

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES JUNE 10, 2021 - 9:30 A.M.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The June 10, 2021 Technical Committee Meeting was called to order via a Zoom conference call in accordance with Kalamazoo County State of Emergency Declaration, at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Kathy Schultz.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Participants in the meeting stated their name, agency, and location from which he/she is attending the meeting remotely.

**ROLL CALL**

Remote meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

|                         | <u>Agency</u>                                                          | <u>Call-in Location</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Christina Anderson      | City of Kalamazoo                                                      | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Mickey Bittner          | Village of Paw Paw                                                     | Allegan, MI             |
| Ryan Gladding           | Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Urban Travel Analysis | Lansing, MI             |
| Todd Hackenberg         | Village of Lawton                                                      | Lawton, MI              |
| Jamie Harmon            | City of Portage                                                        | Portage, MI             |
| Jeff Heppler            | Village of Augusta                                                     | Augusta, MI             |
| Joel Hoort              | Van Buren County Road Commission                                       | Lawrence, MI            |
| Anna Horner             | Oshtemo Township                                                       | Oshtemo Township        |
| Anthony Ladd            | City of Kalamazoo                                                      | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Iris Luppert            | Oshtemo Township                                                       | Oshtemo Township        |
| Robert Maffeo           | Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Urban Travel Analysis | Meridian Township       |
| Jim Mallery             | Village of Vicksburg                                                   | Vicksburg, MI           |
| Ryan Minkus, Vice-Chair | Road Commission of Kalamazoo County                                    | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Kyle Mucha              | City of Portage                                                        | Portage, MI             |
| Michelle O'Neill        | Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC                             | Texas Township          |
| Sherman Potter          | City of Portage                                                        | Portage, MI             |
| Dennis Randolph         | City of Kalamazoo                                                      | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Ryan Russell            | Village of Schoolcraft                                                 | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Brian Sanada            | Michigan Department of Transportation, Region                          | Antwerp Township        |
| Kathy Schultz, Chair    | Central County Transportation Authority                                | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Jodi Stefforia          | Comstock Township                                                      | Comstock Township       |
| Nancy Stoddard          | City of Parchment                                                      | Parchment, MI           |
| Greg Vlietstra          | Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority                              | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Luke Walters            | Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning              | Lansing, MI             |
| George Waring           | City of Kalamazoo                                                      | Kalamazoo, MI           |
| Tim Woodhams            | Village of Mattawan                                                    | Plainwell, MI           |
| Mark Worden             | Road Commission of Kalamazoo County                                    | Kalamazoo, MI           |

## OTHERS PRESENT

|                    | <u>Agency</u>                       |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Phil Doorlag       | Wightman                            |
| Megan Mickelson    | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Fred Nagler        | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Juan Ruelas        | Rathco Safety and Supply            |
| Elizabeth Rumick   | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Paul Sotherland    | KATS Citizens Advisory Committee    |
| Steve Stepek, AICP | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Ali Townsend       | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |

## CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No changes or additions to the agenda were requested, however, Stepek said he plans to remind attendees to submit timesheets during the New Business portion of the meeting.

## APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Heppler, SECOND by Worden, ***“to approve the June 10, 2021 Technical Committee Agenda.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

## MINUTES FROM THE MAY 13, 2021 MEETING

MOTION by Minkus, SECOND by O’Neill, ***“to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2021 Technical Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

## POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Stepek reported Congressman Upton visited the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Policy Committee meeting and gave updates from Washington. Jonathan Start’s retirement was celebrated during the in-person meeting held in Comstock Township. Thank you to all those who attended. Jon was appreciative of his gift. Schultz echoed the meeting was well attended, informative, and it was nice to see Jon and wish him the best in retirement.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

## FISCAL YEAR 2020-2023 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

Chair Schultz stated the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment schedule is included in the meeting packet. Stepek explained the majority of the amendments are Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) projects. MDOT scope change projects included traffic safety projects at US-131 and XY Avenue and Shaver Road. There is an abandonment of an MDOT traffic safety pavement marking project. A Kalamazoo Stadium Drive project is a scope change project shortening the length and adding a non-motorized element. Lastly is a COVID Relief Funded project in Augusta. A Village of Schoolcraft project also using COVID dollars, is anticipated being part of the August TIP. The KATS Prioritization Subcommittee will need to meet to discuss this Schoolcraft project including the fact that it will not use the full allotted \$200,000.

