

MINUTES

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
Transportation Division
POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, August 19, 2009
Kent County Road Commission
1500 Scribner NW Grand Rapids, MI**

Varga, Chair of the Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Voting Members Present

Peter Varga	<i>(Chair)</i>		The Rapid
Alex Arends			Alpine Township
Dan Carlton			Georgetown Township
Rick DeVries		<i>Proxy for</i>	City of Grand Rapids
		<i>Mark DeClercq</i>	City of Grand Rapids
Jeff Dood			City of Rockford
Jim Holtrop		<i>Proxy for</i>	Ottawa County
		<i>Don VanDoeselaar</i>	City of Hudsonville
Jim Koslosky			GRFIA
Ken Krombeen			City of Grandville
Dal McBurrows			MDOT
David Pasquale			City of Lowell
Rich Pastoor			City of Wyoming
Jon Rice		<i>Proxy for</i>	KCRC
		<i>Sandi Frost Parrish</i>	Kent County
Darrel Schmalzel			City of Walker

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
Don Stypula	GVMC Staff
Steve Warren	KCRC
George Yang	GVMC Staff
Mike Zonyk	GVMC Staff

Voting Members Not Present

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Larry Bruursema	OCRC
Christine Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Pat Bush	City of Grand Rapids

Dick Davies
 Mark DeClercq
 Sharon DeLange
 Mike DeVries
 Ken Feldt
 George Haga
 Bryan Harrison
 Don R. Hilton, Sr.
 Dennis Hoemke
 Bob Homan
 Rich Houtteman
 Jim Miedema
 Audrey Nevins
 Sandi Frost Parrish
 Steve Peterson
 Jack Poll
 Chuck Porter
 Don VanDoeselaar
 Toby VanEss

Cannon Township
 City of Grand Rapids
 Village of Sparta
 Grand Rapids Township
 City of East Grand Rapids
 Ada Township
 Caledonia Charter Township
 Gaines Township
 Algoma Township
 Plainfield Township
 City of Kentwood
 Jamestown Township
 Byron Township
 Kent County Commissioner
 Cascade Township
 City of Wyoming
 Courtland Township
 City of Hudsonville
 Tallmadge Township

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Varga entertained a motion to approve of the June 17, 2009 Policy Committee meeting minutes.

MOTION by Rice, SUPPORT by Holtrop, to approve of the June 17, 2009 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Sevensma asked the Committee if there were any long or short range plans to utilize piggybacking to transport goods to and from Michigan. He added that as fuel prices go up, it may be less expensive to ship by rail than by truck. Kent responded that the problem with piggybacking containers is that they end up in Chicago, and because of infrastructure problems in Chicago, it is more efficient to transport items by truck than by rail. Kent added that Chicago is working to remedy this issue, but that it will take some time to do so. Discussion ensued.

Arends stated that Alpine Township has a new railroad crossing and that there is a lot of room for rail expansion. Because of this, he would be interested in participating in further conversations about moving freight by rail. Discussion ensued.

IV. FY2008-2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that MDOT and Staff were requesting several TIP amendments. Kent explained MDOT's TIP amendment and modification requests. He stated that MDOT's first request was to move the following FY2010 projects to FY2009 as a TIP modification: US-131 at West River Drive, US-131 at 10 Mile Road, M-44 at 7 Mile Road, M-121 at 40th Avenue, and M-21 over the Flat River. MDOT's second request was to amend the following General

Program Accounts (GPAs) into the FY2010 TIP list: CPM & CSM – Bridge Trunkline, CPM – Road Trunkline, EPE/PE/ROW – Trunkline, Highway Safety – Trunkline, and Enhancements – Local. MDOT's third request was to amend several project phases into the FY2008-2011 MPO TIP, including M-11 from M-37 E. to I-96 for PE, M-44 Con. from I-96 to Airway Street for PE, M-44 Con. from I-96 to Airway Street for ROW, and I-96 at M-44 for Construction. MDOT's fourth request was to amend several ITS projects for maintenance and operations into the FY2008-2011 TIP as advance construct conversions for 2010, 2011, and 2012. He named several cost changes to these projects. Kent asked the Committee to disregard the last project request: M-11 from Grand River to Church Street. Discussion ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to approve of amending MDOT's ITS projects for maintenance and operations in 2010-2012 into the FY2008-2011 TIP.

MOTION by Rice, SUPPORT by Pasquale, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of amending MDOT's maintenance and operations ITS projects into the FY2008-2011 TIP as advance construct conversions for 2010, 2011, and 2012, with the understanding that the funding be taken out of the ITS set aside for future use. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the rest of MDOT's TIP amendments/modifications into the FY2008-2011 TIP as presented by MDOT.

