

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

**Tuesday, August 23, 2005 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A102**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Doug Christensen called the August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 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, Gary Malm, Steve Gander, and Dorette Kerian.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Julie Romig, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Marissa Champion, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Executive Assistant.

Guests present were: Cindy Voigt, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Christensen declared a quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Haugen introduced Julie Romig, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; and Marissa Champion, GF/EGF MPO Intern.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2005, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

*Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Gander, Kerian, and Christensen.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

**MATTER OF FINAL APPROVAL OF THE 2006-2008 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that copies of the Draft Final 2006-2008 T.I.P., which was out for final comments, was included in the packets. He added that a copy of the public notice was also included, and pointed out that it states that the T.I.P. also incorporates the local transit operators' Program of Projects, so there is no need to produce a separate document. He pointed out that the

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

notice also states that unless there are significant changes made during adoption of this document, the public is informed that the document currently under review will constitute the approved 2006-2008 T.I.P. for the MPO. He added that the definition of “significant changes” is defined in the document.

Haugen stated that as the T.I.P. is approved, some additional actions are taken as well, which are: Page VI – Approval of the T.I.P.; Page VIII – Validity of Transportation Plan; and IX – Civil Rights Assurance.

Christensen asked that Mr. Haugen give a brief overview on the Long Range Transportation Plan. Haugen explained that the Long Range Transportation plan is really two documents, one is dedicated to the Street and Highway System of the metropolitan area; and the other identifies alternative modes, such as transit, sidewalk and pedestrian, etc. sections. He pointed out that this body approved the alternative mode section earlier this year, and the Street and Highway section in 2003.

Christensen said, then, that we should look at what we approved. Haugen reported that there have not been any generated changes to those documents, the projects that were submitted to the MPO, for consideration of inclusion in the T.I.P., all conformed to those plans, so we aren’t proposing any need to changes to the Transportation Plan.

Christensen said that what he is getting at, what he wants to know is what our plan is for the next three years, and he would like to know what the projects are, in the order or rank, for both Cities. Haugen referred to the project tables, beginning on Page 24, and stated that they show the programmed projects for the next three years for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks.

Haugen referred to Page 24, Grand Forks Projects 1 and 2, and pointed out that they deal with the Transit System. He explained that they spell out how much federal funds we are going to put towards the fixed-route operations, and also, as you will note, there is an effort to combine the Dial-A-Ride and Senior Rider systems into one system, and this identifies what those projected costs will be, what will be covered by federal funds, and what will be covered with state funds.

Christensen asked what the bid status is for Project 2. Haugen responded that they received two bids, and staff will be reviewing those bids tomorrow afternoon, and will determine who to award the bid to. Grassel asked if the bids were coming in lower than they did last time. Haugen responded that the Dial-A-Ride Program has always been directly charged the taxi regulated rate, and now, through this bid process they are separating the Dial-A-Ride Program from the metered taxi-fares, so the bids submitted are lower than what the average rate we were previously paying. He added that the Dial-A-Ride Program has been in the taxi system since 1982, and the last four years the average ride has cost \$7.50, and by combining the two programs, we are at a \$1.00 less than that per ride. Grassel asked if there was anything in the bid to allow for an adjustment to fuel costs. Haugen responded that there was, that there will be a three year contract, and, if awarded it will have a COLA included. Malm asked if this would be a COLA on just the fuel costs or would it be an overall COLA. Haugen responded it would be an overall COLA.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

Haugen reported that the Senior Rider Program costs were close to \$10.00 or \$11.00 per ride, and, just doing some quick math, if we are able to go with the lowest bidder, and there is one that is clearly the lowest bidder, we would be looking at around a \$100,000 savings, assuming the same ridership we had last year. He added that for the Dial-A-Ride Program, it would be the same service as the Senior Riders, which would mean more hours and days, and would actually be a little more costly per ride than it was. Kerian asked what the estimate was based on. Haugen responded it was based on 60,000 rides, at a cost to the City of about \$4.50 per ride. Kerian asked what the Senior Riders would be charged. Haugen responded that everyone would be charged the same, around \$2.00 to \$2.50.

