



## GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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GREENVILLE • HASTINGS • HUDSONVILLE • IONIA • JAMESTOWN TOWNSHIP • KENT COUNTY • KENTWOOD • LOWELL • LOWELL TOWNSHIP • MIDDLEVILLE • OTTAWA COUNTY  
PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP • ROCKFORD • SAND LAKE • TALLMADGE TOWNSHIP • WALKER • WAYLAND • WYOMING

# GVMC BOARD MEETING

8:30 a.m.  
September 7, 2023

Kent County  
Commission Chambers  
300 Monroe, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Grand Rapids, MI

1. Welcome
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment
4. Approval of Minutes – ITEM 4
5. New Board Members – John Shay, City of Wyoming; R. Tyler Dotson, City of Hudsonville; Darla Falcon, City of Cedar Springs – ITEM 5
6. REGIS Board Appointments, Jason Moore – ITEM 6
7. Investment Policy MI Class Agreement, Chris Brown – ITEM 7
8. FY 22/23 Budget Amendment Environmental Programs, John Weiss – ITEM 8
9. Public Hearing - GVMC FY23/24 Budget - ITEM 9
  - Open Hearing
  - Close Hearing
  - Motion to Approve Budget
10. Executive Committee & Officer Appointments Discussion – Brian Donovan
11. Adjusted Census Urban Boundary (ACUB) – Laurel Joseph – ITEM 11
12. 2024 GVMC Board Schedule of Meetings – ITEM 12
13. Other
  - November 9<sup>th</sup> Dinner & Board Meeting – Whitecaps Ballpark
  - Wendy Ogilvie Retirement – Attachment
  - KCDA Fiscal Agent
  - MTPA Awards
14. Adjourn

# Grand Valley Metro Council

## Board Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2023  
8:30 a.m.

Kent County Commission Chambers  
300 Monroe  
Grand Rapids, MI

### 1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Mike DeVries called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

#### Members Present:

Jim Alles	Cannon Township
Betsy Artz	City of Kentwood
Rick Baker	At-Large Member
Nora Balgoyen	At-Large Member
Thad Beard	City of Rockford
Mark Bennett	Tallmadge Township
Walt Bujak	Kent County
Mike Burns	City of Lowell
Gary Carey	City of Walker
Shea Charles	East Grand Rapids
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Joshua Eggleston	City of Wayland
Adam Elenbaas	Allendale Township
John Gibbs	Ottawa County
Lisa Haynes	GVSU
Nathan Henschel	At-Large
Steve Kepley	City of Kentwood
Melissa LaGrand	Kent County
Ross Leisman	Ada Township
Grace Lesperance	Cascade Twp.
James Lower	Village of Sparta
Steve Maas	City of Grandville
Greg Madura	Alpine Township
John McCarter	City of Wyoming
Justin Stadt	Georgetown Township
Craig Stolsonberg	Village of Middleville
Kyle Terpstra	Ottawa County
Jeff Thornton	Village of Caledonia
Al Vanderberg	Kent County

Cameron VanWyngarden	Plainfield Township
Mike Verhulst	City of Grand Rapids
Rod Weersing	Gaines Township

**Members Absent:**

Robyn Britton	Nelson Township
Brian Donovan	At-Large
Precia Garland	City of Ionia
Kevin Green	Algoma Township
Jerry Hale	Lowell Township
Bryan Harrison	Caledonia Township
Ryan Kidd	Georgetown Twp.
Dennis Luce	City of Coopersville
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Amos Tillema	Byron Township
Kent Vanderwood	City of Wyoming
Laurie Van Haitzma	Jamestown Township
Mark Washington	City of Grand Rapids
Lynne Wells	City of Grand Rapids
Open	City of Cedar Springs
Open	City of Greenville
Open	Village of Sand Lake
Open	City of Belding
Open	City of Hudsonville

**2. Quorum Call**

- a. Vice Chair DeVries stated a quorum was present.

**3. Public Comment**

None

**4. Approval of Minutes**

- a. **MOTION - To Approve the February 2023 Minutes. MOVE - Elenbaas. SUPPORT - Cary. MOTION CARRIED.**

## 5. Executive Committee Nomination of John Gibbs

Steve Kepley reported that John Gibbs was being nominated to the GVMC Executive Committee as the seat traditionally reserved for Ottawa County.

**MOVE – Kepley. SUPPORT – Bujak. MOTION CARRIED.**

## 6. At-Large Nomination of Nathan Henschel

Nathan Henschel has applied for the At-Large position previously held by Megan Rydecki. Henschel is Rydecki's replacement at Consumers Energy and is very well qualified.

**MOTION – To Appoint Nathan Henschel to the GVMC Board as an At-Large Representative. MOVE – Cary. SUPPORT – LaGrand. MOTION CARRIED.**

## 7. Oath of Office

The Oath of Office was administered to the following:

- Rod Weersing, Gaines Twp.
- Kyle Terpstra, Ottawa County
- James Lower, Village of Sparta
- Justin Stadt, Georgetown Twp.
- Nathan Henschel, At-Large

## 8. Transportation

### a. FY23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment.

Laurel Joseph reported on the requested UPWP Amendment.

Staff is requesting to amend the FY2023 UPWP to add budget and work activities for a Kent County Area Mobility Study. This study will be funded through a Service Development New Technology grant awarded through MDOT's Office of Passenger Transport, which is funded with FTA Section 5304 funds and state match. The total budget for this project is \$402,500. *No additional local match is required.*

While this project was proposed by Kent County with their Mobility Task Force, MDOT requested that GVMC be the grantee administering the project. This study will aim to evaluate mobility options, needs, and solutions for folks in the region, but will be informed by and coordinate with other regional mobility planning efforts – GVMC's TDM Plan, The Rapid's Transit Master Plan, etc. – that are currently in progress, so that work is not duplicated.

Proposed changes associated with this project have been incorporated into the full FY2023 UPWP document, which is posted on the GVMC website in draft form for review at [www.gvmc.org/unified-planning-work-program](http://www.gvmc.org/unified-planning-work-program). Amended sections are highlighted in grey.

Both the Policy Committee and Executive Committee recommended Board approval of this amendment at their May meetings.

**MOTION – To Approve the Resolution to Amend the FY23 Unified Planning Work Program. MOVE – Madura. SUPPORT – Baker. MOTION CARRIED.**

**b. FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Approval**

Laurel Joseph reported on the FY24 UPWP.

The FY2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC) includes the budget for all federally assisted transportation planning activities that the GVMC Transportation Division, the Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will undertake. GVMC must submit the UPWP annually to the sponsoring federal agencies, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, prior to October 1st. It functions as the coordinated budget for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Staff is requesting GVMC Board review and action on the draft FY2024 UPWP, so that it can be submitted to MDOT for state/federal approval. The Policy Committee and Executive Committees reviewed and recommended approval of the FY2024 UPWP at their May meetings.

The draft FY2024 UPWP document and the associated budget to complete the included tasks is available for review on the GVMC UPWP webpage: [www.gvmc.org/unified-planning-work-program](http://www.gvmc.org/unified-planning-work-program). The work outlined in the program addresses all the federal planning factors, emphasis areas, and performance-based planning and programming requirements. FY2024 revenues that will support the completion of this planning work total about \$2,575,000 for GVMC, \$225,000 for The Rapid, and \$90,000 for MDOT.

Federal and State Planning Emphasis Areas have largely stayed the same as last year, so additions that were made to the program in FY2023 to address those remain in FY2024.

New work items in FY2024 include the development of a Regional Safety Action Plan utilizing SS4A grant funds awarded to GVMC and staff work on supplemental safety action planning activities using STP funds set aside for planning tasks. A task area has also been added to accommodate staff time needed to implement strategies that will come out of the Transportation Demand Management Plan, and a task under Technical Assistance was added for GVMC to assist/coordinate where appropriate on steps toward implementation of the Airport Access Study preferred projects. Additionally, staff will utilize the

required 2.5% PL set-aside for Safe and Accessible Options to work with partners on regional complete streets policy/guidance/tools. Staff will also continue work on the transportation infrastructure resiliency study.

As is typical each year, staff will continue to maintain the TIP (with almost \$136 million in FY2024 projects), provide technical assistance, perform transportation demand modelling activities, collect pavement condition data, and run the regional traffic count and Clean Air Action programs. Staff will also continue to expand the nonmotorized count effort and safety educational campaign. GVMC will perform all these activities in coordination with our local, state, and federal partners.

The GVMC Transportation Program receives its local match through dues assessed to the participating member agencies. With the release of 2020 census data, dues were updated for FY2023 and will remain the same overall for FY2024. Consistent with previous years, GVMC will continue to assume responsibility for a portion of the match instead of assessing it all to members. In FY2024, GVMC will provide administrative match to cover over 36% of the program.

**MOTION – To Approve the Resolution for the FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) MOTION – Madura. SUPPORT – LaGrand. MOTION CARRIED.**

**c. Updated Master Agreement Execution**

**MOTION – To Approve the Updated Master Agreement Execution. MOVE – Vanderberg. SUPPORT – Kepley. MOTION CARRIED.**

**d. Airport Study**

Laurel Joseph reported on the Airport Access Study. To view the full report, please go to:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59dce13bb1ffb65b4d405588/t/64514c4839cf6636c9d4b687/1683049562466/AirportAccessStudy\\_FinalReport\\_04042023.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59dce13bb1ffb65b4d405588/t/64514c4839cf6636c9d4b687/1683049562466/AirportAccessStudy_FinalReport_04042023.pdf)

**Study Background**

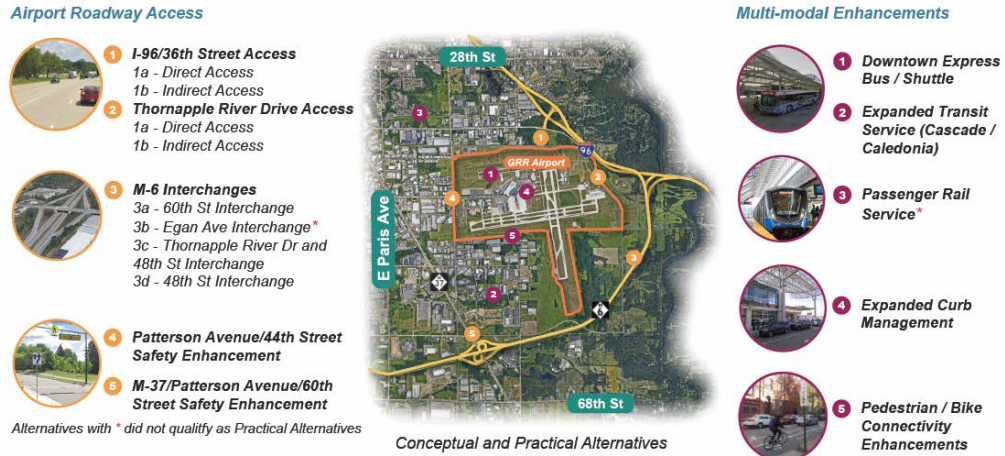
- Proposed by GFIA and MDOT during the development of GVMC's FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program
- Supported by all members for inclusion in the transportation work program and budget.
  - Funded with federal surface transportation funds and local match – total budget \$187,500.

