

**MINUTES**

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council  
Transportation Division  
POLICY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, September 17, 2014  
Kent County Road Commission  
1500 Scribner NW      Grand Rapids, MI**

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

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

**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
Mark DeClercq		City of Grand Rapids
Jim Holtrop		Ottawa County
Rich Houtteman		City of Kentwood
Dennis Kent	<i>Proxy for Mark Howe</i>	MDOT-Grand Region
John Lanum	<i>Proxy for Dal McBurrows</i>	City of Lowell
		MDOT
		MDOT
Joe Slonecki		City of East Grand Rapids
Ben Swayze		Cascade Township
Roger Towsley		Village of Sand Lake
Peter Varga		ITP-The Rapid
Steve Warren, <i>Vice Chair</i>		KCRC

**Staff and Non-Voting Guests Present**

Andrea Faber	GVMC Staff
Rod Ghearing	ITP-The Rapid
Abed Itani	GVMC Staff
Josh Lungert	Grand Rapids Chamber
Darrell Robinson	GVMC Staff
Norm Sevensma	WMEAC-RWBC
Jim Snell	GVMC Staff
George Yang	GVMC Staff

**Voting Members Not Present**

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Dan Carlton	Georgetown Township
Jamie Davies	City of Rockford
Eric DeLong	City of Grand Rapids
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
George Haga	Ada Township

APPROVED

Bryan Harrison  
Don R. Hilton, Sr.  
Dennis Hoemke  
Mark Howe  
Dal McBurrows  
Jim Miedema  
Tim Nelson  
Audrey Nevins-Weiss  
Richard Pastoor  
Jack Poll  
Chuck Porter  
Brian Ryks  
Darrel Schmalzel  
Dan Strikwerda  
Thad Taylor  
Cameron Van Wyngarden  
Toby VanEss

APPROVED  
ITEM II: ATTACHMENT A

Caledonia Charter Township  
Gaines Township  
Algoma Township  
City of Lowell  
MDOT  
OCRC  
Cannon Township  
Byron Township  
City of Wyoming  
City of Wyoming  
Courtland Township  
GRFIA  
City of Walker  
City of Hudsonville  
City of Cedar Springs  
Plainfield Township  
Tallmadge Township

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Krombeen entertained a motion to approve the July 16, 2014 Policy Committee minutes.

**MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by Altman, to approve of the July 16, 2014 Policy Committee meeting minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**IV. 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

Referring to **Item IV: Attachment A**, Snell explained that at today's meeting, staff would present the findings of all of the analyses completed for all of the various transportation elements contained in the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This effort is the culmination of months and sometimes years of efforts to identify needs for all transportation resources in our community. He added that the Policy Committee is being asked to endorse the package of transportation needs so the work of developing a set of preferred alternatives and prioritization can begin. The Committee will not be asked to look at identified solutions at this time.

The TPSG Committee met in August and reviewed and discussed the needs list in great detail. The GVMC Technical Committee met on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and also endorsed the needs lists. The public has been invited to comment on the lists prior to any preferred alternatives being developed. So far, staff has received two comments, and both relate to transit. The public comment period for the needs lists goes until September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Capacity Deficiencies** – Snell stated that there is a list of approximately 100 capacity deficiencies. They have been out for just over a month and he has already received several comments on it from technical staff from various jurisdictions. All of the capacity deficiencies will go through the congestion management process, and they will be evaluated against a menu of solutions to address capacity issues on facilities. These

include, among others, adding a left turn lane or a do-nothing approach. Widening is the last case scenario they look at. He noted that congestion/capacity deficiencies are based on SE data, so as things start to ramp up with the economy, there may be some areas in future plans that need to be looked at a little harder. However, the Committee will get a chance to review this again in the future.

Houtteman asked if staff foresees roads being developed that aren't on the list yet in order to reduce congestion on some corridors. Kent responded that the simplest thing to do is to list new solutions on the illustrative list, which contains unmet needs, because the MTP needs to be financially constrained. Discussion ensued.