Christensen asked if we were on track with the approved projects, and if we have the funding necessary to get them done. Haugen responded that all of these projects have come from the City Council's from both Cities, so each City should have identified whether or not they have the local match available to match the federal funds programmed to each project.

Christensen asked what the status is on the Pointe Bridge Project. Haugen responded that the information staff has been given is that this project is still on track to be done in 2006. He added that there was a public meeting held last evening on the Draft Project Concept Report, with very little public attendance, and now it will be going back to the respective City Council's to determine which alternative they will go after. Christensen asked what the alternatives were. Haugen responded that there were at least three alternatives presented to the public: 1) preservation project at a cost of about \$1.8 million; 2) preservation plus expansion of slip-plane, and bringing bridge up to a more current design at a cost of \$4.5 million; and 3) replacement bridge utilizing two of the existing piers at a cost of \$7.9 million.

Christensen asked where the funds will come from to do any of these alternatives. Malm asked which alternative will be chosen. Haugen responded that they have programmed \$2.139 million dollars towards the Pointe Bridge Project, which is the amount of funding we have been told is available to fund that project.

Gander commented that the last meeting he attended, at which the Pointe Bridge was discussed, there was the question of, if they don't take out the slip-plane on the east side, some of the funding that had already been locked in on the Minnesota side may not be available. Haugen responded that it will be available, that it isn't tied to anything being done, or not, with the slip-plane. Haugen reiterated that they have \$2.139 million dollars programmed, so they only have enough funds to cover one of the alternatives.

Christensen asked, of the \$2.139 million dollars, how much is federal and how much is state. Haugen referred to Grand Forks Project 5, and pointed out that it shows that \$855,600 in federal funds have been programmed; \$700,500 has been programmed from East Grand Forks, for which he will explain how it is split when he goes over the East Grand Forks Project list; and \$583,900 City funds have been programmed. He explained that Grand Forks will cover the \$369,000 of federal funds that East Grand Forks could not secure through the Minnesota process, which is why the local funds are higher in the Grand Forks Project list.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

Haugen referred to East Grand Forks Project 4, and pointed out that it, too, shows the \$2.139 million total. He then explained that the costs are split, then, with \$375,000 federal; \$325,500 local; and \$1,438,500 other, which is the Grand Forks portion that we just went over.

Christensen asked if everyone was comfortable with how the costs of this project are split. Grassel responded that if we have to move forward, we have to move forward, because this has to get done.

Gander asked, if we were to come in under budget with Alternative 1, which is the only one that fits our budget, and had a couple hundred thousand left over, could there be, now, added to the contract some stabilizing of that bank to bring us back up to budget since we aren't adding another span, or would you recommend that we just continue to spend the \$8,000 or \$10,000 a year to stabilize that bank for the next ten or fifteen years. Haugen responded that that is a decision that you would have to determine. He added that the alternatives for soil stabilization in the PCR were more extensive than those pricings, so you would probably have to do further investigation to determine what, if anything, could be done. He stated that he would assume, however, that as you got into the project, change orders could be approved as long as both sides agree. Gander asked if there would be any way those additional funds could be retained for annual maintenance, or couldn't they be utilized in that manner. Haugen responded that you wouldn't be able to do that with federal funds, but you might be able to with local funds as long as both sides concur that that is how they want to utilize those funds. Gander asked if any of the federal funds were leveraged as a match so that the local dollars have to be spent in order to get them. Haugen responded that East Grand Forks does have to spend the \$325,000.

Christensen commented that this is a project that has been talked about for a long time, and the City of Grand Forks has already ponied up \$375,000 to help East Grand Forks out, and they intend to approve this project, and, while he understands East Grand Forks' struggle with finding funds as they have the same issues here, but his question is if this doesn't get done, how do we de-obligate these funds so we can move on, because we have to get this project done. Haugen responded that if we approve the T.I.P., it does not require the expenditure of the funds that have been programmed. He said that the funds would either lapse, or we would do an amendment to the T.I.P. to identify how those funds should be spent elsewhere.