- The study’s purpose was to investigate potential ways to improve access to the airport along with ways to improve transportation safety, circulation, operations, etc. within the broader study area.

### Public Engagement 1

- Participants were informed about current transportation and economic conditions within the study area.
- Asked about people’s travel modes to and/or from the airport and whether there are significant issues accessing the airport.
- Included a map-based question that allowed folks to identify locations of specific challenges and opportunities.
- Thanks to the airport, more than 3,000 people from the region participated.

### Initial Evaluation

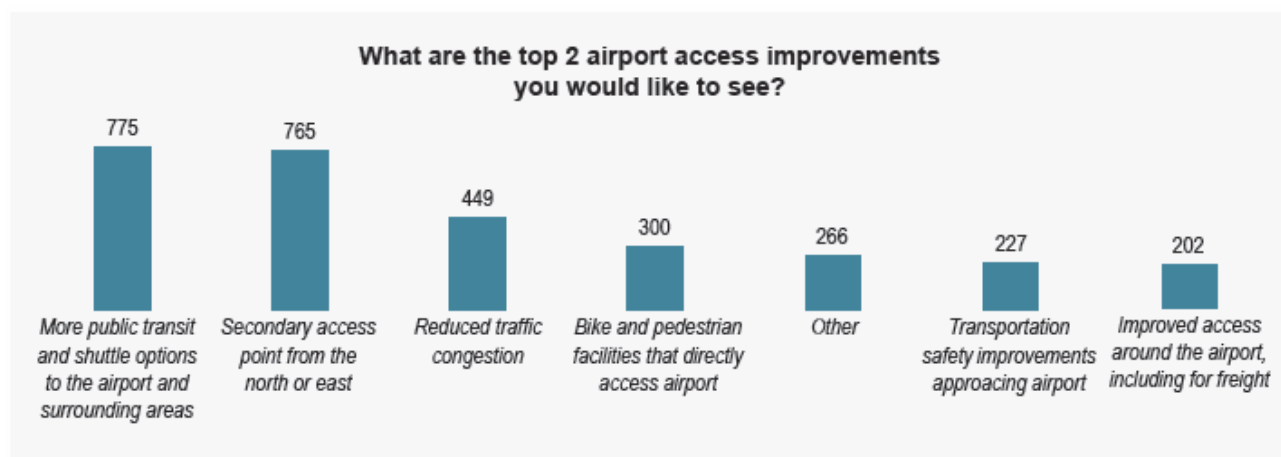


#	Alternative	Variations	Support For Purpose and Need	Potential ROW/Environment Impact	Complexity
1	I-96/36th Street Access	Direct I-96/36th Street Access	High	Medium	High
		Indirect I-96/36th Street Access	Medium	Medium	Medium
2	Thornapple River Drive Access	Secondary Freight Access	Low	Low	Low
		Air Cargo Drive Access	High	Low	High
3	M-6 Interchange	60th Street Interchange	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Egan Avenue Interchange	Medium	High	High
		Thornapple River Drive and 48th Street Partial Interchanges	Medium	Medium	Medium
		48th Street Full Interchange	High	High	High
4	Patterson Avenue /44th Street Safety Enhancements		High	Low	Low
5	M-37/Patterson Avenue/60th Street Intersection Enhancements		Medium	Low	Low

#	Alternative	Support For Purpose and Need	Potential ROW/Environment Impact	Complexity
1	Downtown Express Bus/Shuttle	Medium	Low	Medium
2	Expanded Transit Service	Low	Low	Medium
3	Passenger Rail Service	Medium	High	High
4	Expanded Curb Access/Management	Medium	Low	Medium
5	Pedestrian/Bike Connectivity Enhancements	Medium	Low	Low

## Public Engagement 2

- Opportunities for participants to examine the Practical Alternatives
- Story map with an introduction to each alternative and an online survey. More than 2,000 regional responses showing overall support for practical alternatives.



*Top 2 selected airport access improvements from Phase 2 Engagement online survey*

## Detailed Evaluation of Preferences and Feasibility

The following feasible preferences were identified:

- I-96/36<sup>th</sup> St Access Direct Access
- Thornapple River Drive Secondary Freight Access
- Patterson Avenue /44th Street Safety Enhancements



- M-37/Patterson Avenue/60th Street Intersection Enhancements
- Downtown Express Bus/Shuttle
- Pedestrian/Bike Connectivity Enhancements

The study is only the first step to identify preferred and feasible projects. In-depth planning and funding options will be ongoing if any of these move forward.

Public Involvement included:

- Three online surveys
- In person open houses at Cascade and Kentwood
- A virtual public meeting

Partners Included:

- MDOT
- Gerald R. Ford International Airport
- Kent County Road Commission
- City of Kentwood
- Cascade Twp.
- Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Right Place
- The Rapid
- Kent County
- Experience Grand Rapids

Grace Lesperance stated that while Cascade fully supports the top priority (I-96 36 Street access), she feels Cascade Twp. did not have enough input. She said that the priority survey caused a lot of social media chatter and pushback as rumors spread that the survey contained projects which were already approved despite the affect or wishes of residents.

Laurel Joseph, Dennis Kent (MDOT), and Casey Ries (Airport Authority) answered questions. Joseph clarified that alternatives in the survey were listed as options that were being evaluated in the study, and not as preapproved projects.

Jeff Thornton asked questions regarding funding and tunneling under roads. Dennis Kent clarified that if approved, the appropriate planning, funding (from all sources) and engineering would be completed.

## **9. Resolution to Change the Articles of Incorporation to Remove City of Hastings from the Metro Council**

John Weiss explained that the City of Hastings has officially notified the Metro Council that it wishes to withdraw from GVMC.

**MOTION – To Approve the Resolution to Change the Articles of Incorporation to Remove the City of Hastings from the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. MOVE – Thornton. SUPPORT – LaGrand. MOTION CARRIED.**

**10.EPA Grant**

Wendy Ogilvie explained the Air Quality grant which will be used to identify and make an action plan to mitigate greenhouse gases. If anyone has not yet sent a letter of support, please forward one to Wendy asap.

**11.Executive Committee**

John Weiss reported that the Executive Committee will be voted on for FY 24 at the September GVMC Board Meeting. If there are any interested parties, please forward an application to John Weiss, Brian Donovan, or Gayle McGrath.

**12.Adjourn- 9:45 a.m.**

**ITEM 5**

**OATH OF OFFICE**

STATE OF MICHIGAN     )  
  ) ss.  
COUNTY OF KENT        )

I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of this State, and that I will faithfully perform the duties of the office of a member of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

\_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Title



## REGIONAL GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM AGENCY

AN AGENCY OF THE GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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### **ITEM 6**

#### **REGIS Board of Directors**

Ada Township – Julius Suchy  
Alpine Township – Sue Becker (*Vice Chairperson*)  
Byron Township – Peggy Sattler  
Cascade Charter Township – Brian Hilbrands  
City of Cedar Springs – Michael Womack  
City of East Grand Rapids – Doug LaFave  
Gaines Charter Township – Dan Wells  
Grand Rapids Charter Township – Mike Devries  
City of Grandville – Matt Butts  
City of Hudsonville – Dan Strikwerda  
The Rapid – Nick Monoyios  
Kent County Road Commission – Steve Warren  
City of Kentwood – Shay Gallagher  
City of Lowell – Michael Burns  
Plainfield Charter Township – Cameron Van Wyngarden (*Chairperson*)  
City of Rockford – Thad Beard  
Village of Sparta – Jim Lower  
City of Walker – Frank Wash  
City of Wyoming – John Shay

#### **REGIS Executive Board of Directors**

Grand Valley Metro Council, John Weiss  
Plainfield Township, Cameron Van Wyngarden  
Alpine Township, Sue Becker  
City of Wyoming, John Shay  
City of Kentwood, Shay Gallagher  
City of Grandville, Matt Butts

### **REGIS Advisory Committee**

Ada Township – Julius Suchy  
Alpine Township – Sue Becker (*Chairperson*)  
Byron Township – Peggy Sattler  
Cascade Charter Township – Brian Hilbrands  
City of Cedar Springs – Bill LaRose  
City of East Grand Rapids – Doug LaFave, Brian Bigorowski  
Gaines Charter Township – Dan Wells  
Grand Rapids Charter Township – Robin Rothley  
City of Grandville – Charlie Sundblad, Jim Vanderwest, Tyler Hoezee  
City of Hudsonville – Dan Strikwerda, Sarah Steffens  
The Rapid – Nick Monoyios  
Kent County Road Commission – Rick Sprague, (*Vice Chairperson*)  
City of Kentwood – Jim Kirkwood  
City of Lowell – Ralph Brecken  
Plainfield Charter Township – Pete Elam  
City of Rockford – Dan Apkarian  
Village of Sparta – Jim Lower  
City of Walker – Jason Rottman, Rachell Nagorsen  
City of Wyoming – Paul Gerndt, Jeff Oonk

### **REGIS Technical Committee Members**

City of East Grand Rapids – Gary Veldhof  
Kent County Road Commission- Mike Goeree  
City of Kentwood – Matt Anderson  
City of Wyoming – Paul Gerndt  
City of Walker – Jason Rottman

**INVESTMENT POLICY 2023**

**Grand Valley Metropolitan Council**

**PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council to invest its funds in a manner which will provide the highest investment return with the maximum security while meeting the daily cash flow needs of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council and comply with all state statutes governing the investment of public funds.

**SCOPE:**

This investment policy applies to all financial assets of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. These assets are accounted for in the various funds of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council and include the General fund, Environmental program fund, Regis fund, and Regis capital fund, and any other fund that may be established by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The primary objectives, in priority order, of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's investment activities shall be:

Safety--Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to insure the preservation of capital in the overall investment vehicles.

Diversification--The investments will be diversified by security type and institution in order that potential losses on individual securities do not exceed the income generated from the remainder of the portfolio.

Liquidity--The investment portfolio shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated.

Return on Investment--The investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of obtaining a rate of return throughout the budgetary and economic cycles, considering the investment risk constraints and the cash flow characteristics of the investments.