**Intersections of Interest** – Snell noted that intersections are where a lot of the recurring and nonrecurring congestion is happening. He explained that the approximately 100 intersections on the list are problem locations that the Committee would possibly like to look at further in the future. These intersections need to be in our Metropolitan Transportation Plan so that they are ready to be brought forward in the future.

Kent asked if staff had noted where work had already been done on intersections. Snell explained that while staff has maintained good documentation as to why intersections are on this list, he viewed this as a working list. He added that while some work may have been done on these intersections, there may still be issues remaining. Discussion, comments and questions ensued.

Warren noted that the Capacity Deficiency list listed townships under the responsible jurisdiction while the Intersections of Interest list listed the KCRC or OCRC as the responsible jurisdiction. Snell stated that staff would work on making these lists more consistent.

**Freight** – Robinson stated that GVMC staff worked extensively with the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce on the Freight Plan. To begin, staff went through and identified GVMC's freight network. Staff also tried to identify trucking, rail and air freight movements, as well as potential freight issues in the future. A rail station/intermodal facility was identified as an important future need. He noted that the state has its own rail plan, and staff piggy backed off that plan to determine needs.

**Non-Motorized** – Snell noted that the Policy Committee approved the Non-Motorized Plan a couple of months ago, and therefore, it wasn't necessary to give an overview of it at today's meeting.

**Safety** – Snell added that the Safety Plan was also brought through the Committee for approval a couple of months ago. He noted a number of safety activities, such as drunk driving awareness campaigns, that the MPO could foreseeably become involved in, along with the physical condition of the road and what could be done to improve safety, such as adding left turn lanes, road diets, or restriping wide 4-lane roads to add nonmotorized facilities.

**Transit** – Snell noted that ITP-The Rapid's safety plan has been out for quite a while and that it has a lot of good information in it.

**Condition** – Snell noted that there is a condition report dated June 25, 2014, that looks at the need and what happens with the system. The last page of the report outlines

various options for different elements. Staff will need to tie performance measures into this report eventually. He noted that staff will develop alternatives and work with a steering team to determine recommendations that will come back through the process. Unfortunately, there's no extra funding for this. He explained that the Committee will need to come back together and start to make recommendations.

Snell then asked for questions. Kent asked Snell if he's planning on holding a Steering Committee meeting in October. Snell replied that it will probably take place at the time/date of the regularly scheduled Policy Committee meeting, which would likely be cancelled. Snell invited any of the Committee members that wished to serve on the MTP Steering Committee to contact him.

DeClercq asked for clarification on the extent to which MPOs in general are held to performance measures without an increase in federal funding. Snell replied that there is no additional funding and that there are certain issues that FHWA will hold us to, such as safety and national highway system conditions. The MPO will be sanctioned with its federal funding unless it meets its goals in these areas. Itani then provided samples of some achievable performance measures set by other MPOs. DeClercq asked if the MPO will determine what the objectives are. Itani explained what the process could look like for selecting an objective for all transportation modes, including a possible hybrid meeting between Tech, Policy and Staff, which would also involve looking at various funding scenarios and creating an investment strategy for the MTP. Discussion ensued.

Krombeen entertained a motion to endorse moving forward with the needs list proposed by Snell.

**MOTION by DeClercq, SUPPORT by Varga, to endorse the pool of needs proposed by Snell. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **V. 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

Referring to **Item V: Attachment A**, Robinson informed the Committee that he was bringing the draft version of the financial plan to them today for their review. It will eventually be included in the FY2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Robinson explained that the financial plan is the section of the MTP that documents the method used to calculate funds reasonably expected to be available and compares this amount to proposed projects to demonstrate that the MTP is fiscally constrained. The financial plan also identifies the costs of operating and maintaining the transportation system within GVMC. It contains federal, state and local revenues.

The MTP contains the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects and eventually projects (once programmed) that will most likely be implemented from FY2018-2040. Therefore, this transportation plan covers a period of 26 years. The TIP and eventual MTP list of projects are required to be fiscally constrained; that is, the cost of projects listed in the TIP and MTP cannot exceed the amount of funding "reasonably expected to be available" during that time.