MOTION by Heppler, SECOND by Mallery, ***“to approve the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

## PRIORITIZATION PROCESS DISCUSSION

Chair Schultz noted the draft Prioritization Process is an enclosure in the meeting packet for a second reading. Stepek reported the Prioritization Process was discussed with agencies but no comments were received on the document. KATS is appreciative of agency efforts to understand and learn the

process. KATS Staff recommends adoption. Schultz asked when the Call for Projects will go out. Stepek responded, provided the Policy Committee agrees with the Technical Committee recommendation, it will be mid-July or August, 2021.

MOTION by Minkus, SECOND by Worden, ***“to approve the Prioritization Process Application and Instructions for Transportation Improvement Program.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Schultz stated Metro continues rear-door bus access only and no collection of fares. Front-door bus access is planned to be reinstated on July 6, 2021. Fare collection is planned to resume August 2, 2021. Beginning June 14, 2021, hourly service will be provided on all bus routes. Service hours will be reduced on Saturdays. Metro continues to experience a severe shortage of bus drivers. Schultz repeated the announcement that Metro is hiring bus drivers and for attendees to continue to spread the word. Metro is hopeful for increased service to the community in the fall when in-person learning resumes. The Central County Transportation Authority/Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority board meeting will be held June 14, 2021. The November county-wide millage proposal will be discussed. Schultz thanked Ruelas and all Rathco Safety and Supply staff for successful completion of the large bus stop sign project.

## **STATUS REPORTS**

### **ROADS-**

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta is installing storm drains on a couple secondary roads which will be resurfaced by the end of the month. In the next two weeks, resurface work will begin on five local streets.

Ladd stated the City of Kalamazoo in-house paving of 16 local streets is planned. The chip seal and crack seal project is expected to begin in early July 2021. The City plans to add speed humps for traffic calming on 5 to 6 streets in the north-side neighborhoods. A city-wide, broad traffic calming project is being rolled out. The Howard Street pathway and Portage Street projects are progressing.

Minkus echoed that the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) is hiring drivers and provided the following updates:

#### Non-Motorized

- Planning efforts continue with Oshtemo and the Parks Department for the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail. RCKC is looking for 2024 additional state-wide funding and preparing applications.

#### Roads

- The Systemic Stop Sign Project in the northern half of the county is done. RCKC thanks Ruelas and all Rathco Safety and Supply staff for work to complete the project.
- U Avenue between Oakland and Portage Road restoration is on-going this week with punch-list items and will be wrapping up soon.
- The Nichols/Solon project underground traffic signal and storm sewer work is being completed. There are signal material delays.
- G Avenue Riverview Drive to 24<sup>th</sup> Street rehab project is slated to start next week.
- R Avenue 36<sup>th</sup> Street east to County Line will start after the Fourth of July.
- The preconstruction meeting for the Sprinkle Road Milham to N Avenue project is next week. Work will begin soon.
- Chip seal is underway. Work is being completed in Comstock today and tomorrow.

#### Other News

- For weekly project alerts and updates, sign-up for RCKC Connect. Contact Minkus for more information.
- RCKC is experiencing material delays which in turn is delaying some project timelines. The June 9, 2021 Wood TV8 evening news aired a story on RCKC material delays and the related Nichols Road project. Ellie Blonde of RCKC spoke about global supply chain issues,

traffic signal mast-arm material delays, dust control delays, and a CDL driver shortage all impacting construction. The CDL driver shortage impacts not only RCKC and Metro, but contractors and vendors everywhere.

- RCKC is looking forward to reviewing the Non-Motorized Element of the Transportation Plan and sharing more information with the committee.
- Minkus thanked KATS for putting together the enjoyable in-person Policy Committee meeting and celebration of Start's retirement.

Harmon provided the following status update for the City of Portage:

- The East Milham Avenue project from South Westnedge Avenue to Portage Road continues. Water main work is complete. Storm water and concrete work continues. Grading and paving of the water main trench on the south side has begun this week and will continue through next week. Substantial completion is August.
- Design continues on the South Westnedge Avenue microsurfacing project from Mall Drive to Trade Centre Way and the Lovers Lane reconstruction project from East Milham Avenue to Kilgore Road. Both projects are scheduled for GI submittals in August for construction in 2022.

