

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Friday, December 16, 2005 – 12:00 Noon
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A102**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Doug Christensen called the December 16th, 2005, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:10 p.m..

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Chairman Doug Christensen, Dick Grassel; Warren Strandell, Rob Kweit, Dorette Kerian, and Punky Beauchamp.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Ryan Brooks, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Executive Assistant.

Guests present were: Brad Gengler, Interim Grand Forks City Planner.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairman Christensen declared a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY BEAUCHAMP, TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER, 10TH, 2005, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

MATTER OF FY 2007 NORTH DAKOTA TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT (T.E.) APPLICATIONS

- a. ND Revised T.I.P. Schedule
- b. MN Draft New Program

Haugen reported that traditionally at this time of year the MPO has to forward projects to either NDDOT or MNDOT for our three year T.I.P. Program. He referred to the staff report, included in the packets, and pointed out that the recommended action is to approve a revised schedule. He

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explained that at the last Executive Policy Board meeting, we specifically set this meeting in order to meet the previous deadline for submittal, however, according to the letter from NDDOT, also included in the packet, they are allowing an additional month, setting a new submittal date of January 20th. He added that we had previously published a notice to the public that earlier this month was the deadline for project submittal to the MPO, and that action on those projects would be today, so we will need to revise that schedule to concur with the delay, and the new date for submittal of January 4th for Urban and Regional projects for North Dakota. He reported that the Technical Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on January 11th, and the Executive Policy Board is tentatively scheduled to meet on January 20th, however, that date may need to be changed as Martin Luther King Day falls on the Monday of that week, therefore the City Council will be meeting on Tuesday instead, so we could meet on Wednesday instead. He commented that we have met on the due date many times in the past, so that isn't unusual.

Haugen stated that on the Minnesota side, a new program has been created that is in the process of getting off the ground. He explained that it is the Statewide Corridor Program, and has been developed because there are some huge projects needing to be done across Minnesota, so they came up with this funding source to allow for federal assistance, statewide, that is not distributed back to the ATP for distribution. He cited the example that if we were to need to replace a bridge at a total cost of \$15,000,000; East Grand Forks' share would be about \$7,500,000, and the ATP wouldn't have that much money to give to East Grand Forks for that bridge, so this program will allow the ATP to get 50% of the \$7,500,000, or about \$3,000,000 from the central pot, so that the ATP does not have to spend all their money on one project, and thus spreads the money out a bit more, allowing large projects to get built. He stated that they are funding this program by holding back a chunk of money from the increase in funding in the new transportation bill. He added that because they already had a 2006-2008 T.I.P. and S.T.I.P. approved, and didn't want to interfere with either of them, the first year these funds will be available for competition will be 2009.

Haugen reported that while they aren't revising the schedule, they are identifying out to Minnesota agencies that this program is almost up and running, and that we will probably begin solicitations for it in January so that when we approve our draft T.I.P. in April, we should have processed any requests from East Grand Forks for this program.

Haugen commented that another program we will be soliciting projects for in Minnesota at the end of this month is the Highway Safety Improvement Program, which replaces what used to be the Hazard Elimination Safety Program in the old highway bill. He stated that another significant change with this program is that the feds have doubled the amount of funding for the program, so safety projects are now going to be emphasized more heavily than in the past. He added that safety projects will be stand-alone projects such as the signalization of intersections, intersection expansions, etc.. He stated that on the North Dakota side they are still preparing their program to include these additional funds and programs that SAFETEA-LU created.

Haugen said that staff, and the Technical Advisory Committee is requesting that the Executive Policy Board approve the revised T.I.P. project submittal date for North Dakota projects, identify that the new Minnesota programs are going to come on board, and that we begin soliciting for them in January 2006.

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A MOTION WAS MADE BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY BEAUCHAMP, TO APPROVE THE REVISED T.I.P. PROJECT SUBMITTAL DATE FOR NORTH DAKOTA PROJECTS, TO IDENTIFY THAT THE NEW MINNESOTA PROGRAMS ARE GOING TO COME ON BOARD, AND THAT WE BEGIN SOLICITING FOR THEM IN JANUARY 2006.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

**MATTER OF FINAL 42ND STREET EVENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN
ALTERNATIVES – EXTEND CONTRACT COMPLETION TO MARCH 1ST**

Haugen reported that he will be providing a power point presentation to update the Executive Policy Board on what is occurring with the 42nd Street Event Traffic Management Plan. He stated that what he is presenting, and what was included in the packets (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), is, in working with the Study Review Team, alternatives that were identified that will address the traffic operations once the Canad-Inn is up and operational. He reminded the Board that they approved an Interim Plan at their last meeting that will address traffic issues during the construction of the facility, and we now have to approve a final plan that will identify our alternatives once the facility is in place.

