



Interurban Transit Partnership

Future Planning & Innovations Committee Members

Rick Baker

Andy Guy

Jack Hoffman (Chair)

Paul Troost

FUTURE PLANNING & INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, June 8, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.

Rapid Board Room (300 Ellsworth, SW)

AGENDA

	<u>PRESENTER</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1. PUBLIC COMMENT		
2. MINUTES REVIEW – February 9, 2026	Jack Hoffman	Review
3. DISCUSSION		
a. Website Update	Andy Prokopy	Discussion
b. Planning Overview	Nick Monoyios	Discussion
• Previous Planning Efforts		
• Summer 2026 Service		
• Evaluating Data & Analyzing Trends		
• Internal Process Refinements		
• Fall 2026 Service		
c. Learning Opportunities	Nick Monoyios	Discussion
4. ADJOURNMENT		

Next meeting: October 12, 2026



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FUTURE PLANNING & INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 9, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.

Rapid Operations Center (335 Bartlett SW)

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members Present:

Rick Baker, Andy Guy, Jack Hoffman, Paul Troost

Committee Members Absent:

Rapid Attendees:

Josh Brink, Kris Heald, Nick Monoyios, Jason Prescott, Andy Prokopy, Steve Schipper, Tim Roseboom

Public Attendees:

Mr. Schipper called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

2. MINUTES – May 12, 2025

Mr. Schipper asked for any changes or corrections to the meeting minutes from May 12, 2025, there was none. The meeting minutes passed as submitted.

3. DISCUSSION – Mr. Nick Monoyios

a. Current Winter 2026 Service

Mr. Monoyios reported on the slides presented in the meeting packet.

Current Service Overview:

- The system includes 21 regular Fixed Routes, 2 BRTs, 5 off-campus routes (GVSU, GRCC, Ferris, and trippers to GRPS).
- Schedules are built three times a year; summer (May), fall (last week of August), and winter (first Monday after New Year's).
- The planning team review data and monitors performance during the initial months of each cycle.
- Final schedule adjustments are made in March for the upcoming summer, fall, and winter services.

Summer Service Adjustments:

- Service reductions occur due to school schools.

- Specific routes like the Bulldog Line (Ferris shuttle to Big Rapids) and Laker Line (off-campus shuttle) are suspended or modified.
- The Laker Line shifts to 15-minute service all day during summer.
- Considerations include optimizing drop-off and pick-up times for daycare, and potential adjustments to pulse layovers a Rapid Central Station.

Contract and Service Changes:

- The Special Olympics of Michigan (SOMI) no longer has a contract, which previously extended Route 10 to 68th Street, Pine Rest, and Corewell.
- Route 10 now terminates at 54th Street Meijer.
- Byron Center service has lapsed; efforts are underway to explore extensions for non-profits and other community needs.
- Impact on paratransit services south of 60th Street is significant if certain segments are discontinued.

Route Refinements Under Consideration:

- Route 33 may be rerouted to serve Walker City Hall, Library, and Fitness Center, increasing trip generation opportunities.
- Route 15's current route through Leffingwell and the Kent Tech Center may be adjusted to improve efficiency, especially in evenings and weekends.
- Route 12 might be optimized by maintaining on Wealthy route to improve transfer times at Central Station, especially with upcoming Amphitheater developments.
- Route 1 (U of M Health Campus) is being examined for streamlining due to its sprawling layout and time-consuming routing.

b. Summer 2026 Service – Preparation and Influences

- The planning team maintains a regular communication cadence with GVMC (Grand Valley Metropolitan Council) and MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation).
- These collaborations involve all municipalities and jurisdictions with the region, focusing on coordinating construction projects, detour planning, and schedule adjustments.
- This ongoing dialogue helps refine service schedules, minimize disruptions, and ensure smooth operations for customers and operators.
- The team also discusses improvements to bus stop design and amenities, particularly related to road reconstruction projects and development activities.
- Engaging with cities with the six cities, especially those with master plans or zoning updates, allows for proactive planning to enhance stop locations and customer experience.

c. 2026 Coordination Opportunities

Mr. Monoyios noted with the upcoming major venues like the Amphitheatre and Soccer Stadium, the focus is on ensuring transportation services are optimized.

- The goal is to provide the best possible level of service while minimizing negative impacts such as congestion and operational challenges.
- Proactive planning and coordination are essential to address the increased trip demand and large crowds expected at these major event locations.

d. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Update

- The Rapid is involved in regional projects, notably the GVMC Transportation Demand Management Project.
- Currently, a regional survey is underway, distributed online by The Rapid.
- The purpose is to understand regional travel behaviors, tendencies, and thresholds-such as how much time or cost factors influence switching to alternative transportation modes.
- Gathering this data helps identify when people decide to seek other transportation options.

