MINUTES

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, February 16, 2011
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI

Varga, vice chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Peter Varga *(vice chair)*	*Proxy for*	The Rapid
	Jim Koslosky	GRFIA
Jerry Alkema		Allendale Township
Alex Arends		Alpine Township
Dan Carlton		Georgetown Township
Dick Davies		Cannon Township
Mark DeClercq		City of Grand Rapids
Tim Grifhorst		OCRC
Don R. Hilton, Sr.		Gaines Township
Rich Houtteman		City of Kentwood
Ken Krombeen		City of Grandville
Dal McBurrows		MDOT
David Pasquale		City of Lowell
Steve Peterson		Cascade Township
Jon Rice	*Proxy for*	KCRC
	Dick Bulkowski	Kent County Commissioner
Darrel Schmalzel		City of Walker
Dan Strikwerda	*Proxy for*	City of Hudsonville
	Don VanDoeselaar	City of Hudsonville

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	WMEAC-RWBC
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Steve Warren	KCRC
George Yang	GVMC Staff
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Dick Bulkowski	Kent County Commissioner
Christine Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Sharon DeLange	Village of Sparta

Eric DeLong	City of Grand Rapids
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Jeff Dood	City of Rockford
Ken Feldt	City of East Grand Rapids
George Haga	Ada Township
Bryan Harrison	Caledonia Charter Township
Dennis Hoemke	Algoma Township
Jim Holtrop	Ottawa County
Bob Homan	Plainfield Township
Jim Koslosky	GRFIA
Jim Miedema	Jamestown Township
Audrey Nevins	Byron Township
Richard Pastoor	City of Wyoming
Jack Poll	City of Wyoming
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Don VanDoeselaar	City of Hudsonville
Toby VanEss	Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve the January 19, 2011 minutes.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to approve of the January 19, 2011 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma commented that he has seen a lot of advertising for the Silverline millage and asked if the Silverline will go to Medical Mile or if a transfer would be needed. Varga clarified that the millage request would go toward seven service improvements, including the Silverline, and that the bus would provide direct service from Central Station to Medical Mile or from the Division Corridor to Medical Mile.

Sevensma also asked what portion of the millage would go toward the Silverline. Varga clarified that the increase would be .35 mills and that the BRT operating portion of the increase is less than ¼ of the increase. Varga also explained other bus service improvements that the millage increase would cover. Discussion ensued.

DeClercq asked what MDOT's strategy was for the New International Trade Crossing (NITC) in regard to funding and how this project would impact the region. Itani replied that the amount of federal funding the MPO receives will remain the same. However, the region will be impacted because of its use of soft match funds. McBurrows added that Canada has pledged $550 million for the NITC project and explained that MDOT and FHWA have agreed to allow Canada's investment in the NITC project to be used as matching funds for federally funded highway projects across the state. More information about this project will be available in the coming days. Kent provided additional clarification. Discussion ensued.

IV. FY2011-2014 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Speaking on **Item IV: Attachment A**, and referencing an additional handout, Robinson informed the Committee about several requested amendments/modifications to the FY2011-2014 TIP.

First, ITP-The Rapid requested to amend the FY2011-2014 TIP to reflect several changes to Activity Line Items (ALI's) in section 5307 and 5309 in FY2012.

Second, the KCRC requested to add an awarded Transportation Economic Development Fund Category A project (state funded) to FY2011.

Third, the City of Grand Rapids requested to move a FY2012 project: 6th Street Bridge over the Grand River, to FY2011.

Fourth, the Village of Kent City requested to add an awarded STP Enhancement project for streetscape of South Main Street from Spring Street to M-46 to FY2011 of the TIP. The total project cost is $443,808 ($315,494 federal; $128,314 local).

Fifth, the City of Lowell requested that the two STP-Small Urban Programs grants that they received be added to the TIP. The first project is Bowes Road reconstruction with sidewalks west of Valley Vista Drive for a total cost of $417,501 ($334,000 federal; $83,501 local). This project is for FY2012. The second project is Bowes Road milling and resurfacing with sidewalks from west of Valley Vista to West Main Street for a total cost of $223,311 ($178,648 federal; $44,663 local). This project is for FY2014.

Sixth, Hope Network requested to add their 5310 program to FY2012 in the TIP.

Seventh, MDOT requested an administrative modification to a FY2011 project: US-131 at Burton, Hall, and Franklin Streets. The request is to split the project into two job numbers and add approximately $200,000 to the project and construct the Franklin Street Bridge in FY2012. MDOT also requested an amendment to add a Preliminary Engineering (PE) project to FY2011, I-96 at Cascade Road, bridge deck replacement, widening and operational improvements at a total cost of $700,000. The addition of this project is necessary because the estimate for construction of the project is estimated at over $5 million. Kent provided additional information.

Eighth, Senior Neighbors asked that their funding request to MDOT for section 5310 capital funding in FY2012 to purchase ADP hardware be included in the TIP. The funding request total is $5,422.

Lastly, Georgetown Seniors requested that their 5310 program, which included two vehicles, be added to FY2012 of the TIP.

