

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

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

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mickey Bittner	Village of Paw Paw (Wightman & Associates)
Nolan Bergstrom	City of Kalamazoo
Heather Bowden	Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Kerry DenBraber	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Eric Feldt	City of Portage
Josh Grab	Michigan Department of Transportation, Region
Rachael Grover	Kalamazoo County
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Jamie Harmon	City of Portage
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
Anna Horner	Oshtemo Township
Anthony Ladd	City of Kalamazoo
John Lovely	Texas Township
Ryan Minkus, Chair	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Ryan Russell	Village of Schoolcraft
Kathy Schultz	Central County Transportation Authority
Pratik Sharma	City of Portage
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee
Jodi Stefforia, Vice-Chair	Comstock Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
Greg Vlietstra	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo

OTHERS PRESENT

Phil Doorlag	Wightman & Associates
Bart Franklin	HRC
Martin Janssen	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority

Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Juan Ruelas	Rathco
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Hailey Savola	ROWE
Steve Stepek, AICP	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
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

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

MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 8, 2022 MEETING

Minkus reported some changes to the attendance portion of the minutes.

Hoekstra moved, and it was duly seconded by Schultz, ***“to approve the minutes with the attendance corrections, from the December 8, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Stepek reported on behalf of the Policy Committee that the Technical Committee recommended Transportation Improvement Program Amendments were approved. Regional traffic signal coordination was discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sotherland stated non-motorized progress in the Kalamazoo region is getting statewide notice and thanked the group for their efforts and hard work.

METRO COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS PRESENTATION

Minkus introduced Schultz for the Metro Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) presentation. Metro hired consultant Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning for the COA which started in October 2021. The final report is expected in February 2023. The last COA was completed in 2010. Schultz summarized the 2010 COA changes Metro implemented noting it took six years to apply them. Metro anticipates a similar time frame for the current COA. The initial analysis included collecting ridership data by bus stop, review of route alignments including destinations, and a study of what areas of the community are well-served and those that are missing service. Metro's goal is to have easy-to-use routes, an easy-to-understand bus system, and a robust mix of destinations including housing, grocery stores, medical facilities, schools, and employers. Schultz displayed maps of transit need and maps of transit potential including minority and low-income populations. Employer location, land use information, and ridership levels by bus stop were reviewed to determine the greatest need for bus services. Outreach is a large and important component of the COA. Initial meetings began with the Central County Transportation Authority/Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority boards in December 2021. Extensive outreach has continued with the board along with the public, drivers, stakeholders, and other agencies. Foursquare presented draft recommendations of service scenarios at the beginning of December 2022. The scenarios include concentrating the fixed route bus routes near high density areas and transit supportive land use, interlining bus routes and the introduction of Microtransit. Lots of questions remain on the details of Microtransit including if

service will be outsourced, whether a marketing firm or additional staff are required, fee structure, type of vehicles, hours of service, and location of service. Schultz distributed and discussed Kalamazoo Metro/CCTA Comprehensive Operational Analysis Draft Microtransit Zone map showing four zones. After the COA final report is received in February 2023, Metro Staff will perform extensive planning to develop a timeline for implementation of recommendations. Minor changes could potentially begin to be implemented in September 2023. In response to Minkus' question, Schultz answered Muskegon, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Battle Creek all have Microtransit service. In discussion with Stoddard, it was noted that contracting or outsourcing Microtransit could speed up the introduction and application of service. Schultz clarified for Heppler, Microtransit would allow transportation from a Microtransit zone to a fixed route bus stop, or even within a zone. Along with displaying fixed route maps, Schultz detailed the more substantial planned bus route modifications. Schultz's presentations are available on the Metro website at kmetro.com/coa.

2020 URBANIZED AREA POPULATION

Steppek reported the census data was released earlier this month. This defines Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and small urban areas. The urbanized area population determines how much money the MPO obtains for staffing and funding. The Kalamazoo urban area lost 5,000 people from the last census in 2010. Geographies of the urban areas are expected to be released toward the end of the month. Then, we will be able to determine whether or not Mattawan became its own small urbanized area. Paw Paw/Lawton is only listed as Paw Paw in the new data. Our MPO funding will be functionally flat. Tweaks may need to be made to 2024 projects. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study will then begin the process of reviewing and approving the functional classification system for the area. Stepek responded to Feldt's question by stating the comparison is to the 2010 census. If there is a change not accounted for any errors in the 2020 data, no appeals can be made. The next census will be conducted in 2030. In response to Sotherland's inquiry, Stepek responded MPO processes and procedures will remain the same with Mattawan even if it becomes its own separate area.

