

MINUTES

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMMING STUDY GROUP
Wednesday, August 20th, 2014

Grand Valley Metro Council

678 Front Ave NW

Schweitzer called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. The Committee members, staff, and guests present introduced themselves.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Terry Schweitzer (<i>Chair</i>)		City of Kentwood
Chris Zull		City of Grand Rapids
Ron Carr		City of Grandville
Tim Cochran		City of Wyoming
Scott Conners		City of Walker
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Wayne Harrall	<i>Proxy for</i>	County of Kent
	<i>Mike DeVries</i>	Grand Rapids Township
Russ Henckel	<i>Proxy for</i>	City of Wyoming
	<i>Bill Dooley</i>	City of Wyoming
Paul Lott		MDOT
Steve Warren		KCRC
Tim Bradshaw		City of Kentwood
Conrad Venema	<i>Proxy for</i>	ITP-The Rapid
	<i>Rod Ghearing</i>	
Brad Sharlow		MDOT

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Tim Haagsma	Gaines Township
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Janice Hoekstra	ITP-The Rapid
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff
Erin Haviland	GVMC Staff
George Yang	GVMC Staff
Mike Brameijer	GVMC Staff
Rick Sprague	KCRC

APPROVED

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema
Sandy Ayers
Sharon DeLange
Mike DeVries
Ken Feldt
Roy Hawkins
Mark Howe
Tom Stressman
Dan Strikwerda
Bill Dooley
Brett Laughlin
Phil Vincent

**APPROVED
ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A**

Allendale Township
Village of Caledonia
Village of Sparta
Grand Rapids Township
City of East Grand Rapids
GRFIA
City of Lowell
City of Cedar Springs
City of Hudsonville
City of Wyoming
OCRC
City of Rockford

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Schweitzer entertained a motion to approve the December 4, 2013 Transportation Programming Study Group (TPSG) meeting minutes.

MOTION by Conner’s, SUPPORT by Devries, to approve the December 4th, 2013 TPSG meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Needs Discussion-

Action: Staff will present identified transportation needs to the committee for discussion. An endorsement of the various needs will be sought for use in the GVMC 2040 MTP.

Snell stated that he met with everyone concerning the different elements involved. The goal today is not to talk about alternatives, what element gets what. We want to focus on the needs of the community. Different committees will be talking over the next few months about the future of transportation. This discussion will feed that process. The idea is to get input from all elements at the table at the same time so that we can move forward. The next step is to work individually and as a group with the communities to address their issues. We need to keep things moving. There is a process for public comment early next month, so if any changes need to be made, they need to be done relatively quickly. With that being said, Snell asked if there are any questions about what is going to be discussed today. Not making final choices today. We are simply looking to get an endorsement. Kent asked Snell if the idea was not to get too involved in a discussion of issues, Snell replied, we could but it would more than likely take up much of the meeting and it might be better discussed offline. Warren raised a question concerning constraints imposed on transportation, is transportation

still under the same restraints historically or can this plan be an expression of what is needed. Snell responded by stating his intention is to formulate a plan of what is needed. Snell went on to state that transportation should not limit the plan to what the Feds would allow but to put in the plan what is needed. Warren stated that this is an opportunity to tell our officials, here is our set of needs and problems that we are facing. What we are spending versus what needs to be spent.

Schweitzer mentioned that this is a wide open discussion, and the members have been given a lot of information and data. Is this focus to work within the material given or leave the discussion wide open? Snell responded by stating that a lot of this information and data should have been information that most communities have seen. The resources are just not there to work on all of the needs, but the idea behind the information and data is to get the word out that here are the needs. These are basic everyday needs or in some cases wants that others have identified that we will have to work through and develop a working list as we move forward. Snell went on to offer that if anyone has questions or comments, he would like to offer a sit down to get a better understanding of individual needs.

Snell turned the table to Venema for a discussion about Transit. Venema went on to discuss the plan, it was adopted in 2010. Discussion has started and revisions to the plan might need to be made so Transit might be revisiting the idea of a new 20-yr plan. The 1st phase of the plan was frequency improvements, extended evening and weekend services, this has been implemented already. Originally in this plan Transit has 2 BRT corridors, Laker Line and the Silver Line. The recommendations of this plan are more opportunistic. The next five years need to be about maximizing the capital. A main need would be transit with emphasis on the transit corridors. The idea would be to find creative ways to offset the spending. Snell went on to state that in the discussions with ITP the Beltline corridor was discussed, it is a main source of congestion. When looking at transit, many things have to be factored in terms of the land use pattern and road blocks. This needs to be a regional effort and process. Venema went on to explain that the best way to leverage money would be to put in place a partnership proposal to make their case, using the Laker Line as an example. This is how to be competitive and draw funds out. Zull asked about the upcoming success of Silver Line, would this expected to set the new standard for Transit. One of the top priorities is reaching out to the underserved; will there be a culture shift because of the Silver Line? Venema stated he would like to see more Silver Line projects be put in place; the justification would need to be there. Zull asked if the justification is the use, to which Venema relied that and the cost. Zull asked about ridership updates and the success of the Line, Venema stated yes they would offer those updates to the members. Discussion Ensued.

