



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

The March 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, John Byrnes, Ron Copping, Chris Forth, Rick Fowler, John Frakes, Allan Galicia, Keith Hernandez, Jason Latham, Bill Schomisch, Richard Skalski, Jodi Stefforia, Frank Szopo, Dallas Williams and Laura Wise.

OTHERS PRESENT

Sarah Koepke, Kathy Carrier, and Jon Start.

MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 9, 2006 MEETING

A clarification was noted under Status Reports relating to the bridge repairs on 4th Street and 6th Street. Both bridges are over I-94.

Motion by the Technical Committee, “*to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2006 Technical Committee meeting.*” Motion approved.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Start reported on the February 22 Policy Committee meeting. The committee held a public hearing to amend the 2025 Transportation Plan and the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program. Both documents were amended. The committee also approved the air quality conformity findings based on the changes to both documents. FHWA gave a presentation on SAFETEA-LU. Updates were given on the CMAQ program and the public transportation meetings.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Citizens Advisory Committee met on February 16 to discuss the status of the Transportation Authority and the 2030 Transportation Plan. They were advised of the amendments for the 2025 Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program. They are concerned about the lack of members attending the meetings and have requested the Technical and Policy Committee’s assistance in getting more citizens involved. Jon Start requested that the Technical Committee let KATS staff know of interested groups or issues that may concern the Citizens Advisory Committee.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS - None

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was requested that the committee discuss the Local Jobs Today program announcement by the governor and the FY 2007 apportionments. These items would be discussed under Other New Business.

CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY (CMAQ)

A list of projects approved by the CMAQ Subcommittee was provided to the Technical Committee. The CMAQ Subcommittee discussed the distribution of funding and identified the following projects:

- Oakland Drive Corridor from Kilgore Road to South Street: Upgrade signals
- M-43 at Drake Road: Purchase right-of-way and design work to upgrade intersection
- US-131BR and M-331: Perform preliminary engineering services for signal optimization at up to 23 intersections
- I-94 eastbound off ramp to southbound Westnedge Avenue: Reconstruct ramp
- I-94BL/M-43: Perform preliminary engineering services for signal optimization at up to 8 intersections
- M-43 from I-94BL to G Avenue: Perform preliminary engineering services for signal optimization at up to 11 intersections
- 40' Bus for Metro Transit
- Community Ridesharing Program for FY 2006

MDOT will be receiving \$794,242 in CMAQ funds. The local agencies will be splitting \$794,242 in CMAQ funding. It was noted that MDOT will be working with the City of Kalamazoo and the Road Commission on the West Main and Drake intersection project with the intersection being completed in FY 2007. The improvement would be coordinated with a planned resurfacing project. All FY 2006 CMAQ projects need to be obligated by September 30, 2006. It was noted that Metro Transit will not be requesting bus replacements from the CMAQ program in fiscal years 2007 or 2008.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***“to support and approve the FY 2006 Congestion Mitigation Air Quality project list as presented.”*** Motion approved.

PRESENTATION ON SAFETEA-LU PLANNING PROCESS CHANGES

Sarah Koepke from the Federal Highway Administration presented an overview of the new requirements under SAFETEA-LU. She noted that the Transportation Improvement Programs and Transportation Plans will have to be SAFETEA-LU compliant by July 1, 2007. If they are not, they cannot be amended. FHWA is focusing on four emphasis areas:

- Environmental Mitigation
- Consultation with Local Groups
- Participation Plan Update
- Congestion Management Process

The Transportation Improvement Program will be a four-year document instead of a three-year document as it currently is. The Public Involvement Plan will need to be updated to be named a Participation Plan and include new requirements, such as visualization and consultation with other interests.

Jon Start reported that staff is working to incorporate some of the elements of the new requirements in the 2030 Transportation Plan that is scheduled for adoption in the fall, 2006. He didn't see any issue with KATS being in compliance prior to the July 1, 2007 deadline.

I-94 PROJECT STATUS

The I-94 amendments to the 2025 Transportation Plan and the FY 2006 - 2008 Transportation Improvement Program have been approved by the KATS Policy Committee. Staff is working to give the amended documents to MDOT. The cities of Kalamazoo and Portage have requested that MDOT provide information on the local share for the I-94 improvements.

