

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, July 18, 2012
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:42 am. Johnson introduced Ryks, the new executive director of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport, who will be serving on GVMC's Policy Committee from this point forward. Ryks added information about his background and noted that he was looking forward to participating on this Committee. Everyone present then introduced themselves.

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

Peter Varga, <i>Chair</i>		The Rapid
Alex Arends		Alpine Township
Dan Carlton		Georgetown Township
Mark DeClercq		City of Grand Rapids
Tim Grifhorst		OCRC
Jim Holtrop	<i>Proxy for</i>	Ottawa County
	<i>Jim Miedema</i>	Jamestown Township
Dennis Kent	<i>Proxy for</i>	MDOT
	<i>Mark Howe</i>	City of Lowell
Ken Krombeen, <i>Vice Chair</i>		City of Grandville
Ray Lenze	<i>Proxy for</i>	MDOT
	<i>Dal McBurrows</i>	MDOT
Dave Pasquale		Grand Rapids Township
Brian Ryks		GRFIA
Darrel Schmalzel		City of Walker
Don VanDoeselaar		City of Hudsonville
Steve Warren	<i>Proxy for</i>	KCRC
	<i>Dick Bulkowski</i>	Kent County Commissioner
	<i>Jon Rice</i>	KCRC

Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present

Andrea Dewey	GVMC Staff
Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Phil Johnson	GRFIA
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Dick Bulkowski	Kent County Commissioner
Christine Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Dick Davies	Cannon Township
Jamie Davies	City of Rockford

Eric DeLong
 Mike DeVries
 Ken Feldt
 George Haga
 Bryan Harrison
 Don R. Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Bob Homan
 Rich Houtteman
 Mark Howe
 Dal McBurrows
 Jim Miedema
 Audrey Nevins-Weiss
 Richard Pastoor
 Steve Peterson
 Jack Poll
 Chuck Porter
 Jon Rice
 Martin Super
 Toby VanEss

City of Grand Rapids
 Grand Rapids Township
 City of East Grand Rapids
 Ada Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Plainfield Township
 City of Kentwood
 City of Lowell
 MDOT
 Jamestown Township
 Byron Township
 City of Wyoming
 Cascade Township
 City of Wyoming
 Courtland Township
 KCRC
 Village of Sparta
 Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve the May 16, 2012 minutes.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to approve of the May 16, 2012 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. FY2011-2014 TIP AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that MDOT and GVMC Staff are requesting several TIP amendments/modifications for FY2012-2014, including the addition of several approved FY2013 and 2014 CMAQ projects, several updates to project costs and the addition of several projects to the TIP. Robinson noted that since this is the end of the fiscal year, these changes are minor and have no effect on constraint.

Schmalzel asked for clarification on the MDOT/KCRC "East Musketawa Trailhead construction" project. Robinson responded that the project has been sponsored by the MDNRE and that, while information was limited on the project, he believed that this segment was the downtown connector for the trail. Lenze explained that the project was part of a \$2.1 million DNR grant. Of this amount, approximately \$100,000 is for this area, which is why the project is listed in GVMC's TIP. The rest of the funding would be put in the statewide TIP or other MPO TIPs. Warren added that he believed sidewalk construction from the trail to a parking area is also going on as part of this project. Discussion ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to amend/modify the FY2011-2014 TIP.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by DeClercq, to approve the FY2011-2014 TIP amendments/modifications requested by MDOT and Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR PROGRAMMING PROJECTS

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that GVMC and MDOT staff have been working on updating the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document that exists in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) document to make some much needed improvements. There are two areas of concentration in the Policies document: “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” and “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility.” Robinson explained many of the changes in the “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” section and noted that the purpose of many of these changes was to improve the efficiency of the project approval process and reduce bureaucracy. Robinson noted that, in the “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility” section, the Asset Management Committee is recommending that the Committee move from using PAVER to PASER to collect pavement data and select projects for the TIP. Projects would be rated on a scale ranging from 1 to 10.

The first section, “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP),” was presented to the Transportation Programming Study Group (TPSG) for more discussion and approval. The TPSG subcommittee recommended Technical and Policy Committee approval. The section titled: “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility” was discussed at length by the Asset Management Committee. They also recommended the Technical and Policy Committee approval as well.

Varga entertained a motion to approve the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document.

