

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES JANUARY 11, 2024 - 9:30 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The January 11, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. at Kalamazoo Metro, by Chairperson Stefforia.

ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet. Introductions were made by all present.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Muhammad Arif	City of Portage
Nolan Bergstrom	City of Kalamazoo
Mickey Bittner	Village of Paw Paw
Heather Bowden	Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Kerry DenBraber	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Eric Feldt	City of Portage
Kendra Gwin	City of Portage
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Jim Hoekstra	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Joel Hoort	Van Buren County Road Commission
Anna Horner	Oshtemo Township
Sarah Joshi	Central County Transportation Authority
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township
Ryan Minkus	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Tom Palumbo	City of Kalamazoo
Whitney Pizzala	Village of Mattawan
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Ryan Russell	Village of Schoolcraft
Paul Sotherland	Citizens Advisory Committee
Jodi Stefforia	Comstock Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
Greg Vlietstra	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo
Bret Witkowski	Van Buren County Road Commission

OTHERS PRESENT

Dean Disterheft	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Phil Doorlag	Wightman
Jamie Harmon	City of Portage

Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Connie Morrison	Value Engineering
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Juan Ruelas	Rathco
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Hailey Savola	ROWE
Ali Townsend	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Hoekstra, ***“to approve the agenda of the January 11, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 7, 2023 MEETING

Minkus corrected the spelling of Jacob Kapa’s name. The action item to postpone voting on the 2024 Safety Performance Measures was seconded by Waring not Minkus. Hoekstra corrected the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County Squires Road project is in the January letting, not the February letting.

Minkus moved, and it was duly seconded by Hoekstra, ***“to approve the minutes with the corrections, from the December 7, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Mickelson reported on behalf of the Policy Committee who met at the end of December. The annual holiday breakfast was well attended. Technical Committee recommended Transportation Improvement Program Amendments were adopted. Action on the Safety resolution was postponed awaiting approval by the Technical Committee. Stefforia added that Sarah Joshi made a very informative presentation on Microtransit.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

FY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

Referring to the amendments enclosed in the meeting packet, Mickelson explained there are some funding changes for fiscal year 2026 that will be discussed at the next Transportation Improvement Program Subcommittee meeting. One amendment triggered a new document for ozone conformity.

Minkus moved, and it was duly seconded by Hoekstra, ***“to approve the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments and to recommend them to the Policy Committee for approval.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

AMENDED LIMITED ORPHAN MAINTENANCE AREA (LOMA) OZONE CONFORMITY DOCUMENT FOR THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Documents are included in the meeting materials. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is a Limited Orphan Maintenance Area (LOMA) for air quality and ozone conformity. Mickelson reported the approved December 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments included one non-exempt air quality project. The project is on US-131 at US-131 BR in Oshtemo Township. An

Ozone Conformity Report is required for non-exempt projects. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) put together an interagency workgroup covering the three counties of Kalamazoo, Van Buren, and Calhoun. The draft of the Ozone Conformity Report is out for public comment through the end of January. In response to Stefforia's inquiry, Mickelson responded that the report is on KATS website, Facebook, and Instagram. In response to Bergstrom, Mickelson stated that KATS public engagement process is audited every three years during its Certification Review by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Michigan Department of Transportation. The last of which occurred in the Fall of 2023. Further discussion ensued regarding public comments, and the length of the comment period. Bowden pointed out that this project has already been approved in the December 2023 TIP. This action item is to add this project to the conformity report. The committee agreed that they would like to review any public comments obtained on the document.

Minkus moved, and it was duly seconded by Feldt, ***“to recommend approval of the Air Quality Ozone Conformity Document to the Policy Committee pending any public comment.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

2024 SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURE TARGETS

Stefforia summarized that this was discussed at the last meeting. Although the committee supports adoption of the state's safety targets, approval was postponed because the resolution did not indicate the downward trends in the local area. A Subcommittee met and added a statement to the original resolution that Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) and its local member agencies are actively working to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities as reflected in the Metropolitan Planning Area's downward trends. In the fourth paragraph, Minkus noted that the letter 'a' in "area" is not capitalized. In the same paragraph, it was agreed that the word 'Metropolitan' should be added before "Planning Area". Horner pointed out that the letter 's' in "study" in the sixth paragraph is not capitalized. As was discussed at prior meetings, Sotherland reiterated the misleading use of the word 'target.' Attendees discussed the word use and agreed that the word 'target' is required to be used and cannot be changed. Better clarification can be used in other documents.

