

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, November 19, 2014
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Krombeen, chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:36 am.

Being that there were no new members or guests in attendance, no introductions were necessary.

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

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ken Krombeen, <i>Chair</i> | | City of Grandville |
| Gail Altman | | Jamestown Township |
| Alex Arends | | Alpine Township |
| Mark DeClercq | | City of Grand Rapids |
| George Haga | | Ada Township |
| Dennis Kent | <i>Proxy for Mark Howe</i> | MDOT-Grand Region |
| John Lanum | <i>Proxy for Dal McBurrows</i> | City of Lowell |
| | | MDOT |
| | | MDOT |
| Jim Miedema | | OCRC |
| Nick Monoyios | <i>Proxy for Peter Varga</i> | ITP-The Rapid |
| | | ITP-The Rapid |
| Darrel Schmalzel | | City of Walker |
| Terry Schweitzer | <i>Proxy for Rich Houtteman</i> | City of Kentwood |
| | | City of Kentwood |
| Steve Warren, <i>Vice Chair</i> | | KCRC |

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Andrea Faber | GVMC Staff |
| Abed Itani | GVMC Staff |
| Erick Kind | MDOT |
| Darrell Robinson | GVMC Staff |
| Norm Sevensma | WMEAC-RWBC |
| Jim Snell | GVMC Staff |
| John Weiss | GVMC Staff |
| Mike Zonyk | GVMC Staff |

Voting Members Not Present

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Jerry Alkema | Allendale Township |
| Henry Betten | Cannon Township |
| Dave Bulkowski | Kent County Commissioner |
| Dan Carlton | Georgetown Township |
| Jamie Davies | City of Rockford |
| Eric DeLong | City of Grand Rapids |

Mike DeVries
 Bryan Harrison
 Don R. Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Jim Holtrop
 Rich Houtteman
 Mark Howe
 Dal McBurrows
 Audrey Nevins-Weiss
 Richard Pastoor
 Jack Poll
 Chuck Porter
 Brian Ryks
 Joe Slonecki
 Dan Strikwerda
 Ben Swayze
 Thad Taylor
 Roger Towsley
 Cameron Van Wyngarden
 Toby VanEss
 Peter Varga

Grand Rapids Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Ottawa County
 City of Kentwood
 City of Lowell
 MDOT
 Byron Township
 City of Wyoming
 City of Wyoming
 Courtland Township
 GRFIA
 City of East Grand Rapids
 City of Hudsonville
 Cascade Township
 City of Cedar Springs
 Village of Sand Lake
 Plainfield Township
 Tallmadge Township
 ITP-The Rapid

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the September 17, 2014 Policy Committee minutes.

MOTION by DeClercq, SUPPORT by Altman, to approve of the September 17, 2014 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sevensma shared that, a couple weeks ago, he flew to Seattle and took the train back, but missed the connection in Chicago by five minutes and had to stay there for 24 hours. The last time he missed a connection in Chicago a couple years ago, they sent him back to Grand Rapids on a bus, which they don't do anymore. The train Sevensma took to Grand Rapids was then an hour late getting into the station. He noted that Amtrak sent him a couple of surveys after this trip, which he returned with feedback.

IV. **FY2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS**

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson explained that the following organizations were requesting to amend/modify the TIP:

- (1) ITP-The Rapid requested to modify the costs of three FY2015 TIP projects: bus tire lease, computer software, and planning funds.
- (2) MDOT requested amendment/modifications to the FY2014-2017 TIP, which included a cost increase to a GPA, adding two new FY2015 General Program Account (GPA's), and a cost update to a project listed in the TIP. The specific projects included Grand Rapids TSC HMA Crack Treatments (Construction), I-196 WB Off-Ramp to M-11 pavement repairs (construction), I-196 WB off-ramp to M-11

- Pavement Repairs (PE), I-96 Grand River to Cascade Road Mill and Resurface/CPM (construction).
- (3) The City of Grand Rapids requested an administrative modification to change the project limits of one FY2015 TIP project to coincide with a project that already occurred. The project, currently listed as Fulton Street—Woodward Avenue to Lakeside Avenue at 0.29 miles should change to Fulton Street—Wallinwood Avenue to Sunnybrook Avenue and the increased length would be 0.383. However, the grant amount would remain the same.
 - (4) KCRC requested to add two MDOT funded FY2015 TAP projects—Burroughs Street Bridge PM Project (Historic Restoration) and Caledonia Trails—Phase 1. It was noted that the Burroughs Street Bridge project has already been approved, while the Caledonia trails project is a conditional commitment only at this time.
 - (5) The City of Wyoming requested to move a FY2014 project, Interurban Trail and Kentwood Connector, that was not obligated to FY2015. This is possible due to the TAP program having a separate obligational authority that is typical to road projects. Robinson noted that this project won't impact the FY2015 TIP or other road projects.

