

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, August 18, 2004 – 1:30 p.m.
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A102**

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the meeting to order with the following members present: Les Noehre, NDDOT-Grand Forks; Nick Ludowese, NDDOT-Grand Forks; Mike Kamnikar, MNDOT-Bemidji; Kent Ehrenstrom, MNDOT-Bemidji; Paul Benning, NDDOT-Bismarck; Mark Johnson, FHWA-Bismarck; Ryan Brooks, EGF Planning; Dean Wieland, EGF Engineering; Dennis Potter, GF Planning; Dan Jonasson, GF Engineering; Richard Onstad, GF County Engineer; and Roger Foster, Public Transportation. Staff present were: Lane Magnuson, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Mark Engel, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Administrative Specialist, Senior.

A quorum was present.

Guests present were: Jerry Liibbe, FHWA-St. Paul; Dave Leftwich, NDDOT-Bismarck; Karen DellaPaolera, MNDOT-St. Paul; and Lynne Bly, MNDOT-St. Paul.

INTRODUCTIONS

Haugen stated that, because there were some new faces here today, he would ask that everyone please state their name, and the organization they are representing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Brooks, seconded by Wieland, to approve the July 14th, 2004, minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee, as read. Motion carried unanimously.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE FINAL FY 2005-2007 T.I.P.

Haugen reported that copies of the Draft Final FY 2005-2007 T.I.P. were included in the packets, as well as copies of the public hearing notice that was published. He stated that the two actions we will be taking today include hearing any public comments concerning the Draft Final FY 2005-2007 T.I.P., and, depending on those comments, approving the document and forwarding it to the MPO Executive Policy Board for approval.

Haugen referred to the Public Notice and pointed out that our T.I.P. document also acts as the local transit operator's program of projects, and, reading the notice, we are also notifying people that unless there are changes approved at this meeting, or the Executive Policy Board meeting, the draft that has been out for review will be the final document. He stated that this alleviates the need to publish an additional notice that we have approved the document. He added that this information was also mailed to the local private providers of transit service in order that they could attend to voice any concerns or changes they would like to see implemented.

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Haugen reported that the Draft T.I.P. does have one additional change, something this body may not have been fully aware of, that through the development process that we have going through this past twelve months, a change in local funding, due to an agreement between Grand Forks and East Grand Forks concerning the funding of the Point Bridge project, which entails the shifting of \$369,000 of local money from East Grand Forks to Grand Forks for that project.

Haugen stated that, other than the above mentioned change, the document resembles, for the most part, what was approved in April. He added that back in July, the Technical Advisory Committee was also notified of some changes to some Grand Forks projects, between 40th Avenue and 47th Avenue, where federal funds were shifted between the two projects.

Haugen opened the public hearing.

a. Public Hearing

Haugen pointed out that they also included, in the notice, a statement allowing anyone that might not be able to attend today's meeting, the opportunity to submit any comments or changes they may have in written format, however, none were received.

Potter reported that he believes that Dan Jonasson has some updated numbers that should be read into the record. Jonasson commented that the total construction costs do not change, that there are, however, some changes in the breakdowns.

Jonasson referred to the T.I.P. tables, and went over the changes as follows:

Grand Forks Project #4 – Page 24 – Under the Annual Element column for 2005 – The construction amount should be \$280,000, and under the PE amount, or right-of-way, the amount should be \$54,000.

Grand Forks Project #9 – Page 26 – Under the Annual Element column for 2006 – the PE amount should be \$286,000, and the construction amount should be \$1,069,500.

Grand Forks Project #10 – Page 26 – Under the Annual Element column for 2006 – the PE amount should be \$150,000, and the construction amount should be \$850,000.

Haugen asked, with those changes noted, if there was any other public comments on the Final Draft FY 2005-2007 T.I.P. Hearing none, he stated that he would then like to bring this back to the committee for discussion.

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Haugen commented that, as part of the approval process they have to fill out a checklist for MNDOT. He then distributed copies of that checklist, explaining that it indicates the responses from the MPO, and went over it briefly. He added that this also provides the Technical Advisory Committee with an idea, or opportunity, as to all the different things we are asked to look at, and consider, and document as we approve and report our T.I.P. document.

