

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, January 21, 2015
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Krombeen, chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:39 am.

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

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

| | | |
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| Ken Krombeen, <i>Chair</i> | | City of Grandville |
| Gail Altman | | Jamestown Township |
| Dave Bulkowski | | Kent County Commissioner |
| Dan Carlton | | Georgetown Township |
| Mark DeClercq | | City of Grand Rapids |
| Rich Houtteman | | City of Kentwood |
| Dennis Kent | <i>Proxy for Dal McBurrows Mark Howe</i> | MDOT-Grand Region |
| | | MDOT |
| | | City of Lowell |
| Jim Miedema | | OCRC |
| Chuck Porter | | Courtland Township |
| Mark Rambo | <i>Proxy for Steve Warren</i> | KCRC |
| | | KCRC |
| Darrel Schmalzel | | City of Walker |
| Joe Slonecki | | City of East Grand Rapids |
| Peter Varga | | ITP-The Rapid |

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

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| Andrea Faber | GVMC Staff |
| Rod Ghearing | ITP-The Rapid |
| Abed Itani | GVMC Staff |
| Erick Kind | MDOT |
| Josh Lunger | Grand Rapids Chamber |
| Steve Redmond | MDOT |
| Darrell Robinson | GVMC Staff |
| Norm Sevensma | WMEAC-RWBC |
| Jim Snell | GVMC Staff |

Voting Members Not Present

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| Jerry Alkema | Allendale Township |
| Alex Arends | Alpine Township |
| Henry Betten | Cannon Township |
| Jamie Davies | City of Rockford |
| Eric DeLong | City of Grand Rapids |

Mike DeVries
 George Haga
 Bryan Harrison
 Don R. Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Jim Holtrop
 Mark Howe
 Dal McBurrows
 Audrey Nevins-Weiss
 Richard Pastoor
 Jack Poll
 Brian Ryks
 Dan Strikwerda
 Ben Swayze
 Thad Taylor
 Roger Towsley
 Cameron Van Wyngarden
 Toby VanEss
 Steve Warren, *Vice Chair*

Grand Rapids Township
 Ada Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Ottawa County
 City of Lowell
 MDOT
 Byron Township
 City of Wyoming
 City of Wyoming
 GRFIA
 City of Hudsonville
 Cascade Township
 City of Cedar Springs
 Village of Sand Lake
 Plainfield Township
 Tallmadge Township
 KCRC

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the November 19, 2014 Policy Committee minutes.

MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to approve of the November 19, 2014 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma notified the Committee of the City of East Grand Rapids' proposal to levy a two mill property tax for road repair and reconstruction. He stated that this tax will only be levied if the sales tax proposal doesn't pass. If it does pass, the property tax will be reduced down to one mill.

Bulkowski thanked several Committee members for their support of the Shoveling Snow Angels program and passed around complimentary buttons. He asked that, if Committee members know of neighborhood associations or others that would like to offer assistance, to please let him know.

IV. FY2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson explained the following TIP amendment/modification requests to the Committee:

- ITP-The Rapid requested to increase the cost of their Bus Tire Lease project from \$300,000 to \$412,000 and move their Lake Michigan Drive Park and Ride Lot project from FY2014-2015.
- The City of Grand Rapids requested to move their Turner Avenue Bridge over Indian Mill Creek project from FY2014 to FY2015 in the TIP and combine it with a new

bridge preventative maintenance project that would need to be added to the TIP— Walker Avenue Bridge over Indian Mill Creek. The Walker Avenue Bridge project was awarded for FY2016, but according to MDOT, the work can be done in any year prior to and including the fiscal year it was awarded.