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the requested amendments/modifications to the FY2014-2017 TIP.

MOTION by Schweitzer, SUPPORT by DeClercq, to approve of the amendments/modifications to the FY2014-2017 TIP requested by ITP-The Rapid, MDOT, the City of Grand Rapids, the KCRC, and the City of Wyoming. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN—FUTURE FUNDING STRATEGY

Snell gave the Committee an overview of a handout that described the congestion management process, including various cafeteria options as well as information on the corridors that staff deems to become capacity deficient in the future, projected traffic volumes, etc. Snell noted that, as part of this process, Staff looks at all of the options to increase capacity that don't involve widening, such as nonmotorized, ITS, land use options, etc. Snell noted that the capacity problem can be solved in 2/3 of the capacity-deficient corridors through such cost effective, less invasive corrective options. Snell noted that the list of projects that do include widening will move forward through the process, including consultation, public involvement, etc., which will be occurring between now and Christmas. Snell added that there will be a public meeting on the MTP in December, and the Technical Committee will act on approving the document in January.

Altman congratulated Snell on a job well done.

Warren commented that it would be helpful to see Snell's handout in a blown-up format that shows the corridors of concern. He suggested using a "corridor approach" in moving forward, which would include identifying plans along some of the corridors in an effort to more easily translate this information to the public and the media.

Itani responded that some of the deficiencies are stock locations and less than .1 of a mile, so they don't lend themselves to a corridor perspective per se. Some, however, would, and for these larger segments, staff can go back and highlight those. Snell commented that this handout is not for public consumption. While this information feeds into the MTP, it doesn't go directly into it. Snell added that staff just wanted to show the

Committee the connection between the CMP document and the rest of the plan. Discussion ensued.

Snell explained that the other piece of his presentation is an action item. Snell stated that every committee member should have a handout that discusses the financial plan and financial strategy for the MTP moving forward. He explained the handout and added that the MPO has a pot of \$505 million that can be distributed however the MPO and member agencies see fit and that the Committee would need to devise a strategy for allocating that funding. Snell then explained four approaches that the Committee could choose from, which included: (1) a do nothing approach, (2) a dedicated path approach, (3) continuing the current approach of dedicating all of the funding to pavement, and (4) an illustrative additional non-federal funding approach. Snell noted that this is for analysis purposes only and that the decision today will not lock the Committee into this approach in the future. All of these approaches look at five different elements, including congestion mitigation, non-motorized, pavement management, transit, and safety, all of which except pavement has a dedicated funding source. Snell explained that staff identified the amount of funding that comes through the dedicated sources and assigned that to its respective area and determined the level of need. Snell noted that there is \$2.5 billion in identified need to bring the system to where the region would like it to be by 2040. Snell explained that the \$505 million is not dedicated to any specific transportation element and can be spent however the MPO sees fit. He added that the Technical Committee acted on this item earlier this month, and they selected the third option--to continue allocating funding to pavement and to program the TIP accordingly. Snell explained that he also analyzed a what-if scenario in case extra funding becomes available. Discussion ensued.

Snell added that, once it's approved, the MTP will need to be turned around immediately and reopened in order to address performance measures in two areas—safety and National Highway System (NHS) condition. If the MPO fails to meet the goals it sets, there will be ramifications on funding, etc. Itani provided an update on the status of incorporating performance measures into the MTP and gave several examples of safety goals set by other MPOs. He cautioned the Committee members to make the goals achievable.

Itani clarified that the investment strategies in the handout are to meet the goals in the plan itself. He reiterated the recommendation from the Tech Committee—to allocate \$500 million in STP to pavement—because the first thing the Committee needs to make sure is that there are good roads. He explained that the analysis shows that \$33 million is needed to maintain the system and improve it. Currently, the MPO is spending \$11 million. Discussion ensued.

