

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES MAY 9, 2024 - 9:30 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The May 9, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. at Metro, by Chairperson Stefforia.

ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet. Introductions were made by all present.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nolan Bergstrom	City of Kalamazoo
Mickey Bittner	Village of Paw Paw
Zac Culbert	Village of Schoolcraft
Kerry DenBraber	Michigan Department of Transportation, Transportation Service Center
Dean Disterheft	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Eric Feldt	City of Portage
Josh Grab	Michigan Department of Transportation, Region
Jamie Harmon	City of Portage
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Joel Hoort	Van Buren County Road Commission
Anna Horner	Oshtemo Township
Anthony Ladd	City of Kalamazoo
Jenny McCowen	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Sherman Potter	City of Portage
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Joshua Ranes	City of Galesburg
Kathy Schultz	Central County Transportation Authority
Clayton Sigmann	Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Paul Sotherland	Citizens' Advisory Committee
Jodi Stefforia	Oshtemo Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo

OTHERS PRESENT

Lisa McNees	City of Galesburg
Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
John Morrison	West Michigan Trails
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Tom Palumbo	City of Kalamazoo
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

Steve Stepek
Ali Townsend

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
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CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Schultz moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, ***“to approve the agenda of the May 9, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 11, 2024 MEETING

Stefforia mentioned that her reported agency should be updated.

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Horner, ***“to approve the minutes as corrected from the April 11, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Stepek reported on behalf of the Policy Committee who met in April. The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) hosted the meeting. The Fiscal Year 2024 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment was approved. The meeting was followed by a tour of the new RCKC facility and the Township Supervisors meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sotherland of Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Citizen’s Advisory Committee reminded attendees that the Kalamazoo Commuter Challenge starts a week from tomorrow. Sotherland encouraged everyone to participate and sign up for the Love to Ride app.

FY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

Stepek mentioned the two Transportation Improvement Program Amendments are included in the packet. Both are non-exempt for Air Quality. One is for adding funds to the Kalamazoo Avenue road rehab project by the City of Kalamazoo. The other is a Michigan Department of Transportation project scope change for the I-94 westbound at US-131 northbound ramp. The ramp widening has changed to the addition of an auxiliary lane bordering US-131 from I-94 to Stadium Drive. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Staff recommends the Technical Committee approve the amendments and recommend them to the Policy Committee for approval.

Schultz moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, ***“to approve the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments and to recommend them to the Policy Committee for adoption.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

FY 2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM DRAFT

Stepek stated a link to the document was provided in the meeting materials. The draft was presented last month for comments. There were two minor verbiage adjustments and an answered question. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Staff recommends the Technical Committee approve the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program and recommend it to the Policy Committee for approval.

Schultz moved, and it was duly seconded by Feldt, ***“to approve the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program and to recommend it to the Policy Committee for adoption.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

WEST MICHIGAN TRAILS REGIONAL WAYFINDING GUIDE PRESENTATION

Stepek introduced John Morrison, Executive Director of West Michigan Trails. Morrison gave the history of West Michigan Trails. It was established as a non-profit 501C(3) in 2005. The goal of the organization is to create a connected visually consistent and attractive wayfinding and regulatory signage framework across West Michigan. The Regional West Michigan Wayfinding Guide with access to sign design templates is available at the wmtrails.org website under the Resources menu. Sign templates are available for vehicular signs on roads and for bicyclists' signs on trails. Trail connectivity, and consistency throughout the state was discussed. Attendees' questions were answered. Further dialogue ensued.

COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN DRAFT

The draft plan is included in the meeting packet. Stepek clarified this Implementation Plan is a way for Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) to implement Complete Streets and put a metric on it to put into our Prioritization Process. Submit any questions or comments to Mickelson by May 29, 2024. Mickelson summarized the Complete Streets Implementation Plan Draft outlines how KATS is going to score projects. It will tie into the Complete Streets line item in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) scoring in the Prioritization Process. The plan is expected to be brought back next month for action. Horner expressed interest in receiving feedback from those who served on the Complete Streets Subcommittee. Horner opined that the Committee should hear and discuss comments before the day of the vote. Waring inquired about the feasibility of adding the condition '*IF an improvement was done on the roadway for Complete Streets*' to the last three program objectives of Roadway Lanes, Activity Centers, and Equity. You won't receive points unless an improvement is made. Stepek responded it could be clarified here and in the Prioritization Process overall. Stepek added these questions will be on the TIP application and will fit into the five points of overall scoring. This is the first step of Implementation. The next Call for Projects will be this fall. Horner expressed appreciation for the productivity, effort, and compromised Criteria developed by the Complete Streets Subcommittee as well as the patience demonstrated by KATS Staff. Horner advocates for giving the Complete Streets Implementation Plan greater significance in the Prioritization Process. Harmon expressed difficulty regarding Complete Streets and the steps of the NEPA process. One more Complete Streets Subcommittee meeting will be held prior to the next June Technical Committee meeting.

CONTRIBUTED SERVICES FISCAL YEAR TO DATE

Stepek explained that the fiscal year-to-date April 2024 Contributed Services Report by agency is included in the meeting materials for your information and review. Ask for assistance with any questions in completing time sheets.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE- Townsend reminded attendees to submit edits on the nonmotorized maps through the survey. The next meeting will be in July.

COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN- The update was provided as a separate agenda item.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION- The next Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee meeting will be in August.

PRIORITIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE- Stepek stated Townsend is upgrading our document from the pdf application to a more user friendly, efficient, online document similar to our nonmotorized survey. This ties in with the Complete Streets Implementation Plan, and therefore can't be adopted until after Complete Streets is. It will most likely be presented for adoption in August. The Call for Projects is planned for September or October. Stepek reminded attendees to get Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments in early. Look at fiscal 2025 projects now. Review fiscal 2026 projects. Once we adopt the new TIP, a lockdown period goes into affect on the old one.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Schultz reported Metro's new Microtransit pilot program has been running for about a month. This Metro Link app based, on-demand service operates in three different zones in Kalamazoo County. Eight vehicles are being used for the service. Feedback has been positive. Schultz expressed thanks for coordination of road construction impacting bus movement. Heppler thanked Metro for sending buses to assist with the Tuesday emergency. Schultz elaborated that Metro is part of the Emergency Management process in Kalamazoo County. Metro assisted in moving people from Pavilion Estates in Kalamazoo in the aftermath of the tornado.

STATUS REPORTS

ROADS-

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta secured a contractor for the Washington Street bridge project which will be done this summer.

DenBraber gave the Michigan Department of Transportation updates. KL Avenue under US-131 is closed and being detoured. Southbound US-131 in Schoolcraft is detoured. One lane is closed northbound. M-40 in Lawton is closed and detoured.

Hoort reported Van Buren County Road Commission is starting three resurfacing projects today. Two in Antwerp Township and one in Paw Paw Township.

Disterheft provided the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County updates. Roadway work on Squires Drive is mostly complete. Roundabout construction at Squires/Drake will begin in June after school is out. Squires will remain closed during this time. Storm sewer work has begun on the Douglas Avenue project. W Avenue final paving is planned for this week. The road will open to traffic in the next two weeks. The MN and Mercury Drive project was awarded and expected to start in June. The 9th Street and Stadium Federal Aid Buyback project is anticipated to start in June. Stepek suggested letting RCKC Staff know the two Federal Aid Buybacks are in process. Multiple projects are under design for fall 2024 Michigan Department of Transportation lettings.

Waring reported the City of Kalamazoo Whites and Westnedge projects continue. The water main phase is ongoing now. The Ransom Street project will be ongoing through the rest of the year. The Michikal project was rebid and will be awarded. It has a tentative start date in June. Michikal will fully close during the project. Work will begin this month related to the new downtown Event Center. Closures for utility work will start on Westnedge. The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail will be rerouted. In late May the Safe Streets for All pilot project will begin. The planning process will begin after the Safety Action Plan. The Howard Street project was bid and awarded. It came in under budget. It will begin in July. The Riverview Drive project will be completed in mid-June. Local street projects are planned to begin May 22, 2024.

Harmon reported the City of Portage Portage Road project is underway with water main and sanitary sewer work. The Shaver Road project from South City Limits to Vanderbilt Avenue mill and resurfacing is scheduled for mid-July. The West Milham project from 12th Street to Oakland Drive is under design. A 2026 project on West Centre Avenue is being planned. Cleanup and restoration is underway from the May 7, 2024 tornado. Both Centre and Westnedge Avenues are now fully open. Thousands of trees are down. Power is not fully restored. Ten traffic signals are still not working. Crews are working around-the-clock.

LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-

Stoddard reported the City of Parchment Trestle Restoration project continues.

Grab reported a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) "MI Travel Counts Survey" has been issued. Randomly selected households will receive notification through the mail. More information and the survey are available at mitravelcounts.com. Travel patterns will assist with Travel Demand Modeling. Compensation is

offered to volunteers. A new Southwest Region Transportation Planner has been hired by MDOT to replace Grab on this Committee.

Sigmann announced that the Fiscal Year 2024 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment has been submitted to the feds.

Bergstrom reported that the City of Kalamazoo is hosting its second annual Bike Show in Bronson Park on Saturday, rain or shine. A larger turnout than last year is expected. Bergstrom encouraged attendees to participate in the Kalamazoo Commuter Challenge, adding that the Love to Ride app is very easy to use. The Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation Department is partnering with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety to host the annual Bike Rodeo for kids on May 15, 2024 at Mayors' Riverfront Park.

Feldt reported the City of Portage is nearing completion of the final draft of the Master Plan. The web-based format is available on the City of Portage homepage. The Planning Commission is getting close to their recommendation. Then it will go to the City Council later this month or early June for approval of public notification distribution. The 63-day state required notification period will last through the end of summer or early fall. The City of Portage will host a public workshop to showcase the Master Plan. Send any comments to the Community Development Department in Portage.

Schultz reported Metro will be applying for the Michigan Shared Streets and Spaces Grant. The \$200-million-dollar grant will be used to create a bus mobility hub at Western Michigan University's Rood Hall. The Grant application is due June 7, 2024. Schultz may contact you for Letters of Support.

Stefforia reported Oshtemo will be hosting a mandatory open house on May 16, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. for the combined Downtown Development Authority and South Drake Road Development Authority presentation of concepts to extend Atlantic Avenue. On June, 13, 2024 the Planning Commission is hosting the first visioning session for the new Master Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forth.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sotherland provided detail that the Love to Ride app is available now through March 2025. Data collected will contribute to an anonymized heatmap of rides which will also assist with Traffic Demand Modeling mentioned by Grab. Horner announced the Junior Leage of Kalamazoo is hosting Touch-a-Truck at the Kalamazoo Fairgrounds on May 11, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Ladd announced that today is his last day as a member of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee. He has accepted a new job with the Federal Railroad Administration. Ladd expressed appreciation for working with members the last 5 years and partnership for positive progress made.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee will be held on Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

DRAFT