

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, January 15, 2014
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:31 am. Altman introduced herself as the new representative from Jamestown Township.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**Voting Members Present**Peter Varga, *Chair*

Gail Altman

Dave Bulkowski

Dan Carlton

Mark DeClercq

Don R. Hilton, Sr.

Rich Houtteman

Mark Howe

Ken Krombeen, *Vice Chair*

Dal McBurrows

Jim Miedema

Brian Ryks

Darrel Schmalzel

Dan Strikwerda

Ben Swayze

Steve Warren

ITP-The Rapid

Jamestown Township

Kent County Commissioner

Georgetown Township

City of Grand Rapids

Gaines Township

City of Kentwood

City of Lowell

City of Grandville

MDOT

OCRC

GRFIA

City of Walker

City of Hudsonville

Cascade Township

KCRC

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber

Abed Itani

Dennis Kent

Erick Kind

Josh Lungert

Darrell Robinson

Norm Sevensma

Jim Snell

Rachael Tupica

Mike Zonyk

GVMC Staff

GVMC Staff

MDOT-Grand Region

MDOT

GR Chamber

GVMC Staff

WMEAC-RWBC

GVMC

FHWA

GVMC

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema

Alex Arends

Jamie Davies

Eric DeLong

Mike DeVries

Ken Feldt

Allendale Township

Alpine Township

City of Rockford

City of Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids Township

City of East Grand Rapids

George Haga
Bryan Harrison
Dennis Hoemke
Jim Holtrop
Tim Nelson
Audrey Nevins-Weiss
Richard Pastoor
Jack Poll
Chuck Porter
Thad Taylor
Toby VanEss
Member Awaiting Appointment

Ada Township
Caledonia Charter Township
Algoma Township
Ottawa County
Cannon Township
Byron Township
City of Wyoming
City of Wyoming
Courtland Township
City of Cedar Springs
Tallmadge Township
Plainfield Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve the November 20, 2013 minutes.

MOTION by Hilton, SUPPORT by Ryks, to approve of the November 20, 2013 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Varga stated that he was pleased to have served for two years as chair of the Policy Committee, but now that his term is up, the Committee needed to elect a new chair and vice chair. Varga encouraged Krombeen, current vice chair, to serve as chair of the Committee. Krombeen stated he was willing to chair the Committee. No other nominations were made.

MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by Warren, to elect Krombeen to serve a two-year term as chair of the Policy Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Varga asked the Committee for nominations for Policy Committee vice chair, stating that he would serve in that capacity if none of the other Committee members were interested. Warren volunteered to serve as Policy Committee vice chair.

Varga entertained a motion to elect Warren as vice chair of the Policy Committee.

MOTION by Ryks, SUPPORT by Houtteman, to elect Warren to serve a two-year term as vice chair of the Policy Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. FY2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson explained several TIP amendment/modification requests to the Committee.

The first set of requests were the result of the December 4, 2013 TPSG Committee meeting. At that meeting, the Committee programmed projects where gaps existed in the

approved FY2014-2017 TIP. The TPSG Committee recommended the following changes, which were approved by the Technical Committee at their January 8 meeting:

- The Committee moved two projects from FY2017 to FY2014 STPU. The projects were 10 Mile Road from Courtland Drive to Myers Lake Avenue and Michigan Street from College Avenue to Eastern Avenue. This move was necessary in order to backfill the FY2014 STP Urban program in the amount of \$598,054 Federal since projects were moved up to FY2013 to capture unobligated STPU funds identified by MDOT.
- The Committee added a project (building acquisition) to the FY2014 CMAQ program in the amount of \$40,000 Federal to fill in a gap created by the Sidewalk project being added to the list last year.
- The Committee moved two projects (68th Avenue from Fillmore Street to M-45 and Belmont Avenue south of 10 Mile Road) from the Illustrative project list to FY2017 to fill in the gap due to the two previously mentioned projects moving to FY2014.
- The Committee added three projects (IP Data Ring, Belmont Avenue at 10 Mile Road and 54th Street at US-131 AC) to the FY2017 CMAQ program in the amount of \$280,000 Federal to fill in a gap left by a previous project found not to be eligible for CMAQ funding.

