

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, November 19, 2008
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Peter Varga (<i>Chair</i>)		The Rapid
Larry Bruursema		OCRC
Pat Bush		City of Grand Rapids
Jim Holtrop		Ottawa County
Jim Koslosky		GRFIA
Ken Krombeen		City of Grandville
Dal McBurrows		MDOT
Sandra Otey	<i>Proxy for Bill Cousins</i>	Cascade Township
		Cascade Township
Dave Pasquale		City of Lowell
Jon Rice	<i>Proxy for Bob Homan Sandi Frost Parrish</i>	KCRC
		Plainfield Township
Darrel Schmalzel		Kent County
Keith VanBeek		City of Walker
Don VanDoeselaar		City of Kentwood
		City of Hudsonville

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Erick Kind	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	RWBC-WMEAC
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Steve Warren	KCRC
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Marta Brechting	Alpine Township
Christine Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Bill Cousins	Cascade Township

Dick Davies
 Sharon DeLange
 Mike DeVries
 Rick DeVries
 Jeff Dood
 Ken Feldt
 George Haga
 Bryan Harrison
 Don Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Bill Holland
 Bob Homan
 Jim McIntyre
 Jim Miedema
 Audrey Nevins
 Sandi Frost Parrish
 Rich Pastoor
 Jack Poll
 Bill Wiersma

Cannon Township
 Village of Sparta
 Grand Rapids Township
 City of Grand Rapids
 City of Rockford
 City of East Grand Rapids
 Ada Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Georgetown Township
 Plainfield Township
 Courtland Township
 Jamestown Township
 Byron Township
 Kent County Commissioner
 City of Wyoming
 City of Wyoming
 Tallmadge Township

Varga noted a change to the agenda. Since Brechting, the Policy Committee vice chair, was no longer serving on the committee, Varga stated that a new vice chair needed to be elected. He asked the floor for nominations, and entertained a motion for Koslosky to be elected to fill this position.

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Rice, to elect Koslosky as vice chair of the Policy Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve of the September 17, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Varga, to approve of the September 17, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma declared that he was surprised that the price of gas didn't go up after the election.

IV. FY2008-2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Speaking on **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the committee that three different jurisdictions were requesting to amend or modify the TIP. The first request, from the City of Hudsonville, was to provide Surface Transportation Program Urban (STPU) funding for a previously submitted FY2009 CMAQ project that was determined to be ineligible for CMAQ funding by FHWA and MDOT. The project is located on 32nd Avenue at the I-196 interchange. The City

was requesting to advance construct the project in FY2009 and be reimbursed (advance construct conversion) in FY2010. The second request, from MDOT, was to modify two projects in the FY2009 TIP, make two cost revisions to existing projects in the TIP, and amend three additional projects into the FY2009 TIP. Kent described the projects in detail. The last request, from the KCRC, was to add a High Priority Project to the FY2009 TIP. The project is a 10-foot-wide nonmotorized pathway to connect the Musketawa Trail to the White Pine Trail. The earmark project will be implemented in two phases. Phase one will include the design engineering, while the second phase will include construction.

Varga entertained a motion to amend/modify the TIP to include the projects identified by Staff.

MOTION by Koslosky, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of amending/modifying the TIP to include the City of Hudsonville, MDOT, and KCRC projects identified by Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. **SAFETY PROJECTS (TIP Amendment)**

Speaking on **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson reported that MDOT has announced the local STP Safety Projects and High Risk Rural Road Programs selected for the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC) for FY2009. He referred to the Selected FY2009 STP Safety Projects list included in the agenda packet, and stated that there was one change to the list from the last Technical Committee Meeting. The Leonard Street at 24th Avenue project is now listed as a regular Safety Project, not a High Risk Rural Road project. These projects needed to be incorporated into the FY2008-2011 TIP and required a TIP amendment.

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

MOTION by Bush, SUPPORT by Rice, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of amending the FY2008-2011 TIP to contain the STP Safety Projects and the High Risk Rural Road Program discussed by Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. **FY2009 CMAQ PROJECT REPLACEMENT TIP AMENDMENT**

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that a project proposed for FY2009 CMAQ funding was later determined to be ineligible for that type of funding and needed to be replaced. The total amount of available funds to be programmed was \$323,336 in federal funds, as indicated on the attachment. The Technical Committee recommended replacement of the ineligible project with two potential CMAQ projects at their last meeting. Robinson needed the recommendation of the Policy Committee to move forward with performing an air quality analysis for these two projects and, should they be determined to be eligible, staff will come back at a later time and amend them into the TIP.

Varga entertained a motion to approve of the two replacement projects and to move forward with air quality analysis.

MOTION by Bruursema, SUPPORT by Bush, to recommend to the GVMC Board approval of the Vergennes at Pettis Avenue Project and the 20th Avenue at Baldwin Street project, so long as both projects are determined to be eligible after the air quality analysis is completed.

Questions and discussion ensued.

Varga called into question the motion on the floor. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FY2010-2013 TIP

Referring to **Item VII: Attachment A**, Robinson announced that he is starting the FY2010-2013 STIP/TIP development process, which follows the TIP development schedule included in the agenda. He'll begin to program STP-Urban and EDF "C projects at the TPSG meeting in December. CMAQ projects will be handled shortly thereafter.

