



**KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF AUGUST 11, 2005**

The August meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee was called to order at 9:30 a.m. at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission lower level conference room. Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Muhammad Arif (Chair), Shahid Abbas, Andrea Augustine, John Byrnes, Ron Copping, Jeff Erickson, Ron Fleckenstein, Rick Fowler, Darrell Harden, Ron Reid, Richard Skalski, Jodi Stefforia, John Sych, Frank Szopo, and Dallas Williams.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Matt Crawford, Cheri Lutz, and Bill Schomisch.

OTHERS PRESENT

Jim Cramer, Pat Gibbons, Tom Hohm, Michelle O'Neill, Kathy Carrier and Jon Start.

MINUTES FROM THE JULY 14, 2005 MEETING

A correction was noted on the minutes for the Technical Committee meeting. The date on the minutes should read July 14, not July 7.

Motion by the Technical Committee, *“to approve the minutes of the July 14th Technical Committee as corrected.”* Motion approved.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Start reported on the July 27th Policy Committee meeting. A public hearing was held on the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program and the air quality analysis report for the TIP. No changes were made to the document, resulting in the Policy Committee approving the document and its submission to MDOT. The Policy Committee also approved the FY 2006 Unified Work Program and salary adjustments for KATS staff. They will be reviewing and taking action on the Technical Committee Bylaws at the September meeting. A joint meeting of the Technical Committee and Policy Committee will be held August 31 to work on the development of a project prioritization process.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS - None

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

KATS staff has been working with the City of Portage and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to allow the City of Portage's Lovers Lane widening project to be advertised and have bids opened in October, 2006. Because MDOT Local Services obligate any federal funds at the time of advertising a project, they will obligate the \$970,000 in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds in September, 2005 or fiscal year 2005 for this project that will be awarded and built in 2006. Consequently, Portage's Lovers Lane project needs to be shown as a FY 2005 advance construction project and as a FY 2006 STP conversion project.

Dallas Williams thanked Jon Start and Darrell Harden for their work on getting the necessary paperwork completed so that the project can be advertised in September, 2005. He noted that Portage does have the funding to advance construct the project.

Darrell Harden commented that MDOT has sent a letter to the Federal Highway Administration explaining the situation. They have requested from FHWA the ability to obligate the 2006 federal funds early if necessary. Several of the Technical Committee members questioned how MDOT bids projects at the end of the fiscal year but doesn't show the project as an advance construction project in the Transportation Improvement Program. Jon Start stated that he would look into their policy for obligating funds. It was noted that the advance construct project would not affect financial constraint for the TIP.

Motion by the Technical Committee, "***to recommend Policy Committee support of showing the Lovers Lane Widening Project in the FY 2005 Transportation Improvement Program with advance construct funding and as a FY 2006 STP funding conversion project.***" Motion approved.

2030 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The deficiency maps have been received by KATS. Staff will be working with the local agencies to develop alternatives to be tested. A meeting will be taking place in the next month.

A question was asked about whether I-94 was in the 2025 Transportation Plan since funding was put in the new transportation legislation. The I-94 project is currently listed as an illustrative project, which states that the project is important but does not have funding identified. FHWA has stated that they would prefer that MDOT identify funding sources for the entire I-94 project prior to the start of construction, but would allow a project to go forward if a segment of the total made sense as a stand alone project. The \$40 million is over the life of SAFETEA-LU. MDOT Lansing will be reviewing the I-94 project to determine where the funding will be used.

A Non-Motorized Committee meeting will be held in the next few months. Staff is currently reviewing the map from the Southwest Michigan Commission, who is working with MDOT to develop a multi-county non-motorized map for Southwest Michigan.

METRO TRANSIT AND CARE-A-VAN

The Transit Oversight Committee at its last meeting met with elected officials from urban townships and municipalities and Friends of Transit. Discussions were held on what transit authority structure would make the most sense, advantages and disadvantages of various models, likely support, other issues, and how Friends of Transit can coordinate educational efforts with the direction the Oversight Committee is going.

TRAFFIC COUNT-NETWORK SEGMENTATION MEETING

KATS and MDOT will be reviewing the HPMS network segments over the next few months to develop sample count areas. Staff will be working with the local agencies to identify segments. A five-year program is being proposed with counting beginning in the spring of 2006.

REAUTHORIZATION OF TEA-21

A new transportation bill was signed by President Bush on August 10. The bill is called SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users). The amount of planning funds for metropolitan planning organizations rose from 1% to 1.5% of the "core program." A four-year Transportation Improvement Program schedule was also enacted instead of the current three-year. \$7.2 million was earmarked for bus replacement for Metro Transit and \$40.8 million for the widening of I-94. Jon Start noted that he did not see the change in funding for the US-131/US-131BR interchange in the bill. He will talk with Congressman Upton. The change in the 1-hour standard for CMAQ funding was changed to cover the areas impacted by the 8-hour standard.

JOINT TECHNICAL AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

A joint meeting of the KATS Technical and Policy Committees will be held August 31 at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will focus on the development of the project prioritization process. The Technical Committee will discuss how projects are selected prior to being placed in the TIP and brought before the Policy Committee. The question of how projects are selected has been discussed by the Policy Committee.

STATUS REPORTS

A copy of the agency status reports was in the meeting packet. Jon Start requested that the agencies provide a brief write-up to be included in the meeting packet for the committees.

Tom Hohm noted that the Barton/Howard Lake bridge was now open, as well as the South Sprinkle at Lake/Comstock. They are currently working on getting right-of-way from the airport for the Romence/Sprinkle intersection.

Dallas Williams noted that the Oakland Drive paving should be completed soon with the project being finalized by the end of the year.

The committee discussed the CMAQ projects for 2005. The Road Commission has rejected the bids for the signalization project along South Sprinkle since the bids came in higher than anticipated. The City of Kalamazoo bids also came in high for their signalization project, and they may be rebidding the project as well. Staff talked with MDOT about the funding and because both projects have had funds obligated, the funds will be available in FY 2006.

The Technical Committee Bylaws will be reviewed by the Policy Committee at their September meeting.

AGENCY TIME SHEETS

Kathy Carrier reported that most of the agency time sheets through June have been submitted. She stressed that time sheets are needed regularly through the end of the fiscal year so that KATS can create final billings for the year.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

The inventory of the federal-aid eligible roads will take place the week of August 15. KATS staff will be working with the City of Portage August 22-23 on collecting data on the local streets within the city.

The job description for the Planner/Engineer is being finalized. Jon noted that he hoped to advertise the position in August. The Finance and Personnel Committee will be reviewing the benefit package for staff in the upcoming year.

The committee discussed letting various agencies know when a road will be closed, including schools and police/fire departments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Arif adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.