

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, December 21, 2011
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Koslosky, chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. DeLong introduced Schulz, planning director for the City of Grand Rapids.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Jim Koslosky (<i>Chair</i>)		GRFIA
Bill Cousins	<i>Proxy for Steve Peterson</i>	Cascade Township Cascade Township City of Grand Rapids City of Grand Rapids City of East Grand Rapids Gaines Township Ottawa County City of Kentwood
Mark DeClercq		OCRC
Eric DeLong		OCRC
Ken Feldt		MDOT
Don R. Hilton, Sr.		City of Lowell
Jim Holtrop		City of Grandville
Rich Houtteman		MDOT
Fred Keena	<i>Proxy for Tim Grifhorst</i>	Grand Rapids Township
Dennis Kent	<i>Proxy for Mark Howe</i>	City of Wyoming
Ken Krombeen		KCRC
Dal McBurrows		Kent County Commissioner
Dave Pasquale		City of Walker
Richard Pastoor		City of Hudsonville
Jon Rice	<i>Proxy for Dick Bulkowski</i>	ITP-The Rapid
Darrel Schmalzel		ITP-The Rapid
Don VanDoeselaar		
Conrad Venema	<i>Proxy for Peter Varga</i>	

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Phil Johnson	GRFIA
Erick Kind	MDOT
Joshua Lunger	GR Chamber
Steve Redmond	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Suzanne Schulz	City of Grand Rapids
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff

Steve Warren
Mike Zonyk

KCRC
GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema
Alex Arends
Dick Bulkowski
Christine Burns
Dan Carlton
Dick Davies
Mike DeVries
Jeff Dood
Tim Grifhorst
George Haga
Bryan Harrison
Dennis Hoemke
Bob Homan
Mark Howe
Jim Miedema
Audrey Nevins
Steve Peterson
Jack Poll
Chuck Porter
Martin Super
Toby VanEss
Peter Varga

Allendale Township
Alpine Township
Kent County Commissioner
City of Cedar Springs
Georgetown Township
Cannon Township
Grand Rapids Township
City of Rockford
OCRC
Ada Township
Caledonia Charter Township
Algoma Township
Plainfield Township
City of Lowell
Jamestown Township
Byron Township
Cascade Township
City of Wyoming
Courtland Township
Village of Sparta
Tallmadge Township
The Rapid

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Koslosky entertained a motion to approve the October 19, 2011 minutes.

MOTION by Hilton, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to approve of the October 19, 2011 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Koslosky noted that his two-year term as chair, and Varga’s two-year term as vice chair, are up, and asked for nominations for a new chair and vice chair for the Policy Committee. The new chair and vice chair would begin their terms on January 1st.

Koslosky entertained motions to nominate a new chair and vice chair of the Policy Committee.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by DeClercq, to nominate Varga to serve a two-year term as chair of the Policy Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION by DeClercq, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to nominate Krombeen to serve a

two-year term as vice chair of the Policy Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. MICHIGAN AT COLLEGE CORRIDOR

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Itani noted that the City of Grand Rapids was requesting high priority corridor status for Michigan St. This designation would allow the street to receive federal funds to purchase right-of-way. Itani noted that when 44th St. received high priority corridor status years ago, the Committee used a 50/50 match to purchase right-of-way. However, using federal funding for PE is not permitted. According to the guidelines set forth in the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document, Michigan St. does qualify for high priority corridor status. Itani added that since Michigan St. serves an important role in the area and because there is a multi-modal approach to resolving the congestion problems on this road, MPO staff does support this. At the Technical Committee earlier this month, the Committee also recommended to the Policy Committee that Michigan St. be designated as a high priority corridor.

DeLong said that he appreciated the recommendation of the Technical Committee. He explained that the City of Grand Rapids is conducting a significant planning study for the Michigan at College intersection project and then reintroduced Schulz, who passed out handouts and provided additional information about the corridor study to the Committee. She also noted that the total cost of the study is over \$1 million, and that funding for the study came from 16 different sources, the largest being from a HUD grant. Discussion ensued.

Koslosky entertained a motion to designate Michigan St. as a high priority corridor.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by DeLong, to approve designating Michigan St. from the Grand River to Plymouth as a high priority corridor, with the understanding that decisions regarding funding right-of-way would be made in the future.

Rice noted several concerns, including why the high priority corridor designation goes all the way to Plymouth. He suggested that the limits of the high priority designation end at Fuller instead, or that the Committee consider implementing a phase corridor approval process. Second, referring to the Tech minutes, Rice noted that it appeared as though the level of service for the intersection will not be improved. Lastly, Rice expressed his concern about agreeing to fund right-of-way purchases on Michigan St. at this time at 50/50 without a defined plan for the intersection. He asked if designating Michigan St. as high priority could wait.