Haugen referred to the Draft Technical Memorandum 4 that was included in the packets, and pointed out that it includes a list of alternatives that were suggested, but were not recommended be forwarded on due to cost issues. He went over that list briefly. He then referred to the power point presentation, pointing out that it shows the list of alternatives, and went over them as well, explaining that all of the alternatives focus on how to improve the south parking lot as it has the longest dumping time, currently 88 minutes.

Presentation ensued.

Alternative 1: Six-lane exit (three lanes south and two lanes north on 42nd Street) –
Reduces dumping time to 57 minutes.

Kerian commented that she feels there is, and will continue to be a problem at the intersection of 17th and Columbia as there isn't a right turn lane, so traffic could become backed up. Haugen responded that so far that kind of scenario hasn't been identified as a problem. Grassel asked if, when traffic is dumped onto 11th, does it travel down to DeMers Avenue. Haugen responded that that would be correct. He explained that roughly about 500 vehicles would be directed down 11th, to 34th Street, and then would have the option of going north, south, or continuing east on 11th. Kerian pointed out that there isn't a stop light on 34th. Haugen agreed, explaining that that intersection would be officer controlled during events.

Alternative 2: Seven-lane exit (four lanes south and two lanes north on 42nd Street) –
Reduces dumping time to 45 minutes.

Alternative 3: Eight-lane exit (four lanes south and three lanes north on 42nd Street)-
Reduces dumping time to 38 minutes.

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Haugen referred to the Summary Table on Page 3 of the Technical Memorandum, and went over it. He pointed out that the last alternative does achieve more of a spreading out of the traffic from the north/south lot, with the dump times being more evenly distributed. He commented that they did not focus on the north lot because the current dump time is only 48 minutes, and all of the alternatives only reduce that to 34 and 38 minutes, so there isn't a significant change. He stated that the one thing Alternative 3 does is to add more time to the north parking lot than to the others.

Haugen stated that what they are recommending for consideration is Alternative 2, with a 45 minute dump time for the south parking lot. He explained that the primary reason is that, while Alternative 3 does show better time savings, the misdirection from the northeast corner of the south parking lot, the VIP area, to 11th may be too optimistic, as it may be difficult to get people to follow those directions, and it also interferes with the shuttle service.

Discussion on alternative parking and shuttle service ensued.

Haugen reported that there is also a request to extend the timeline for completion of this project to March 1st.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY BEAUCHAMP, TO APPROVE EXTENDING THE COMPLETION DATE FOR THE FINAL PLAN TO MARCH 1ST.

Christensen asked how much input Canad representatives have had with this plan. Haugen responded that direct contact with Canad representatives has not occurred, however indirectly information has been provided through Rick Duquette's office and Alerus staff. Christensen asked if there was a real urgency to approve this plan. Haugen responded that the urgency the MPO has is to honor the contract we have with SRF, which is why we are asking for an extension to March 1st. He added that once the plan is adopted, then the City, and whomever else may be involved, will implement it, and their urgency may be different as they wouldn't have an actual timeline to meet. He said that Mr. Christensen is right in that if they aren't starting to build, then there is no hurry to implement the plan, but once they start building you need the plan in place. Christensen stated that he would rather see the MPO staff talk to Canad, talk to Lonnie Laffen, talk to their people, to get their input, because not to have them involved may be a problem in the future. Haugen asked what the involvement would be, adding that they were involved in the parking lot changes, and were informed of the routing suggestions as well. Christensen responded that it is because they want them to do it, so that when the time comes, we, and future City Council's don't have any problems, and so we show them how this affects their lot, so there isn't any questions when they build their facility.

MOTION, AS AMENDED, TO APPROVE EXTENDING THE COMPLETION DATE FOR THE FINAL PLAN TO MARCH 1ST, AND FOR STAFF TO CONTACT CANAD PERSONNEL FOR DISCUSSION, AND INPUT IN THE FINAL PLAN.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

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**MATTER OF DRAFT FINAL E.G.F. GATEWAY DRIVE ACCESS MANAGEMENT
PLAN – EXTEND CONTRACT TO MARCH 1ST**

Brooks reported that staff has been working with HDR, and with their sub-consultant Floan-Sanders, and have a final draft plan from them. He referred to the draft plan (a copy of which is included in the file, and available upon request), and went over it briefly.

Brooks commented that, basically, the plan divides the corridor into three sections; residential on the far east side towards the river, commercial in the center area, and industrial to the very east. He stated that they looked at four alternatives:

1. A full-access, signalized intersection at 5th Avenue N.W.. He explained that there is currently a right-in/right-out only there, and are looking at making it a full-access, to open it up to the north, and to put a signal in at the intersection. He stated that this intersection is important due to flooding considerations we have along River Road.
2. A full-access at 2nd Avenue N.E.. He explained that what they did on the south end, as they hook-in and meet the southern leg, they actually put on their graphic a large retail area, so as they come up the southern side of that area, they will actually direct traffic around the building to keep traffic from wanting to enter into the residential area.
3. $\frac{3}{4}$ -access at 2nd Avenue N.E.. He explained that this alternative minimizes the highest crash probability from someone trying to go from south to north and north to south as they cross through the traffic, and when using the left-out.
4. Substation access, just to the west as it curves down to the southern part of Highway 2. He explained that they would be utilizing the existing accesses, but bringing in the frontage roads to connect, bulbing them out, and opening up some additional industrial area.

