

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
**MINUTES NOVEMBER 9, 2023 - 9:30 A.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The November 9, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. at Kalamazoo Metro, by Chairperson Minkus.

**ROLL CALL**

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet. Introductions were made by all present. One Federal Highway Administration employee joining the meeting virtually from Lansing introduced herself.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Christina Anderson	City of Kalamazoo
Muhammad Arif	City of Portage
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
Rachael Grover	Kalamazoo County
Kendra Gwin	City of Portage
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Jim Hoekstra	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Joel Hoort	Van Buren County Road Commission
Sarah Joshi	Central County Transportation Authority
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township
Ryan Minkus	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Tom Palumbo	City of Kalamazoo
Zach Pierson	Oshtemo Township
Whitney Pizzala	Village of Mattawan
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Paul Sotherland	Citizens Advisory Committee
Jenny Staroska	Federal Highway Administration
Jodi Stefforia	Comstock Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
Madee Thorburn	Michigan Department of Transportation, Region
Greg Vlietstra	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Bart Franklin	HRC
Phil Doorlag	Wightman

Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Connie Morrison	Value Engineering
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Lexi Petrella	Alta Planning & Design
Juan Ruelas	Rathco
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Steve Stepek, AICP	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
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**

Hoekstra moved, and it was duly seconded by Stefforia, ***“to approve the agenda of the November 9, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 12, 2023 MEETING**

Hoekstra moved, and it was duly seconded by Gwin, ***“to approve the minutes from the October 12, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

**POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Steppek reported on behalf of the Policy Committee who met at the end of October. Technical Committee recommended Adjusted Census Urban Boundary (ACUB) Maps were adopted. Once final approval is obtained, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study will begin the National Functional Classification revision.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

**FY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS**

Referring to the amendments enclosed in the meeting packet, Stepek explained there are two small safety projects. In answering DenBraber’s inquiry, Stepek responded additional projects that need to be programmed before December must be submitted to Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study as a special amendment by November 27, 2023.

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

**DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Referring to the draft Public Participation Plan in the meeting packet, Stepek reminded attendees the plan has been out for feedback for the past several months. A summary of changes to the document has been provided. The majority of the changes are minor, with the biggest being additional Environmental Justice outreach. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study’s (KATS) Title VI plan has been out for comment for the same time period. KATS is working with the Michigan Department of Transportation to formalize the process of investigating Title VI complaints. The document will then be presented for adoption.

Randolph moved, and it was duly seconded by Hoekstra, ***“to approve the Public Participation Plan for presentation to the Policy Committee.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

## **2024 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE**

Referring to the schedule included in the meeting packet, Stepek explained it is a continuation of meetings at the same place and same time, on the second Thursday of each month with the exception of November and December where they will be the first Thursday due to the holidays.

Stefforia moved, and it was duly seconded by Feldt, ***“to approve the 2024 Technical Committee Meeting Schedule.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

## **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OFFICER DISCUSSION**

Minkus pointed out that Anna Horner from Oshtemo Township was going to be contacted as a potential Vice-Chair. Pierson reported he talked to Anna who agreed to accept the position. As previously discussed, Stefforia has agreed to move up to the Chairperson position. There is still an opportunity to volunteer for an officer position. The officer election will occur at next month's meeting.

## **FISCAL YEAR 2023 CONTRIBUTED SERVICES**

Stepek explained the final fiscal year 2023 contributed service amounts by agency are included in the packet for your review. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study's overall required minimum match was far exceeded. Stepek reminded attendees to please continue to send in time sheets since we have started a new fiscal year. October timesheets are due by November 15, 2023.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE-** Townsend reported the subcommittee met last week. The subcommittee discussed both changes made to the non-motorized interactive map and why certain edit requests were not made. Guests Dave Rachowicz and Madee Thorburn from the Michigan Department of Transportation spoke on topics brought up at the last Technical Committee meeting. They also confirmed that a crossing was not included in the project at US-131 and XY and YZ Avenues.

**COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN-** Mickelson stated the Complete Streets Implementation Plan Subcommittee met recently. The subcommittee reviewed the draft prioritization methodology to score based on complete streets elements. There was discussion on how that scoring would be incorporated into other Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) planning processes. Progress is being made on the KATS implementation plan. A draft is anticipated early next year.

**TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION-** Minus mentioned the Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee will meet December 7, 2023 after the next Technical Committee meeting as specified in today's meeting agenda.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Vlietstra introduced Sarah Joshi, Metro's new Deputy Director of On-Demand Services. Joshi pointed out that Metro is in the process of hiring a Transit Planner.

## **STATUS REPORTS**

### **ROADS-**

DenBraber reported the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Portage Road ramps to I-94 are open. Work continues on Portage Road.

Randolph reported the City of Kalamazoo is wrapping up a lot of projects for the season. Only signal work, painting, and minor punch list items remain on the Michigan Avenue project. Roads around the new justice center are open. Park Street has an anticipated opening of November 20, 2023 after Consumers Energy completes their work on it. A Request for Proposals is out for design for the two-way downtown street conversion. Bollards are being removed along Michigan Avenue, Westnedge, and Park for snowplow access during the winter. Lead line replacement is scheduled in the area of Kalamazoo and Douglas. The Ransom Street project is wrapping up for the season. The road will remain closed during the winter. Construction will resume in 2024. Waring added the Patterson Street bridge is being paved tomorrow. The bridge will be open November 14, 2023.

Hoekstra reported the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) is working in partnership with Oshtemo Township to complete the KL Avenue trail. The 9<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk project in Oshtemo Township is in design with an early 2024 letting anticipated. Lake Street will open on November 20, 2023. There are two jobs in letting now. The Squires Road reconstruction is targeted for a January letting. The Squires Road roundabout is targeted for a February letting.

Pierson reported the Oshtemo Township 7<sup>th</sup> Street M-43 project is complete. The road is open.

Gwin stated the City of Portage Shaver Road water main installation has been completed. The detour is planned to be removed and the road open to all traffic next week. Punchlist items remain on all other construction projects. Portage Road from Romence Road Parkway to Fairfield Road is scheduled to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Transportation this week for a February bid letting. The project has had delays receiving NEPA approvals due to it being located in an area of archeological significance. A kick-off meeting for the design of West Milham Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Oakland Drive for construction in 2025 is scheduled for this afternoon. Professional design services for the West Centre Avenue project from Oakland Drive to Shaver Road scheduled to be constructed in 2026 is anticipated to be awarded this next week.

#### **LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-**

Thorburn announced her last day with the Michigan Department of Transportation is today as she is moving to Minnesota. Thorburn mentioned it has been great working with the committee. Attendees wished her well.

Stoddard reported the City of Parchment has obtained permits and finalized a project to remove a railroad trestle crossing the Kalamazoo River. This will improve river flow and allow for riverbank restoration.

Grover asked all attendees to complete the Community Climate Action and Climate Justice Questionnaire. It is available on the [kalamazoo.org](http://kalamazoo.org) website homepage. It helps the County obtain federal and state funding for projects.

As discussed earlier, Bowden elaborated that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) met to determine a process of investigating Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Title VI complaints. The process will be for KATS to send any complaints to Orlando Curry at MDOT who will then forward them to the Federal Highway Administration. This will be formalized in writing and given to KATS to incorporate into their Title VI plan.

Anderson reported the City of Kalamazoo completed its commercial zoning code update. The residential zoning code update will begin in January. The city hired Gud Marketing to assist with communication, branding, and marketing on downtown projects. The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo, and Modeshift Kalamazoo hosted "Le Tour de Lane" last Saturday on Michigan Avenue. Approximately 70 riders participated in the successful event. Anderson expressed appreciation for the event and the partnership with the organizations.

Stefforia invited attendees to the Comstock Township Planning Commission meeting tonight at 7:00 p.m. If you are unable to attend the meeting in person, it is available on cable, or the Public Media

Network webpage or app. The meeting will feature a speaker from the Graham Sustainability Institute to discuss battery energy storage. Legislation brought to the Governor's desk after the meeting was planned threatens to take away all local control of solar, wind, and battery energy storage. There are two possible storage sites in Comstock Township of 200 megawatts each. For every megawatt, they have to pay the community \$2-thousand-dollars for a potential of \$800-thousand-dollars for Comstock.

Staroska reported the Federal Highway Administration is drafting the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Certification Review report. The draft report is expected to be issued by the end of January and finalized by the end of March.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Referring to the flyer at the meeting, Stepek invited attendees to the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study holiday breakfast on December 20, 2023 prior to the Policy Committee meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee will be held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.*

*Approved 12/7/23 (er)*