

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, January 21, 2009
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

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

Peter Varga	<i>(Chair)</i>	The Rapid
Jerry Alkema		Allendale Township
Alex Arends		Alpine Township
Pat Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Rick DeVries		City of Grand Rapids
Jeff Dood		City of Rockford
Ken Feldt		City of East Grand Rapids
Jim Holtrop	<i>Proxy for Don VanDoeselaar</i>	Ottawa County
		City of Hudsonville
Jim Koslosky		GRFIA
Dal McBurrows		MDOT
Sandi Frost Parrish		Kent County Commissioner
David Pasquale		City of Lowell
Jon Rice	<i>Proxy for Bob Homan</i>	KCRC
		Plainfield Township
Terry Schweitzer		City of Kentwood

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	GVMC Staff
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Steve Warren	KCRC

Voting Members Not Present

Larry Bruursema	OCRC
Christine Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins	Cascade Township
Dick Davies	Cannon Township
Sharon DeLange	Village of Sparta
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
George Haga	Ada Township

Bryan Harrison
Don Hilton, Sr.
Dennis Hoemke
Bob Homan
Ken Krombeen
Jim McIntyre
Jim Miedema
Dale Mohr
Audrey Nevins
Rich Pastoor
Jack Poll
Darrel Schmalzel
Don VanDoeselaar
Toby VanEss

Caledonia Charter Township
Gaines Township
Algoma Township
Plainfield Township
City of Grandville
Courtland Township
Jamestown Township
Georgetown Township
Byron Township
City of Wyoming
City of Wyoming
City of Walker
City of Hudsonville
Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve of the November 19, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Holtrop, SUPPORT by Rice, to approve of the November 19, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL CLASS SYSTEM AMENDMENT

Speaking on **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) was seeking to upgrade the current functional classification of Belmont Avenue from an Urban Local Road to an Urban Collector on the segment between Post Drive and Jupiter Avenue. This segment was once classified as an Urban Minor Arterial prior to the construction of Jupiter Avenue. In 2000, the minor arterial designation was changed to Jupiter Avenue. Since that time, traffic volumes on Belmont have increased steadily. The change will allow the KCRC to obtain Federal Funds in the future. The Technical Committee recommended approval of this change at their January 7 meeting. Questions and comments ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the TIP to include the KCRC request identified by Staff.

MOTION by Koslosky, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of upgrading the current functional classification of Belmont Avenue from an Urban Local Road to an Urban Collector on the segment between Post Drive and Jupiter Avenue. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee of four requests

to amend the FY2008-FY2011 TIP. The first request, from the Kent County Road Commission, was to change the phasing of their 4 Mile project currently located in FY2010 and FY2011 in the TIP. The project will now be implemented in two phases instead of three, and the total cost of the project will increase from approximately \$3,200,000 to \$4,000,000. Robinson stated that the additional funds would be covered through a local match, and no additional federal funding would be given to this project.

The second project was a request from GVMC Staff to amend the FY2009 TIP to deobligate the Congestion Management System (CMS) project and to delete this line item from the TIP. Robinson said that Staff was also requesting to move a City of East Grand Rapids project—Breton Avenue from Lake to Hall—to Advance Construction Conversion for FY2009. The East Grand Rapids project will then receive the funding from the project that GVMC is deobligating. Itani clarified that this project is an advance construct project, and that when GVMC moved to the new format of the TIP, the project remained in FY2008 instead of moving to FY2009. Therefore, if this change isn't made, the City of East Grand Rapids stands to lose their Advance Construction Funding. "Carryover" funds from Congestion Management from FY2009 will then be used to fund the Congestion Management System project.

Robinson continued, explaining the third request, from the City of Lowell, to amend the FY2009 TIP to include a Federal Safe Routes to School program project. The project is located on Gee Drive from Creekside Park to Alden Nash and will include the construction of a 10' wide path. The grant total is \$269,700. Lowell is the only entity in the area to receive funding through this program.