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Arends, to approve both the “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” and the “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility” sections of the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document.

Varga then asked for questions.

Warren commended staff for streamlining the bureaucratic part of the TIP and making the process more efficient. Regarding the switch from PAVER to PASER, Warren noted that the KCRC has been a big proponent of the move and that the County Road Commission supports it. He added that he believed that using PASER will make it easier to determine road conditions and project eligibility. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Holtrop stated that, at the Technical Committee meeting, there was a discussion on how

to handle projected project deficiencies. For example, he said that there could be a road segment with a PASER rating of 6. Two years out, it could be projected to be a 4. Since allowable project fixes are based on PASER ratings, he asked if this anticipated number could be taken into consideration. Itani noted that the Technical Committee agreed to permit projects to be built based on projected deficiencies.

DeClercq recommended that Staff further develop or expand the matrix that was included as part of the agenda packet and outlined the process for revising the TIP and MTP or develop a scorecard in order to weigh projects. He noted that there may be other driving factors that can determine whether a project gets in the TIP other than PASER score, such as bikeability, tie in to Complete Streets, quality of life issues, different strategies, priorities, etc. Itani responded that the new transportation bill mandates that the TIP and MTP be performance-based, and staff will need to demonstrate that the investment in the transportation system is improving the system as a whole. He noted that to be in the TIP, projects must be deficient. He added that the issues DeClercq was suggesting cannot be used for project selection at this time. Policies regarding these items would need to be developed at the MTP level and go down to the TIP. Therefore, he suggested that DeClercq once again bring up items such as goals, policies, measures of effectiveness, etc. during the development of the next MTP. Robinson cautioned the Committee against being too prescriptive, as that could mean less flexibility with projects in the future. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Varga noted that, under the “Qualifications for Adding/Amending New Projects to an Existing TIP” section of the Policies and Practices document, the word “Replacement” should be removed from the following sentence: “All buses should come from the Fleet Replacement Plan.”

Kent reiterated that what MDOT and GVMC staff are trying to accomplish is to allow for more flexibility and address the issues that caused FHWA to hold up TIP amendments. Varga added that these revisions do simplify the process, but reiterated to the Committee that some changes to the TIP can now take place without their official vote. Discussion ensued.

Robinson clarified that he, Kent, and Dewey all worked on revising the document.

Varga returned the motion in question to the floor, noting that the motion had been revised as follows:

MOTION by Warren, SUPPORT by Arends, to approve both the revised “Adding/Programming New or Revised Projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)” and the “Condition Deficient Project Eligibility” sections of the Policies and Practices for Programming Projects document, with the word “Replacement” to be eliminated from the following sentence: “All buses should come from the Fleet Replacement Plan.”

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Varga brought up an issue from the March 21, 2012 Policy Committee meeting where MDOT was asked to provide additional information regarding the \$54 million in unused obligation authority. Itani responded that it is very unlikely that urban areas will

receive much (or any) of this funding, but that he'd continue to work with Lenze on this issue. Discussion ensued.

Kent passed out a handout entitled "Draft State Transportation Commission Policy on Complete Streets." He noted that this policy is available online and that the public can comment on it. It is expected to be formally acted on in August. MDOT will also have the procedures put in place to implement the Complete Streets policy.

Kent also passed out a handout entitled "Drive Michigan's Transportation Future! 2035 MI Transportation Plan Revision." This handout provided information about the August public meetings for MDOT's 2035 MI Transportation Plan Update.

Varga noted that The Rapid has spent more funding providing free rides on Clean Air Action Days than they had expected due to the unusually high number of Action Days this year. They have currently used all of the funding from contracts and are looking at exactly how many more days of free rides they can provide. Once the funding is gone, The Rapid will discontinue providing free rides on Action Days. Varga noted that The Rapid may need to address how free bus rides are handled on Action Days in the future, since they cannot sustain another summer like this.

Itani stated that there is a new transportation bill, MAP-21. He added that the area should receive the same amount of funding as before. Planning funds, however, were increased, since the MPOs will have to meet additional requirements. Funding programs were reduced from 13 to 6. Discussion ensued.

DeClercq mentioned that the Sustainable Streets Task Force has reached out to the Community with meetings, and they have received a lot of interesting feedback from the public that they are now working to address.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Varga adjourned the July 18, 2012 Policy Committee meeting at 10:41 am.