- GVMC staff requested to add (pending conditional commitment notification of the appropriate jurisdictions) recently approved FY2015 TAP projects to the FY2014-2017 TIP. These projects include the following: (1) M-37 Sidewalks from Lamoreaux Dr. to North of York Creek (Alpine Township), (2) Widen and Resurface Interurban Trail (City of Wyoming), and (3) Adding a sidewalk on Plainfield Avenue from 3 Mile Rd. to I-96 (City of Grand Rapids). Robinson noted that the list is slightly overprogrammed, but that the agencies involved have agreed to make their projects work with the money that's available. He also added that TPSG will be meeting to program FY2016-2017 projects next month.
- The Georgetown Senior Center requested \$48,113 specialized services funding and \$369,000 for three new medium class 2 buses for FY2016.

Discussion ensued.

Krombeen asked for a motion to approve all of the TIP amendment/modification requests from today's meeting.

MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by DeClercq, to approve the amendments to the FY2014-2017 TIP requested by ITP-The Rapid, the City of Grand Rapids, GVMC Staff, and Georgetown Senior Center. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. LAKER LINE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (LPA)

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Varga explained that ITP-The Rapid has completed their analysis of the Laker Line through URS Corporation, which will be a new BRT for the area. Varga explained the route that the Laker Line will take, which will start at Grand Valley's Kirkhof Center and end at Michigan hill at Lafayette. The Rapid has developed a locally preferred alternative for the Laker Line, and they are coming before the Committee today to request approval of including the Laker Line locally preferred alternative in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well as the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Varga explained future plans for the project as well, noting that they plan to fuel the bus fleet with CNG. Several Rapid staff members are going to Washington in March to work on securing a Tiger Grant for the CNG portions of the facilities, and a small starts grant for the BRT itself. However, they may need to combine both for a small starts grant. Varga stated that significant public outreach has been done for this project.

DeClercq asked if this will eliminate the current University bus system. Varga confirmed that the Laker Line will convert the route 50 connector into a BRT project instead. Sixteen buses will operate the service. Discussion ensued.

Schmalzel asked for clarification on the timeline for the project. Varga stated that he would know more after March, but the best case scenario would be to get a grant in FY2017.

Itani added that if the Committee approves the Rapid's request, this project will be carried over to the FY2040 MTP. He noted that this won't go to Metro Council, since amending the MTP is the responsibility of the Policy Committee. Discussion ensued.

Houtteman asked for clarification that the new project won't cost any more to run. Varga stated that there'd just be a marginal increase in the operating cost, and that they're hoping the CNG fuel will save money over time.

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve ITP-The Rapid's request, as identified.

MOTION by Schmalzel, SUPPORT by Bulkowski, to approve of and include the Laker Line Locally Preferred Alternative in the 2035 LRTP as well as the 2040 MTP. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Snell provided the Committee with an update on the status of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The 2040 MTP is now complete, and it will come before the Technical and Policy Committees next month for approval, and the GVMC board in early March for final approval. He noted that GVMC staff has been working to address extensive comments from MDOT and FHWA, as well as the public. Snell stated that staff received substantially more comments on this MTP than the previous one, and he encouraged the Committee members to read through them. While the official public comment period has closed, Snell added that the MTP will remain an active document and that Committee members can still comment on it. Snell stated that he would send out a link to the document. Snell added that, at the beginning of the MTP development process, staff developed a seven or eight question public survey that received over 300 responses. The results of this survey showed road condition was the top issue, followed by congestion.

Snell noted that, after this plan is approved, the Committee will need to work to develop performance measures for Safety, Condition and Congestion as required by MAP-21.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani reminded the Committee that there was no need to hold elections for the chair and vice chair, since the elections held last January were for two-year terms.

Itani explained a handout entitled "Transportation Revenue Ballot Option" to the Committee, which showed what to expect if the sales tax increase is approved. Kent provided an additional explanation of the ballot proposal, which included a new wholesale tax on gas and an increase in the state sales tax rate from 6% to 7%. There would also be some changes in registration fees that would impact new cars and alternate fuels. The ballot proposal will go to the public in May. Discussion ensued.

Krombeen noted that the next Policy Committee meeting would be on February 18th.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Krombeen adjourned the January 21, 2015 Policy Committee meeting at 10:24 am.