- Collaboration among all stakeholders aims to optimize transportation modes and improve regional mobility, making transportation more efficient and accessible for everyone.

e. Kent County Mobility Study Update

- The study has recently concluded, resulting in four main recommendations:
 1. Demand Response Service
 2. Mobility Management and Education
 3. Express & Fixed Route Services
 4. Supporting Services and Infrastructure
- Questions remain about governance and funding models, including community partnerships, county-level coordination, and potential formation of a new Public Transportation Authority.
- The Steering Committee agreed that further exploration is needed-There are additional issues and opportunities to consider.
- GVMC has committee to further analyze these recommendations and will take the lead in advancing this work.

Mr. Baker inquired about the Amphitheatre opening in May and the impact of upcoming events, such as concerts, on service frequency.

Mr. Schipper noted challenges in coordinating event schedules ahead of time, especially since initially there were no overlapping Van Andel events, but now at least six overlaps are expected.

Mr. Baker sees this as an opportunity for The Rapid to promote a Park N Ride to accommodate event attendees.

Mr. Schipper mentioned that Rapid Central Station, only a block and a half away, is easily walkable, and routes can bring concertgoers directly there.

Mr. Baker emphasized the need for monitoring during concerts and soccer games to dynamically adjust schedules accordingly.

Mr. Monoyios noted that they are examining the implications of extending evening service beyond the current last pulse at 10:00 p.m., with the goal of encouraging transit as a viable and convenient transportation option for evening events.

f. Reporting Ridership & Performance Data

Mr. Tim Roseboom presented a recap of ridership reporting methods.

Fare Payment Data Collection:

- Five methods used:
 - Wave Card
 - Contactless payments
 - GFI Farebox
 - Cash
 - Key Count (e.g., GVSU, Senior, free ADA, Child)
- Routes that do not charge fares include DASH and most of the Laker Line.

Data Storage Systems:

- Init: Stores Wave Card data with transaction timestamp, route, geolocation, and amount. Mr. Roseboom retrieves this twice weekly for monthly reporting.
- Avail: Stores Automatic Passenger Counter (APC) data, used for dispatch and route management, including trip details like route, location, and time.
- GFI System: Stores cash and key count transactions, tracking amounts and key associations. Data is pulled monthly.

Productivity and Ridership Reports:

- Total ridership, including weekday and weekend data.

- Passengers per hour and per mile.
- Farebox recovery ration.
- These data points are compiled into comprehensive reports comparing current month versus previous year, ridership by fare category, contract routes, paratransit, service days, fiscal year-to-date, and quarterly totals.

Efficiency Metrics:

- Standard deviation rankings assess routes based on productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness scores.

MDOT Quarterly Report:

- Includes data on hours, miles, passengers by day of week, trip type, and paratransit, used for external reporting.

System Summary:

- Updated monthly with productivity metrics.
- Tracks average daily ridership by route and day type.
- Monitors changes over months and supports annual performance analysis.

Importance of Monthly Reporting:

- Data feeds into the National Transit Database (NTD), managed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- Ridership and trip length data are used to calculate passenger miles, which influence federal funding allocations.
- Approximately 80% of the agency's capital budget relies on these federal funds distributed based on this data.

On Time Performance – Mr. Josh Brink

Mr. Brink presented a high-level overview of On-Time Performance.

Methodology:

- Data is collected from buses and categorized into three buckets:
On Time
Early
Late
- Data points log the actual arrival times relative to the schedule.
- The goal is to achieve 90% on-time performance.
- Timing thresholds:
Late: more than 5 minutes after scheduled time
On Time: 0-5 minutes early
- The data is analyzed by date and route to identify patterns.

Purpose and Use:

- The data helps the team identify consistent issues, such as detours, that impact OTP.
- By analyzing these patterns, routes can be tweaked to improve overall performance.
- The goal is to serve customers as effectively as possible by making data-driven adjustments.

Business Intelligence Suite from Avail – Mr. Nick Monoyios

- The suite offers a wide range of analytical tools and features.
- Capabilities include tracking Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), maintenance planning, and more.

MISSION: *To create, offer and continuously improve a flexible network of public transportation options and mobility solutions.*

- The data can be broken down by various characteristics and activity types to support detailed analysis and decision-making.

g. 2026 Conference Opportunities

Mr. Monoyios presented the upcoming conference opportunities:

- MCX Workshop in Savannah, GA
- Legislative Conference in Washington, DC
- Mobility Conference in Salt Lake City, UT
- Workforce Summit in Salt Lake City, UT
- Annual APTA Expo in Chicago, IL

APTA

- Transit Board Members & Board Administrators Seminar in Detroit, MI
- ATPAtch in St. Louis, MO
- Transit Ballot Initiatives Workshop in Nashville, TN
- Mpack formerly RailVolution in Ontario Canada

Mr. Troost inquired about what happened to the proposed West Michigan Express service to Holland. Mr. Monoyios noted the last time this committee met was last May 2025 there was interest in supporting a pilot, but it didn't get anywhere with the funding. It was approximately \$2M for a three-year pilot and it was all designed and flushed out implementation strategy which was a part of the TMP however it remains on the radar.