**Delegation and Authority to Make Investments:**

Authority to manage the investments is derived from the Executive Committee of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council who wishes to keep the funds in convenient investment sources, which are basically transfers between banks, and other investment funds that generally may provide a higher rate of return than a typical bank account, money market account, or certificate of deposit. Transfers to other accounts must be approved by the Executive Director of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council and will only be done when there are excess funds, and the transfer of which will not jeopardize current cash flow needs.

The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council is limited to investments authorized by Public Act 20 of 1943, as amended, and may invest in the following:

Mercantile Bank: checking/operating account for the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council.  
Kent County Local Unit Investment Fund  
Michigan Class Local Government Investment Pool

**Safekeeping and Custody:**

All transactions entered into by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council shall be on a cash basis. The investments are held by the approved investment vehicles and will be evidenced by account statements and the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's accounting records.

**Prudence:**

Investments will be made with judgment and care, and since only invested in the approved vehicles, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the safety of capital as well as probable income to be derived.

**MOTION – To Approve the Proposed GVMC Investment Policy. MOVE \_\_\_\_\_  
SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ MOTION CARRIED.**

**Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: September 7, 2023**

Reference:

<https://www.michigan.gov/treasury/local/cefd/letters/1998/sample-investment-policy>

**Resolution to Amend the Fiscal 2022-2023**

**Environmental Programs Budget**

**September 7, 2023**

Whereas, The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council annually adopts a budget for all GVMC Programs, and

Whereas, this budget was developed in the summer of 2022, and

Whereas, the budget was adopted by the GVMC Board of Directors in September of 2022, and

Whereas, the Environmental Programs Budget relies heavily on grants and outside income to fund its programs, and

Whereas, grant income and expenses require a wide-variety of deadlines, completion schedules and reimbursement schedules throughout the year that do not always match our fiscal year.

Now therefore Be It Resolved, that the Environment Programs Budget 2022-2023 revenues be increased by \$132,668.00 from \$840,071.00 to a new amended budget of \$972,739.00.

Be It Also Resolved that the 2022-2033 Environmental Programs Budget expenses be increased by \$207,954.50 for a new total of \$971,767.00.

At a Regular Board of Directors Meeting held on September 7, 2023 a motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ supported by \_\_\_\_\_ to adopt this Budget Amendment Resolution for Fiscal Year 2022-23. The vote was \_\_\_\_\_yes to \_\_\_\_\_no. MOTION ADOPTED.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike DeVries  
Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Weiss  
Executive Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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HASTINGS • HUDSONVILLE • IONIA • JAMESTOWN TOWNSHIP • KENT COUNTY • KENTWOOD • LOWELL • LOWELL TOWNSHIP • MIDDLEVILLE • NELSON TOWNSHIP • OTTAWA COUNTY • PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP
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Budget Resolution for Fiscal 2023-2024

Whereas, the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC) was organized as a Council of Governments in 1990; and

Whereas, GVMC now has 39 members from West Michigan including cities, villages, townships, and counties: and

Whereas, the budgetary process at GVMC is highly transparent and began in April and has had involvement by approximately 75 members or representatives of GVMC members; and

Whereas, GVMC has added many new programs and initiatives in the past few years; and

Whereas, GVMC has completed reorganization of its operations and a fiscal transformation; and

Whereas, GVMC has reached fiscal sustainability through increased revenue and dramatically reduced expenses and through staff reductions, privatization, program expansion, and reorganization we are able to adopt this balanced budget, and

Whereas, GVMC budgets on a functional level not a line item basis; and

Whereas, The Transportation Policy Committee, REGIS Executive Committee, REGIS Board of Directors and GVMC Executive Committee have reviewed and recommend the budget,

Now Therefore be it Resolved, that the Board of Directors of GVMC hereby adopts the Budget for Fiscal 2023-2024.

Be It Further Resolved that our functional budgets are as follows:

Table with 3 columns: Category, Revenue, Expenses. Rows include General Fund, REGIS Fund, REGIS Capital, Environmental Programs, and Infrastructure Asset Mgmt.

At the Regular Board of Directors Meeting held on September 7, 2023 a motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ supported by \_\_\_\_\_ to adopt this Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The vote was \_\_\_\_\_ yes to \_\_\_\_\_ no. Motion Adopted.

Michael DeVries
Chair, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

Date

**TO: Grand Valley Metropolitan Council**

**FROM: John Weiss, Executive Director**

**DATE: July 14, 2023**

**RE: FY 2023-2024 Budget Message and Budget Resolution**

Below you will find the details of the FY 2023-2024 Budget for all programs at GVMC.

Most importantly, the Grand Valley Metro Council continues to be in a very strong financial, programmatic, and budgetary position. We continue to be involved in many issues, have developed additional collaboration initiatives, and expanded those that already exist. We are continuing to bring in grants, fees for services and non-dues related revenues and have the highest level of public awareness and regional and state-wide leadership since our founding in 1990. Because we have reached fiscal sustainability through increased revenue and dramatically reduced expenses through staff reductions, privatization, program expansion, and reorganization we are able to present this balanced budget.

Attached for your review and consideration is the GVMC budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The budget utilizes revenues from GVMC general fund dues, transportation allocations, and project-specific grants to fund the activities of the Council's Strategic Initiatives, Transportation, Environmental, Infrastructure Asset Management and REGIS through September 30, 2024. The GVMC Budget is adopted at the function level, not on a line-item basis.

The GVMC Executive Committee, and the REGIS Executive Committee and Board have reviewed this budget and recommend it to the GVMC Board of Directors. In addition, the GVMC Board has already adopted the Transportation/Unified Work Program at our June 2023 meeting. This approval comprises the majority of our General Fund Budget and was recommended by the Transportation and Executive Committees prior to our June approval.

This year we are once again using a very transparent approach to our budget with approximately 75 of our members actively involved in development process for the budget. We have also allowed for necessary review and consideration by the Board of Directors. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Chris Brown.

#### **Key Budget Highlights for 2023-2024**

- We continue to monitor the progress of the Michigan Infrastructure Council, Transportation Asset Management Council and Water Asset Management Council as we plan to coordinate our efforts with state initiatives. Revenues for this program were awarded through our leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure Pilot in 2018 and as the Michigan Infrastructure Council continues its work, this budget item will be used to assist local communities to develop or continue or expand their asset management Programs. These funds are available for GVMC and West Michigan Shoreline Development Commission Asset Management Programs.
- GVMC has completed its fiscal transformation, and this is a balanced budget that continues expansion of our programs and services to our members. We have achieved financial stabilization, budget control, and fiscal sustainability.

- As our programs continue to grow and we have sought and received substantial non-dues related revenues through program and service expansion and calculated program growth. Our growth is funded through grants and fees for service.
- In FY2024, the Transportation Department will complete the development of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in collaboration with our members, stakeholders, and the public; and continue to assess transportation infrastructure resiliency in our region as part of the effort to address new federal planning emphasis areas. While the financial analysis out to 2050 is still pending, it is expected that federal, state, and local revenue forecasts will meet or exceed the **\$10.8 Billion** estimated over the life of the 2045 MTP.
- Other special studies the department will be working on include the Kent County Area Mobility Study and the development of a Regional Safety Action Plan, which will open the door for all local jurisdictions in the region to apply for federal Safe Streets and Roads for All implementation grants.
- Transportation staff will also begin work on implementing strategies from the Transportation Demand Management Plan (complete by the end of FY2023) and provide technical assistance, as necessary, related to moving forward the preferred projects identified in the Airport Access Study (completed in Spring 2023).
- The Transportation Department will continue short- and long-range planning for all transportation modes with the goal of program expansion and refinement to continually improve and better serve our members and the region and collaborate with Environmental Programs and REGIS on cross-departmental projects including tools like the nonmotorized facilities finder as well as regional climate action planning efforts associated with the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant awarded to GVMC in FY2023.
- In 2015 during the REGIS reorganization a complete renovation of the REGIS system was completed. This renovation brought back confidence and stability in the system. A major goal was achieved to develop a hardware capital improvement plan and software master plan. In 2021 & 2022 the plans called for both hardware and software upgrades that were completed on time and under budget. These plans also call for regular hardware and software upgrades at regular intervals and this budget provides savings for planned future upgrades. We will continue to follow these plans.
- REGIS has been assisting many of its members with their Master Plan analysis and mapping. This is another value-added service REGIS provides that makes the entire process efficient and cost effective. REGIS has also assisted members with community surveys for input on their Master Plan process. REGIS has additionally assisted members with citizen engagement, one example is an online Adopt a Road application recently featured in the City of Kentwood's newsletter to residents. REGIS also built an Emergency Management Field Data collection application that can quickly collect data after major events. As these applications are launched, they can be shared across the membership to save time and resources for members.
- One of the important priorities of REGIS is to engage users of the system by asking what GIS tools and data are important to their everyday workflows. With COVID19 restrictions relaxed REGIS is now meeting face to face with users of the system via on-site meetings. Staff have also been conducting on-site training with REGIS users, which is very effective for communications between users and REGIS staff.
- REGIS members also have access to the REGIS Help Desk that is available Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm. Users can access the help desk to get assistance to

any questions related to the REGIS system. From 10/1/22 to 6/28/23 REGIS staff successfully answered over 130 help desk calls usually during the first call with no follow up needed. This is another benefit to the REGIS membership.

- Over the past 6 fiscal years REGIS has rebated to its members a total of **\$750,000**. These rebates occurred with no increase in dues and saved each of our members about 20% of their total dues.
- In 2017, the REGIS Board of Directors and GVMC Board of Directors implemented an equity- based cost structure based on fixed multipliers for population and parcel counts. This policy requires recalculations every 2 years for parcels and 10 years (with the census) for population. This budget reflects Kent & Ottawa County Equalization Report 2023 real parcel count data and 2020 Census Total Population, which is required by the policy. Census data will be updated with new data upon completion of the 2030 Census. This budget utilizes the most recent information available.
- GVMC continues to work with communities through the NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits. All permit applications and progress reports were submitted in 2023. Funding received from the 23 participating communities allows staff to implement robust public education programs, monitor water quality in storm sewer system discharges, and assist communities in adopting new stormwater ordinances.
- GVMC's Environmental Programs has continued to be awarded several grants from federal, state, and local sources. Recent awards and projects that will be conducted in FY 2024 include \$134,000 from US Forest Service, \$1,000,000 from US Environmental Protection Agency, \$18,000 from Michigan Department of Environmental Great Lakes, and Energy, \$295,000 from local foundations.
- The Environmental Program's Fee for Service opportunities are expected to generate over \$40,000 for environmental education programs, community service and science projects, and natural resource inventories within the watershed.

