

# NEWS RELEASE



## The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

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### **Grand Valley Metropolitan Council Unveils Newest Tool to Analyze and Improve Pavement Conditions in the Grand Rapids Metropolitan Area**

**GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN** – A new advanced technology tool to gather data on pavement conditions and help local and state officials make better decisions about road repairs and reconstruction in the Grand Rapids metropolitan area was unveiled today by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC).

The GVMC's new mobile Pavement Management System (PaMS) is a full-size Ford® van equipped with state-of-the-art electronic pavement scanners, high-resolution still cameras, Global Positioning System (GPS) components and computers. Operated by experienced transportation planners from GVMC's Transportation Department, the equipment will be used throughout the GVMC transportation study area to ascertain pavement conditions and enable local road agencies and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to better manage roads, bridges and other elements of our region's surface transportation network.

It marks the first time that the mobile, semi-automated, advanced technology system will be used to gather and analyze road condition data in Michigan.

“This is a major step forward for our collaborative transportation planning efforts in the Grand

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Rapids metro area,” said Metro Council Chairman James Buck, Mayor of Grandville. “Once again, Metro Council is collaborating to share costs and employ the most-advanced technology, to benefit taxpayers and the motoring public in the Grand Rapids metropolitan region.”

During the construction season (April through November), GVMC’s distinctive PaMS vehicle will travel the freeways and surface streets in the Grand Rapids metropolitan area, scanning and photographing pavement and other road and bridge infrastructure and storing the data for later analysis by GVMC transportation planners. While the van is being operated at normal road speeds, lasers scan the road surface to ascertain pavement conditions and GPS technology pinpoints the location of pavement deficiencies and adjacent transportation infrastructure. High-speed still cameras inventory and catalogue pavement conditions, together with road and bridge infrastructure (traffic signals, signs, street lamps, guard rails, etc.), and store the data and photographic images on high-capacity disk drives.

GVMC transportation planners and engineers then analyze the data and collaborate with public works officials and engineers from area cities and villages, the Kent and Ottawa County Road Commissions and MDOT to ascertain pavement conditions, catalogue deficiencies and prioritize road and bridge improvement projects.

“At a time when local taxpayers and motorists are rightly demanding that local officials collaborate and use more efficient methods for delivering critical services, GVMC has stepped up to meet that demand,” said GVMC Vice Chairman Don R. Hilton, Sr., Supervisor of Gaines Charter Township. “By putting state-of-the-art technology in the hands of experienced transportation planning professionals, and collaborating to share the costs, we’re ensuring that the taxpayers’ investments are wisely managed.”

The \$400,000 GVMC PaMS vehicle will be stored and maintained at the City of Wyoming Public Works Center.

*The Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) is a regional organization dedicated to promoting cooperation and coordination among local governments in the metropolitan Grand Rapids area. Created in 1990, its membership now includes Kent and Ottawa Counties and 32 local governments, representing nearly 700,000 people.*

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