Gander commented that if Mr. Christensen is concerned about East Grand Forks passing this project, the creation of that pool of funds to address the slippage on the east side, is very favorable to East Grand Forks because it would create a funding mechanism that will prevent the need to use general funds to do so. Christensen stated, however, that Grand Forks isn't going to be funding East Grand Forks' on-going repairs when they have a problem funding their own repairs. He added that this is something that we should get cleared-up now, so we can get this done, because he has been told that there may be some issues with this project, although he hopes that isn't the case as they have been working on this in good faith, and have used a lot of MPO monies to study it, so we need to decide if we are going to do it or not. He stated that to him, \$10,000 a year for the next ten years shouldn't be that hard to find. He asked how long this repainting and reconstruction project will last. Haugen responded it should last at least twenty years. Gander stated that up to now, however, the two Cities have split the cost of repairing the slippage, correct. Voigt responded that the maintenance agreement that was sent over calls for a

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

future split of the repairs, 50/50. Gander asked if that would include slippage on either side of the bridge. Voigt responded that there is no specific catastrophic things that are outlined, nor excluded, in the agreement. Christensen asked if that is the agreement that is sitting unsigned. Voigt responded that it was. Christensen stated that he would look at the agreement. Christensen said, again, that we need to do what we have to to get this project done, and move on. Gander asked, in moving on, how would we move on in a way that would be different than approving this. Christensen responded that we have \$2.139 million to fix it, and we would eat that up in studies in a year; Grand Forks doesn't have \$4.5 million, and East Grand Forks doesn't have \$4.5 million, to replace it; so it seems to him the lack of alternatives clarifies the conversation, which is the \$1.8 million, and we move on. He said that he just wants to know if we are going to do this or not, because if we aren't going to do it, then we will just get this project out and move on, we just won't deal with it, because we have been dealing with it since he has been on the MPO. Gander said, then, that Mr. Christensen is saying we should move on without even considering repairing the bridge. Christensen responded that it seems as if East Grand Forks wants the bridge to go into disrepair in order to get a new bridge someday, and if that becomes the focus of the community conversation, that will be the first bridge that gets built, but it won't be \$8 million, it will be \$12 million or more. Gander stated that his position will be to fix the bridge. Grassel agreed that that will be his as well. He added that whoever Mr. Christensen is hearing this from, probably doesn't have a vote, as it is the Council that will vote on it, not certain individuals. Christensen said that they have had some information conveyed to them that that indicated that this was East Grand Forks' feelings about this project. He said that the document that Grand Forks' Mayor and Auditor signed, hasn't been signed by East Grand Forks' Mayor and Auditor, but they hope that it will get signed soon so that when Grand Forks votes on it, they know what to do. Grassel asked where the agreement is at. Christensen responded that it is sitting on a desk in East Grand Forks City Hall.

Gander asked for one more item of clarification, that when this is all approved, if the revenues exceed the expenditures, where will the extra funds go, and would there be a pool of funds for maintenance. Haugen responded that he would have to defer to Ms. Voigt as there will be a project concept report approved, then we would have design and bidding, approving of the bids, and finally the final costs. Christensen commented that we would just have to figure out a formula based on our mutual contributions, and live with it. Gander agreed.

Voigt reported that if the project is approved, the bidding process will be held in February 2006.

Christensen asked if there was anything of note regarding the remaining projects. Haugen responded that there is one project from East Grand Forks. He reported that East Grand Forks was successful in getting a high priority earmark, and, referring to Page 37, Project 10, pointed out that the project being funded is the extension of 13<sup>th</sup> Street S.E.. He explained that this is a new road that will extend across Hartsville Coulee to connect with the elementary school, thus creating a better access to Bygland Road. He stated that this project is programmed in 2007, as they were awarded \$257,000 in hazard elimination safety funds, and are combining those funds with the \$960,000 in earmarked funds, to create a total of \$1.215 in federal dollars towards a \$1.5 million dollar project. Grassel asked if there was any way this project could be moved up a year. Haugen responded they could. He explained that in Minnesota their fiscal year begins July 1, 2006, so any time after that the funds would be available, even though the federal funds

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

wouldn't technically be available until after October 1, 2006, the State would just carry the costs with State funds until then. Haugen added that another alternative, if they would like to do the project even sooner, would be to advance construct the project, which is what Grand Forks is doing with their 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Grade Separation Project. He explained that this would involve the payment of the project upfront, and being reimbursed later, and that the interest is eligible for federal participation.