Varga entertained a motion to approve the requested TIP amendments/modifications.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by DeClercq, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of the amendments/modifications to the FY2011-2014 TIP requested by ITP-The Rapid, the KCRC, the City of Grand Rapids, the Village of Kent City, the City of Lowell, Hope Network, MDOT, Senior Neighbors, and Georgetown Seniors, as identified. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FINAL COMMENTS

Speaking on **Item V: Attachment A**, Dewey explained that the draft Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is nearly complete. During the public comment period, which took place from January 1-30, 2011, GVMC staff invited comment on the document, project list, and Air Quality Conformity Analysis results and also held eight public meetings from January 17-20. Dewey

noted that Staff received zero additional comments from the public in addition to the six previously submitted to the Committee for review at the January meeting.

As part of the consultation outreach, Dewey said that GVMC received official correspondence from three state and federal agencies, and a phone call from the Grand Rapids Audubon Club regarding the impact of widening projects on reducing bird habitat. Dewey added that the LRTP will go to the Executive Committee tomorrow and then move on to Metro Council for approval before it is sent to MDOT. Discussion ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to recommend approval of the draft 2035 LRTP.

MOTION by Hilton, SUPPORT by Arends, to recommend approval of the final draft of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan to Metro Council.

DeClercq asked for clarification on the approval process for the LRTP and asked if the plan has emphasized nonmotorized transportation more based on the comments received. Dewey responded that the MPO is required to address all modes of transportation; however, the funding sources we have are primarily geared toward roads. Itani added that the LRTP clearly addresses all modes of transportation and lays out the needs under all the different modes. But, the Committee will need to come up with a policy to address these needs.

Varga added that the LRTP document was open for public comment and available at multiple sites for the public to view. There were also multiple opportunities for the public to comment on the document. He clarified that today's meeting was the last time that comments could be made on the document and announced that the public comment period for the LRTP has closed. The Policies and Practices document, which is an appendix to the LRTP, is still in the process of being approved, however.

Schmalzel thanked Dewey and Staff for their work on the LRTP.

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

VI. POLICIES AND PRACTICES NON-MOTORIZED SECTION UPDATE

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Dewey reminded the Committee that staff had brought up for discussion at the December Technical Committee meeting the call for updating GVMC's Policies and Practices for Programming Projects to reflect current practice with regard to non-motorized transportation funding. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the revised document. However, at the December Policy Committee meeting, some Committee members expressed concerns about approving the revised Policies and Practices document and recommended returning the discussion to the Technical Committee so that the Policies and Practices could be further refined.

At the February Technical Committee meeting, the Committee continued to discuss the eligibility requirements in detail, particularly with regard to the maintenance of non-motorized facilities. It was also asked whether the word "potential" needed to be included in the first eligibility requirement. The third point that was brought up was with regard to Transportation Enhancement and whether the MPO should require non-motorized type TE applications to pass through the MPO process and meet the non-motorized eligibility requirements before they may be submitted to MDOT. However, the Technical Committee made no formal decisions regarding this and decided to discuss this item again in March.

Varga asked for clarification on the requirement that "projects must demonstrate a potential non-recreational modal shift from the automobile." Dewey responded that, essentially, any nonmotorized facility is going to have a recreational component. However, this would limit certain projects, such as trails within parks, from receiving federal transportation funds.

DeClercq asked if it would be possible to justify a trail as part of interconnectivity with streets to get from a home to place of employment. Dewey responded that this becomes an issue when looking at the funding source, but stated that in 2011, the City of Kentwood funded a trail with CMAQ. However, the Committee would need to determine whether or not to allow for federal funds to be spent on nonmotorized projects in the future.

Rice asked Dewey to clarify her earlier statement about cities/townships with TE applications potentially needing to come to the Policy Committee to approve them before they are submitted. Dewey responded that the Tech Committee only discussed the possibility of evaluating TE applications before they are submitted, but no formal decision was made. Itani stated that, in the past, the Committee had opted not to look at these applications to give members flexibility, and that MPO staff simply "rubber-stamped" them. He added that it will ultimately be up to the Policy Committee to decide if they want to review TE applications for non-motorized projects before they are submitted. McBurrows strongly recommended that the MPO endorse these projects and suggested that those with TE applications be given an opportunity to have them endorsed, but stated that this wouldn't need to be mandatory. Varga agreed and encouraged members submitting applications to ask for support. Discussion ensued.

Rice recommended removing "non-recreational" from the first eligibility requirement for non-motorized projects, because he believed keeping this word would result in potentially eliminating good projects. Varga agreed that "non-recreational" was not necessary. Itani noted that the Committee is only addressing facilities on the federal aid system. Discussion ensued.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani noted that the continuing resolution for funding expires on March 4th and recommended that Committee members submit their projects to MDOT before then. He added that Congress's 2012 budget cuts transportation funding by $11 billion. Discussion ensued.

McBurrows stated that MDOT will be looking at CMAQ program process improvements and will be working with MPOs, FHWA and FTA regarding this. He also added that MDOT will be scheduling FY2012 pre-Unified Planning Work Program meetings in April.

Snell distributed and explained a handout entitled "Projected Pavement Condition 2005-2015." He stated that pavement condition will not improve until the system is invested in again. Due to continual deterioration, it will now be even more expensive to bring the system back to where it was. Alkema asked Snell to e-mail the Committee additional information on pothole formation.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Varga adjourned the February 16, 2011 Policy Committee Meeting at 10:53 am.