

MINUTES

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMMING STUDY GROUP

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

Grand Valley Metro Council

678 Front Ave NW

Zull called the meeting to order at 11:31 am. The Committee members, staff, and guests present introduced themselves.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Chris Zull (*Chair*)

Ron Carr

Tim Cochran

Scott Conners

Mike DeVries

Ken Feldt

Wayne Harrall

Mark Howe

Jack Klein

*Proxy for
Brett Laughlin*

Ray Lenze

Terry Schweitzer

Dan Strikwerda

Steve Warren

City of Grand Rapids

City of Grandville

City of Wyoming

City of Walker

Grand Rapids Township

City of East Grand Rapids

County of Kent

City of Lowell

OCRC

OCRC

MDOT

City of Kentwood

City of Hudsonville

KCRC

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey

Andrea Faber

Abed Itani

Dennis Kent

Steve Kepley

Steve Redmond

Darrell Robinson

John Weiss

GVMC Staff

GVMC Staff

GVMC Staff

MDOT

City of Kentwood

MDOT

GVMC Staff

GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema

Sandy Ayers

Roger Belknap

Jamie Davies

Sharon DeLange

Rick DeVries

Allendale Township

Village of Caledonia

City of Cedar Springs

City of Rockford

Village of Sparta

City of Grand Rapids

APPROVED

Bill Dooley
Jan Hoekstra
Brett Laughlin

APPROVED

ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

City of Wyoming
ITP-The Rapid
OCRC

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Zull entertained a motion to approve the April 4, 2012 Transportation Programming Study Group meeting minutes.

MOTION by Schweitzer, SUPPORT by Cochran, to approve the April 4, 2012 Transportation Programming Study Group meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR PROGRAMMING PROJECTS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Itani stated that GVMC Staff, along with MDOT staff, has been working on updating the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document that exists in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) document to make some much needed improvements. They also created a matrix for adjusting the TIP. Itani noted that the issue with updating this document arose when FHWA staff denied some of the City of Wyoming’s projects because of a lack of clarity in the Policies and Practices document. The area of concentration in updating the document was around the “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” section. Clarification, definition, and documentation were necessary in several areas of this section of the document being that some of the information was out-of-date. GVMC staff presented this document to the Tech Committee, and they made several suggestions. However, they ultimately directed staff to bring the document before the Transportation Programming Study Group for more discussion before approval.

Beginning with the “TIP Amendments” section, Robinson went through the changes with the committee. (Changes were indicated by italics.)

Referring to the first bullet, *“Projects with cost exceeding 20% of the TIP programmed Federal-aid amount,”* Robinson noted that if a project cost exceeds 20% of the TIP programmed Federal amount, it must be a TIP amendment. Itani also noted that if Michigan is designated as unclassifiable for air quality, Staff won’t be required to do an air quality analysis, and that moving an illustrative project into the body of the TIP is a TIP amendment.

Referring to the line that stated: “Amendments require the approval of the *Technical*

and Policy Committees,” Schweitzer stated that there have been a couple of instances where items have been taken straight to the Policy Committee, or where the Committees have taken different actions. He asked how this would be handled. Itani noted that this could be handled one of two ways. First, we can continue with the current process, or we can go back and look at the bylaws and reduce quorum levels, possibly from 19 to 11. Schweitzer suggested that this line be revised to read: “Amendments require the review of the Technical Committee and the approval of the Policy Committee.” Kent noted that the matrix states that items can go straight to the Policy Committee, if necessary.

Robinson then went through the various changes outlined in the “TIP Administrative Modifications” section.

The first change was reflected in the first bullet, which read: “*Changes in Federal-aid cost, more than 10% and less than or equal to 20% of the TIP programmed amount, is an administrative modification and requires MPO staff/Committee approval (before it is obligated).*” Under this bullet also read the following: “*Per Local Agency Programs; projects with a cost increase less than or equal to 10% of the TIP programmed amount do not require MPO action as long as financial constraint is maintained and should be reflected in the next TIP E-file.*” Robinson explained that these changes would give staff the ability to move projects along more quickly, as any projects with cost changes less than 20% could be handled by an administrative modification, and project changes of less than 10% could be handled without any type of action. Robinson asked that the Committee communicate slight changes in cost to Staff so that Staff can make sure that this is reflected in the E-file. Itani reiterated that it’s extremely important that the Committee members tell staff the amounts that they are contracting for. Discussion ensued.