DeLong responded that the Michigan corridor is influenced by three highway interchanges, the East Beltline, and downtown. Therefore, to deal with a shorter project limit would be short-sighted at this time. Regarding the purchase of right-of-way, DeLong stated that the initial focus will be the Michigan at College intersection and that the City of Grand Rapids is not asking for approval to

purchase right-of-way at this time. However, they do want the ability to come and ask for funding for right-of-way in the future. Delong also clarified that the designation is needed today for the design team to proceed.

Schulz added that the limits were discussed at length during the Technical Committee meeting, and the Committee decided to shorten the limits of the high priority corridor designation from the East Beltline to Plymouth. She also added that, at this point, it is unknown what the final level of service will be. However, the City of Grand Rapids anticipates that the level of service will increase, but the amount of the increase will be dependent on the final design of the alternative that's chosen. For instance, if a round-about is chosen, the intersection will operate at level of service A. She also noted that a high priority designation for Michigan St. will help in applying for grants.

DeClercq added that he strongly supports applying for grants, and noted that, in regard to the level of service comment, that this study takes into consideration traffic patterns beyond Michigan St. from a north to south perspective. Expanding the limits of the study east to west brings a more holistic approach to addressing the network. He added that the multi-modal approach to addressing this intersection will also help the current level of service.

Itani added that, in 3 of the 4 design alternatives, the intersection will operate at level of service D or below. He noted that a round-about would destroy businesses at the Michigan and College intersection, and therefore, it is not a viable option. He added that designation of a high priority corridor does not automatically qualify the project for right-of-way money, since approval of all funding requests need to go through Tech and Policy. It merely makes it eligible for right-of-way funding. He encouraged the Committee to not wait to designate Michigan St. as a high priority corridor until after the study is completed due to its importance. Discussion ensued.

Koslosky returned the motion in question to the floor. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

VI. FY2012 CMAQ PROJECT: MICHIGAN AT COLLEGE

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Robinson explained that the City of Grand Rapids was asking the Committee to delay their Michigan at College project from FY2012 to FY2014. Recently, the TPSG Committee met in order to make room for this project in FY2014 and to fill the gap left by the project in FY2012. The proposal they endorsed involved moving projects in FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014, and was included in the agenda packet. The TPSG meeting occurred after the last Technical Committee meeting, but since the Tech Committee chair, Scott Connors, was present, he recommended that this proposal be brought forward to the Policy Committee for consideration.

Koslosky entertained a motion to amend the FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014 CMAQ project

listing as presented.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to amend the FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014 CMAQ project listing, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT

Referring to **Item VII: Attachment A**, Itani explained that Staff is requesting to amend the FY2012 UPWP to reflect an additional transportation funding grant and previously obligated unspent transportation planning funds from FY2011. The first item is a State Planning and Research (SPR) grant for US-131 Transportation/Land Use Corridor Study for \$75,000. The second item is to add previously obligated unspent PL-112 funds in the amount of \$50,000 for the Michigan Street Corridor Study. Both of these changes are related to work item "3.2"-Technical Assistance. In order for GVMC to retain these funds, the FY2012 UPWP needs to be amended.

Koslosky entertained a motion to amend the FY2012 UPWP.

MOTION by DeLong, SUPPORT by Pastoor, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of amending the FY2012 UPWP. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VIII. UPDATE ON TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND SAFETEA-LU

Itani noted that the existing extension for SAFETEA-LU expires on March 31st. A markup of the House transportation bill is tentatively scheduled for February. The Senate bill contains many notable changes, including consolidating the programs from 20-30 to 5 and changing how MPOs function. If the bill were to go forward as proposed, MPOs would be designated as Tier 1 or Tier 2. Tier 1 MPOs would have 1,000,000 or more, whereas Tier 2 MPOs would have 200,000 or more. Tier 1 MPOs will need to have their TIPs and Plans adhere to various performance measures whereas Tier 2 MPOs will not. Smaller MPOs would cease to exist. There would also likely be a 7-8% cut in current funding levels. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

IX. DRAFT MDOT FIVE YEAR PROGRAM (FY2012-2016)

Referring to a handout and a large map, Kent updated the Committee on MDOT's FY2012-2016 5-year program. He noted that, in theory, the program is fully funded in FY2012. Kent stated that the public comment period for MDOT's 5-year program goes through December 29. The 5-year program will then go to MDOT's Transportation Commission in January and to the Legislature in February. McBurrows encouraged the Committee members to look at MDOT's 5-year program on their web site.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Stypula acknowledged the extraordinary career of Koslosky, who was retiring. Koslosky noted that he was proud to have served the group for over 20 years and commended the Committee for the work that it has done.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Koslosky adjourned the December 21, 2011 Policy Committee meeting at 10:37 am.