Minkus moved, and it was duly seconded by Randolph, ***“to approve the 2024 Safety Performance Measures with the correction of two capital letters and addition of the word “Metropolitan”, and for the Chair to sign the Resolution on behalf of the Committee.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE- Townsend reported map edits will be up on the katsmpo.org website by the end of January. Submit the form for any further edits. The Subcommittee's next meeting will be at the end of February. As discussed at last month's meeting, Minkus provided an update on the railroad crossings at the proposed railway extension from Galesburg to Ft. Custer. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Rail has escalated this matter to the Attorney General's office for enforcement action on the previously ordered work items. MDOT Office of Rails is supportive of the connection. Heppler expressed appreciation.

COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN- Mickelson stated the Complete Streets Implementation Plan Subcommittee will meet in February. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) continues development of a new scoring matrix and a draft document.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION- The next Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2024.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

There were no public transportation updates.

STATUS REPORTS

ROADS-

DenBraber reported the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) US-131 corridor I-94 ramp project noise analysis determined the need for a noise wall installation on the northwest corner of the interchange. A public meeting is scheduled. An MDOT Complete Streets public survey is out. The link will be shared with members.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta 2024 Washington Street bridge project is planned for a letting in the next month or two with construction this summer.

Hoekstra provided the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) updates. Squires Drive from Drake Road to Ravine Road, including the roundabout at Drake Road and Squires Drive was in the January Letting and came in 0.8% underestimate. The project is estimated to start when the weather allows. RCKC is awaiting the contractor schedule for the W Avenue from 42nd St to 44th Street project. RCKC is awaiting the contractor schedule for the Douglas Avenue project from Mosel Avenue to the Kalamazoo City limits. With Transportation Improvement Program Amendment approval, the MN and Mercury project from 44th Street to East Michigan Avenue will be in the April Michigan Department of Transportation Letting. The paving projects on 9th Street from Stadium Drive to KL Avenue and Stadium Drive from 8th Street to 9th Street projects are targeted for June or July 2024.

Waring reported the City of Kalamazoo Ransom Street project will restart as weather allows. The Westnedge water main project will be the most impactful project of 2024. It will start in February or March and last through the season. Alternate north/south travel routes are recommended. The Whites Road from Oakland to Westnedge project will start in March. Traffic will be allowed in only one direction. The first of the two-way conversion projects, the Michikal Street project, is scheduled from April to June with reopening in July. Bronson Boulevard will be closed for bridge reconstruction. Public outreach with information on all 2024 construction projects is scheduled for January 16, 2024 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Girl Scout Building at Maple and Crosstown.

Harmon reported the City of Portage 2024 Portage Road project from Romence to I-94 will be appropriated in a February Bid Letting with construction planned from April through most of the summer. The Cooley Drive project is out for construction bids now. The 2025 West Milham and 2026 West Centre projects are under design. The project on Westnedge south of Centre is scheduled for 2024 construction.

LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-

Heppler mentioned the Village of Augusta is starting on a comprehensive zoning plan.

Bowden of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) reported there are unfortunately no eligible transit agencies in our planning area that are entitled to the left-over Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds of approximately \$4.5 million dollars that will be distributed. Local agencies are encouraged to apply for the Michigan Infrastructure Office technical assistance funding. Email Bowden for more information. Bowden reiterated the availability of the Complete Streets Survey. MDOT is trying to conform their policy to standards. The fiscal year 2025 federal aid buyout program has been canceled. Applications for Bowden's Planning position will be open for the next two weeks. Bowden will continue to serve on both the Technical Committee and the Policy Committee until that position is filled.

Horner reported Oshtemo Township is looking for a new Planning Director. The new Streets and Mobility Ordinance was presented to the township board this week. The ordinance focuses on access management and maintenance. There is increased interest in development on M-43/West Main corridor from Drake to 7th Street.

Stefforia has an upcoming meeting with an attorney regarding the ongoing lawsuit filed in federal court by Soil Friends against Comstock Township.

NEW BUSINESS

Mickelson reminded attendees that today's Transportation Improvement Program Subcommittee meeting is canceled.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sotherland noted the North Country Trail was designated as a unit of the National Park System in December 2023. It was not previously a part of the National Park System. Sotherland announced the Kalamazoo Bike club is starting to feature 'cycling shorts' presentations that are open to the public. They are held the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Township Community Center. The next presentation scheduled for February 13, 2024 will feature guest speaker George Waring discussing making streets safer for all users.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

Approved 2/8/24 (er)