The second change was reflected in the following bullet point: “*Minor Federal-aid changes may be allowed if other local projects are not impacted, and will be reflected in the next TIP E-File (ie-MDOT, ITP, TE, Bridge, Safety, HPP, (earmarks), or other discretionary sources).*” Harrall asked if a jurisdiction wants to move a bridge project from FY2013 to FY2012, how soon it would show up on MDOT’s radar. Itani asked if this could be done with a GPA. Lenze replied that MDOT doesn’t have local GPA’s anymore. Lenze added that there’s no reason why you shouldn’t give staff the authority to amend the TIP for bridge projects, for example, since there’s no competition when jurisdictions are awarded that money. Because of this, Lenze suggested that staff include language on the Policies and Practices document for bridge projects that says that staff can amend the TIP and later on inform the committees about the amendment. Harrall added that this could apply to all of the types of projects listed under this bullet point, including ITP, Safety, HPP, etc.

Robinson asked if the Committee would prefer language that says that these projects could be added to the TIP by staff without formal Committee action. Itani responded that these projects can only be added with the approval of the chair and vice chairs of the Tech and Policy Committees.

Lenze noted that adding a new bridge project to the TIP would be a TIP amendment, but moving the project from year to year is just a modification. Itani clarified that if staff is saying it's a TIP amendment, then staff can move the project forward.

Kent noted that, for new projects, staff should add language saying that modifications can be done by staff. Itani noted that this will only be done if time is short. Redmond asked what would be done in this instance for public involvement. Kent noted that this was discussed with Robinson and Dewey when they revised the document, and it was noted that if the TIP is amended by contacting the Committee chairs, there's no opportunity for public comment at the meeting. Harrall added that there is a public involvement process for new TIPs. Lenze added that if the amendments go through the committee structure, public involvement is clearly included. But another way to go would be through the illustrative list. Itani stated that staff can always call an emergency meeting and open the meeting for public involvement then. Robinson clarified that as long as the projects are on the illustrative list, it should be acceptable to have the approval of the chairs of Tech and Policy. However, this would only happen in a pinch, since under normal conditions, the projects would need to go past Tech and Policy. Discussion ensued. Robinson continued to read through the list of bullets under "TIP Administrative Modifications."

There were no comments on the third bullet: "Revisions that cause projects to switch years can be made by MPO staff with Committee notification; however, if financial constraint and/or another agency project are impacted, MPO Committee approval is required."

For the fourth bullet—"Changes in non-federal funding participation; these modifications will be reflected in the next TIP E-File"—Robinson noted that this topic is what held up the City of Wyoming's project and resulted in the Policies and Practices document being revised. He asked Committee members to let staff know if the cost of any of their projects went up significantly, even if they plan on covering the difference with local funds.

Warren noted that there are references to non-federal funding throughout the Policies document. He stated that he assumed that there are requirements for local match. He asked if there was any documentation for non-grant funded projects. Robinson responded that if it's significant, it must be documented for air quality.

Itani added that if a jurisdiction has a project that's not in the TIP but uses local money, it doesn't need to be in the TIP. He noted that those funds need to be captured in the financial estimates for the plan. Discussion ensued.

Warren asked if jurisdictions were to submit a plan to us, whether federal funding was anticipated or not, if this could be documented in the plan and if this would expedite the process. Itani noted that the only requisite that's needed is that it has to

be a federal aid project. Discussion ensued.

Kent noted that this can be done as a staff action with committee concurrence, and can shorten the process but is still an amendment. Itani added that projects should be kept on the illustrative list if they don't have funds.

Robinson continued to read through the bullets listed, and there were no comments on the rest of the bullets in this section.

Lenze added that, in the following paragraph, the sentence "Administrative modifications do not require Federal approval" is not quite accurate. Discussion ensued.

Dewey noted that, for LRTP amendments, one change included: "Changing air quality conformity model year grouping for a regionally significant project." Discussion ensued.

The following changes were also noted:

- "Administrative modifications do not require Federal approval" was changed to read: "In most cases administrative modifications do not require Federal approval"
- "Non-motorized" was to be added to "regionally significant projects." How non-motorized projects are regionally significant was also to be defined.
- The term "regionally significant" needed to be further clarified.

Zull thanked staff for revising the Policies and Practices document, and entertained a motion to approve the revised Policies and Practices document with the noted changes.

MOTION by Carr, SUPPORT by Feldt, to approve the revised Policies and Practices document with the noted revisions and to bring it back to the Technical Committee for approval. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani noted that the Asset Management Committee will be meeting on Monday to discuss using PASER instead of PAVER, along with other indices. He added that there is currently a consensus among the members to start using PASER as a 1st cut. If the Committee decides to use PASER, there will need to be several policies in place. One that will be recommended is that when there is a dispute about a ranking of a certain segment, the final verdict will come from MPO staff, since MPO staff are unbiased. Discussion ensued.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Zull entertained a motion to adjourn the June 20, 2012 TPSG Committee meeting.

APPROVED

APPROVED
ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

MOTION by Carr, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to adjourn the June 20, 2012 TPSG Committee meeting at 1:25 pm. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.