



**KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2007**

The July meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. Meeting attendance was recorded from the sign-in sheet.

***MEMBERS PRESENT***

Tim Hudson (Chair), David Anderson, Richard Atwell, Dennis Berkebile, Jeff Bither, Alan Bussema, Ron Commissaris, Gary Cramer, Carol Fricke, Michelle O'Neill, Lee Philport, Claudette Reid, Susan Richardson, Jeff Sorensen, Tom Swiat, Jr., Don Ulsh, John Van Dyke, Loren Warfield, and Ron White.

***MEMBERS ABSENT***

Dan DeGraw, Dan Pryson, Phyllis Simmons, Jack Urban and George Weston.

***OTHERS PRESENT***

Lew Bashaw, John Byrnes, Michele McGowen, Jack Mekemson, Lara Meeuwse, Dale Hein, Bill Schomisch, Frank Szopo, Bobbi Welke, Kathy Schultz, Steve Stepek, and Jon Start.

***MINUTES OF THE JUNE 27, 2007 MEETING***

Motion by the Policy Committee, "*to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2007 Policy Committee meeting as mailed.*" Motion approved.

***TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT***

Frank Szopo reported on the July 12<sup>th</sup> Technical Committee meeting. Updates were given on the 2030 Transportation Plan and FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Comments are being solicited from federal, state, and local agencies on the FY 2008 - 2011 TIP.

***CITIZENS' COMMENTS*** - None

### ***TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM***

A copy of the comments received on the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program were provided to the Policy Committee for review. Jon Start noted that no comments were received that would cause staff to recommend a change in a project identified in the document. Many of the comments expressed thanks for allowing a chance to comment on the upcoming projects and wanted to be kept informed of progress in the future. Staff is in the process of finalizing the financial constraint portion of the document. The testing for air quality will take place once Battle Creek has completed their model.

Jon Start asked that the Policy Committee establish a public hearing for the August 29<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee meeting in order to adopt the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program.

Motion by the Policy Committee, *“to establish a public hearing for the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program on August 29, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission.”* Motion approved.

### ***2030 TRANSPORTATION PLAN***

Edits on the 2030 Transportation Plan are taking place. Staff has discussed the request for changes by the Federal Highway Administration and the new edits will be part of the final document. Staff is waiting for air quality testing for the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek/Van Buren county non-attainment area before the 2030 Transportation Plan can be adopted.

### ***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATE***

Richard Atwell reported that Dale Hein has been hired as the Project Manager for the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority.

Carol Fricke reported that ridership for Metro Transit is up 13.9% over ridership from last year. Metro Transit is in the process of switching over to B-5 Biodiesel. A request for a 1 mil renewal will be going before the Kalamazoo City Commission on August 6 for the November election. This renewal will be for the City of Kalamazoo residents. Carol also noted that an agreement has been reached with Western Michigan University in regards to service to students. Metro Transit will be providing service around the outer areas of the campus and the interior system will be run by a private provider.

Bill Schomisch informed the committee that Metro Transit is working with the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority to develop a coordinated human resources plan so that Kalamazoo can apply for Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom funding through federal legislation. They are working to identify unmet needs in the community and will be involving many groups that service individuals who need transportation.

### ***I-94BL CORRIDOR PROJECT***

Steve Stepek reported that a group has been meeting with local officials and the community to develop a plan for the I-94BL corridor from Sprinkle Road to Michigan Avenue in downtown Kalamazoo. The Gateway Plan will address such things as non-motorized facilities, aesthetics, traffic safety, and signage.

The Partnership for Change is being assisted by the Land Information Access Association. A draft of the plan has been brought before the community and business leaders. The adopted plan will be brought before the Policy Committee in a future meeting.

### ***OTHER NEW BUSINESS***

A question was asked about the High Priority funding that was allocated to the US-131/US-131BR interchange. Jon Start reported that the funds are still available. KATS has requested Congressman Upton's help to allow the option that if the funds are not used for the interchange specifically that the funds would be used on surface street improvements to improve access to the northside business area. He pointed out that a cash match will be needed should the funds be expended.

David Anderson noted that there seems to be an increase in rail traffic, specifically downtown, which is causing delays in traffic moving through the downtown area. He requested that an updated be provided by staff on what is happening with local rail service. Staff will be working to get a representative to a future meeting to discuss the rail service.

Michelle O'Neill reported that MDOT is looking to develop a comprehensive list of enhancement projects that can be submitted to MDOT in the future for funding. She noted that some of the projects being developed may be competing for funds against each other. With a comprehensive list, communities can plan for proposed improvements in conjunction with road improvements in the future.

Bobbi Welke invited the Policy Committee to a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 31 at 2:00 p.m. to open the Oakland Drive bridge. She noted that the westbound ramp will remain closed for several more weeks. She also reported that three fatal accidents have occurred in the work zone since April and that MDOT is working to improve the merge area into the construction zone to improve safety.

A questionnaire regarding Jon Start's evaluation for 2007 was distributed previously to the Policy Committee voting members. Tim Hudson requested that the forms be turned in to him as soon as possible.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business, Chairperson Hudson adjourned the meeting at 9:47 a.m.