

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, May 21, 2014
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. Krombeen noted that there was still not a quorum for the Committee, and recommended beginning the meeting with non-action items. He also asked those with proxy votes to identify them on the attendance sheet.

Krombeen asked if anyone new was in attendance. Lanum stated that he was sitting in for Dal McBurrows today.

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

Ken Krombeen, <i>Chair</i>		City of Grandville
Gail Altman		Jamestown Township
Alex Arends		Alpine 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</i>	MDOT-Grand Region
	<i>Mark Howe</i>	City of Lowell
John Lanum	<i>Proxy for</i>	MDOT
	<i>Dal McBurrows</i>	MDOT
Darrel Schmalzel		City of Walker
Joe Slonecki		City of East Grand Rapids
Peter Varga		ITP-The Rapid
Steve Warren, <i>Vice Chair</i>	<i>Proxy for</i>	KCRC
	<i>Cameron Van Wyngarden</i>	Plainfield Township

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Rod Ghearing	ITP-The Rapid
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Paul Lott	MDOT
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	RWBC-WMEAC
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
Rachael Tupica	FHWA
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Jamie Davies	City of Rockford

Eric DeLong
 Mike DeVries
 George Haga
 Bryan Harrison
 Don R. Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Jim Holtrop
 Mark Howe
 Dal McBurrows
 Jim Miedema
 Tim Nelson
 Audrey Nevins-Weiss
 Richard Pastoor
 Jack Poll
 Chuck Porter
 Brian Ryks
 Dan Strikwerda
 Ben Swayze
 Thad Taylor
 Cameron Van Wyngarden
 Toby VanEss

City of Grand Rapids
 Grand Rapids Township
 Ada Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Ottawa County
 City of Lowell
 MDOT
 OCRC
 Cannon Township
 Byron Township
 City of Wyoming
 City of Wyoming
 Courtland Township
 GRFIA
 City of Hudsonville
 Cascade Township
 City of Cedar Springs
 Plainfield Township
 Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the March 19, 2014 minutes.

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

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma said that he had seen an article in the newspaper today that stated that Michigan has some of the highest at-the-pump taxes for motorists, but some of the worst roads in the country. He asked for clarification on how this is possible. Kent stated that more than half of the gas tax goes to schools and other activities, not toward transportation. Itani added that Michigan ranks dead last on the per capita amount of funding spent on transportation. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

IV. FY2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson stated that the American Red Cross and MDOT were requesting to amend/modify the FY2014-2017 TIP. Their specific requests included the following:

- The American Red Cross requested to add an expansion vehicle to the FY2014-2017 TIP utilizing 5310 funds.
- MDOT requested the following changes to the FY2014-2017 TIP:
 - Adding funding to two projects (I-96 under Cascade Road bridge replacement for construction and PE in FY2015 and FY2014, respectively)

- Adding a new phase to an existing project (M-21 over the GRE/G&W RR in FY2014)
- Adding a new project for FY2014 (M-11 from Indian Mounds Drive to Church Avenue).
- Moving the fiscal year and modifying the limits of an existing project (Replacing freeway lighting on US-131 from 36th St. North to M-11)

At their meeting earlier this month, the Technical Committee recommended all of these amendments and modifications for approval by the Policy Committee.

Kent noted that, for the US-131 from 36th St. North to M-11 project, the limits will extend beyond 36th St., and may reach as far as 76th St.

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

MOTION by Carlton, SUPPORT by Varga, to approve of the amendments/modifications to the FY2014-2017 TIP requested by the American Red Cross and MDOT, as identified. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. NON-MOTORIZED PLAN APPROVAL

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Zonyk informed the Committee that GVMC staff is asking for the Committee's final approval of the 2014 Non-Motorized Plan. Zonyk stated that the Non-Motorized Committee approved the document in April, and the Technical Committee recommended approval of it to the Policy Committee earlier this month.

Itani added that the draft version of the Non-Motorized Plan was announced in March at the Technical and Policy Committee meetings where it was officially opened up for public comment. All of the comments/changes received have been incorporated into the document.

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the FY2014 Non-Motorized Plan.

MOTION by Carlton, SUPPORT by Varga, to approve the FY2014 Non-Motorized Plan. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Itani explained the Unified Planning Work Program document to the Committee, noting that it includes the budget for all federally assisted transportation planning activities that the GVMC Transportation Division, the Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will undertake. This document must be submitted annually to the sponsoring federal agencies, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, by October 1st. Itani noted that he usually takes the UPWP to a subcommittee of the Policy Committee for approval before it goes to the Policy Committee, but because the document needed to go to the Metro Council for approval in June, he was unable to do this. He added that the Executive Committee gave the UPWP preliminary approval to go to Metro Council based on the approval of the Policy Committee. Itani described the

activities outlined in the UPWP, and the funding levels and sources for them. Itani noted that the next UPWP will be approximately \$150,000 less because the Michigan St. downtown traffic circulation study grant will no longer be listed and because of a general reduction in PL activities to try to maintain or cut costs. Itani noted that a consultant had been selected for the study—Parsons Brinkerhoff. He explained that they were able to negotiate the price down to \$175,000. Discussion ensued.