This budget reflects the continuing integration of all GVMC programs and operations with multiple collaborations, cost sharing and program efforts occurring between departments. This has resulted in program expansion and improved operational efficiencies.

**The Budget Calendar is as follows:** (Approximately 75 people have been involved in this process).

This year the process is changed slightly to allow for concurrent review of the budget by the REGIS and GVMC Executive Committees and Boards.

- May 17-Transportation Policy Committee Reviewed the Budget and recommended approval by the GVMC Board of Directors.
- June 1, -The Unified Work Program (Transportation Budget) was adopted by the GVMC Board
- July 20-REGIS Executive Committee recommends adoption of the 2022-2023 Budget.
- August 2-REGIS Board of Directors reviews the Budget and recommends approval.
- August 17-GVMC Executive Committee Reviews and recommends approval.
- August 17- After Review by the Executive Committees and Boards, the budget is distributed to Board Members and posted on GVMC website.
- September 7- GVMC Board Meeting with public hearing and adoption of the budget
- October 1- Beginning of the new fiscal year.

### **What is GVMC?**

The Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) is a regional organization dedicated to promoting cooperation and coordination among local governments in the West Michigan area. Created in 1990, its membership now includes 39 local governments, representing over 750,000 people. Our mission is to advance the current and future well-being of our metropolitan area by bringing together public and private sectors to cooperatively advocate, plan for, and coordinate the provision of services and investments which have environmental, economic, and social impact.

Included within GVMC are, Administration and Operations and the area Transportation Metropolitan Planning Organization with revenue of **\$3,280,241.00** and operating expenses of **\$3,033,501.50**. Our REGIS (Regional Geographic Information System) serves 19 governmental units with revenues of **\$797,534.00** and expenses of **\$790,367.80**. REGIS also includes a fixed savings account of approximately **\$152,000** known as REGIS Capital Equipment. For this account, we anticipate **\$1,400** in revenue from interest and no expenses as this is a savings year for future upgrades. Finally, GVMC Environmental Programs has proposed revenues of **\$1,232,971.00** and operating expenses of **\$1,154,106.25**.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT**

In 2018, GVMC took the lead role as grant recipient and West Michigan chair the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure Pilot. This pilot includes a 13 county West Michigan area with a population of over 1.5 million residents. The area covers an area of 8,163 square miles (about the size of New Jersey). There are over 130 miles of Lake Michigan Shoreline, and the region extends 75 miles to the heart of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Working in collaboration with southeastern Michigan and over 60 communities from our area, the Infrastructure Pilot was hugely successful. Data on 15,000 miles of drinking water lines, 13,500 miles of sewer pipes and 6,700 storm-water pipes was collected from 163 communities.

To keep this effort moving forward using past grant dollars, GVMC established an Infrastructure Asset Management Budget of **\$350,000** for further data collection and implementation of a regional and state-wide asset management program. The GVMC Executive Director is chair of the Michigan Infrastructure Council. We have maintained the Infrastructure Asset Management Budget for 2023-2024 and hope to be able to re-engage our efforts to help local government in asset management self-assessment in this year. In addition, many representatives of GVMC communities were able to attend an extensive Asset Management Champion Program sponsored by the Michigan Infrastructure Council at no cost to our member governments.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The Transportation Department is responsible for managing the long range, Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the **\$539 million** 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Annual Transportation Improvement Program for our region, among other planning activities. This budget anticipates projects that will leverage **\$15.4 million** in local match to obtain **\$116.4 million** in state and federal revenues in the FY2024 TIP. The Department is responsible for administering these programs using guidelines established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/ Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Transportation programs are generally funded on an 80/20 basis with the 20% local match being utilized to leverage 80% state and federal

dollars. The 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program Activities and Budget below was previously approved by the GVMC Board of Directors on June 1, 2023.

To meet the federal and state requirements of the programs and provide the highest levels of coordination, there are six major focus areas for the Transportation Department. Also, I have provided the degree at which GVMC leverages local funding to obtain state and federal grants.

**1. DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS** – GVMC will monitor and analyze area travel characteristics and factors affecting travel such as socio-economic and land use data, transportation system data, and environmental issues and concerns. Priorities include data collection and analysis, monitoring, and evaluation, including more focus on federal performance measures, maintenance, expansion of a nonmotorized count database and collection system, and continued advancement in GIS capabilities.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$62,134	\$342,337

**2. LONG RANGE PLANNING** – GVMC will identify transportation system planning tasks related to the development of a sustainable, safe, and accessible multimodal transportation system. Priorities include maintaining and utilizing the travel demand model for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), completing the 2050 MTP, maintaining and continuing implementation work related to recommendations from the 2045 and/or 2050 MTP, identifying long-range needs, nonmotorized and complete streets planning, air quality conformity, environmental justice and equity, environmental mitigation, resiliency, consultation, and more effectively linking land use decision-making, including housing considerations, and transportation planning throughout the region.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$71,510	\$424,430

**3. SHORT RANGE PLANNING** – GVMC will identify transportation system planning tasks related to short-range transportation systems planning. Priorities include maintenance/update of the FY2023-2026 TIP, providing technical assistance to MPO members, freight planning, safety planning, security planning, public participation and virtual public involvement, air quality conformity, transportation demand management activities, and managing the Clean Air Action Program.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$139,028	\$755,805

**4. TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS** – GVMC will monitor area travel characteristics and factors affecting congestion and pavement conditions. Priorities include collecting and analyzing transportation system data, coordinating with MDOT and local transportation providers, maintenance of the congestion management process, continuing

development of an asset management system, and implementation and monitoring of ITS solutions as a part of operation and management requirements.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$44,241	\$267,753

**5. PROGRAM COORDINATION** – GVMC will continue to carry out functions required to manage the transportation planning process on a continual basis, including program administration, development, review, and reporting. Priorities include the UPWP, public involvement, environmental justice, environmental mitigation, Title VI, ADA policy, timely submittal of documents, MPO scheduled meetings, and coordination with all MPO member units. This task will also provide a platform to encourage and support regional cooperation and consolidation of regional transportation services.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$54,000	\$243,523

**6. SPECIAL PLANNING STUDIES** – In response to member community feedback and new federal planning emphasis areas, GVMC will continue to lead efforts related to special regional planning studies. Priorities for FY2024 include continuing work on the regional Transportation Infrastructure and Resiliency study, the Kent County Area Mobility Study, and developing a federally compliant Safety Action Plan for the entire MPO region.

LOCAL	TOTAL
\$135,000	\$675,000

### **REGIS Regional Geographic Information System**

Since 1997, REGIS has been a single centralized GIS department for 19 local governments. REGIS operates on annual revenues of **\$797,534.00** and expenses of **\$790,367.80**. This budget anticipates the addition of one additional GIS Analyst in the second quarter 2024. In addition, REGIS has a Capital Fund used for the REGIS data center’s future capital improvements and major software upgrades. Currently this fund has **approximately \$150,000**. In FY 20-21 and FY 21-22 funds were allocated for both hardware and software upgrades. REGIS can anticipate another full data center upgrade in 6 to 7 years. In future fiscal years funds will be added to the Capital Fund to save for this next major upgrade.

Since its inception REGIS and its members have utilized GIS software provided by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). The software is undergoing a major platform change therefore REGIS must plan and transition to ESRI’s updated platform. There are resources allocated in this budget to begin the first steps of this transition, which includes GVMC staff training and an implementation plan. The last major ESRI platform change was in the early 2000s.

REGIS is one point of service to local governments, the private sector, the education community and our citizens. Once again, we are anticipating revenues for REGIS beyond the dues structure.

In the past member dues were close to 100% of REGIS revenues, that percentage lowers as the REGIS team works as integral part of GVMC and is serving as a resource for the State of Michigan in asset management and works closely with the other GVMC programs on joint projects.

In addition to the significant financial gains and collaborations achieved through the REGIS reorganization, operational changes resulted in the establishment of several very active committees. REGIS has a Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Advisory Committee, and Technical Committee. The Technical Committee is a group of higher skilled Information Technology (IT) leaders that meet to discuss issues, strategies and system and service enhancements. The Advisory Committee is directly involved in operational decisions and service priorities that will improve REGIS services at the user level. Working closely with REGIS staff, the REGIS Board and each other, the committees are helping to determine the future operational direction for REGIS. System leadership and direction is directly determined by the members. REGIS now serves in direct response to the members and works through the committee system to fulfill the needs of the membership.

REGIS/GVMC has also continued collaboration efforts in GIS on both a region and statewide effort. For example, assisting the Michigan Infrastructure Commission and speaking at their Asset Management (AM) Champions Webinar in April of 2023. Through this leadership REGIS has become recognized as one of the most complete GIS systems statewide.

Collaboration with Environmental Programs and Transportation has also been achieved. Working closely with both programs REGIS has assisted with enhancing the Adopt-A-Drain mapping application and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) mapping for Environmental Programs. Transportation and REGIS staff are also working to develop an online map that will show data collected with the GVMC Asset Management Vehicle "The Tahoe". Once launched this application will quickly display Pavement Surface Evaluation Ratings (PASER) along with forward and rear facing photos of the roadways assessed.

In July of 2016, the REGIS Board of Directors approved an equity-based dues structure with fixed multipliers for all members based on population and parcel count. This budget continues the equity-based system. In the past six fiscal years REGIS has rebated **\$750,000** to its 19 member communities.

## **Environmental Programs Department**

Our goal in creating an Environmental Programs Department was to elevate GVMC's presence in our member communities and be recognized as environmental leaders in our region. Our members are very much at the forefront of water issues and our work revolves around assisting water managers in complying with permit regulations and implementing projects that improve and protect natural resources. We have worked and planned for tremendous but focused and managed growth in our programs, influence, and public awareness. GVMC is now one of the strongest and most influential environmental programs in Michigan. Budgets and revenues are cyclical, and grant driven. As such, we anticipate fluctuations in the program and grant opportunities as priorities change.

The Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW) is an agency of GVMC, which is managed through our Environmental Programs Department. LGROW is dedicated to the preservation, improvement, and monitoring of the Lower Grand River. LGROW is an excellent example of cooperation and collaboration in our area, as a broad stakeholder organization



dedicated to the ongoing health, use, and enjoyment of the Grand River. The Lower Grand River Watershed covers 1.8 million acres of property (2,909 square miles) and all or portions of 10 counties in West Michigan.