2030 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Jon Start distributed a list of proposed projects for the 2030 Transportation Plan. He also identified proposed costs for the projects. Staff will be scheduling a meeting in the upcoming weeks to work on the development of alternatives to be tested by MDOT. The plan is still on schedule to be completed this fall.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

The Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority held a retreat on March 4 to discuss the proposed budget for the authority and outline the upcoming millage request. They are working to hire a consultant to conduct a poll of Kalamazoo County residents to determine the amount of support for public transportation services. A campaign committee has been formed. Friends of Transit continues to meet monthly on the first Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at the Disability Resource Center.

Bill Schomisch reported that a consultant is working to complete an origin/destination report to determine where people are getting on and off the bus. The data will be used during the redesign of the route system downtown once the new Downtown Transfer Center is open this fall. He is also working on completing an origin/destination report of Care-A-Van users.

STATUS REPORTS

Allan Galicia reported on the Kalamazoo County Road Commission projects:

- 6th Street from West Main to H Avenue: The project is scheduled for an April letting. The township will be doing some sewer work in conjunction with the road work.
- 26th Street from East Main to H Avenue: Bids have been opened. Sewer work is being planned as a part of the entire project.
- Romence Road at Sprinkle Road: Construction on the safety project starts this spring. Utility work is currently taking place.

- Portage Road bridge over Gourneck Creek: April letting. Work starting in June.
- Sprinkle Road CMAQ signal project: The project will be starting this spring.

Laura Wise reported on the Michigan Department of Transportation projects:

- Lovers Lane Bridge over I-94: The bridge has been removed and the project is currently on schedule. The center piers will be removed in the upcoming weeks.
- Several preventative maintenance projects are starting soon.

Frank Szopo reported on the City of Kalamazoo projects:

- West Michigan Avenue: Work will be starting again this spring on the two-year project.
- Crosstown Parkway at Howard Street: The project is in the design phase.
- South Street and Portage Street: The two streets are being reconstructed due to the construction of the new cinema downtown. The cinema will be open this fall.
- Portage Street from Cork to Kilgore: Resurfacing scheduled for this summer.
- East Main Street: The reconstruction project will be completed this year. It is a continuation of last year's project.
- Portage Road CMAQ signal project: The project will be completed in August, 2006. Work is being coordinated with the utility companies.

Chris Barnes provided a list of the City of Portage projects. They include:

- Oakland Drive from Centre to Romence: Will be completed this spring.
- Lovers Lane from Milham to Kilgore: Earthwork underway in conjunction with the bridge project. Sewer construction to begin March 13. The project should be completed by September 2006.
- Kilgore Road and Bacon Avenue: Engineering proposals for both projects are ready for advertising. Both projects will be completed in 2007.
- Westnedge from Milham to Kilgore: The enhancement and widening contracts were awarded. Construction to begin in 2007.
- Centre/Shaver Intersection: The final design is underway. Construction to begin in 2006.

Keith Hernandez reported on the City of Kalamazoo planning projects:

- Park/Westnedge Beautification Project: The preliminary design work is occurring.
- Riverview Project: The city is working on collecting public input on the project.

Dick Skalski reported that an agreement has been reached with the railroad to extend the Kal-Haven Trail to downtown. The acquisition should be completed in three months. He noted that the plans for the bridge over Portage Creek are almost complete. DKI is working to put signs up downtown identifying the trailway.

Chris Forth reported that Portage is working to update their land use plan.

Jason Latham noted that MDOT is soliciting public comment on the State Long Range Plan and will be holding a public open house in Kalamazoo on March 29 at 4:30 at the Chamber of Commerce. He is also meeting with the US-131 Committee in St. Joseph County regarding US-131 improvements.

Jon Start informed the committee that he will be discussing the use of STP funds for the new KATS position at the March 29th Policy Committee meeting.

AGENCY TIME SHEETS

Kathy Carrier noted that time sheets are due by the 15th of the month. Staff will be sending the first quarter report to MDOT in the upcoming weeks.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Jon Start asked if there was additional information about the governor's Local Jobs Today announcement. MDOT staff did not have information available.

It was noted that weight restrictions were in place as of Friday, March 10.

Bill Schomisch noted that the FY 2007 appropriations bill has a number of earmarks. The authorization amount is close to the appropriations amount.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Arif adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.