Mr. Schipper noted there is a bucket of money that the MPTA is trying to decide how it is to be spent, and conversations are ongoing.

Mr. Guy asked if it was special initiative money. Mr. Schipper replied when they did the LBO change, there's a bucket of money they didn't really specify how it was to be spent.

Mr. Hoffman recognizes the strengths in data and regional economic development, emphasizing that a thriving urban core is vital for overall regional health. While acknowledging that ridership levels are a concern, he attributes this more to broader societal and economic factors rather than the performance of The Rapid itself.

His optimism about the upcoming millage in 2029 and the potential for increased support at the state and regional levels suggests a strategic outlook. He advocates for exploring innovative regional transportation models, inspired by cities like Austin, TX, to enhance connectivity beyond the urban core. Additionally, he stresses the importance of support from surrounding rural counties-such as Allegan, Ionia, and Barry-highlighting that their economic well-being depends on a robust regional transportation network, even if their residents do not directly use it.

Mr. Troost highlighted The Rapid's recent assistance in Ottawa County following a pile-up, praising the service and community support involved. However, he raised the question of funding – asking who bears the costs for providing these emergency assistance services.

Mr. Schipper responded by noting that the Ottawa County incident involved Hudsonville Public Schools, and the Rapid's help at the M6 accident was supported through existing MOUs with the emergency management division, primarily within the six cities. He also mentioned that The Rapid facilitated transportation for evacuees to the Cascade Library.

Furthermore, Mr. Schipper explained that this kind of community support began after the helicopter crash on Butterworth, emphasizing that such efforts are rooted in community goodwill and collaborative emergency response.

Mr. Baker shared a perspective that challenges the current mindset regarding ridership. He expressed concern that there's a sense of acceptance about declining ridership levels, even though

the city and local businesses are growing. He believes an attitude adjustment is needed, emphasizing that we shouldn't be satisfied with these declines.

He revisited the upcoming new venues, questioning what proactive strategies are in place to boost ridership. Mr. Baker emphasized that it's our responsibility to actively create our own customers rather than passively accept the trend. He advocated for the committee to have open discussions about specific initiatives-such as a park-and-ride campaign-and possibly retraining the community's mindset from a car-centric society to one that embraces public transportation as a viable option.

Mr. Hoffman expressed appreciation for the Chamber's role in championing the urban core, while also highlighting the competitive landscape for transportation funding. He noted that various sectors-such as the trucking industry and rural county road commissions-receive significant subsidies, and that these subsidies somewhat dilute the funding available for public transportation. He believes that the state has not contributed enough to provide the level of service needed and emphasized that higher ridership would likely lead to more frequent and improved service.

Mr. Troost added to the discussion about shifting community attitudes, suggesting that a targeted advertising campaign could be effective. He proposed creating ads or commercials that showcase the positive experience of riding the bus-highlighting comfort, convenience, and the pleasant aspects of transit-to help reframe public perception and encourage more people to consider using public transportation.

Mr. Monoyios added that with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) project with the outreach, we are identifying many barriers and issues. He noted many people don't know how to ride a bus.

Mr. Baker feels there may need to be a cultural training to get people to change their minds. He feels we do bite size pieces. Change behaviors around events.

Mr. Baker inquired about the data from the COA analysis, can we look at the BRTs, and do they get better ridership, and the regular fixed routes get or are there any comparisons? How do we decide when it's time to invest in the next BRT and what that route would be. He feels this is the future planning committee and we should be discussing future stuff.

Mr. Schipper appreciated the comments from Mr. Baker. He noted that leadership team meets internally on a weekly basis to discuss the data and the customer feedback and find what opportunities there may be

Mr. Baker asked if we lose people when they need to make a transfer. Mr. Schipper noted 30% of our customers are a 2-seat ride.

Mr. Monoyios added what the mode split. While we look at a map, we can connect as many lines as we want, we have data to show the propensity, how likely someone would use that as a transit trip. The question is, do we increase frequency or add more service.

Mr. Roseboom jumped in regarding mode split as he reviews that data frequently. The mode split on the two BRT corridors, is two to three times better than in other corridors with higher ridership.

Mr. Guy supports Mr. Baker's comments. He noted we have a TMP with great ideas. One thing he is hearing is that this group wants to be a little more active in prioritizing those action items. He encourages the group to keep the TMP recommendations in front of us and all of it with an eye towards 2028 when this is on a ballot. What we are telling people we are going to do with the millage, and what service we are going to provide, and the time to do the future planning innovation is right now. He would like to see the agendas to be more action oriented in that direction and he is happy to help with that.

Mr. Baker added he is not usually advocating for more meetings however; the next meeting isn't until June and perhaps this committee could meet before then. He agrees with Mr. Guy that how we can use this committee to drive innovation and ridership.

4. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2026

Respectfully submitted,



Kris Heald, Board Secretary