Referring to a handout, Robinson explained the second set of requests, from MDOT. Robinson noted that he had called the chair of the Technical Committee to request approval to add this item to the Policy Committee agenda and received no response, which he took as concurrence. He explained that MDOT was asking to add funds to two projects on I-96 under M-50. One project was a bridge replacement; the other was to add a center turn lane on M-50 over I-96 and extend the deceleration lane on the eastbound off-ramp. Kent provided additional details about the projects.

The last request was to add the "Roads and Risks Fund Projects" that the Michigan Legislature selected to the FY2014-2017 TIP. These projects are State funded (with no Federal funds) and are a combination of MDOT and Local FY2014 projects. McBurrows clarified that some of these projects might involve ACT 51 funds, which would be federal. GVMC Staff, as well as the Technical Committee, recommended adding these projects to the TIP for informational purposes. Robinson explained that the Committee can choose to add these projects to the body of the TIP or the illustrative list. The "Roads and Risks Fund Projects" include the following:

- 52nd Street
- Patterson from 108th to 100th
- I-96 from 500' West of Cascade Road east to M-11
- Bil-Mar
- M-37 from 3 Mile Road North to Alpenhorn Drive
- Godfrey Street from Market Avenue to Chicago Drive
- I-96 (8 locations) I-196 (1 location)

Tupica asked if any of these projects were regionally significant. Robinson stated that, to the best of his knowledge, they were not. Varga stated that because there is potential that federal funds could be used the projects need to be amended into the TIP. Itani agreed that these projects will need to be amended into the TIP. Discussion ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to amend/modify the FY2014-2017 TIP.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Krombeen, to approve amending/modifying the FY2014-2017 TIP to reflect the recommendations of the TPSG/Technical Committee, MDOT's requests, and the Roads and Risks Fund projects, which would be added to the body of the FY2014 TIP.

Schmalzel asked if it was premature to approve funding for the Michigan Street from College Avenue to Eastern Avenue project since the project plans weren't complete. Itani stated that the project was moving forward and that the funding would most likely be used to purchase real estate parcels. Robinson provided further information about the project. Discussion ensued.

Varga called the motion to question. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

A. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Faber stated that this was the final opportunity for the public to comment on the Public Participation Plan. No comments were received, and Varga closed the public comment opportunity for the document.

B. APPROVAL OF THE FINAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Faber stated that staff was requesting the Committee's approval of the final Public Participation Plan. She noted that Staff presented the draft Public Participation Plan to the Committee in November for approval. Since then, the document has gone through its federally-required 45-day public comment period, which officially concluded on Monday, January 6. The public was notified about the public comment period through ads that were placed in El Vocero and in the Advance and its affiliate papers—the Cadence and the Penasee Globe. A notice was also placed on gvmc.org and a postcard was also sent to GVMC's Interested Citizen/Agency List.

Four comments were received on the draft document. One minor change was made to the "staff presentations" section on page 24 of the document as a result of these comments.

Varga entertained a motion to approve the final Public Participation Plan.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Howe, to approve the final Public Participation Plan.

Bulkowski thanked Staff for changing "the disabled" to "people with disabilities" within the document and reiterated that the Grand Rapids Times be included in the future on the list of newspapers that GVMC uses to reach the public, since it targets the African American community. Itani responded that Staff would keep this publication in mind for the future.

Varga called the motion to question. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) KICKOFF

Referring to **Item VII: Attachment A**, Snell noted that the January Technical Committee meeting marked the official kickoff for the development of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The 2040 MTP will serve as the long range transportation planning document for the region.

Included in the agenda packet were the schedule for the development of the MTP and a copy of the goals and objectives from the last MTP. Snell noted that the next step in the MTP development process is to approve the goals and objectives, since they will contribute strongly to the selection and evaluation of alternatives in the transportation system. The goals and objectives will need to be reviewed and approved at an upcoming meeting. Snell noted that the Technical Committee members had already provided him some feedback and he requested that the Policy Committee also review the goals and objectives and send him comments before the next meeting. Snell noted that one new goal/objective was added to meet the federal guidelines, which involved getting projects done quickly and efficiently. He stated that because the goals and objectives were just developed 3 ½ years ago, he didn't expect there to be significant changes.