Grassel stated that, speaking for himself, he would like to see this project moved up as soon as possible. He commented that it is a safety issue, and should be done as quickly as possible. Gander agreed. Grassel said that there wouldn't be a problem with the East Grand Forks City Council approving it be moved up as well. Haugen stated that it is really only a matter of getting the City of East Grand Forks' consulting engineer on board to get the design done, and go through the MNDOT process to get the environmental clearances.

Consensus was to move the Extension of 13<sup>th</sup> Street S.E. Project up.

Haugen reported that there were no other significant changes to the T.I.P., and that the Technical Advisory Committee did hold a public hearing last Wednesday, and there was no public comment received. He stated that there were some very minor editorial tweaks required, which the Technical Advisory Committee took care of, so the recommendation is to approve the document.

***MOVED BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY MALM, TO GRANT FINAL APPROVAL OF THE  
2006-2008 T.I.P. SUBJECT TO THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES.***

*Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Gander, Kerian, and Christensen.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SAFETEA-LU**

Haugen distributed copies of a document, and explained that the State of Minnesota put together this sheet of information highlighting those changes that will most affect the MPO's with the passing of SAFETEA-LU. He referred to the document, and pointed out that the change he put an arrow by is the one that is most significant, and is something that will need to be addressed at the City Council level, and at the MPO Executive Policy Board level, and involves going to a four-year T.I.P.. He pointed out that we just approved a three-year T.I.P., 2006 to 2008, and beginning the end of this month we will begin soliciting projects for 2007 to 2010. He stated that, as part of the North Dakota system, they have asked that an additional year be added for the regional system, so we will be going out to 2011, and possibly 2012 with projects that will need federal funds to be completed.

Kerian stated that this makes sense, that, while it may be somewhat difficult to project out four-years, it makes sense to plan ahead. Haugen commented that you have to remember that we have a six-year Capital Improvements Plan, and most State DOT's have a ten-year working plan, as well.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

Gander asked if this means the plan will be updated every four-years, at least every four-years, or, should something urgent presents itself in two-years, would we have the opportunity to do an update at that time. Haugen responded that it needs to be updated a minimum of every four-years, but the State will still require an annual update that will allow us to make any necessary changes at that time.

Haugen commented that another program that has been created is the Safe Route to School Program, which is used to fund sidewalks, bikepaths, crossing guards within a mile or two of schools, etc.. He said that we did put together a document, which identified safe routes to all the schools. He added that they also identified some improvements that are needed as well, so we may actually have a leg-up on some of the work that needs to be done to access these funds.

Haugen stated that if we go to a four-year T.I.P. cycle, we may have to do multiple solicitations at different times, as these programs get identified, and projects are forwarded to us.

Grassel said that Mr. Haugen mentioned sidewalks, and federally funding them. Haugen responded that sidewalks are already eligible for federal funds, but this is creating a program in which they have set money aside specifically for safe routes to school. Kerian asked if this would involve a 50/50 split. Haugen responded that that isn't known yet, but he would think it would either be an 80/20 split, or, as is the case with safety projects, a 90/10 split.

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON EGF GATEWAY DRIVE ACCESS STUDY**

Haugen referred to copies of information he distributed, and reported that the EGF Gateway Drive Access Study has already begun. He explained that the study entails looking at improving access on Gateway Drive in East Grand Forks. He stated that the first public meeting was held last Wednesday evening, and, attached for this body's review, are copies of the handouts from that meeting, and comments received.

Haugen stated that the MPO did a study in 1994 to try to get more access on U.S. 2, and he thinks that the hard work that went into that study showed up in the comments received at the public meeting for this study. He pointed out that there are some new accesses to the northern neighborhoods, that most access issues were worked out ten years ago, and these comments seem to be in favor of those access still there, so we are on the right track. He added that this isn't so much a capacity or traffic operation issue, but a matter of, particularly during flood events due to the River Road access now flooding, no other accesses to the north except for Central and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E., which is why they are looking at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W., near Sherlock Pool, instead of being a right-in/right-out, becoming a full access to the north, and also at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue N.E., near the Holiday Station, having access to the south.