Robinson stated that he had just received revenue estimates through FY2012. However, revenue for FY2013 is still unknown. Itani stated that revenue estimates are a guess and that SAFETEA-LU expires this year. He clarified that the feds will allow the last year of the bill to be used for funding discussions. Therefore, the projections from MDOT for 2010 and 2011 reflect 2009 levels, or a 0% increase. However, this amount could always go down. The 2010 census could also change the amount of funding received. GVMC is planning on being very conservative when programming the TIP so that projects hopefully won't need to be deleted. Itani also stated that, during the development of the TIP, an illustrative list will be developed. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Holtrop asked the committee how funding from a proposed economic stimulus package to repair roads and bridges would be administered. Itani stated that with discussions he had had with other MPOs and government employees, the feds don't know how the funding would be administered, as of yet. However, Itani has expressed his belief that any funding received should be 100% federal with no matching funds, and that earmarks should come from the Long Range Transportation Plan. Varga said that, if anything, the funding would be fast-tracked and distributed to the entities that could distribute it the quickest. Rice said that there is some advantage in simply granting funds to each agency.

VIII. PROPOSED PM_{2.5} NONATTAINMENT AREA FOR KENT AND OTTAWA

Speaking on **Item VIII: Attachment A**, Itani provided the committee an update on the status of the nonattainment area designations for PM_{2.5} for West Michigan. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) recommended that only Kent County be included in the nonattainment area for PM_{2.5}. The EPA disagreed with this assessment, stating that the appropriate nonattainment area for this pollutant should be Kent and Ottawa County, since the data clearly showed that Ottawa County was contributing to PM_{2.5} levels in Kent County.

Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) recently provided a letter of support to the EPA for placing both Kent and Ottawa Counties into a two-county nonattainment area for particulate matter. GVMC believes that if Kent County is asked to reduce emissions for this pollutant, they will need the help of Ottawa County in order to do so. The EPA is expected to make final designation decisions by December 18, 2008. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Sevensma stated that the last time Kent County went from nonattainment to attainment a large portion of CMAQ funding was lost and asked if there was an advantage to being in a nonattainment area. Itani clarified that with the way the regulations are written, if an area goes from nonattainment to attainment, they would still receive CMAQ funding, but that amount may be approximately 10% less. The actual number would depend on a specific formula.

IX. MDOT 5-YEAR PROGRAM

Kent updated the committee on MDOT's FY2008-2012 5-Year Program, which is in the process of being updated through FY2013. At this point, there are many unknowns about funding, especially for FY2013. Even over the past couple years, a few modifications have had to be made due to increasing costs. Kent gave the Ada Bridge project as an example. However, in the current FY2008-2011 TIP, not many changes are expected for what was programmed for Grand Rapids. MDOT intends to keep moving forward with most projects at this point, but has made some minor tweaks to their letting schedule. Kent provided additional information.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani drew the Committee's attention to the Executive Summary from the Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2) handout that had been distributed before the meeting. Varga explained the handout as well as the Task Force's recommendation to double the investment in funding for transportation for the State of Michigan. TF2 had discussed eliminating the gas tax and then taxing the total amount sold to make the gas tax more "inflation-proof." Varga stated that every detail of the final report was unanimously approved by the task force, and since so much work had gone into it, he didn't expect many of the committee members to let this project go.

Kent followed that MDOT will be able to provide a match for 2009 federal funds, but will be limited in 2010. Rice said that sometimes, when MDOT can't match federal aid, the KCRC can. He stated that a contingency plan should be in place so that no federal aid goes back to Washington.

Varga asked Stypula how GVMC would address the recommendations from TF2. Stypula commented that he had already taken the report and its recommendations to GVMC's Legislative Committee, and that he has the opportunity to work with all the stakeholders to craft something in the lame duck session for the new legislative session.

Rice asked Varga if TF2 had looked at implementing a mileage tax. Varga stated that it was included in the report, but was not included in the list of

recommendations. Varga encouraged the committee to weigh in about TF2's recommendations with their legislators. Stypula stated that this discussion will be a number one issue at the upcoming legislative breakfast. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Dewey noted that there is temporary schedule change for the Pere Marquette. The train will be leaving at 6:30 a.m. instead of 7:30 a.m. until December 4. She also stated that for Amtrak's last fiscal year, ridership on the Pere Marquette was up 6.6%. Lastly, she noted that a Bicycle Lane Liability Workshop will be held on Wednesday, December 3rd from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Kent County Courthouse. She asked that committee members e-mail her to RSVP.

Varga returned the discussion regarding TF2's final report to the floor, and asked Stypula if it would be beneficial for GVMC to have a motion from the Policy Committee regarding this report. Stypula stated that it would.

Varga entertained a motion for the Policy Committee to endorse TF2's report.

MOTION by Koslosky, SUPPORT by Rice, to recommend that the Policy Committee endorse the Transportation Funding Task Force's final Report.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bush asked GVMC staff to look into why, as of FY2010, locals can't use CMAQ money for signal optimization projects.

Stypula announced that VanBeek, a long-standing committee member, has accepted a new position as the Assistant County Administrator in Ottawa County. Stypula thanked VanBeek for his work and for serving on the Committee.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Varga adjourned the November 19, 2008 Policy Committee Meeting at 10:52 am.