The 23 urbanized municipalities in the Lower Grand River Watershed and Grand Valley State University (four campuses) are required to have NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits. These municipalities are working together through LGROW to comply with stormwater discharge permits required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. Contracts are in place for GVMC to manage the program on behalf of our members into the future. New permit applications were submitted in 2023, which increases our workload in assisting our members to maintain compliance with the NPDES regulations. Funding for the Environmental Programs comes as earned revenue from fees for the MS4 program, LGROW donations and membership fees, environmental services, and grants. The total budget for our Environmental Program is **\$1,232,971.00** with expenses **\$1,154,106.25**.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES and VISION**

In the past, the Board of Directors adopted nine Strategic Initiatives in which to focus our efforts in collaboration and cooperation. Those initiatives are:

1. Managing Emerging Issues
2. Encouraging Collaborative Service Sharing
3. Coordinating a Region-Wide Training Exchange
4. Nurturing a Regional Economic Development Partnership
5. Planning for Sustainable Communities
6. Regional Leader in Collaboration Efforts-Facilitator
7. Communicate/Educate Regarding GVMC and Regions
8. Focus on Core Competencies (Transportation, Environment, GIS, Regional Prosperity Initiative, Council of Governments)
9. Increase Lansing/Washington Connection

By focusing our efforts on these nine strategic initiatives, we have made dramatic improvements to our communications, involvement, transparency, member participation and influence in each of these critical areas.

### **GENERAL FUND BUDGET AT A GLANCE**

**Net Revenue \$3,280,241.00 to expenses of \$3,033,501.50.** As in the past, this budget is conservative in nature and no contingent funding is included. Through conservative budgeting and operational controls GVMC has significantly improved our financial stability over the past nine years by leveraging our financial resources and controlling costs. This effort has resulted in improved stabilization of our financial resources.

During Fiscal Year 2023-2024 we will continue to privatize finance resulting in a dramatic decrease in cost for financial administration. We will continue to share the services of our finance director with the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council which is the MPO for the Holland/Zeeland area. This partnership has resulted in a significant reduction in costs for GVMC and even more for MDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

## **BUDGET ALIGNS WITH GVMC'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

This budget includes sufficient resources to support GVMC's strategic goals, objectives and initiatives for the entire fiscal year and all Transportation, Environmental, REGIS and GVMC program needs. Our goal in this budget is to continue to advance the resources, staff skills of GVMC and to align our resources with the needs of our members while bringing increased value. This effort will involve continued evaluation and evolution of GVMC and the Executive Director and Executive Committee are constantly monitoring our programs.

The budget also supports our on-going collaborative initiatives with the other agencies, the Governor's Office and agencies of state government, Members of Congress, federal agencies, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, The Right Place, private business and others. We are also working closely with many of our member governments on a wide variety of issues involving legislation, taxation and discussions on enhanced cooperation and collaboration. Our past leadership of the Regional Prosperity Initiative has also increased our exposure on a regional and state-wide level and has brought increased opportunities for GVMC to participate on broader regional and state-wide issues.

In addition, through the chairmanship of the Michigan Infrastructure Council, the Executive Director has direct contact with infrastructure leaders throughout Michigan in both the public sector and private utilities and senior leaders in state government.

## **MONITORING COSTS AND CUTTING EXPENDITURES**

As in the past, we have been very diligent in working with our staff and insurance consultants to hold down employee health care costs. Historically, GVMC's health insurance costs have been held to a minimum because each year, as we prepare the next fiscal year budget, we take steps to modify GVMC's employee health insurance plan to control costs.

To ensure that we maintain financial health long into the future, we continually work at a staff-wide level to limit expenditures and reduce costs, while we aggressively pursue new sources of grants revenues or fees for services for projects that benefit GVMC.

## **Additional Sources of Revenue**

In the recent past we have been very successful at increasing revenues through grants and fee for service projects. We will continue to pursue all avenues for funding for both foundation grants and special projects. We meet with regularly with representatives of local, state and regional foundations, representatives of the Governor's office and our state legislators, institutions of higher education, and other groups to seek funding for on-going regional activities that support our strategic goals and initiatives. We are continually searching out, identifying, and pursuing grants, gifts, work contracts and other sources of funding that benefit both GVMC and our strategic partners.

I hope this information is helpful and informative as you review the GVMC Budget for the 2023-2024. If you need assistance, you can reach me anytime at 776-7604, or via email at [john.weiss@gvmc.org](mailto:john.weiss@gvmc.org).

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**Infrastructure Asset Management**

	<b>Infrastructure Pilot</b>		
	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
INCOME			
Grant Income	350,000.00	350,000.00	-
Total General Fund Income	<u>350,000.00</u>	<u>350,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
Expenses			
Program Expenses	350,000.00	350,000.00	-
Total Program Expenses	<u>350,000.00</u>	<u>350,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
Revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**GENERAL FUND**

**GENERAL FUND ONLY**

	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>Difference</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>			
Consolidated Planning Grant	1,612,933.00	1,391,583.00	221,350.00
MTF Asset Management Income	24,000.00	24,000.00	-
CMAQ Clean Air Action	80,000.00	131,654.00	(51,654.00)
HIP Covid Relief	-	110,000.00	(110,000.00)
STP Special Projects--Airport Access Study	-	50,000.00	(50,000.00)
STP Special Projects--Transportation Infrastructure Study	-	150,000.00	(150,000.00)
SS4A Grant - Safety Action Plan	240,000.00	-	240,000.00
STP Special Planning Studies	250,000.00	-	250,000.00
NTSD Grant - Kent County Area Mobility Study	402,500.00	-	402,500.00
Member Dues GVMC	299,514.00	299,514.00	-
Member Dues Transportation	265,294.00	265,294.00	-
Miscellaneous	5,000.00	5,000.00	-
Interest Income	75,000.00	14,000.00	61,000.00
Fee for Services	25,000.00	25,000.00	-
GVMC Meetings and Conferences	1,000.00	1,000.00	-
	-	-	-
<b>Total General Fund Income</b>	<b>3,280,241.00</b>	<b>2,467,045.00</b>	<b>813,196.00</b>
	3,280,241.00	2,467,045.00	813,196.00
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Program Expenses</b>			
Wages	600,000.00	498,000.00	102,000.00
Payroll Taxes	48,400.00	40,597.00	7,803.00
Employer Retirement	54,000.00	44,820.00	9,180.00
Health Insurance	135,000.00	108,000.00	27,000.00
Dental/Vision/Life/Disability	16,000.00	12,500.00	3,500.00
Combined Planning Expenses (includes contracts)	678,000.00	325,839.00	352,161.00
Clear Air Action	31,225.00	25,000.00	6,225.00
SS4A - Safety Action Plan	280,000.00	-	280,000.00
STP Special Planning Studies	13,844.00	-	13,844.00
MPO GIS Expense	24,900.00	-	24,900.00
NTSD - Kent Co. Area Mobility Study	350,000.00	-	350,000.00
STP Pavement Management System	-	12,500.00	(12,500.00)
Asset Management	480.00	1,000.00	(520.00)
Covid Relief	-	100,000.00	(100,000.00)
STP Special Projects--Airport Access Study	-	50,000.00	(50,000.00)
Computer and Software Expense	7,500.00	-	7,500.00
Regis Services for Transportation Dept.	1,000.00	1,000.00	-
Environmental Dept. Reimbursement for Clean Air	10,000.00	10,000.00	-
Environmental Dept. Reimbursement for Land Use	-	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>2,250,349.00</b>	<b>1,231,256.00</b>	<b>1,019,093.00</b>
<b>Administrative and Indirect</b>			
Wages	335,000.00	295,000.00	40,000.00
Payroll Taxes	28,127.50	25,067.50	3,060.00
Employer Retirement	30,150.00	26,550.00	3,600.00
Health Insurance	64,000.00	39,500.00	24,500.00
Dental/Vision/Life/Disability	7,375.00	4,700.00	2,675.00
Office Supplies	12,000.00	12,000.00	-
Postage, Mailing	6,000.00	6,000.00	-
Advertisements/Legal Notices	4,000.00	4,000.00	-

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL  
2023-2024 Budget**

**GENERAL FUND**

	<b>GENERAL FUND ONLY</b>		
	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Meeting Expenses	15,000.00	15,000.00	-
Insurance	12,000.00	12,000.00	-
Dues and Subscriptions	7,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
Professional Development	10,000.00	10,000.00	-
Mileage Reimbursement	7,500.00	7,500.00	-
Printing	2,500.00	2,500.00	-
Utilities	3,500.00	3,500.00	-
Telephone, Telecommunications	14,500.00	14,000.00	500.00
Repairs & Maintenance	2,000.00	3,000.00	(1,000.00)
Equipment Rental/Lease	5,000.00	5,000.00	-
Rent	89,000.00	87,000.00	2,000.00
Accounting Fees	35,000.00	35,000.00	-
Legal Fees	12,000.00	12,000.00	-
Other Professional Services	40,000.00	40,000.00	-
Contractual Services	5,000.00	5,000.00	-
Bank and Credit card fees	1,500.00	1,000.00	500.00
Miscellaneous	10,000.00	10,000.00	-
Office Equip & Furniture	10,000.00	10,000.00	-
Capital Purchases	15,000.00	15,000.00	-
Total Administrative and Indirect	<u>783,152.50</u>	<u>706,317.50</u>	<u>76,835.00</u>
Total General Fund Expenses	<u>3,033,501.50</u>	<u>1,937,573.50</u>	<u>1,095,928.00</u>
Revenues over (under) expenditures	<u><b>246,739.50</b></u>	<u><b>529,471.50</b></u>	<u><b>(282,732.00)</b></u>