Zull brought up congestion as the next topic for discussion. The discussion was about Transit increasing density. Our tradition congestion methods might not be the best method to evaluate. Now forty people on a bus are more efficient than forty individual vehicles on the road. When talking about congestion and delay to we shift our way of thinking to more of a person delay rather than a vehicle delay. Snell responded that when the model for congestion is done, we look for a difference in shift in the BRT. Snell went on to explain that down the road they will be shifting to more of a time of day analysis. The current model

is not set up for this type of analysis. We have to start looking at things differently because of the BRT than how things were done in the past. The model will begin to reflect the reality of what is out there. Itani stated that the first step is to determine that it is deficient and the next step is why. The model itself does not recognize that, it just sees the capacity and the volume. Schweitzer stated that what this discussion might be pointing at is that in the past we looked at these things in silos, congestion management, pavement, non-motorized, sounds like as we go forward it should be about what will give us the best bang for our buck. Itani agreed and stated that in internal discussions it was brought up to have different spreadsheets with more relevant information. This will be coming down the road. Itani mentioned that the data was collected and fed to the model, which is where the congestion deficiencies came from. Schweitzer mentioned how long it will take to implement once the plan is adopted and approved. Itani stated the MPO's have 2-years to come into compliance with Map 21 requirements. Discussion Ensued.

Snell discussed the 2040 Capacity Deficiencies handout. The shaded ones are currently slated to be addressed. These will go through the Congestion Management Process to weed out things that do not make sense. There will be an opportunity for discussion prior to anything going out to the public. No air quality restrictions at this time. Warren asked what level of service the deficiencies are based, to which Snell commented level D. Warren stated at this point how much more flexibility do we have. Warren stated that the focus should be on the corridors that can be worked on versus the ones that cannot. Itani agreed stating that some corridors will have either a financial restraint or a capacity restraint. Snell stated to focus on 17-20, these will be the new 2018-2020 tip. Discussed Ensued.

Snell went on to discuss the next handout, the GVMC Intersections of Interest. The intersections of interest are a combination of legacy intersections that we've had from different studies. These are not all congestion, they could be safety or sight distance projections. The idea is not only to address the intersections brought up during the previous meetings, but to come up with improvements. The members were encouraged to let Snell know if one needs to be on the list that is not listed. Discussion Ensued.

Robinson went on to discuss Freight. The Freight Discussion handout was discussed. Kent helped with the effort to complete the draft. Robinson went on to define what freight is, and what the important freight inventory is in this area. Freight is trucking, rail, and air. The first step was to define inventory, the next step was to identify the projects that transportation has applied for. One project that is done or near completion is the 44th street. This was a higher freight capacity corridor. Some areas that have been improved are 131 South to the Indiana Michigan border. Itani, the bottom line with freight is there are not a lot of freight networks; the idea is to know the local freight networks, so that when attempting to improve congestion we can engage the right people. For informational purposes transportation put together a document to compare where the capacity deficiencies are, what the issues are and where they might be in the future. Discussion Ensued.

Snell talked about non-motorized needs. \$58 million dollars in need. If any changes are needed, let Snell know.

Yang went on to discuss the Safety handout. Data is updated annually. Current data is 2012. Yang updates the data as it comes in annually. The website is full of all the stats that have been updated over time. Yang stated that the data analysis is still being conducted. Zull stated that the city was working on pedestrian and bike safety measures as well.

Snell discussed the Pavement Management Needs Analysis handout. The most important part of the handout is the back. The more money you put in, the better the line will be. The number is much higher than in previous years due to the higher cost to fix the issues. The idea is to take the format from this analysis and use it across the board on other analysis. The analysis will show, if you invest this much, this is what the results will be. Discussion Ensued.

Snell stated the goal with this meeting was for endorsement purposes, revisions will be made over the next few days. Snell asked for an endorsement on what was covered during the meeting. Public involvement will take place soon. Schweitzer asked for a consensus at least in concept and let the communities know they can make changes over the next week. Consensus given by the members.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Schweitzer asked whether there were any updates, hearing none he moved for adjournment.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Schweitzer adjourned the August 20, 2014 TPSG Committee meeting at 11:14 am.