Gander commented that he has heard discussion about the Hugo's/Holiday access, specifically that if we go south of U.S. 2 to 2<sup>nd</sup>, would we only go to the frontage road, or would we continue to Luigi's. Grassel responded that we would only go to the frontage road. Haugen stated that the City's Plan includes language that states that the City does not want to make that a straight shot to whatever businesses go there so that they would block the direct line of sight, but there will be a way to connect, through the parking lot, with interior access roads.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

**MATTER OF DISCUSSION ON 2006 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAM**

Haugen commented that back in August 2004, the MPO established a 2005/2006 Annual Work Program, and now that a year has passed, and priorities may have changed, in-fact one such change that staff is anticipating is additional funds being made available to us next year, so he would like everyone to start thinking about any additional studies you might like us to look at doing.

Haugen referred to the last page in the packet, and explained that it shows what we currently have programmed to undertake. He pointed out that staff will finish up the transportation plan, the street section, next year; will study unsignalized intersections in Grand Forks; will study our transit shelters; will finish up the Land Use Plans on both sides of the river; and will do an incident management plan to develop an annual plan to allow transportation personnel to communicate better with emergency responders. He stated that all of these projects are all programmed with funds that were identified a year ago, and, although he doesn't know the exact dollar amount yet, we will have more funds made available to us, so we can do these, as well as some additional projects. He added that if, say, Grand Forks didn't want us to do the Unsignalized Intersection study next year, we could swap that project with another project that is felt has a higher priority.

Christensen asked how the Unsignalized Intersection Study fits in with the intersection of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Haugen responded that that intersection is actually part of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Traffic Management Plan, which is currently underway right now. He added that if this study wasn't being done, then that intersection would have been included in the Unsignalized Intersection Study. Christensen asked if the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Traffic Management Plan Report would be available soon. Haugen responded it would, that a summary should be distributed either later today, or tomorrow, and will include data on that particular intersection, as well as some interim event traffic management strategies. Christensen asked if this report will tell us whether or not a signal is warranted once the CanadInn Hotel is constructed. Haugen responded that the report will actually show that a signal is warranted right now, without the CanadInn. He added that there will be a neighborhood meeting held next Tuesday evening to see if they would rather wait with the light until the CanadInn Hotel is up and operational, or would they like it sooner. He said that in addition to that issue, the meeting will also deal with trying to get some feedback as to whether or not they agree to using 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue for shuttles. He commented that the reason they need to know about shuttles is due to the fact that the Alerus will lose a large amount of parking, and large events will need to shuttle people in to them, and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the most efficient route to do this. Christensen asked where the shuttles will be staged from. Haugen responded that there is already an agreement with Altru to use their south parking lot, which has about 450 parking stalls, however this still isn't enough parking for large events; so, because the majority of the large events involves UND football and basketball, the other staging will be from UND. Malm asked if the plan indicates that they will shuttle people for nothing. Haugen responded that there will be a cost, but the question is who will absorb that cost. Malm said that is why he asked, because as soon as you put a cost on shuttling, the shuttle rides will diminish. Kerian commented that they would have to add a cost to the parking at the same time as the shuttle. Malm said that you may want to do that, but ultimately you have to find a solution that

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

drives people to do something they don't really want to do, some kind of incentive to do what they don't want to do.

Grassel asked about the possibility of putting a slip-turn in and a slip-turn out to the north, which was discussed some time ago, and whether or not that has been explored. Haugen responded that the only way the feds will allow an access onto their interstate system is at a public street, and the only public street in that vicinity is at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and our plan is for 17<sup>th</sup> to just be an overpass, and not to have an on or off ramp, but that could be changed. Gander asked, in terms of local resistance to the interchange at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, does that resistance go way up as soon as there are on and off ramps, because you are now not only dealing with local traffic, but are actually going to be bleeding off some interstate traffic through there, so would you expect a lot more local resistance in that case. Christensen responded that there has been resistance to this in the past, and that certainly won't change, so it won't be an easy issue to deal with.