Snell also noted that he planned to schedule meetings with all the jurisdictions to discuss population and employment data, growth, and other areas that are important to the region, as has been done in the past.

Itani added that one of the requirements of MAP-21 is to have a performance-based MTP. Itani explained that the secretary of transportation will develop these performance measures and that the state will need to adopt them. The MPO, in turn, will need to adopt the state policy that leads to implementing these performance measures. However, this information is not yet available, and Itani expressed his concern that the performance measures would be released too late to incorporate them into the MTP. Tupica provided a timeline for implementing the goals and performance measures at the USDOT, state and MPO levels. She noted that FHWA would have a better idea of the goal areas in the next couple of months and that, most likely, they would be implemented in a year and a half. There will be phase-in time for the MPOs to incorporate them into their MTPs. Tupica added that she would work with Staff so that information can be added to the MTP as it becomes available. Discussion ensued.

Warren stated that, while he understands that the requirements and regulations of the plan must be conformed to, this document is really the only opportunity the community has to dream too. He cited an article he'd recently read about a group that is lobbying to double the federal gas tax. He suggested that the Committee prioritize transportation needs and use this opportunity to dream about what could be done with additional transportation dollars. He noted that the MTP could also be used as a platform to advocate for more funding by showing a vision for the future and how much funding would be needed to achieve it. Itani responded that the MTP development process will allow for this, and that a scenario analysis can also be included in the MTP. Itani stated that the document must show that the system as a whole is improving. Tupica stated that Warren made several relevant points and that there are a number of ways the Committee can have fun with the plan that would be useful for the community. She suggested using scenario analysis or looking at the goals listed in the Asset Management Plan. She also added that the MTP could show different opportunities to link transportation and economic development.

Tupica also asked Warren how he envisioned doing the visioning for the area. Warren stated several ideas, including evaluating the effect of the current proposals that exist to increase transportation funding and discussing how to invest those funds. Warren added that the more jurisdictions can identify specific improvements and use visualization techniques to demonstrate them, such as “maps with lines,” graphics and multimedia, the better, since that’s what people pay attention to. Itani stated that staff plans on doing this, and Tupica added that the regulations do require using visualization and that there may be a session on this at the annual MPO conference. Discussion ensued.

Snell stated that Staff will develop a steering committee for the MTP soon that will be representative of a wide spectrum of transportation stakeholders. Staff would be asking for volunteers, a committee chair, etc. Itani explained how the steering committee would function in relation to the Technical and Policy Committees. Discussion ensued.

Itani noted that the MPO’s certification, which will take place in May, will overlap with the MTP development process.

DeClercq stated that the Sustainable Streets Task Force recommended that the City of Grand Rapids extend the income tax to fund local streets, and the City Commission has agreed to put this on the May ballot to extend the income tax for up to 15 years. He explained how this would be positive for the region and expand growth.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Urban Area Boundary Update

Referring to **Item VIII: Attachment A**, Zonyk stated that there is now a new urban area boundary based on the 2010 census. He noted that the Committee already went through a process to approve this new boundary. For planning processes, these boundaries are in effect as of January 1st. Warren asked if information was available about how much the urbanized area within the MPO grew, especially in proportion to other areas in the state. Zonyk stated that he would research this. Itani stated that GVMC’s MPO area had one of the biggest population increases across the state and that perhaps staff could present additional information from the census at the next Policy meeting. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

DeClercq noted that the National Highway System has a new classification system of stipulated roads within metropolitan areas that creates constraints on what jurisdictions can do for improvements. He asked if others had heard of this and if anyone could explain this further. Itani stated that he received an email about this and that he would have more information by the next meeting. Tupica added that FHWA is currently discussing this internally. Discussion ensued.

Itani thanked Varga for serving as chair, and previously vice chair, of the Policy Committee. Varga stated that he chaired the Committee twice, and that it has been a fun experience.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Varga adjourned the January 15, 2014 Policy Committee meeting at 10:38 am.