DeClercq stated that he understood the Technical Committee's recommendation because if there isn't a solid pavement base, the MPO can't take advantage of any of the other transportation modes on the table. Schweitzer added that this decision seemed to be consistent with FHWA because the focus is on preservation. He suggested using the MTP to show what the Committee would like to do in order to give the Committee an idea of how much money is needed. Itani added that that was the intent of this exercise. Additional discussion ensued.

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve of the Technical Committee's recommendation to select the third investment strategy of allocating the available

funding to pavement.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to approve of the Technical Committee's recommendation to select option 3—continuing the current approach of dedicating all of the funding to pavement in 2040 (\$505,000,000 flexible funding available)—as a basis for future investment to improve the transportation system within the Grand Valley Metro Council MPO area. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Warren asked for clarification on why FHWA required the MPO to develop a MTP now and goals and objectives later. Itani explained that this happened because it took some time to get the new regulations in place after MAP-21 was developed. He then explained the timeline for the state and the MPO to approve performance measures.

Warren stated that the amount of money the MPO dedicates toward road improvements is a small percentage of what's invested in roads overall. He added that the MTP shouldn't be just about what Committee members are investing in federal funds. He noted that the KCRC has a long-range plan and within this document, they've laid out different scenarios for what they can achieve along with goals. He stated that other jurisdictions also have similar plans. He suggested that, at some point, the Committee should pool these plans to develop a collective vision for the future. He stated that it seems like we're talking about how we invest the \$500 million when it's really about the individual decisions happening around this table. He suggested the goal of achieving 85% of pavement in good or fair condition and writing about how federal funds assist us in achieving that objective. Itani replied that what Warren is describing is included in objective 4, the "unconstrained alternative," and will be one of the next steps the Committee undertakes. He noted that that would be an unconstrained goal and that FHWA does not require you to stick to a financially constrained scenario if you have additional money you can pour into achieving your goals. However, you have to be able to achieve the goals you set with the funding that's available. The next step will be determining how much goals will cost and how the Committee will achieve them. Itani also noted that between now and when the draft document is completed, staff will be talking with the members about their future goals and the costs for these goals, and this information will be included in an illustrative scenario. Discussion ensued.

VI. NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION STATEWIDE REVIEW

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Zonyk stated that the National Functional Classification (NFC) statewide review is officially underway. The NFC determines federal-aid fund eligibility, so therefore, this review is very important for Act 51 agencies. MDOT will be coordinating the reviews with the MPOs and the appropriate agencies within their area boundaries. Zonyk explained that MDOT will be holding NFC meetings similar to the urban area adjustment group meetings. These meetings will be informational workshops to help us begin to review the system and prepare our NFC revision proposals. The anticipated timeframe for review workshop meetings is September 2014-April 2015. A meeting regarding this has been set on December 19 and all Act 51 agencies should attend. Itani added that this is an important exercise for the locals, and Zonyk added that any modifications will be going through the MPO process.

VII. GENERAL PROGRAM ACCOUNT (GPA)

Robinson stated that MDOT has several GPA accounts listed in the TIP document and that statewide MPO groups got together and developed a process to add GPAs for local projects. Starting immediately, the MPO will take many projects listed in the TIP and put them into GPAs in order to minimize the need to amend the TIP and streamline the process. Staff will not need to take GPA projects forward to the Committees. GPAs may be used for reconstruction projects, CMAQ projects, etc. Robinson noted that staff will work through the Tech Committee to accomplish this.

Kent added that MDOT is expanding the use of GPAs to additional work types, but there will be limits. For instance, major projects that involve widening will be listed in a line item as well as any project over \$5 million. Kent explained how the GPA categories will be listed as a separate tab in the TIP.

VIII. LAKER LINE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (LPA)

Monoyios, long range planner at the Rapid and project manager of the Laker Line study, presented a Power Point on their vision for the next BRT line. He noted that work on this endeavor started last summer, and he informed the Committee about the project scope and timeline as well as public outreach. The Rapid received over 1000 comments on an online website they provided. The alignment for the project goes from Allendale to the Pew Campus then on to Medical Mile with a possible further extension east of Plymouth. The next phase of the project is a detailed environmental evaluation, and by September of 2015, the Rapid will make an application for Small Starts funding through FTA. They will begin design of the project in 2016, with the hope to have this open by the fall of 2018. Discussion ensued.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

None

X. ADJOURNMENT

Krombeen adjourned the November 19, 2014 Policy Committee meeting at 10:53 am.