MOTION by Krombeen, SUPPORT by Schmalzel, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of amending MDOT's remaining TIP amendments and modifications into the FY2008-2011 TIP, as described by MDOT Staff. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Robinson stated an additional TIP amendment request, which was that the proposed changes to FY2010 and FY2011 in the TIP made during the FY2010-2013 TIP development process, including changes in project costs, scope, and adding new projects to these years of the TIP, be incorporated into the current FY2008-2011 TIP. Robinson reviewed these changes, which included (1) moving the 4 Mile Road from Baumhoff to Old Orchard project from FY2010 to FY2011, (2) adding the Cannonsburg Road from Meyers Lake to Giles project as a new STP-Rural project in FY2010, (3) changing the limits of the 3 Mile Road project from Elmridge to Walker to Indian Creek Road to Walker for FY2010 EDFC, (4) moving the 4 Mile Road from Baumhoff to Peachridge project to FY2012, (5) adding STP-rural projects to FY2011, and (6) adding Forest Hills Avenue from Ada Drive to Braeburn Street in FY2011 for EDFC funding.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the changes as described by Staff.

MOTION by Arends, SUPPORT by Pastoor, to recommend to the Metro Council Board approval of amending the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the TIP amendment requests, as identified by Staff.

McBurrows asked if an air quality conformity analysis was completed because of the changes to the TIP. Itani responded that an air quality conformity analysis had been conducted, and that the public involvement process had been completed as well.

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

Lastly, Robinson described a request from Staff to move a project from the B-list of Stimulus (ARRA) projects to the "A" list as a FY2008-2011 TIP modification. Robinson explained that, due to the bidding/letting process at MDOT, some of the projects came in under budget, which resulted in ARRA funds being left over. The City of Rockford had a project identified to be given first priority if any funds became available. This project is Main Street from Division to Courtland, and will be resurfaced with \$128,000 in Federal funds. Robinson added that at the August 5, 2009 Technical Committee meeting, the Technical Committee had recommended to move forward with the City of Rockford's project.

Varga entertained a motion to amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to include the City of Rockford's project.

MOTION by Dood, SUPPORT by Krombeen, to recommend to the Metro Council Board moving the City of Rockford's B-list project to the A-list as a FY2008-2011 TIP modification. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. **AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) PROJECTS**

Robinson stated that more ARRA funding may be available in the near future, due to the probability that many additional projects will come in under their estimates. He expected that the Committee would be able to move an additional project from the B-list to the A list with these additional funds at a future meeting. Itani stated that any project submitted must be obligated before December 31, 2009.

Itani added that, excluding the City of Rockford's project, there was approximately \$315,000 in remaining ARRA funding. Itani added that there will be a TPSG Committee meeting the first week of September to discuss the remaining ARRA funding and that the City of Hudsonville will have until that meeting to decide on whether to proceed with their ARRA project. If the City of Hudsonville ends up forfeiting their project, that would add \$120,000 to the amount of ARRA funding available. Itani explained that another possibility may be using a combination of ARRA and STP funding to fund a larger project.

Robinson added that he receives a balance report from MDOT every week that shows the remaining amount of ARRA funding. Itani added that, at this time, \$4.5 million worth of projects is yet to be obligated, and the best case scenario will be that bids will continue to come in low, which means that additional funding will be available. The worst case scenario is that all of the available funding will be used up. Itani added that there is no ARRA money available to be received from other states. Discussion ensued.

VI. **2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) UPDATE SOCIOECONOMIC (SE) BASE YEAR DATA**

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Dewey presented to the Committee information regarding the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan base year data for population and employment. She stated that the LRTP update is due in March of 2011, and one of the first steps in this process is to refine the socioeconomic data. She added that the base year for all of the data for the 2035 LRTP is 2009. To develop the base year data,

Dewey explained that GVMC had purchased employment data from Claritas and used information from the census for population. Dewey explained that all of the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) maps are available on www.gvmc.org, and that the Technical Committee was given the same data and asked to review it and provide changes by August 12. Itani provided additional information and explained that while the travel demand model is now encompassing an additional area in Ottawa County, the MPO-area itself is not expanding.

Dewey added that GVMC has divided the MPO-area into 5 subregions, and meetings are expected to begin in September. Itani added that GVMC will also hold individual meetings with jurisdictions if requested by the jurisdiction. Discussion, comments, and questions ensued.

Varga entertained a motion to conditionally approve the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update Socio-Economic 2009 base year data for population and employment.

MOTION by Pasquale, SUPPORT by Pastoor, to conditionally approve the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update Socio-Economic 2009 base year data for population and employment. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Dewey announced that MDOT, the Department of Public Health and the City of Grand Rapids are organizing a free onroad bicycle training workshop on September 11, 2009. There are 10 spaces available. Dewey asked interested Committee members to notify her if they are interested in attending.

Dewey added that the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition will be sponsoring a series on WGVU about national parks. The show will start airing in September. Dewey also announced that August 5th, 2009 marked the Pere Marquette's 25th anniversary. This milestone was celebrated by an event at the Amtrak station that morning.

Varga added that the Michigan Chamber recently announced that they would not support any candidate that would vote against their transportation initiatives. He recommended that all committee members interested in transportation funding contact the Michigan Chamber to tell them thank you for putting their energy into transportation funding. Discussion ensued.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Varga adjourned the August 19, 2009 Policy Committee meeting at 10:27 am.