



**KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2007**

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

***MEMBERS PRESENT***

Frank Szopo (Chair), Shahid Abbas, Muhammad Arif, Chris Barnes, Michael Bippley, Ron Fleckenstein, Chris Forth, Rick Fowler, Allan Galicia, Darrell Harden, Keith Hernandez, Tom Hohm, Fred Nagler, Bill Schomisch, and Jodi Stefforia.

***MEMBERS ABSENT***

John Byrnes, Lotta Jarnefelt, and Dallas Williams.

***OTHERS PRESENT***

Edward Fowler, Michelle O'Neill, Kathy Schultz, Steve Stepek, and Jon Start.

***MINUTES FROM THE JULY 12, 2007 MEETING***

Bill Schomisch asked about having the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority as a voting member on the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee Bylaws allow for a voting member from additional authorities.

Motion by the Technical Committee, "***to add Dale Hein as a voting member to the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee.***" Motion approved.

Motion by the Technical Committee, "***to approve the minutes from July 12, 2007 as presented.***" Motion approved.

***POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT***

Jon Start reported on the August 29<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee meeting. A public hearing was held on the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program with no public comments being made. Both the Transportation Improvement Program and the 2030 Transportation Plan are scheduled to be approved by the Policy Committee at their September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Action was also taken on salary adjustments for KATS staff.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS** - None

**2030 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The air quality testing has been completed by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The Kalamazoo-Calhoun-Van Buren County non-attainment area was found to be within acceptable limits. The results of the air quality testing are available for review from KATS staff. With the completion of the air quality testing, the Policy Committee will be able to approve the 2030 Transportation Plan at their September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Jon Start noted that several editorial comments regarding the document have been made but otherwise no significant public comment has been made on the document. He recommended that the Technical Committee support the 2030 Transportation Plan's approval by the Policy Committee.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***"to recommend Policy Committee approval of the 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Kalamazoo area."*** Motion approved.

**FY 2008 - 2011 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

No significant comments have been received on the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program that would cause a change in the document. The Policy Committee held a public hearing on the document at their August meeting with no comments being made. Now that the air quality conformity findings have been made for the document, it can be approved by the KATS Policy Committee.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***"to recommend Policy Committee approval of the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program."*** Motion approved.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATE**

Bill Schomisch provided an update on the Care-A-Van situation that occurred in August. Pride Care workers had stopped work at the beginning of August, causing Pride Care, with Metro Transit assistance, to provide rides to clients for several days. Since the walk-off, several people have remained on strike and have been replaced with new drivers. The contract with Pride Care is up for review in January 2008, and Bill Schomisch noted that the Kalamazoo City Commission has asked that a review of the situation be done to determine if the Care-A-Van contract should continue in 2008 with Pride Care. Bill noted that since the beginning of the month, 100% of scheduled rides have been provided. He also noted that seven new buses will be arriving in October 2007 to replace older buses currently in service. The Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority is currently looking at the details of expanding Care-A-Van service to meet with Metro Transit's service hours which include service until 10:00 p.m. week nights and Saturday service.

The City of Kalamazoo voters will be asked in November to renew a millage request for Metro Transit line haul and ADA services. The 1 year, 1 mil levy will be until November 2008 when the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority takes over the entire public transportation system and one millage rate will be in effect for the entire county.

The WMU bus service on campus is being provided by Indian Trails. Metro Transit is providing service to routes around campus. Students still have free access to the entire Metro Transit bus system.

Metro Transit is working with the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority to develop a coordinated public transportation and human services plan in order to qualify for Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom funding under SAFETEA-LU. The first meeting was held recently to identify team players in the development of the plan. The county hopes to have the plan finalized by the spring, 2008.

### ***US-131/US-131 BUSINESS ROUTE HIGH PRIORITY FUNDS***

Congressman Upton was able to secure High Priority funds in SAFETEA-LU for early preliminary engineering/preliminary engineering for US-131/US-131BR connector. To date, less than \$200,000 in the funding has been spent on the an economic benefit study. Over \$1 million is still available. There has been discussions lately about whether an environmental assessment could be done using the funding to determine the layout of the interchange and potential impacts. No funds are in the 2008 Federal appropriations bill, and the study is not in the FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program for KATS. The UPWP could be amended if the study is allowable. Jon Start noted that if the environmental assessment is allowable, a local cash match will be needed. He proposed developing the scope for the assessment in 2008 and completing the assessment in 2009. The committee discussed what it would take to complete an environmental assessment and the potential costs. Darrell Harden will be looking into the language of the bill and what it would take to have an environmental assessment completed.

### ***STATUS REPORTS***

Michelle O'Neill reported on the MDOT projects:

- I-94: The paving of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street bridge is underway. Effective November 30<sup>th</sup>, the I-94 project will slow down for the winter, with lanes opening both eastbound and westbound. Two of the bridges for the interchange will be built during the winter.
- M-43 and M-43 at Drake Road: The project has been completed. The pavement markings should be done soon.
- M-89 at C Avenue: The project was originally scheduled to be completed by Labor Day but has been delayed. A new signal will be added to the intersection.
- Parkview Avenue Bridge over US-131: A pre-bid meeting will be held on Monday. She noted that the project will include precast beams for the bridge with specific guidelines for the building of the bridge due to the special funding being used.
- I-94 Bridge Repairs: Emergency repairs on the bridge along I-94 over Portage Creek and the railroad (west of Lovers Lane Bridge) are scheduled for October 2007. Closures should only be needed at night.

Tom Hohm reported on the Kalamazoo County Road Commission projects:

- 38<sup>th</sup> Street: The project has been completed.
- G Avenue: Bridge work is being completed over Gull Creek. Paving will be done between 37<sup>th</sup> Street and 39<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Mosel Avenue: The project will be receiving Local Jobs Today funding. It is scheduled for the March letting. An amendment to the FY 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program will be needed.

Muhammad Arif reported on the City of Portage projects:

- Kilgore Road: The road is opened to traffic. He noted that the contractor will be working in the area on shoulder work and that the speed limit will remain at 25 mph until the project is completed.
- Bacon Street: Sewer work is currently ongoing.
- Shaver Road at Centre Street: The project has been completed.

Frank Szopo reported on the City of Kalamazoo projects:

- Paterson Street: The project is almost complete. The lane markings should be completed in the new few weeks.
- West Gateway project at Lovell and Oakland: Bids were received for the project, with construction scheduled for this fall.
- Mill Street: A preconstruction meeting is scheduled for next week.
- Crosstown Parkway: Bid prices were \$300,000 less than engineering estimates. The project is a Local Jobs Today project and will be completed next spring.

KATS will be submitting the FY 2009 CMAQ applications to MDOT as soon as information is turned in to staff. It was also noted that year end reports on projects will be needed to meet the federal requirement for reporting federal fund expenditures for the year.

Chris Forth noted that the Portage Planning Commission will be discussing a land use permit for Kalamazoo Valley Family Church who is relocating their church to Angling Road at the cathedral. Some concerns have been expressed about the increase in traffic from the church to Angling and Vincent.

Keith Hernandez reported that Kalamazoo Christian High School is looking to expand their school on Drake Road and Stadium Drive. The city is working with the school and MDOT since there may be some encroachment issues with the property.

Kathy Schultz reported that the data collection for asset management should be wrapping up in late September. To date, no issues have been identified. She hoped to have reports on the 2007 inventory by early October.

***AGENCY TIME SHEETS***

Agency time sheets through September are needed by October 15. KATS will be closing out the fiscal year and needs to have information entered for the audit and final billing.

***ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business, Chairperson Szopo adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.