Ehrenstrom pointed out that on Page 11, under the narrative for Transit Funding, the last sentence states that East Grand Forks has been programmed to receive funding in 2002 to purchase a replacement coach, which, of course, has already occurred. He then referred to Page 13, under the Year 2005 column, and pointed out that the Minnesota Transit State Aid is zeroed out, however, it is his understanding that a project has been programmed for \$132,670.00. Haugen responded that that would be correct, that the T.I.P. table shows that Minnesota is programmed to spend some State monies in 2005.

Haugen referred to Page 6, and explained that a new section, Environmental Justice, was added to the document.

b. Technical Advisory Committee Action

Moved by Potter, seconded by Brooks, to forward a recommendation to the MPO Executive Policy Board to approve the Final FY 2005-2007 T.I.P., subject to changes discussed. Motion carried unanimously.

MATTER OF SCHEDULE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FY 2006-2008 T.I.P.

Haugen reported that copies of the schedule for the submittal of, solicitation of, projects for the FY 2006-2008 T.I.P. He stated that on Monday he e-mailed information concerning the solicitation of T.E. projects, for both North Dakota and Minnesota, to everyone, and now he would like to distribute a hard copy of that information.

Haugen referred to the document, and explained that the solicitation of T.E. projects is being based on the assumption that provisions and programs for TEA21 will be extended for T.E. projects. He pointed out that the deadline for submittal of projects to the MPO is November 3rd, and then to both DOT's within that same time frame. He commented that there have been some changes to the Minnesota program, specifically how the funds are distributed, so the schedule is a little different, however, North Dakota's schedule remains the same.

Benning distributed copies of information pertaining to the T.E. Program, and explained that, although Ben Kubischta was not able to attend today's meeting, he did ask that a copy of this

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information be distributed and discussed. Benning referred to the document, and went over it briefly.

Benning commented that one thing Director Sprynczynatyk was asked to do was to review the Director's Task Force project selection process when the new highway bill is passed into law. He explained that the Director's Task Force is currently composed of seven different people who review all of the T.E. Project Applications, and this request came from the Fargo-Moorhead Council of Governments, who felt that there may be too many members on the force from the Bismarck area. He stated that, once the new highway bill is passed, Mr. Kubischta will be looking at the Director's Task Force makeup at that time.

Brooks asked if only Mr. Kubischta was going to be doing the review of the Director's Task Force. Benning responded that the entire Director's Task Force, including Mr. Kubischta, will get together to do the review. Jonasson asked, then, if this means that all of the people from the western part of the State will get together and review this to determine if these same people should remain on the task force. Benning responded that this would be correct. Brooks asked if they were looking for others to sit in on that review, such as MPO representatives. Benning responded that, in all seriousness, once the highway bill is passed, Mr. Kubischta will meet with all the MPO's to get their input on the makeup of the task force. Brooks asked who would make the final decision on what the makeup should be. Benning responded that the DOT would make that decision.

Information only.

**MATTER OF CONSIDERATION OF 2005-2006 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Haugen reported that the MPO now has to begin consideration of activities for their 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program. He referred to the staff report, included in the packets, indicates that no action is required, that we are just laying the ground work to begin thinking of activities you would like us to consider. He added that there are already a few projects identified, including an update to the Street and Highway section of the Long Range Transportation plan, which means data collection will begin in 2005, and both cities will be asked to look at their Land Use Plans to make sure that the area where we are planning for traffic growth in their communities is compatible with their growth plans. He added that once that is completed, in 2006, we will begin working with A.T.A.C. on the modeling and travel demand forecasting.

Haugen commented that because of the non-authorization of TEA21, and the extension of appropriations, we are most likely not going to be completing the transit shelter study, nor the

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unsignalized intersections on the functionally classified system in Grand Forks, so they will be rolled over into 2005.

Haugen stated that there have also been things mentioned, over the past few months, on studies, as identified in the staff report, such as Incident Management Planning, Minnesota access issues, travel time runs, software purchases, etc. He added that the ITS Regional Architect is scheduled to be completed by April 2005.

Haugen asked that everyone try to generate some ideas for projects, and that these ideas be run through either City Councils, or County Commissions, to get their approval so that the MPO isn't put into the position of doing a study, and having people wonder why we are doing the study.

