

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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

CALL TO ORDER

The February 9, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. at Kalamazoo Metro, by Vice-Chair Stefforia.

ROLL CALL

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

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christina Anderson	City of Kalamazoo
Muhammad Arif	City of Portage
Joe Belka	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Chris Bessert	Kalamazoo County
Mickey Bittner	Village of Paw Paw (Wightman & Associates)
Heather Bowden	Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Eric Feldt	City of Portage
Josh Grab	Michigan Department of Transportation, Region
Kendra Gwin	City of Portage
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Joel Hoort	Van Buren County Road Commission
Iris Lubbert	Oshtemo Township
Tom Palumbo	City of Kalamazoo
Dennis Randolph	City of Kalamazoo
Kathy Schultz	Central County Transportation Authority
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee
Jodi Stefforia, Vice-Chair	Comstock Township
Nancy Stoddard	City of Parchment
Greg Vlietstra	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
George Waring	City of Kalamazoo

OTHERS PRESENT

Phil Doorlag	Wightman & Associates
Jamie Harmon	City of Portage
Martin Janssen	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Jon Start	Citizen
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

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

MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 12, 2023 MEETING

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

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Steppek reported the January Policy Committee meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No citizens' comments were made.

FY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMEMNT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

Noting the amendments are included in the packet, Stepek stated there are three safety project additions, a bridge project increase, and a Metro Transit project budget increase. Staff recommends approval of the Transportation Improvement Program Amendments and presentation to the Policy Committee for approval.

Arif moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, ***“to approve the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR STATE TARGETS FOR BRIDGE, PAVEMENT, AND RELIABILITY

Steppek reported Michigan Department of Transportation notices and corresponding bridge, pavement, and reliability newsletters are included in the meeting packet for your reference. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are required to support state targets even if we adopt our own. For this reason, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study has traditionally adopted the state resolutions. Page 30 in the packet highlights performance by MPO and page 31 is a summary of the overall data with desired trends noted. The reliability performance measure percentage could be 100% reliably bad or 100% reliably good. KATS Staff recommends the Vice-Chair sign approval of the resolution of support on behalf of the committee, and to approve the presentation of the resolution to the Policy Committee.

Feldt moved, and it was duly seconded by Schultz, ***“to approve the Resolution of Support for State Targets for Bridge, Pavement, and Reliability.”*** MOTION CARRIED.

URBANIZED AREA DISCUSSION

Steppek provided information that the geographies of the urban areas have now been released. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Staff prepared the maps enclosed in the meeting packet which show the old Kalamazoo Urbanized Area boundary and the new 2020 Census Data Urbanized Area that will be in place until the next census in 2030. Once Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) reviews and updates the boundaries, KATS will align ours. Then KATS will begin the national functional classification process. The Kalamazoo urban area shrunk and lost 5,000

people from the last census in 2010 but this is a direct result of Mattawan being changed to its own small urbanized area. Richland, Schoolcraft, and Lawton will be added to the Rural Task Force for funding. The Kalamazoo region may experience a small increase of \$20 to \$25 thousand dollars in the Transportation Improvement Program. In response to Lubbert's inquiry, Stepek elaborated the U.S. Census Bureau changed their definition of an urbanized area from population density to housing density. This is the main cause of how all urban areas shrunk. A second reason urban areas shrunk is the fact that skips and jumps were eliminated. In the previous census, if an urbanized boundary ended at a lake, it could jump and cross the lake. Or if a boundary ended a quarter of a mile from area to area, it could jump and continue. Stepek clarified there is no change in the planning boundary from KATS. After KATS receives data from MDOT, we plan to get volunteers for a subcommittee to work on the new boundaries and maximize funding. This official new boundary likely won't be adopted until calendar year 2025.

RAISE GRANT NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY-PROJECT DISCUSSION

Stepek reported the City of Kalamazoo applied for a RAISE grant. Let Stepek know if any agency would like a resolution of support from Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study for any planned grant applications.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

NON-MOTORIZED SUBCOMMITTEE- The Subcommittee met January 18, 2023. As previously discussed, the Subcommittee is working on adding an accurate non-motorized layer to Google Maps for the Kalamazoo region. Townsend reported the Subcommittee discussed adding information to pop-up boxes. Google data sharing maps has four designations for non-motorized trails: trails, dedicated lanes, bicycle friendly, and dirt/unpaved trails. One type of facility will be uploaded at a time, starting with shared use pathways. Subcommittee and public feedback on pathway inaccuracies is being solicited until the next quarterly meeting anticipated in April. Corrections have been made to the map but are not yet reflected on the interactive map.

COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN- Last month's kickoff meeting went well. Mickelson is compiling information. Another meeting will be held in the future.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION- Stepek reported the first Traffic Signal Coordination Subcommittee meeting provided discussion on which agencies are coordinating already, and what others are doing. The Subcommittee will continue to meet quarterly.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Schultz reported the Kalamazoo Metro/Central County Transportation Authority Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) is essentially wrapped up. The final report will be posted to the Metro website and be presented to the Central County Transportation Authority/Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority board at their meeting on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 11:30 a.m. The consultant will return in April for a final sign off. In the fall, changes may begin to be implemented on the fixed route system. Plans are underway to incorporate Microtransit. Metro has met with potential vendors to gather data on outsourcing the service versus keeping it in-house. Microtransit roll-out is anticipated to begin the first half of 2024. As always, please let Schultz know of any construction projects that may impact bus routes.

STATUS REPORTS

ROADS-

Belka provided the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) update that the US-131, from Shaver to M-216 (8.4 miles) was let on February 3, 2023 and came in just under estimate. Construction could begin as early as May 1, 2023 and is scheduled for final completion by June 13,

2025. Milling and multicourse overlay will be done on M-216 to north of Michigan Avenue and south of YZ Avenue to N of XY Avenue. Reconstruction in the Village of Schoolcraft will include median crossover removal at county road intersections, and replacement with indirect left turn lanes. GTR Railroad will be reconstructed. Signal reconstruction will occur at Eliza and Shaver and upgrade at Lyons. I-94 at Portage Road deck pours were delayed. However, work is now ongoing with the first of two deck pours for the Portage Road bridge this week and early next week. Work is also continuing on the railroad bridges and soundwall. The WB I-94 on ramp from Portage Road will have a 45-day closure in the future but it is unknown at this time when that will begin. Tree removal and clearing will begin on March 1, 2023 for the M-40 project in Lawton. The project includes mill and overlay, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, and a culvert replacement. The project has an anticipated completion date of August 23, 2024.

Randolph reported the City of Kalamazoo is planning lots of street projects and sidewalk work. The biggest project will be on Michigan Avenue where two lanes will be removed, crack filling will be done, and bike lanes will be added. Plans are being finalized for the Ransom Road project slated for summer. The city is working on creating a GIS map that would be available to the public. The city is gearing up for an anticipated six-year long downtown street conversion project beginning with Kalamazoo Avenue. The city received \$750 thousand dollars of safety money which will be used for traffic calming activities expected to begin in summer. Waring added the Patterson Street bridge project will begin February 27, 2023 which entails closing the road. Michigan Avenue from Lowell to Main project will begin April 3, 2023.

Harmon reported the City of Portage opened bid last week for two projects. The Shaver Road project and the Portage Road project came in 6 percent under and 2 percent over, respectively. Construction will begin on both projects this year. The majority of the Shaver Road project will be completed next year. The South Westnedge project will be in the April bid letting. Other projects are under design.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta is planning an extensive water project in 2023. Two water mains crossing M-96 and effected roads will be replaced.

LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING-

Bessert reported Kalamazoo County just completed the ArcGIS jumpstart which will allow more collaboration between agencies. Users will be able to edit the data live in the database. The County is working to switch online public mapping from ESRI servers to in-house servers. The Road Commission Region Map Book is being put in GIS.

Anderson updated the City of Kalamazoo is updating the Stuart Neighborhood and Westwood Neighborhood plans. The City plans to update the downtown parking system using data from a study done in 2018. Design includes curbside use considerations, parklets, and sidewalk cafes. The City may revise the current contract or create an RFP for a new provider. Commercial zoning codes are being updated with anticipated completion in July. Residential district zoning updates will follow.

Feldt reiterated the City of Portage Comprehensive Plan update continues. Feldt reminded attendees to complete the City's Mater Plan on-line survey which ends next week.

NEW BUSINESS

Steppek reminded attendees to submit traffic count requests. After next month's Technical Committee meeting, Traffic Count consultant Brian Burlingham will be available.

Steppek announced recent news of funding opportunities from the Michigan Infrastructure Office. A total of \$25 million dollars has been made available to regions for technical assistance to apply for Infrastructure Investments and Job (IJA) Grants. The Kalamazoo region allocation is \$240 thousand dollars and \$750 thousand dollars to match grants. Upcoming meetings and discussions will determine how to proceed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Citizen Start asked if Kalamazoo County is adding utilities to the public GIS maps. Stepek responded that both utilities and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County opted out of doing so. Start pointed out that walking on downtown sidewalks is problematic and challenging for the visually impaired due to restaurant seating on sidewalks.

Sotherland asked members to imagine Kalamazoo becoming known as a bicycling destination, pointing out the significant improvements already made plus the potential for further transformation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

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

Approved 3/9/23 (er)