The final request was from the City of Grand Rapids to amend an enhancement project awarded in 1999 into the current TIP. In order for the project to be obligated, it must be located in the 2009 TIP. Itani added that he was told by MDOT that the money was still available for this project. Discussion ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the projects identified by Staff.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Arends, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of amending the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the amendment requests from the Kent County Road Commission, GVMC Staff, the City of Lowell, and the City of Grand Rapids, as identified by Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. **PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A** and a handout, Snell updated the Committee on the status of the Pavement Management System. He stated that this past year, using the Pavement Condition Assessment Van, Staff covered 1,570 miles of the federal aid system and determined the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for each segment of federal aid eligible roadway in the study area. On average, the system condition improved slightly over a year ago. However, while it has improved, the system itself is still sliding, which is a direct reflection on current funding levels. Snell is currently working with REGIS to get the data out. Snell stated that he asked the Technical Committee if they had a preference as to when he started collecting pavement data this year, and that they didn't have a problem with him starting early.

Itani added that in addition to surveying the federal aid system and the local system, GVMC also completed surveying pavement conditions in the cities of Portage and Novi. GVMC charged these cities for the services. Questions, comments and discussion ensued.

VII. INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Snell continued, speaking on **Item VII: Attachment A** and a handout. He informed the committee on the status of ITS deployment in the area, stating that in the last federal transportation bill, the region received a little over \$10 million to expand ITS deployment. Actual expansion of ITS in the area will begin in spring of 2009 with completion by the fall of 2010. Highlights of this expansion include the installation of 5 additional dynamic message signs, and instrumentation of several major arterial corridors including 28th, 44th, Division, Kalamazoo, and Alpine Avenues. The expansion in conjunction with another project planned in 2010 by MDOT will complete the instrumentation of all the area's freeways with the exception of M-6. The project will also improve and maximize the efficiency of how the ITS elements communicate by installing several miles of new fiber optic communications cable to make the transfer of additional video to the traffic control centers at MDOT and the City of Grand Rapids. For the first time, the system will track specific speeds and monitor sudden changes that may indicate a problem.

The project also represents a unique partnership between local road agencies, MDOT, the Kent Intermediate School District (KISD), Kent County, and potentially GVSU, Davenport, and GRCC. The Kalamazoo Avenue corridor in Kentwood will be using communications fiber owned by the Kentwood School district. Through a regional agreement with KISD, school districts will be able to "hop on" the regional transportation ITS network and share school information with KISD. As the system matures other school districts will also be allowed to join. The partnership will allow everyone to share in the cost of development and maintenance of the core communications system in the region. Security measures have been designed into the project to assure the data carried on the system remains secure.

Varga asked if there would be a request in the next authorization bill for additional ITS funding to build on the program. Itani responded that if earmarks are allowed, there would be a request. Snell announced that there would be a stakeholders' meeting the end of February.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani passed out a publication from Transportation Weekly that analyzed the stimulus package and how much money the MPO area could stand to receive. He emphasized that, at this point, funding levels are only a guess, but it appears that the total will be 30 billion for 2 years. Itani stated that MDOT had said to count on an amount equal to FY2009, which would be 8 million dollars for two years. At this time, it appears that only the federal aid system will be eligible for funding, and that there will be between 120 and 180 days to obligate the projects. If the projects aren't obligated within this time frame, the funding will be lost. All of the projects will be 100% federally funded.

Itani recommended that the Committee look at FY2010 and FY2011 in the TIP, and if a construction job in the TIP is ready to go, that project could be moved forward with stimulus money. FY2010 and FY2011 in the TIP would then need to be reprogrammed.

However, he stated that this was only a possibility and that he would have to wait to find out if this could be done. Itani stated that the list of stimulus projects includes 115 million worth of projects, and at best, the MPO will receive 12 million dollars.

Itani stated that an illustrative list needed to be created for projects not currently in the TIP and expressed his intention to call the TIP development committee together again to determine a strategy for choosing stimulus projects. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Varga entertained a motion to adjourn the January 21, 2009 Policy Committee Meeting.

MOTION by Dood, SUPPORT by Schweitzer, to adjourn the January 21, 2009 Policy Committee Meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.