

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES OCTOBER 12, 2023 - 9:30 A.M.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The October 12, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. at Kalamazoo Metro, by Chairperson Minkus.

**ROLL CALL**

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet. Introductions were made by all present. Two Federal Highway Administration employees joined the meeting virtually from Lansing.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Muhammad Arif	City of Portage
Nolan Bergstrom	City of Kalamazoo
Mickey Bittner	Village of Paw Paw
Heather Bowden	Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Brenda Burdick	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Eric Feldt	City of Portage
Kendra Gwin	City of Portage
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Jim Hoekstra	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Joel Hoort	Van Buren County Road Commission
Anthony Ladd	City of Kalamazoo
Iris Lubbert	Oshtemo Township
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township
Ryan Minkus	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Zach Pierson	Oshtemo Township
Whitney Pizzala	Village of Mattawan
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Paul Sotherland	Citizens Advisory Committee
Jenny Staroska	Federal Highway Administration
Jodi Stefforia	Comstock Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
Madee Thorburn	Michigan Department of Transportation, Region
Greg Vlietstra	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sean Beckman	Wade Trim
Tyana Dau	Value Engineering

Phil Doorlag	Wightman
Evan Gross	Federal Transit Administration
Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Christina Nicholaides	Federal Highway Administration
Lexi Petrella	Alta Planning & Design
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Kathleen Russell	Federal Transit Administration
Andrew Sibold	Federal Highway Administration
Steve Stepek, AICP	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Susan Tebbe	Mannik & Smith Group
Ali Townsend	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

**CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Stefforia, ***“to approve the agenda of the October 12, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 MEETING**

Hoekstra moved, and it was duly seconded by Stefforia, ***“to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

**POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Steppek reported on behalf of the Policy Committee who met at the end of September. Technical Committee recommended Transportation Improvement Program Amendments were adopted. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Staff made a presentation on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Discretionary Program.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

**ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARY (ACUB)**

Referring to the maps enclosed in the meeting packet, Stepek explained they have been out for comment since last month’s meeting. KATS Staff recommends Technical Committee recommendation to the Policy Committee for approval.

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Hackenberg, ***“to approve the Adjusted Census Urban Boundary (ACUB) and recommend them to the Policy Committee for approval.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

**DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Referring to the draft Public Participation Plan linked in the meeting packet, Stepek reminded attendees to submit any comments to Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS). The plan will be presented next month for approval. Per Minkus’ request, a summary of changes will be sent out when it is presented for approval.

## **DRAFT TITLE VI PLAN**

Referring to the draft Title VI Plan linked in the meeting packet, Stepek reminded attendees to submit any comments to Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS). The plan will be presented next month for approval.

## **FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION PRESENTATION: CERTIFICATION REVIEW**

Andrew Sibold from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) presented an overview of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) 2023 Certification Review. Christina Nicholaides from FHWA added that this Technical Committee meeting serves as the required public comment portion of the review. Technical Committee Members are invited to share comments and feedback on KATS to the FHWA or Federal Transit Administration representatives either during or after the meeting.

## **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OFFICER DISCUSSION**

Minkus reiterated that the Technical Committee officer terms expire at the end of the year. Stepek reported that Vice-Chair Stefforia has agreed to move up to the Chairperson position. It is preferable to have one planner and one engineer as officers. Anna Horner from Oshtemo Township will be contacted as a potential Vice-Chair.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE-** Mickelson reported Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Staff continue to make edits to the non-motorized facilities network map on the katsmpo.org website. The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County route changes are being incorporated. Processes to keep better track of edits will be discussed at the next meeting. In response to Minkus' inquiry, Mickelson responded the next meeting will be in either late October or early November. Sotherland requested extension of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail through downtown Kalamazoo be discussed at the next meeting. Sotherland questioned how to cross US-131 south of Schoolcraft on a bike at XY and YZ Avenues. Bowden with the Michigan Department of Transportation will look into it. Heppler asked about progress to extend the trail that begins at Lake Michigan all the way into Augusta. Minkus responded that the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County has partnered with Kalamazoo County Parks and Recreation on completion of the final section of the trail. Progress is being delayed due to the trail's two Amtrak crossings. Not only are all stakeholders in support of completion of the trail, but it is also included in the Kalamazoo County Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Construction will follow once rail crossing issues are resolved.

**COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN-** Mickelson stated the Complete Streets Implementation Plan Subcommittee will meet at the end of October or early November. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Staff continue progress on a new project prioritization and scoring methodology.

**TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION-** Stepek reported the Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee met after last month's Technical Committee meeting. Traffic signal operation and coordination during power outages was discussed. The next meeting will be after the November Technical Committee meeting.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Vlietstra reported Metro is finalizing the Request for Proposal for a micotransit service contract provider. It should be advertised and posted within the next couple of weeks. Sarah Joshi has been hired as the new Deputy Director of On-Demand Services. She will start on Monday October 16, 2023. Her main focus will be to lead the efforts to start a microtransit service. Joshi most recently

was the City Manager at Galesburg. Before that, she worked as the Elections Coordinator at the Kalamazoo County Clerk's Office. Joshi will be Central County Transportation Authority's representative for Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee.

## **STATUS REPORTS**

### **ROADS-**

Heppler reported paving is underway in the Village of Augusta on M-96 for the water project. The Washington Street bridge replacement project will be in the January or February letting.

Hoekstra provided the update for the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC). The W Avenue project came in at 5 percent over engineer estimates. The MN Avenue and Mercury Drive project in Charleston Township is targeted for the November bid letting. Paving will begin soon on the Lake Street project. This is the last project for the 2023 season.

Ladd reported that the Local Agency Program (LAP) Local Bridge Council met recently in Battle Creek for the fiscal 2026 project selection. There are more applications that funding allows. The City of Kalamazoo Ransom Street project is ongoing. Construction will continue as long as possible. Construction will resume in 2024. The Whites Road project is in the process of finishing up. The restoration project on Parkview between Oakland and Whites is ongoing. The next phase of the project will begin in spring. Approaches are being finished on the Patterson Street bridge project. The bridge will be open within the next few weeks.

Pierson reported the Oshtemo Township 7<sup>th</sup> Street sanitary sewer expansion project is ongoing.

Gwin stated the City of Portage South Westnedge Avenue from Melody Avenue to Centre Avenue safety improvements are complete with a few punch list items remaining. Portage Road from East Centre Avenue to Romence Road Parkway is substantially complete. Consumers Energy is currently undergrounding electric and removing poles to enable the contractor to finish the sidewalk part of the project. Planting of boulevard trees is expected to be completed next week. Shaver Road from south city limits to Vanderbilt Avenue water main and storm improvements are currently underway. The detour for northbound traffic on Shaver Road is north on Oakland Drive, east on Vanderbilt Avenue and north on Shaver Road. There is a temporary traffic signal at Vanderbilt Avenue and Shaver Road to facilitate the detour route. Milling and paving will be completed in 2024. Portage Road from Romence Road Parkway to Fairfield Avenue construction documents are being finalized and anticipating a February bid letting. West Milham Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Oakland Drive construction in 2025 engineering contract has been awarded. West Centre Avenue from Oakland Drive to Shaver Road construction in 2026 request for engineering proposals has been advertised.

Burdick reported the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Portage Road project anticipated completion is October 28, 2023. Project delays are expected to move this date back further.

Pizzala reported the Village of Mattawan is researching grants for projects.

### **LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-**

Feldt reported the City of Portage continues the process of updating its master plan. The anticipated wrap up is next summer. The city is working with a consultant on a rezoning project along Portage Road. The city is looking for candidates for its Project Manager Planning position.

Lubbert reported the Oshtemo Township Housing Plan is out for comment. The plan will be presented to the Planning Commission in November and go to the Township Board for approval in December. The township is working with a consultant to update its Comprehensive Master Plan. Completion is anticipated in the summer of 2025. Oshtemo Township just adopted a 5G ordinance. Traffic counters are in place for a project that will be designed next summer. The anticipated construction will be in 2026. Lubbert thanked Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study and the Road Commission of

Kalamazoo County for feedback on the Mixed-Use District Zoning Classification project. The project is nearing completion. Expected adoption will be in December.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was brought forth.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee will be held on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.*