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS**

	<b>Environmental Programs 2023-2024 Budget</b>	<b>AS AMENDED 2022-2023 Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>EP Income</b>			
LGROW Network Dues	13,000.00	12,000.00	1,000.00
MS 4 Income	368,871.00	368,871.00	-
Grand Rapids White Water	-	4,000.00	(4,000.00)
Wege-RCPP Outreach/Education	-	32,000.00	(32,000.00)
NRCS RCPP Reimbursement	-	133,000.00	(133,000.00)
GVSU Green	-	514.00	(514.00)
NWF Sacred Grounds	-	3,400.00	(3,400.00)
EGL 319 RCPP in IN/RR (KCD)	-	519.00	(519.00)
NWF Healing Over Habitats	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
MSU MICorps	5,000.00	9,200.00	(4,200.00)
NOAA BWET	-	23,500.00	(23,500.00)
EPA EE CMU H20	-	135.00	(135.00)
Wege Resiliancy Plan	-	10,000.00	(10,000.00)
Egle 319 Private/Public LID	157,500.00	75,000.00	82,500.00
Wege WMI Coastal Corridor	104,000.00	95,000.00	9,000.00
Regional Prosperity Grant	-	3,000.00	(3,000.00)
USFS Urban Waters Ambassador	60,000.00	60,000.00	-
SWFI Erb Foundation	24,500.00	-	24,500.00
Forest to MI Faucets	23,600.00	-	23,600.00
Wege Operational - Water Trail	30,000.00	-	30,000.00
Wege Operational - Marketing	20,000.00	-	20,000.00
Wege Operational - Community Science & Service	7,500.00	-	7,500.00
Wege Operational - Administration	32,500.00	-	32,500.00
EPA Climate Pollution Reduction	300,000.00	-	300,000.00
American Rivers	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
Other grants (potentially)	40,000.00	107,000.00	(67,000.00)
Fee for Service Projects	7,500.00	7,500.00	-
EP Revenue from GVMC Transport-Clean air	10,000.00	10,000.00	-
EP Revenue from GVMC Transport-Land Use	-	-	-
Other Income	5,000.00	15,000.00	(10,000.00)
Interest Income	4,000.00	3,100.00	900.00
<b>Total - EP Income</b>	<b>1,232,971.00</b>	<b>972,739.00</b>	<b>260,232.00</b>
<b>EP Expenses</b>			
EP Wages	440,000.00	383,000.00	57,000.00
EP Wages Admin	22,500.00	25,000.00	(2,500.00)
EP Payroll Taxes	36,160.00	31,799.50	4,360.50
EP Payroll Taxes Admin	1,721.25	1,912.50	(191.25)
EP Health	91,000.00	82,500.00	8,500.00
EP Health--Admin	4,100.00	4,850.00	(750.00)
EP Dental/Vision/Life/Disability	10,500.00	8,500.00	2,000.00
EP Dental/Vision/Life/Disability ADMIN	500.00	590.00	(90.00)
EP Employer Retirement	39,600.00	34,470.00	5,130.00
EP Employer Retirement-Admin	2,025.00	2,250.00	(225.00)
EP Contractual Services/Grant Expenses	-	-	-
MS 4 Expenses	50,000.00	75,000.00	(25,000.00)
Grand Rapids White Water Grant	-	30.00	(30.00)
Wege-RCPP Outreach/Education	-	9,000.00	(9,000.00)
GVSU Green	-	15.00	(15.00)
NWF Healing over Habitats	1,000.00	-	1,000.00
Wege Sacred Grounds (NWF)	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
Egle 319 RCPP in IMC/RR/KCD	-	100.00	(100.00)
NRCS RCPP Reimbursement	-	56,000.00	(56,000.00)
Egle 319 LGREEN (GVSU) expenses	-	50.00	(50.00)
MSU MI Corps	150.00	1,600.00	(1,450.00)
NOAA BWET Expense	-	10,250.00	(10,250.00)
Wege Resiliancy Plan	-	2,000.00	(2,000.00)

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS**

	<b>Environmental Programs 2023-2024 Budget</b>	<b>AS AMENDED 2022-2023 Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Egle 319 Private/Public LID expense	70,000.00	16,000.00	54,000.00
USFS Urban Waters Ambassador	200.00	250.00	(50.00)
Regional Prosperity Initiative	-	150.00	(150.00)
Wege Coastal Corridor Expense	60,000.00	77,000.00	(17,000.00)
SWFI Erb Foundation	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
Forest to MI Faucets	8,000.00	-	8,000.00
Wege Operational - Water Trail	2,000.00	-	2,000.00
Wege Operational - Marketing	2,000.00	-	2,000.00
Wege Operational - Community Science & Service	2,000.00	-	2,000.00
Wege Operational - Administration	2,000.00	-	2,000.00
EPA Climate Pollution Reduction	220,000.00	-	220,000.00
American Rivers	250.00	-	250.00
Other Grant Direct Expenses	2,500.00	60,000.00	(57,500.00)
EP Meeting Expenses	500.00	1,500.00	(1,000.00)
EP Office Supplies	2,500.00	2,500.00	-
EP Printing	50.00	50.00	-
EP Promotiional/Advertising	100.00	100.00	-
EP Mileage Reimbursement	1,200.00	2,000.00	(800.00)
EP Telecommunications	3,250.00	4,250.00	(1,000.00)
EP Supplies	100.00	100.00	-
EP Insurance	4,100.00	4,400.00	(300.00)
EP Professional Development/Conferences	1,000.00	9,500.00	(8,500.00)
EP Dues and Subscriptions	4,000.00	4,000.00	-
EP Bank Fees	400.00	550.00	(150.00)
EP Professional Fees	7,000.00	9,000.00	(2,000.00)
EP Accounting Fees	10,000.00	11,300.00	(1,300.00)
EP Postage	250.00	250.00	-
EP Utilities	1,100.00	1,100.00	-
EP Repairs	250.00	250.00	-
EP Eqpt Rental and Lease	1,600.00	1,600.00	-
EP Rent	33,000.00	31,000.00	2,000.00
EP Capital Expenses	5,000.00	4,500.00	500.00
EP Miscellaneous	500.00	500.00	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
LGROW Expenses	1,154,106.25	971,767.00	182,339.25
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Revenues over (under) expenditures	78,864.75	972.00	77,892.75
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**REGIS**

	<b>REGIS 2023-2024 Budget</b>	<b>2022-2023 Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Regis Member Dues	731,797.00	726,916.00	4,881.00
Regis GVMC GIS Transportation Services	24,900.00	24,900.00	-
Regis Data Sales	100.00	100.00	-
Regis Data Sharing (Kent County)	16,237.00	16,237.00	-
Regis Pay As You Go Services	500.00	500.00	-
Regis Services to GVMC Transportation	500.00	500.00	-
Regis Services To GVMC Environmental	500.00	500.00	-
Regis Interest Income	<u>23,000.00</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>	<u>18,500.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>797,534.00</b>	<b>774,153.00</b>	<b>23,381.00</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
Regis Wages	350,000.00	299,000.00	51,000.00
Regis Administration Wages	32,000.00	29,000.00	3,000.00
Regis Payroll Taxes	29,039.80	25,138.30	3,901.50
Regis Admin Payroll Taxes	2,448.00	2,218.50	229.50
Regis Health Insurance	84,000.00	74,500.00	9,500.00
Regis Administration Health Ins	5,000.00	5,000.00	-
Regis Life, Dental, Disability	9,900.00	9,800.00	100.00
Regis Admin Life, Dental, Disab	650.00	750.00	(100.00)
Regis Employer Retirement	31,500.00	26,910.00	4,590.00
Admin Employer Retirement	2,880.00	2,610.00	270.00
Regis Office Supplies	3,900.00	3,900.00	-
Regis Postage	300.00	300.00	-
Regis Audit and Accounting	11,000.00	9,000.00	2,000.00
Regis Legal Fees	1,500.00	1,500.00	-
Regis Bank Fees	500.00	325.00	175.00
Regis Professional/Contractual Services	7,500.00	7,500.00	-
Regis Software Licenses/Maintenance	50,000.00	70,000.00	(20,000.00)
Regis Info Tech Network Service	100,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
Regis Advertisements and Notices	500.00	500.00	-
Regis Meeting Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	-
Regis Insurance	4,200.00	3,750.00	450.00
Regis Dues and Subscriptions	2,500.00	2,500.00	-
Regis Professional Development	4,000.00	6,000.00	(2,000.00)
Regis Mileage Reimbursement	500.00	700.00	(200.00)
Regis Printing	200.00	200.00	-
Regis Utilities (includes Wyoming Data Center)	2,100.00	2,100.00	-
Regis Telecommunications	6,000.00	5,125.00	875.00
Regis Rent	33,000.00	30,000.00	3,000.00
Regis Eqpt Rental	1,250.00	1,250.00	-
Regis Repair & Maintenance	1,500.00	1,500.00	-
Regis Miscellaneous	1,500.00	1,500.00	-
Regis Member Rebate (decided after audit)	-	-	-
Regis Capital expenses/eqpt replacement transfer to c	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>92,000.00</u>	<u>(82,000.00)</u>
<b>TOTAL Regis Expense</b>	<b><u>790,367.80</u></b>	<b><u>765,576.80</u></b>	<b><u>24,791.00</u></b>
<b>Revenues over (under) expenditures</b>	<b><u>7,166.20</u></b>	<b><u>8,576.20</u></b>	<b><u>(1,410.00)</u></b>



**GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL**  
**2023-2024 Budget**  
**REGIS CAPITAL**

	<b>REGIS CAPITAL</b>		
	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Income			
Regis Capital Income			
Interest Income	1,400.00	250.00	1,150.00
Regis Operations Transfer	-	-	-
TOTAL Regis Capital Income	<u>1,400.00</u>	<u>250.00</u>	<u>1,150.00</u>
Expense			
Regis Capital Expenses			
Regis Professional Fees	-	-	-
Regis Capital Miscellaneous	-	-	-
Regis Capital Purchases	-	-	-
TOTAL Regis Capital Expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Revenues over (under) expenditures	<u><u>1,400.00</u></u>	<u><u>250.00</u></u>	<u><u>1,150.00</u></u>

## GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

ADA TOWNSHIP • ALGOMA TOWNSHIP • ALLENDALE TOWNSHIP • ALPINE TOWNSHIP • BELDING • BYRON TOWNSHIP • CALEDONIA • CALEDONIA TOWNSHIP • CANNON TOWNSHIP • CASCADE TOWNSHIP  
CEDAR SPRINGS • COOPERSVILLE • COURTLAND TOWNSHIP • EAST GRAND RAPIDS • GAINES TOWNSHIP • GEORGETOWN TOWNSHIP • GRAND RAPIDS • GRAND RAPIDS TOWNSHIP • GRANDVILLE  
GREENVILLE • HASTINGS • HUDSONVILLE • IONIA • JAMESTOWN TOWNSHIP • KENT COUNTY • KENTWOOD • LOWELL • LOWELL TOWNSHIP • MIDDLEVILLE • NELSON TOWNSHIP  
OTTAWA COUNTY • PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP • ROCKFORD • SAND LAKE • SPARTA • TALLMADGE TOWNSHIP • WALKER • WAYLAND • WYOMING

**MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE:** August 22, 2023

**TO:** GVMC Board of Directors

**FROM:** Laurel Joseph, Director of Transportation Planning

**RE:** **Proposed 2020 Adjusted Census Urban Area (ACUB) Modification**

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Following the decennial census, federal law allows MDOT and the MPOs the option to modify Urban Area Boundaries as they relate to changes in population growth since the last census. GVMC received notification to participate and suggest any changes to modify this Adjusted Census Urban Boundary (ACUB), adhering to the federal guidelines. The areas we are responsible for include the small urban areas of Allendale, Lowell, and Sparta, and the Grand Rapids urban area.

This boundary serves as the dividing line for urban and rural roads, defining their associated funding sources for projects on the federal aid road network.