Warren asked for additional information about the Michigan Street study. DeClercq explained that the traffic circulation study will allow the City of Grand Rapids to look at missing gaps between potential activities in the downtown area. Itani added that the traffic circulation study goes beyond the Michigan corridor study. He also noted that since the Michigan St. corridor study was done, GVSU bought a parcel of land along the corridor for development, and there has been a lot of ongoing discussion that entrances and exits to ramps downtown need to change to accommodate future growth. Itani stated that the MPO felt that we needed to do a study so we can understand the improvements that are needed between now and 2040. The traffic circulation study will achieve this. Itani also added that the state has donated \$75,000 funding, and GVSU has donated the 20,000 match for the PL money. Therefore, no local dues are required for this study.

Lastly, Itani added that, for the UPWP, staffing will remain the same, and FY2015 dues were also included in the document, which will remain largely the same.

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the FY2015 UPWP.

MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of the FY2015 UPWP.

DeClercq asked Itani to elaborate on the “efficiency” column on the spreadsheet. Itani clarified that efficiency relates to getting the projects ready, obligating them quicker, the selection of the process (performance-based, etc.), and how efficient the system is. Itani stated that these are things that we deal with at our level, but the state might focus on other items. Itani added that the regulations and requirements for state and metropolitan planning were supposed to be published by the Federal Register in April. However, they aren’t finalized and haven’t been published yet. Tupica noted that there are 8 planning factors that Congress set forth that everyone has to implement. Discussion ensued.

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

VII. METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Snell provided the Committee with a status update on the development of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. He noted that staff met with 34 different stakeholders individually to learn about their respective areas and that staff learned many valuable things about every community at every meeting. Areas covered included non-motorized projects, rail, freight, etc. Staff is busy compiling all of these comments, and the data from these meetings will make the MTP a better plan. The public involvement process has also been ongoing throughout the MTP development process. In addition, Snell added that staff is in the process of developing future socio-economic (SE) data. He noted that, at the next meeting, the Committee will be adopting the SE data and reviewing condition data. Snell stated that Staff will send individual SE data to all of the

Committee members, and that staff still has time to work with jurisdictions if needed so that the MTP will be as accurate as possible. Discussion ensued.

Due to the low attendance at today's meeting, Carlton suggested that the Committee chair send a letter to the Committee members with an attendance list from today's meeting. He also suggested that this possibly be forwarded to Metro Council along with a recommendation that the bylaws be changed to lower the number of votes needed for a quorum. Itani agreed that the number of votes needed for a quorum could be lowered, for example, from 19 to 11, and that this could be added to the next Policy agenda. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Itani stated that he had distributed three handouts to the Committee. The first of these handouts, a letter from FHWA and FTA to Al Vanderberg, the Chair of Metro Council, sets in motion GVMC's certification review, which will start with a public meeting the evening of Tuesday, June 17 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm. Recertification will then take place all day on Wednesday, June 18 and the morning of June 19. Itani explained that, for the certification review, FHWA and FTA will go through all of GVMC's activities and evaluate them to make sure that GVMC meets federal requirements. This process takes place every four years.

Warren asked for additional information on the purpose of the evening public meeting and suggested that FHWA hold an open house the afternoon of Tuesday, June 17 at the KCRC in order to meet with the Committee members and talk about the MPO process. He noted that the Committee members are some of the most significant players and would have the most input to offer. Itani stated that, in the past, FHWA used to go and meet with the road commissions, the City of Grand Rapids, etc., and talk about the MPO transportation process without the involvement of the MPO staff. However, at the last certification, they did not do this. Tupica responded that FHWA is required to have one public meeting, and at the last certification reviews that they've done, they've interviewed the Tech and Policy Committee chairs and/or vice chairs. However, she stated that FHWA would be happy to have a separate open house for Committee members if they so desired. However, because there will be several guests from out of state in attendance for recertification, she wouldn't be able to spend several hours on this. Itani added that certification will be held at the same time as the June Policy Committee meeting, which will be cancelled, and invited the Committee to attend. Tupica suggested that the open house possibly be held at the same time as the Policy Committee meeting and also encouraged the Committee members to attend recertification, since knowledge sharing makes the process better. She noted that, in addition to reviewing GVMC's current processes during this recertification, FHWA will also try to give GVMC recommendations for what it might want to implement for starting performance-based planning and programming down the line. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Itani distributed a MAP-21 reauthorization bill summary. He stated that he distributed this handout so that Committee members can educate themselves on what's going on. The administration is proposing more funding, but there's no way to pay for it. They will need to transfer \$18 billion from the general fund to meet those goals. Discussion ensued.

Faber thanked everyone who responded to her recent email and signed up to host the Clean Air Action display. She noted that more jurisdictions signed up to host the display

this year than ever before, and encouraged anyone who wanted to host the Clean Air Action display but had not yet signed up to see her after the meeting.

Arends noted that Alpine Township had a fatality last weekend after a motorcyclist hit a pothole.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Krombeen adjourned the May 21, 2014 Policy Committee meeting at 10:37 am.