



**KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2006**

The February 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, Chris Barnes, Michael Bippley, Ron Copping, Ron Fleckenstein, Rick Fowler, Allan Galicia, Keith Hernandez, Ron Reid, Bill Schomisch, Richard Skalski, Jodi Stefforia, Frank Szopo, and Dallas Williams.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Chris Forth and Darrell Harden.

OTHERS PRESENT

Dean Blanchard, Tom Hohm, Kathy Carrier, and Jon Start.

MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 5, 2006 MEETING

Motion by the Technical Committee, *“to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2006 Technical Committee meeting.”* Motion approved.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Start reported on the January 18th Policy Committee meeting. Gary Cramer was elected chairperson and Terry Urban was elected vice-chairperson for 2006. The 2006 CMAQ project list was approved as recommended by the Technical Committee. A public hearing was scheduled for February 22 for action on amendments to the 2025 Transportation Plan and the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program. The amendments would add the I-94 widening project to both documents and approve air quality testing including the I-94 project. The committee also discussed the MDOT 2011 call for projects and the development of the Transportation Authority.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jon Start reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on January 19th to discuss the status of the Transportation Authority and the 2030 Transportation Plan development.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS - None

CHANGE OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Jon Start requested discussion under Other New Business about an access management workshop MDOT was planning for May.

I-94 PROJECT STATUS

A public hearing has been scheduled for February 22 at 8:30 a.m. during the Policy Committee meeting. A copy of the amendments was distributed to the Technical Committee. The project is scheduled for construction starting in the fall, 2006.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***“to recommend Policy Committee support of amending the 2025 Transportation Plan to include the Michigan Department of Transportation I-94 widening project.”*** Motion approved.

FY 2006 - 2008 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Action could be taken at the Policy Committee meeting on February 22 to amend the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program to include the I-94 widening project and changes to the Metro Transit’s 2006 - 2008 projects. The Metro Transit amendments reflect their 2006 and 2007 applications for funding from the state. Currently, they are not requesting CMAQ funding for buses in 2007 or 2008 but will be making a request for CMAQ funds for the ridesharing program.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***“to approve the addition of the I-94 widening project to the FY 2006 -2008 Transportation Improvement Program.”*** Motion approved.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***“to approve the changes to the Metro Transit projects as shown in the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program.”*** Motion approved.

Jon Start reported that a copy of the currently identified FY 2006 - 2008 STP projects was provided to the voting members. MDOT has advised KATS that the STP funds for each year of the three-year period is approximately \$29,000 less than budgeted for the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program. MDOT has advised KATS that an amendment does not need to be done to adjust for this reduction in funding for each year of the program.

FY 2007 SAFETY PROJECT RECOMMENDATION

The Safety Management System Subcommittee met recently to discuss the FY 2007 safety project applications. The subcommittee recommended the Parkview Avenue at Stadium Drive intersection improvement project. The application was submitted in November 2005 to MDOT as a supplemental 2006 project in case additional funds were available for FY 2006. Since it was not awarded FY 2006 funding, the road commission requested that it be considered for FY 2007 funding. A total of \$240,000 in safety funds are being sought with \$70,573 in local match.

The project would include realigning the intersection, signal installation, and driveway reduction. The road commission and Oshtemo Township staff have talked with adjacent property owners and no objections are known.

Motion by the Technical Committee, *“to recommend submitting the Parkview Avenue at Stadium Drive intersection improvement project application to the Michigan Department of Transportation for FY 2007 Federal Local Safety Program funds.”* Motion approved.

CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY

A conference call was held earlier in the week with MDOT staff and the state Metropolitan Planning Organization and region offices to discuss the 2006 - 2008 CMAQ call for projects and funding status. Jon Start reported that the agencies were told the amount of funding would not be less than 2005's funding level but 50% of the funding would be delegated for MDOT projects and the remaining 50% for the local agencies. Signal timings, ITS, carpool lots, and ridesharing/MichiVan projects would be funded using a set-aside prior to funding distribution to the local areas.