Brooks referred to the graphic illustrating where closures occur on River Road during flooding events, and explained that they are limited on their north/south accesses as they go from the central part of the city to the north, and one of the things that happens when they hit 33-feet is that the first off-ramp at River Road/4th Street, to get to the campground, closes. He added that as they get to 43 ½ - feet, the water hits the green designated areas, and at 52-feet Gateway Drive closes, all closures mean problems with emergency response on the northend of the City. He referred to the power point presentation, specifically the flood stage table, and went over it briefly, explaining that the consultant has provided us with some computer runs using a software program that simulates what occurs along the corridor during various events. He reported that, as we try to get MNDOT to understand what is going on along the corridor, these are some of the tools we will use to try to convince them to agree to additional accesses.

Video presentation ensued.

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Brooks commented that, again, this is a tool that we can use to try to convince MNDOT, who has been showing considerable concern, to allow additional access along the Gateway Drive Corridor. He stated that he will be meeting with personnel from both the District and St. Paul next week to determine what else they may need to see from us. He added that, to-date, nobody has seen even this video, and most of them don't understand what we have going on here, so that is why we are doing this report, to try to give them enough information to allow us to open up these additional accesses. He pointed out that about ten years ago a study was done that showed a full-access at 5th Avenue N.E., however, when they got to the construction phase, MNDOT came in with some new access management guidelines that wouldn't allow it to occur, which is why we got the right-in/right-out we have.

Brooks reported that the process from here will involve refining cost estimates, identification of funding sources, continue working with MNDOT to try to get them to understand our situation, and to hold one more public meeting on January 10th.

Brooks commented that, due to some delays, we are behind about a month, therefore we are seeking approval to extend the contract to March 1st, 2006.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BEAUCHAMP, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE EXTENDING THE E.G.F. GATEWAY DRIVE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTRACT COPMLETION DATE TO MARCH 1ST, 2006.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

MATTER OF REQUEST TO AMEND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODE PLAN – BIKE SECTION

Haugen reported that this item was placed on the agenda only to alert this body that they may have to act on it in January. He explained that at a meeting last Tuesday, it appears that the consensus was that we will not need to amend the Bike Section of the Alternative Transportation Mode Plan, but he just wanted everyone to be aware of the possibility that action may be needed in January if things change. He added that this was also the reason why our January meeting date was pushed back a week, to January 20th, because, in the event it were to go forward, the soonest Grand Forks City Council could act on it would be Tuesday, January 17th. He stated that preliminary approval of this was still on the City Council agenda for Monday night, and he doesn't know if they will table it, or give it preliminary approval to their January meeting, and table it then.

Kerian commented that she would vote against anything that has a bike-lane in it, as she is against them anywhere. Haugen said, however, that City staff may ask the City Council to give this preliminary approval at their Monday night meeting, as there may be something tied up with the PCR, but, in any event we don't need any action at this time, and just wanted to alert you to the issue.

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Haugen asked if the Executive Policy Board wanted to meet on January 13th, or January 20th. Beauchamp said that, while he knows that we have met many times the day something is due, but it is his opinion that it would be better to act earlier if at all possible.

After some discussion, it was determined that Wednesday, January 18th would be the first choice of meeting date, but if that date doesn't work out, Friday, January 13th would be the next choice.

Information only.

MATTER OF AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATE MPO OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE CONTRACT WITH MNDOT

Haugen referred to copies of the 2005 Contract with MNDOT for Minnesota State Planning Funds, and reported that in order for the MPO to receive funds from MNDOT, a contract is required. He explained that this contract has not changed from previous contracts, and we need official action authorizing the appropriate MPO Officials to execute it.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BEAUCHAMP, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATE MPO OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE CONTRACT WITH MNDOT.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FOUR-HOUR HOLIDAY BONUS

Haugen reported that, again, the MPO tries to mirror the City of Grand Forks' Personnel Policies, and, as in the past, the City of Grand Forks has approved a four-hour holiday bonus for it's employees, therefore, the MPO is requesting the same for it's employees.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE FOUR-HOUR HOLIDAY BONUS FOR MPO EMPLOYEES TO BE USED BY JULY 1ST, 2006.

Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY KWEIT, TO ADJOURN THE DECEMBER 16TH, 2005, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:55 P.M.

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Voting Aye: Strandell, Beauchamp, Grassel, Kerian, Kweit, and Christensen.

Voting Nay: None.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis
Executive Assistant