar, since the dollar amounts reflected are simply estimates. Exact amounts will not be known until the bids come in. He suggested that the Committee program \$12.5 million in projects to have a better chance of spending all of the funds allocated to this MPO area. Cornell-Howe stated that if the group decides to proceed with lump sum amounts for projects, what is programmed is what every community will receive. If the bids come in over the estimated amount, they will need to decide whether to add in extra funding with local funds or not. DeVries stated that contractors may bid higher in June and July because they will be in higher demand. Discussion ensued.

Conners entertained a motion to approve the economic stimulus A list.

MOTION by Schweitzer, SUPPORT by Dooley, to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the economic stimulus A list of \$12.5 million dollars, reflecting a 2% cut in funding per jurisdiction, and the addition of the City of Rockford's Main Street project as the first priority on the B list.

Bush clarified that jurisdictions could decide how they take their 2% cut—whether it's across the board on all of their projects or a lump sum taken off of one project. Itani stated that if communities had a preference as to how to take this cut, they needed to have it to Robinson by 2:00 pm on Tuesday, March 17. Bush asked that this be added to the motion. Cornell-Howe clarified that, with this information, Committee members also needed to include project limits, air funds, and total costs. Discussion ensued.

Conners returned the motion in question to the floor. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Itani recommended that the Committee move on to program the B list, which could contain \$2.2 million in projects. Conners suggested letting the larger communities select projects first.

For the Kent County Road Commission, Warren added the 6 Mile Road from M-37 to Pine Island Drive project to the B list for \$650,000.

Henckel asked when the Committee will know what the funding level for the B list will be. Itani responded that by July, the feds will know how much of the first 50% of funding has been obligated nationwide. Cornell-Howe reminded the Committee that they still need to do all of the FY2009 projects in the TIP.

For the City of Grand Rapids, DeVries added the Madison Avenue project from Burton to Cottage Grove to the B list for a cost of \$510,000.

For the City of Wyoming, Dooley added the Prairie Parkway from Burlingame to Michael to the B list for a cost of \$200,000.

CORRECTED AND APPROVED

For the Ottawa County Road Commission, Laughlin added the Byron Road from 24th Avenue to the County Line to the B list; however, the project will only be a one-mile portion of what is currently listed. The projected cost is \$350,000 for this project.

For the City of Kentwood, Schweitzer added the East Paris Avenue from 52nd Street to Barden Drive to the B list for \$290,000.

For the City of Walker, Conners added the Leonard Street from Wilson to west city limits to the B list for \$85,000.

Carr explained that the City of Grandville would plan to do a local project instead of adding a project to the B list.

Conners stated that the priority for the projects should start with Rockford, and go down in the order listed. Bush asked to defer the question on prioritization until the amount of funding remaining is determined. Itani stated that, in the future, the Committee will need to reconvene and determine the prioritization of the B list.

Conners entertained a motion to approve the B list of stimulus projects.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Dooley, to approve the B list of stimulus projects as a pool of projects, with the project priority to be decided after the amount of available funding is determined.

Itani asked for clarification as to whether or not this motion would negate the commitment previously made to Rockford that its project would have first priority on the B list. After committee discussion, Conners clarified that this commitment to Rockford stands. However, priority for the rest of the projects would be flexible. Warren stated that, since the B list is illustrative, he expected the Committee to have flexibility to pick and choose from the list in the future, or to revamp it to reflect funding received. Feldt asked if projects not funded on the B list will become backfill priority for the TIP and stated that East Grand Rapids' Plymouth Road project had been promised a backfill spot in the TIP. Itani replied that another TPSG Committee meeting would be scheduled to redevelop the TIP.

Hawkins stated that any remaining balance from the John J. Oostema project should be backfilled into the TIP, based on previous committee discussions. Warren replied that this discussion was before MDOT had been encouraged to fund this project and that the KCRC would work with Hawkins to keep the project from exceeding \$800,000. Hawkins stated that all estimates he received were \$1.6 million and above. Itani asked that this project not be brought back before the Committee until there is an agreement between the KCRC and the airport on how to proceed. Itani clarified that this project will not be considered for TIP backfill if the KCRC won't agree to it.

Warren stated that jurisdictional equity should once again be considered when backfilling the TIP, since it had been considered when developing the TIP before the stimulus package came along. He continued that jurisdictions should not be penalized for advancing projects out of the TIP. Itani responded that the Committee should keep in mind that this is an important issue to everyone; however, the Committee also needs to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the system as a whole.

Conners returned the motion in question to the floor. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CORRECTED AND APPROVED

**CORRECTED AND APPROVED
ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A**

A meeting to backfill the TIP was scheduled for Friday, March 20 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at the KCRC.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

None

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Connors entertained a motion to adjourn the March 16, 2009 TPSG Committee Meeting.

MOTION by Dooley, SUPPORT by Bush, to adjourn the March 16, 2009 TPSG Committee meeting at 10:06 am. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.