This draft document is the first attempt at providing future estimates for funding of federal, state and local fund sources for highway and transit. Robinson emphasized that some of the financial estimates could be updated as more information comes in and are

based on a best guess from numbers pulled together statewide. Revenue forecasting relies on a combination of data and experience and represents a “best guess” of future trends. He noted that there will be a number of unmet needs which will be listed in a different part of the document. Approximately \$1.4 billion will be needed through 2015 just to maintain the system.

Robinson stated that staff will be looking for Policy Committee concurrence of the financial plan in order to continue moving forward to eventual programming of projects for the MTP. The Technical Committee recommends approval.

Itani added that the financial chapter is based on a federally required statewide template, and staff will use this to come up with a process to clarify to FHWA where funding comes from and how much in federal funding is spent on the system, operations, etc.

Warren asked if the MPO is required to provide financial information through 2040. He noted that it would be impossible to predict financial conditions that far out. In his opinion, the furthest they could plan ahead would be ten years. Itani responded that the MPO is required to use a 20-year planning horizon, and that there are other technical issues that make it necessary to plan even further out. However, financially, the only certain thing is the first three years of the TIP. Warren noted the importance of explaining to the public that only projects in the immediate future are clear, while future years are uncertain. Discussion ensued.

Warren added that having to keep the MTP financially constrained can take away from the creativity in visioning for the planning process. Visioning can therefore really only be used in illustrative lists. Itani noted that the MPO has another year to get the MTP in conformity with MAP-21 regulations and throughout that process, there will be an opportunity for the Committee to do some visioning for the next 50 years. Discussion ensued.

## **VI. CITY OF KENTWOOD'S REPRESENTATION ON THE TECHNICAL AND POLICY COMMITTEES**

Referring to **Item VI: Attachment A**, Itani stated that he received a phone call from Terry Schweitzer from the City of Kentwood a couple of months ago. Schweitzer explained that while the City of Kentwood was applying for a HUD grant, they determined that they exceeded 50,000 in population. Schweitzer remembered that if a jurisdiction has a population of over 50,000, then they get another vote on the Technical and Policy Committees. Itani stated that he told Schweitzer that he didn't mind if they use the population estimates for grants on the federal level, which would allow Kentwood to have two votes instead of one. However, he explained that the bylaws state that the number of votes a jurisdiction receives is based on the last certified census, which was in 2010. Itani stated that he would leave this decision up to the Committee.

Houtteman provided the background on the letter from Schweitzer requesting an additional vote, which was included in the agenda packet. He noted that Kentwood feels like the system is well advocated for. Schweitzer just wanted to point out their population numbers and ask if they're entitled to another vote.

Houtteman then suggested that, if the Committee wishes to have the census be the dictator of the number of votes a community receives, the following sentence in article 4.1 of the bylaws be revised to add the word “decennial” as written below:

*Cities and townships shall have one additional vote for each 50,000 population based on the last decennial certified census.*

He stated that he believed that this would meet the intent of the group and added that if Kentwood is not given another vote, then they recommend that change. He noted that a certified census could be done for any reason.

Krombeen entertained a motion to amend article 4.1 of GVMC’s bylaws to add the word “decennial” and also remove the word “certified” as indicated below:

*Cities and townships shall have one additional vote for each 50,000 population based on the last decennial ~~certified~~ census.*

**MOTION by Varga, SUPPORT by Houtteman, to revise article 4.1 of GVMC’s bylaws to add the word “decennial” as requested by Houtteman and the City of Kentwood and remove the word “certified.”**

Krombeen noted that membership dues are population-based as well. He then asked for comments about the proposed change. Receiving none, he called the motion to question.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Varga asked that all Committee members receive a copy of the bylaws. Itani stated that the bylaws are on GVMC’s website, and anyone who wants a hard copy of the bylaws can request it.

**VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Krombeen entertained a motion to adjourn the September 17, 2014 Policy Committee meeting.

**MOTION by Holtrop, SUPPORT by Krombeen, to adjourn the September 17, 2014 Policy Committee meeting at 10:36 am. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**