CONTRIBUTED SERVICE UPDATE

The fiscal year-to-date contributed service summary is a meeting enclosure. Stepek asked attendees to turn in timesheets. It is especially important because we are behind where we should be for the fiscal year. Time spent on Master Plan updates is eligible. Contact Stepek if you have questions on eligible activities. Minkus reminded participants to use the new timesheet form.

FY 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Steppek reported with receipt of the new urbanized area population, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) sent out new third-party match agreements. Please return the agreements to KATS as soon as possible. Let KATS Staff know of any large projects planned in fiscal year 2024 so they can be incorporated into the budget.

NON-MOTORIZED DATA SHARING DISCUSSION

Minkus stated that Sotherland pointed out Google Maps non-motorized layer for our Kalamazoo region is not accurate. The Non-Motorized Subcommittee discussed sharing the KATS MPO more accurate GIS data with Google. The Subcommittee would like the groups' opinion on how to proceed with the data sharing, or whether agencies are interested in the idea. Sotherland mentioned the Kalamazoo region non-motorized layer is much more developed than it is portrayed on Google Maps. Grover expressed interest in the idea. No members were opposed to sharing non-motorized data with Google. Stepek mentioned KATS non-motorized mapping does not distinguish between non-motorized trails, dedicated lanes, and bicycle friendly roads as Google Maps does. KATS is not going to make an engineering judgement to define a road as bicycle friendly. In response to Horner's inquiry, Mickelson answered to continually send non-motorized data updates. Referring to her Google Data share handout, Mickelson explained Google requires high quality, accurate data. KATS creates

a profile with Google, enters into a partnership agreement, and sends data which is then reviewed before it is potentially posted.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE- The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.

COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN- The kickoff meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Let Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Staff know if you are interested in volunteering.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION- The first Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee meeting will be held directly after this meeting. Everyone is welcome.

FUTURE EDUCATIONAL TOPICS

Minkus invited members to share information or projects with each other during Technical Committee meetings. Interested members could share a 15-to-20-minute presentation that could be beneficial to others. Presentations could be accommodated quarterly. To plan a presentation, reach out to Stepek or Minkus.

BYLAW REVIEW

Stepek reported no comments were received on the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Technical Committee Bylaws. Please read the bylaws and submit comments by March 1, 2023.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Henderson updated Van Buren Public Transit is almost fully staffed with drivers. Schultz reported Metro is wrapping up the bus stop sign project. Metro is attempting to disallow passengers requesting a bus stop at a major intersection or crossroads. Let Schultz know if you notice a bus stop sign that should be removed, moved, or added.

STATUS REPORTS

ROADS-

DenBraber provided the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) update that the M-96 Burgess Drive to Augusta mill and fill will start May 1, 2023. U.S. 131 over Amtrak tracks at KI Ave. is planned to be let on May 5, 2023. The U.S. 131 mill and overlay project will begin in March. The M-40 project in Lawton is starting in March. I-94 Portage Road project current configurations will remain the same through winter. Setting beams and pouring decks for the bridge work should be complete by the end of January.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta is planning the 2023 water project. Heppler expressed concern about a high number of accidents at East G Avenue and M-96.

Ladd reported the City of Kalamazoo Patterson Street bridge deck replacement project will begin the last week of February and continue through August. The project will include full closure with detours posted. The 2023 Howard Street project will be bid in the next couple months. Whites Road and Westnedge Avenue projects are expected to be bid in early summer with construction beginning in 2023 carrying over into 2024.

Harmon reported City of Portage Shaver Road and Portage Road projects will be in the February bid letting. The remainder of the 2023 projects will be bid in the next couple months. Design has begun on 2024 projects.

Hoekstra reported Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) tree work at 12th Street and 24th Street is complete. All projects are out for bid. There are a lot of spring projects. Project Information Meetings are planned in March and April. Two projects will be in the February bid letting.

LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-

Heppler, Village of Augusta, and Stoddard, City of Parchment, thanked Nagler of Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study for receipt of PASER Rating Data.

Stefforia reported the Comstock Township Master Plan update is underway.

Grover reported Kalamazoo County will be updating its Solid Waste Management Plan to a Materials Management Plan based on recent legislation that passed.

Feldt stated the City of Portage is updating its Comprehensive Plan. He spread the word about the city's online survey.

Lovely reported Texas Township is performing major and minor zoning updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Minkus announced the PASER Training notification went out. Sign up for training if you need to get certified. The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County Railroad Update Meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

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