O'Neill reported the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) I-94 project work is ongoing. The Portage Road ramps to I-94 are expected to open tomorrow June 11, 2021. The concrete joint repair project on US-131 is expected to wrap up this weekend. The D Avenue traffic signal is activated. There are now 3 new traffic signals at D Avenue, one at the Adobe Road intersection and two at the on/off ramps for M-43. A citizen asked who paid for the signals on the Road Commission Facebook page. MDOT paid for the northbound off ramp signal because it was warranted even without the Love's Truck Stop traffic. Love's Truck Stop company paid for the other two signals so there was no cost to taxpayers. In addition to the two projects already planned for the winter savings in the maintenance budget, a bridge project on East Michigan Avenue over Portage Creek in Downtown Kalamazoo was added. The bridge is near the intersection of East Michigan Avenue and Harrison Street. The project will be impactful for traffic over the summer since one bound will be allowed at a time. O'Neill will ensure Schultz gets updated information on the project for Metro bus route impact. O'Neill appreciates efforts by Ladd and the City of Kalamazoo to coordinate this bridge project. The project was let in last Friday's letting. MDOT received favorable bids on the I-94 Business Spur project which will be completed by the end of the construction season this year. The M-96 resurfacing project west of Augusta from the river to the County Line is in the July bid letting. Schultz asked what the anticipated date is to turn the signal on at the new Advia Credit Union Headquarters on 6404 West Main. O'Neill replied the signal will be fully operational on June 23, 2021. Schultz asked if there were any anticipated changes to the West driveway in/out of Meijer. O'Neill stated the driveway would be converted to right and right out only, but that is a second phase of the project. Schultz added changes to the driveway would impact bus routes. Heppler asked for clarification on the M-96 project scope. O'Neill stated the summer maintenance project on M-96 is from the Kalamazoo River to the County Line. There is a proposed Capital Preventative Maintenance project on M-96 between Galesburg and Augusta for 2022 or 2023. Heppler commented Augusta is trying to coordinate with MDOT for a water main repair on Church Street.

Stoddard reported the water main will be replaced in mid-June on Glendale Avenue in the City of Parchment. G Avenue is under construction and torn up. Stoddard plans to contact Ladd on traffic calming measures that could be used in Parchment.

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

Anderson reported the City of Kalamazoo is working with a consultant team for Phase 2 of a Downtown Network project. Plans include cost estimates, project scope, and specific design elements. There is a potential opportunity to extend the bike lane on Kalamazoo Avenue. There is a potential traffic calming project beginning at the intersection of South Westnedge Avenue and South Park Street, north to West Crosstown Parkway. Pedestrian improvement at non-signalized intersections will be reviewed. Public engagement will be performed this summer. Metro will also be

included in planning. The addition of on-street parking and a bike lane will be considered. O'Neill suggested Anderson include Lipset of MDOT on the US-131, US-131 Business Route Interchange plans. Commercial vehicle use of either the new interchange or an alternate route of using Stadium Drive to get to US-131 should be discussed. Anderson will reach out to Lipset.

Stoddard reported the City of Parchment planned unit development for the former mill property will be presented for the second reading at the City Commission Meeting on June 21, 2021. Approval is expected.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Steppek reminded attendees to turn time sheets in to KATS. Most agencies are very far behind in meeting the contributed service requirement. Keep in mind KATS typically cancels the July meeting. A decision will be made in early July depending on whether there are any agenda items. Plan for in-person meetings to resume in August 2021.

Luke Walters of the Michigan Department of Transportation Statewide Planning, introduced himself as the new representative for KATS Technical Committee, replacing Jeff Franklin. Steppek explained Franklin received an out-of-class promotion and thanked Walters for introducing himself. Walters was welcomed.

Schultz asked Steppek for an update on the long-range plan for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan approvals. Steppek replied the timeline is the same with October/November approvals for this year. Some chapters are out, the project list is out for consultation. By August a significant amount of the plan will be out for comment. MDOT revoked outside party access to Act 51 reports. KATS needs the budget and distribution amounts from the Act 51 reports for the plan financial analysis. Steppek may email requests from locals for the reports.

Minkus asked if there is a way to get notifications when posts are made to the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study website. Steppek will follow-up.

Schultz reported Metro will be releasing a Request for Proposal to hire a consultant in August or September for a yearlong Comprehensive Operations Analysis. The study will review the entire transit process and suggest improvements. The addition of transit facilities, and conversion to a parallel system from the current hub and spoke system will be analyzed. Public meetings will be held and agencies will be contacted regarding future land-use planning and road improvements that will impact Metro.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Harmon stated the local American Public Works Association chapter will be providing a Michigan Municipal League legislative update on transportation, energy, and infrastructure June 16, 2021 at noon. Contact Harmon or Worden for more information.

Sotherland of KATS Citizens' Advisory Committee, complimented and expressed appreciation for everyone's efforts in non-motorized improvements in the region.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Schultz reminded members to be on the look-out for possible notification of cancellation of the July meeting. Following a motion by Worden and a second by Heppler, Chair Schultz adjourned the June 10, 2021 Technical Committee Meeting at 10:12 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee will be held on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.*