The committee extensively discussed the CMAQ process and expressed concerned about the lack of time being provided by MDOT for the 2006 project programming. All CMAQ projects for 2006 would have to be obligated by September 30, 2006 or the funding would not be available. It was also noted that the local MDOT office doesn't have enough projects identified for FY 2006 to utilize the approximately \$509,000 that the office would receive for Kalamazoo County. The Technical Committee requested that Jon Start talk with MDOT staff and arrange a meeting with air quality staff and the Policy Committee to further discuss the CMAQ funding process for 2006.

2030 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Jon Start reported that he has been mapping the proposed projects and will be bringing them back to the subcommittee next month. He is also working on cost estimates that will be used with the alternatives. A meeting will be scheduled in March. Staff is also working on setting up a non-motorized meeting to continue the review of the current network and look at future improvements.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Bill Schomisch reported that Metro Transit will be increasing fares starting March 1. The changes will affect all services, including Care-A-Van.

Metro Transit is currently working with a consultant on a Comprehensive Operations Analysis that is being funded through KATS Section 8 funds. They are surveying people getting on and off the buses by route to determine route use and look at route restructuring. The end result will be a new route structure that uses the new transportation center on Kalamazoo Avenue.

Bill also noted that his staff is completing an analysis of Care-A-Van trips and will have a summary report completed in the next few weeks. The 4th quarter progress report for Care-A-Van will be shared with the Policy Committee at their February meeting.

The Transportation Authority has been meeting bi-weekly since January. They are working on developing a budget for 2006. They are also looking for a funding source for a market research study to survey Kalamazoo County residents about the millage question being developed for the November 2006 election.

Phil Reid provided a copy of the new mission statement for Friends of Transit. The group continues to meet monthly on the first Thursday at 10:00 a.m. at the Disability Resource Center.

STATUS REPORTS

Tom Hohm reported on the Kalamazoo County Road Commission projects:

- # Sprinkle Road at Romence Road: Preconstruction meeting was held.
- # Sprinkle Road from East Main to H Avenue: The CMAQ-funded project has been awarded.
- # 6th Street from H Avenue to West Main: Will be let in April.
- # 26th Street from East Main to H Avenue: Will be let in March.
- # Mosel Avenue Bridge: The project was awarded. The bridge will be open during the project.
- # Portage Road over Gourneck Creek: Will be let in April.
- # V Avenue over Little Portage Creek: Will be let in April.

Frank Szopo reported on the City of Kalamazoo projects:

- # Michigan Avenue from Howard to Drake: Utility work is continuing through the winter. The project will start again this spring. Traffic will be maintained during the project with completion scheduled for November 15.
- # Portage Street: The CMAQ-funded project is underway. The city is coordinating with utilities.

Chris Barnes reported on the City of Portage projects:

- # Lovers Lane from Kilgore Road to Milham Avenue: The utility work is continuing. They are working with MDOT on the coordination with the bridge demolition, which is expected in early March.

Michael Bippley reported on the MDOT projects:

- # Lovers Lane Bridge: Coordinating activities with City of Portage. They will be maintaining traffic on I-94 during construction.
- # US-131BR crossing Ravine Road, 4th Street, and 6th Street bridges: Deck patching and repair scheduled.

Jon Start noted that the City of Kalamazoo is continuing work on their Riverfront Development Plan.

The committee discussed the KATS Planner/Engineer position. Jon Start has been discussing the position with Deputy County Administrator Peter Battani and the possible combining of the KATS position with the county's vacant planner position. There are questions of funding the joint position and the delegation of activities. The county is in the process of reorganizing and will continue to work with KATS on identifying the pros and cons of the joint position.

The Technical Committee discussed the use of STP funds to fund the position at KATS. STP funding was previously allocated but not spent when Jon Start was the Traffic Safety Engineer. Once the funds that were paid back to FHWA several years ago are spent down, there is a likelihood that the current funding level would not support three full-time staff members with another source of funding.

Motion by the Technical Committee, "*to recommend to the Policy Committee that \$50,000 in STP funds be allocated to support the KATS Planner/Engineer position with the amount being adjusted annually.*" Motion approved.

AGENCY TIME SHEETS

Kathy Carrier reminded the committee that time sheets are due by the 15th of the month.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Jon Start informed the committee that MDOT is scheduling an access management workshop either May 17 or 18 and would like to know of any agency conflicts. Please let KATS know by Tuesday, February 14. Several members asked if there was funding available for projects that resolved access management issues in the community. Research will be done and reported back.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Arif adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.