MDOT's team provided maps for us to review and coordinate with our members for the modification. Invitations were sent to our MPO members, The Rapid and our Tribal affiliates to collaborate with us and MDOT for the modification. MDOT presented the review criteria and hosted a workshop on June 28th to allow us to smooth and adjust our Urban Area boundary as needed. In attendance were MDOT, the road commissions, and Township agencies.

Following this meeting, MDOT compiled the changes for final review in hardcopy map and GIS formats. The map attached reflects our efforts and the adjustments that were submitted to MDOT for review. The online application depicting the new proposed ACUB boundary can be found at the following link. Be sure to turn on the "Proposed 2020 ACUB Layer" to see this new boundary.

<https://mdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3eafa64de17049989b6968f0faa8e191&extent=-9658992.3629%2C5220622.7552%2C-9402163.9478%2C5358056.532%2C102100>

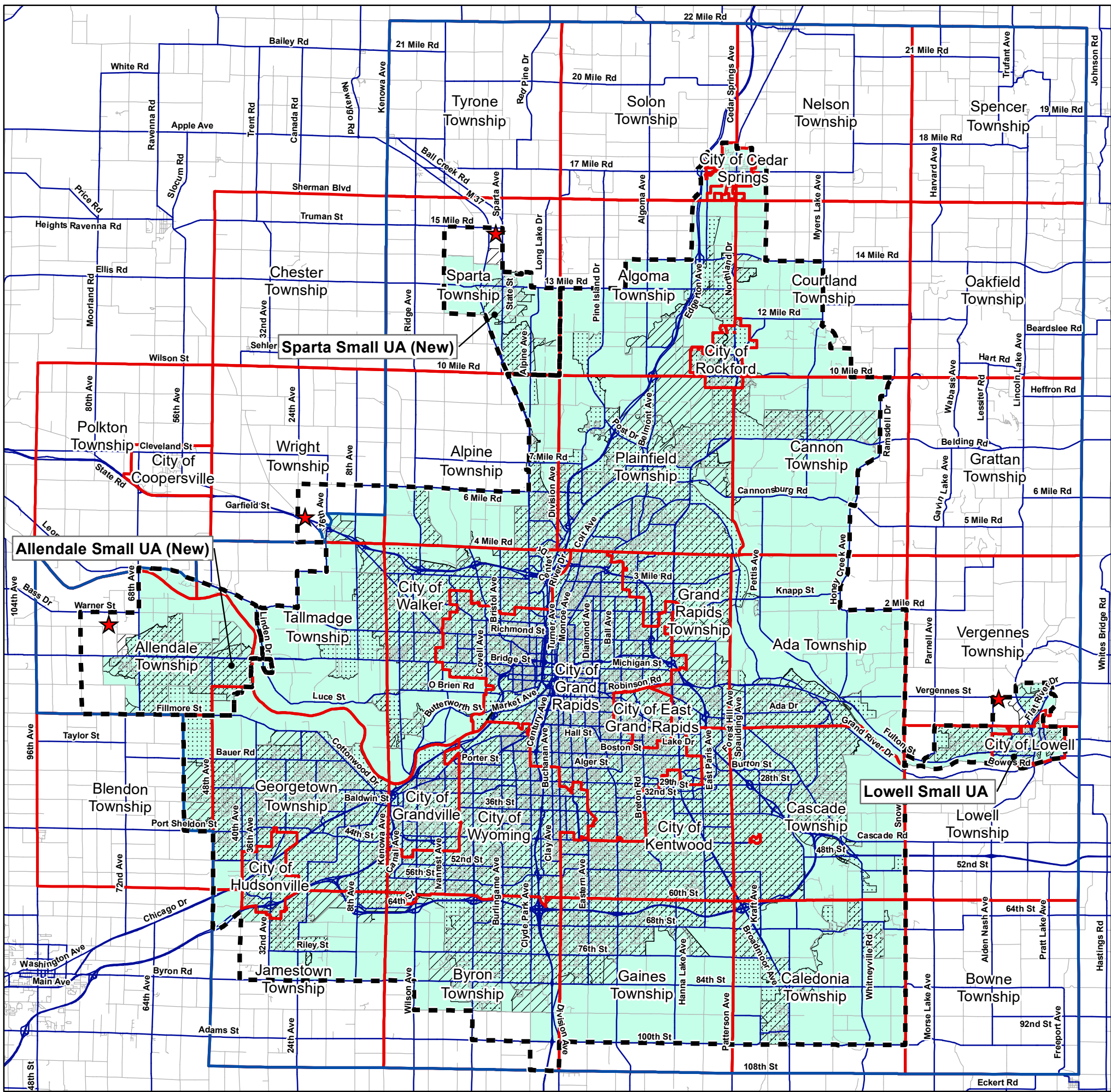
Because of time sensitivity and where our meetings dates fall, we'll need action from the Board at the September meeting. It will be presented to the Technical and Policy Committees as an informational item at their September meetings as well. On August 17, the Executive Committee voted to recommend approval of the ACUB.

The final step of this process for the MPO is to submit a signed resolution letter (attached) to MDOT from the Metro Council with signatures obtained from the Chair/Vice Chair, ITP, and Tribal Councils (if available). MDOT will then be submitting the collective modification efforts statewide to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in January 2024.

Until the proposed 2020 ACUB boundaries are approved by the FHWA and entered within the MDOT databases in 2025, the 2010 ACUB's will continue to be in effect.

If you have any questions, please contact Laurel Joseph at [laurel.joseph@gvmc.org](mailto:laurel.joseph@gvmc.org).

# 2020 Census Urban Area (UA) Boundaries Vs. 2010 Census Layers



**Legend**

- 2020 Adjusted Urban Area
- 2010 Adjusted Urban Area
- Noted Need for Changes
- 2020 Census Urban Area
- MPO Area Boundary
- 2010 Census Urban Area
- Government Boundary

0 1.5 3 6 Miles

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2020 CENSUS

**STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT  
FOR  
ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARY  
ESTABLISHMENT AND REVISION**

Section 101(a) amended of Title 23, United States Codes, states that the boundary locations for urban and urbanized areas shall be fixed by responsible state and local officials in cooperation with each other.

The undersigned hereby certify that these provisions have been complied with in establishing the adjusted census urban boundary locations for the Grand Rapids Urban Area and the Lowell, Allendale, and Sparta Small Urban Areas Urban/Urbanized Area.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike DeVries, Acting Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council Board of Directors  
Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency

**Date: September 7, 2023**  
**To: GVMC Board**  
**From: John Weiss**  
**Re: 2024 GVMC Board Meetings**

Below is a list of the anticipated 2024 GVMC Board Meetings which is in compliance with the change in by-laws made February 2020.

The meetings will be held in accordance to State, Local and National public meeting mandates.

March 7, 2024

- Annual Report Presentation and Acceptance of the Audit

June 6, 2024

- Approval of FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Approval of 2050 MTP

September 5, 2024

- Approval of 2024-2025 Budget
- Election of Executive Committee and Officers

November 2024 - TBD

- Possible Fall Dinner

December 2024 - Date TBD

- Optional Holiday Reception

In addition to the Board of Directors listed above. Each of our departments are comprised of multiple committees and sub-committees. They will continue to meet on a regular basis:

Transportation

Transportation Technical Committee	Transportation Policy Committee
Transportation Programming Study Group	GVMC Freight Committee
Non-motorized Committee	GVMC Traffic Count Committee
West Michigan Clean Air Coalition	WM Traffic Safety Committee
Other meetings as required or requested by members, MDOT or other transportation agencies	

Environmental Department

LGROW Board of Directors	LGROW Executive Committee
Public Engagement Committee	Technical Committee
Sustainability Committee	Subwatershed Committee
Stormwater Ordinance Committee	Fund Development and Membership
Other meetings as required or requested by members, environmental groups and governmental agencies	

REGIS

REGIS Board of Directors	REGIS Executive Committee
REGIS Members Advisory Committee	REGIS Technical Committee REGIS
Specialty Users Groups for Assessors, Clerks, Planners, Assessors, DPW/Engineers	
Multiple visits as requested by members, REGIS Training, WM GIS Users Group	

July 21, 2023

Dear John,

I am writing this letter to make you aware that I intend to retire from GVMC effective October 31, 2023.

I am so grateful for the time spent under your leadership at GVMC and the many accomplishments we have made over the years. You challenged me to make the Department of Environmental Programs bigger than REGIS, and I met that challenge. I am proud of how our team has made GVMC and LGROW the force that it is today.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of GVMC for the past 10 years. I have enjoyed working with you and seeing the collaboration that has evolved into GVMC's culture – no more silos! You believed in me and encouraged my growth, and I am thankful for that.

As we discussed, if you need any assistance with finding and training my replacement, I am willing to participate in that effort.

In order to prepare for my retirement, I will work with Gayle to begin any necessary paperwork that is required. Additionally, I will have some hours of vacation time that I assume will be paid out once I retire. I will confirm those hours with Chris as the date approaches.

Thanks for everything.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy O." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wendy Ogilvie

Director of Environmental Programs

Grand Valley Metro Council



**Wendy Ogilvie & Robert Cloy** Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

## Wendy Ogilvie & Robert Cloy

### *Grand Rapids, Michigan*

**Wendy Ogilvie** (she/her) joined the Grand Valley Metro Council in 2013 as the Director of Environmental Programs, bringing her expertise of over 25 years in watershed and stormwater management. Her work focuses on implementing practices to improve and maintain the health of our watersheds, connecting everyone to their local waterways, and convening and developing partnerships to build capacity in addressing environmental issues. Originally from Maryland, Wendy came to Michigan to earn a B.S. degree in Forestry from The University of Michigan. While employed as an environmental consultant, she attended Michigan State University and received an M.S. degree in Resource Development.

**Robert Cloy** (he/him) joined the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council in Fall of 2022 as the Urban Waters Ambassador for the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. He previously spent time working as a Community Forester for a local nonprofit in Grand Rapids. Robert graduated from Grand Valley State University with a B.S in Natural Resource Management. His work at GVMC consists of reconnecting overburdened urban communities with their waterways, as well as promoting economic, environmental, and social benefits of healthy waterways.



**Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW)**, an agency of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council, works to understand, protect, and improve the natural resources of the Lower Grand River Watershed for all to enjoy. Their vision is to connect water with life.

**Hannah Mico: Just to get us started, Wendy and Robert, we'd love to hear a short introduction and what your roles are at the [Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds \(LGROW\)](#). Wendy, would you like to kick us off?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** Sure! I am Wendy Ogilvie. I am the Director of Environmental Programs at the [Grand Valley Metropolitan Council](#). The environmental programs also house the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds, so I'm the director of that as well and it functions as an agency of the GVMC. I've been here for about 10 years. Seeing our program and staff grow is exciting given the projects we have going on right now.