Haugen commented that they hope to have a draft available for the September Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

Haugen referred to the last page of the information in the packet, and explained that it is an out-of-date work program table, but the funding amounts are relatively the same for 2005, and we anticipate using the same for 2006. He said that he just wanted to give everyone an idea of some of the activities that we have done in the past, and what we are currently doing. He added that, if anyone has any ideas they would like considered, please don't hesitate to run them through to see if they are eligible, and then we can see how they will work within the framework of all the ideas coming in, cost wise.

Haugen reminded everyone that any formal requests should go through the city councils or county commissions prior to September 1st.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Sorlie Bridge Lighting Project

Ludowese said that he read in the paper about lighting being installed on the Sorlie Bridge. He asked if anyone knew the status of that project, and explained that he only asks this because their Cultural Resource Personnel contacted him and said that nobody, at least at the DOT level, has been contacted with any information concerning this project, and what is intended. He added that, if his understanding is correct, and they intend to install this lighting before fall, they would hope that being co-owners of the bridge, along with MNDOT, they would be kept informed of all plans for this project. Wieland responded that he doesn't know who all was contacted about this project, however, he does know that SHIPPO, and MNDOT and NDDOT have been contacted.

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Ludowese said that it was his understanding that SHIPPO contacted their Cultural Resource Personnel, and asked them what was going on. Brooks commented that he thinks they have just started the plans and specifications for this project. Kamnikar responded that this should be done soon, that they are running out of time, and MNDOT/NDDOT will need to review those plans.

Benning asked if they wouldn't have to use period sensitive equipment on that bridge. He explained that whatever era that bridge was built in, the equipment used would have to reflect that era. Haugen commented that this is a project that has been on-going, and the City has sent some alternatives to the WSN design, and he thinks that the local historical society had stated that they would only approve what WSN put out, no alternatives. He added that East Grand Forks is the lead agency on this project, and will be funding the project 100% with East Grand Forks funds.

Information only.

2. Public Meeting on Merrifield Bridge Study

Haugen reported that the second public meeting on the Merrifield Bridge Study will be held on Tuesday, September 28th, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Grand Forks Country Club. He added that Mike Korman, CPS, will be attending our next Technical Advisory Committee meeting on September 8th to give us an update on the progress of this study.

Ludowese commented that he received an e-mail regarding the Merrifield Bridge, which indicated that the consultant had stated that ½-foot of backwater would be acceptable, and he was wondering if that statement was accurate. He said that the reason he is bringing that up is because when they were researching the bridge at Drayton, which they are currently working on, there was a level of backwater that was acceptable to some, but the number of people that had to sign-off on the project before we could receive the permits, was astronomical, and required everyone in the backwater area to sign-off, even down to the Township level, which made it impossible to get that many people to agree, so the effect was that the bridge became much, much longer than anticipated to alleviate the need for all those signatures. He said that because of this, he was very surprised at the statement made by the consultant concerning backwater. Wieland responded that the ½-foot figure was based on DNR's requirements, that they require zero in the floodway, and ½-foot outside the floodway. He added that this was just the first blush, and did not even take into account the diversion of the Cole Creek, upstream from the bridge, so there will most likely be some things that will come into play before this is all said and done.

Wieland commented that, looking at the big picture, both cities are going to have to look at the fact that this bridge will also tie into the floodplain mapping issue. He explained that our

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existing floodplain is a 100-year floodplain, based on 89,000 CFS, and we are now going to 108,000 CFS. He added that we also have an existing floodway ordinance in effect, that is also based on the 89,000 CFS, and if it remains in effect, we are going to have backwater all the way to Fargo, so one of the questions he asked the Minnesota DNR and State Water Commission was, when we change the ordinance, Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and we go to a floodway that compensates the levy, that actually makes conditions better upstream, is there some way they can build that fact into the ordinance. He said that, so far, everyone thinks that is a good question, but no one seems to have the answer, so both cities will really need to look at this.

Haugen asked Mr. Ludowese to write, and send, an e-mail reiterating what was just discussed. Ludowese responded that he would do this.

3. NDDOT Personnel Resume Positions

Benning reported that Steve Salwei was the acting MPO Engineer from December 2003 until last month. He stated, however, this has changed, with Dave Leftwich returning to his position in Local Government, Steve Salwei returning to his previous position, and himself returning to his previous position as the MPO Engineer.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Brooks, seconded by Potter, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,
Administrative Specialist, Senior