**Robert Cloy:** And I'm Robert Cloy. I am the Urban Waters Federal Ambassador here at LGROW and was hired about 8 months ago. The Urban Waters Federal Ambassador position was brought on to be responsible for finalizing, coordinating, and updating the Grand Rapids Grand River workplan, as well as to work with GVMC and other local leaders to connect the community back to the Grand River.

**Hannah Mico: Thank you, both. I'd love to hear more about how GVMC got involved with the Urban Waters Federal Partnership.**

**Wendy Ogilvie.** In 2013, I was on the project team for the [Grand River Revitalization Project](#), led by Grand Rapids Whitewater, and some members of the community were connected with some of the Federal agencies and had heard about this [Urban Waters Federal Partnership](#) opportunity. We thought it was a really good fit, and [our application] was accepted. Many representatives from those Federal agencies came to Grand Rapids to announce the acceptance of our location into the [Urban Waters Federal Partnership](#) program. But [the Grand River

Revitalization Project] is very different from most Urban Waters because it's not a Federal project. This was just a grassroots effort by a couple of people and then a nonprofit. I had been trying to find the right Federal partner to maybe fund a position here. Finally, through EPA Region 5, we were able to work out an arrangement and get funding from EPA, that then had to go through the Forest Service, to hire Robert. It was 10 years in the making.

**Robert Cloy:** I would like to see the [Urban Waters] Ambassador role serve as kind of a facilitator, a focal point for some of these partners, and better coordinate amongst everyone involved in the Grand River Revitalization Project.

**Hannah Mico: What is the Grand River Revitalization Project in a nutshell and how do you all continue to stay involved over this 10 year process?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** The Project started out as a dream of these 2 guys asking, "Hey, where are the rapids in the city of Grand Rapids?" There's a history of scouring out the rapids to build foundations for city buildings and flood walls. The question was how we restore the rapids and make it a river that people can recreate in. As the project went on, it became much more of a holistic restoration project. How can we improve all facets of the river, not just for recreation but for the environment – the animals and the fish – and the important processes happening in this river corridor. [The plan] has gone through many revisions and iterations over the years.

**Hannah Mico: You've named a couple of things that are unique about the project. One of the big ones seemed to be that this *wasn't* a project initiated by a Federal partnership. Are there other big ways that this restoration project is unique to Grand Rapids?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** So many things! The river runs downtown and is very impacted by bridges. There are over 100 bridge piers in the Grand River. There are flood walls too, so it's never going to be a true restoration. We can never bring the Grand River back to what it was. So, we've been trying to call it the Grand

River *Revitalization* Project, as opposed to *Restoration*. That's how the scientists and agencies want to refer to this project.

**Hannah Mico: What has impacted the timeline of the Project and getting things off the ground and moving forward?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** At first we thought we'd just take out the dams, add some rocks, and we should be good. But every time we brought something up, a new challenge arose. One of the first challenges was the question of all this contaminated sediment that the dams were holding back. We tested the sediment and, turns out, it's such a shallow system that it seems to get flushed out all the time. That was one of the big urban myths we had to debunk. But we did discover the Federally endangered snuffbox mussels, which brought us into another regulatory realm. We also found the invasive lamprey. It became a question of figuring out how to find passage for all these native fish without letting the lamprey pass and contaminate the rest of the watershed. In Grand Rapids, we're working with the International Joint Commission, which is an agreement between the US and Canada essentially saying "we won't contaminate your waters and you won't contaminate ours." So we're not only working with several Federal agencies but also an international agency. There have been a lot of challenges that we've consistently met, but working with so many agencies definitely impacts the timeline.

**Hannah Mico: Robert, in your position as the Urban Waters Ambassador and being more new to this project, what have you been interpreting as unique about this project and the challenges and opportunities it poses?**

**Robert Cloy:** The uniqueness stems from the way the investor position is hosted. Like Wendy said, other projects like this have Federal leads or Federal agencies that are running their investor position. But, in Grand Rapids, there's a strong network of partners and organizations that share the same goal of connecting people back to the urban waters. The partners are unique to this location. We're really grassroots and more bottom up, which lends itself to easier relationships.

**Hannah Mico:** You've both mentioned the partners a few times. I'm curious who these partners are and how you've been facilitating community visioning and engagement around this project.

**Robert Cloy:** As the Urban Waters Federal location, we do have a steering committee as a strong network. They call themselves the West Michigan Project Network and it's led by [Elaine Sterrett Isely](#) at the West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC). That group, including others from LGROW, the City of Grand Rapids, and River Network came together to develop a work plan that the Ambassador will then finalize. A lot of these organizations have public facing programs and their own outreach strategies, so we're just kind of working with partners and seeing how they're engaging their communities.

**Wendy Ogilvie:** Another reason [the West Michigan Project Partners] got together was to build on each other instead of competing for the same grants. We're working together to do bigger projects. The group also includes [Plaster Creek Stewards](#), [Friends of Grand Rapids Parks](#), [Grand Rapids Whitewater](#), and [Groundswell](#) out of Grand Valley State University. It's a really wide variety of partners who all understand that we can do more together.

**Robert Cloy:** We also have a [River For All](#) group here in Grand Rapids, as well as another iteration, [Grand River Voices](#). They came out with an [equity framework](#) just a couple of months ago, which serves as a guiding document for residents, policymakers, and really any stakeholders to embed equity into how they're approaching work on the riverfront. The equity framework was informed and developed by the community and the framework is public. Stakeholders are being asked to read through it and find their role in the engagement piece. It's been a really helpful part of our community engagement.

**Hannah Mico:** Turning the lens back toward you all at LGROW, what positioned you all as the organization to help champion the Grand River Revitalization Project?

**Wendy Ogilvie:** We've had a really good partnership with Grand Rapids Whitewater from the very beginning, but LGROW had the credibility and history in the area to connect with the municipalities upstream and downstream. This is 2 miles of the Grand River that might be restored, but there's 250 miles of river upstream and another 40 miles downstream. It's all connected. LGROW was the voice trying to get buy-in, or at least stewardship, from the rest of the watershed.

**Robert Cloy:** I'll echo that: the position that LGROW is in and the kind of influence they have in different communities really lends itself well to what we're trying to do with the Grand River Revitalization Project. They have context and partners in these different communities throughout the watershed, and that's been extremely helpful.

**Hannah Mico: What have you learned about working with State and Federal agencies through the Revitalization Project? Any nuggets of wisdom to share, or lessons learned?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** Be patient. It takes a lot of time. The more [information we learned], the more different agencies had to get involved. The endangered species brought in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; then the lamprey, the invasive species, brought in another subsidiary of the same agency, but with conflicting goals. There was also the Fish Passage Division of the agency *and* the State Department, and those goals don't always align either. It's about trying to stay true to your project and make sure you're clear on your goals while navigating these different regulations. Being in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership meant that we were able to work through some of these issues and agencies that we might not have had direct contact with without the partnership. But it can be time consuming and frustrating.

**Robert Cloy:** In my short time here, meeting with different partners, everyone seems to have pretty similar end goals [for the Revitalization Project], but their means of getting there might be different. The challenge is finding that middle

ground that every partner can tap into while staying true to their own mission and goals. Patience is needed and also taking time to build authentic relationships with different agencies.

**Hannah Mico: Thank you for sharing that. I know it's a continuing point of frustration, especially with more recent permitting issues. But, charging ahead, I'm curious how the expanding network of Urban Waters Ambassadors has contributed here.**

**Robert Cloy:** The network has been super helpful. We have our monthly call that includes all the Federal agencies, NGO partners, and investors of the Grand River Revitalization project, but those calls are a little high level at times. The Ambassadors have a coffee chat about once a month that's a little more informal. We talk about our locations and the problems we're dealing with. I can share my own hurdles and get feedback from others. It's a great network, and great to know that you can reach out to them as well.

**Wendy Ogilvie:** And we love that Robert is so connected with this community in so many different ways. He's just been able to hit the ground running and start connecting with partners. It's been great to see him out there and bringing this project to people's attention.

**Hannah Mico: You're both aware that River Network is bringing River Rally to Grand Rapids in 2024. How can the folks who attend Rally learn from this large-scale project?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** Even though we're frustrated with how the project is progressing now, the community really has embraced this project. It's a catalyst for lots of other things we could do in Grand Rapids. They have totally reimaged our river edges – why do we have our Department of Public Works with these big salt domes on the river edge, and why isn't that a park? Why isn't that a publicly accessible space? There's been so much work done removing the flood walls. We still have

flood protection but, in the meantime, using that as a green space. Now we've got a space that the city purchased from the State. We wanted to use it as a staging area for construction, but now they're just trying out programming: a skate park and movies in the park and bike polo. They have all these cool [activities] to get people to the river. We'll wait to see what happens on the river, but it has empowered anyone who owns property along the river to rethink [programs] and allow people to touch the river. There's a lot of opportunity for River Rally attendees to learn from some of this planning and visioning that's going on along the riverbanks.

**Hannah Mico: What other programs are you really excited about these days?**

**Wendy Ogilvie:** GVMC is working on a landscape-level conservation plan with Audubon, on what we're calling the West Michigan Coastal Corridor. We're looking at the 6 miles of West Michigan along Lake Michigan, and then up to the Grand River Corridor. This is a high quality ecosystem for bird migration. And there's a lot happening at the lakeshore like the decommissioning of coal plants and different opportunities to recapture that land to do some really significant ecological restoration there, or preservation. What we're trying to do is kind of get all of those landowners and stakeholders together to see if we come up with some sort of comprehensive management plan, looking at our common goals to ensure that we're keeping this vision of this great ecosystem for birds and wildlife in the area. We also have a rainscaping project, which is looking at individual residential sites and how they can manage stormwater on their own properties. We provide free site assessments and, as soon as we get enough of those, apply for grant funding for implementation.

**Robert Cloy:** We're also working on [Forest to Michigan Faucet](#). It is a DNR Forest Stewardship program and the purpose is to show the connection between healthy forests and clean drinking water. Some of our priorities include helping our local municipal water utilities implement their source water protection plan and coordinating with landowners to manage their already forested areas in hopes of

preserving some of that [forest] and drinking water as well. We're also planting 10,000 trees in rural locations along riparian zones in communities with smaller populations. And working with partners across the state to share our results and see how we can push this idea of clean forests equal clean water.



*This interview was conducted by [Hannah Mico](#) on May 5, 2023. [Learn more about the Grand River Revitalization Project.](#)*