Kerian asked what the time schedule is for the Land Use Plan. Haugen responded that a public hearing in the Preliminary Draft will be held in February, and final approval will be sought in March.

Christensen asked where the Merrifield Bridge Study is at. Haugen responded that the feasibility study has been completed, and does show that it is a feasible location for a bridge, however we did have to re-work the benefit costs because MNDOT changed their benefit/cost methodology, so instead of it being a 3-1 benefit/cost, it is now a 2-1 benefit/cost so it is still a strong benefit/cost structure. He added that right now the problem is that it is somewhat tied-in with the Thompson Bridge.

Haugen reported that I-29 will be reconstructed in 2009 and 2011, so an interchange at that location would be ideally done then, with or without a bridge at Merrifield.

Christensen asked, then, when we should start looking for funding for a bridge at Merrifield, do we need an earmark to get this done, how do we pursue the funding if this becomes a priority item, for the City's earmarks, and, before you answer that he is also curious about 48<sup>th</sup> Street, because he keeps hearing that we should earmark funds for that as well. Haugen responded that the issue with the Thompson Bridge is whether or not we want to invest money to replace the bridge completely, or just shore it up. He stated that he doesn't know where that study is at, what the Counties are thinking of doing with that bridge, but if they are going to replace it, it would take funding potential away from the Merrifield Bridge. He reported that because the Merrifield Bridge spans two states, coordinating funding becomes a little complicated.

Christensen asked if the two County representatives had any idea of what was going to happen with the Thompson Bridge, and if they don't know that at this time, when could we expect a decision would be made, because we need to start thinking about what we are going to do with the Merrifield Bridge.

Strandell asked if the Thompson Bridge could be repaired without increasing the width of the structure. He stated that he thought there were some requirements that need to be met to get the existing bridge up to standards. Haugen responded that that is the reason the second alternative

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

for the Pointe Bridge increased to \$4.5 million. He added that you need to define if it is a maintenance project or a reconstruction project, because if it is just a maintenance project then you don't have to bring it up to standards, and in the report he saw it sounded almost like an emergency repair situation, to shore it up.

Christensen said, then, that we have all this money here for studies, could the MPO help the Counties by doing a study of the Thompson Bridge. Haugen responded that it would be a stretch for the MPO to go out as far as the Thompson Bridge. Malm stated that, as Mr. Strandell indicated, the Counties really haven't been told what they need to do, or what the cost might be to do it, so it would seem reasonable that we find this information out, then have our engineers take a look at the project and let us know what they feel needs to be done as well.

Christensen stated that he feels the MPO needs to help the Counties with this, that they need to do a study, and he would like to know what needs to be done to get this to happen. Malm asked if they can use planning money to do this as the Thompson Bridge is located outside of the MPO study area. Christensen said that what he is trying to say is that we have this planning money, and if there is a way the MPO can help the Counties study this, we need to do it because we can't move forward on the Merrifield Bridge until a decision is made on the Thompson Bridge.

Malm commented that, if we can get the Merrifield Interchange in, that would direct, would be the incentive to really look at Merrifield, but as long as there is no interchange, that won't happen. He said that he feels the money should go toward a minimal repair job on the Thompson Bridge, because then the incentive, to most people, would be to go to Merrifield. Strandell agreed, adding that he doesn't think that people on the Polk County side want to give up the Thompson Bridge entirely, as there is about 1,000 cars crossing there daily, but they don't want to pay for a new bridge either.

Christensen said, then, that it appears that we should do a study to determine what the minimum required repairs to the Thompson Bridge would be, and we should ask our staff to give us an estimate to do it. Kerian asked if this can be done. Haugen asked if the board wants him to get clearance ahead of time, or ask for forgiveness later. Christensen asked how hard it would be to argue for clearance, he added that sometimes it's easier to ask for forgiveness instead of permission. Kerian asked what the penalty would be if we don't get clearance. Haugen responded that the ultimate penalty would be that we would have to pay 100% of the costs locally.

Haugen commented that Polk County did hire an engineer, who submitted a report, so the MPO could build off that same engineer to help us determine what the minimum repairs would be, and also enable us to have a completed study to work off of. He stated that he will talk North Dakota, who would be the lead agency for the State, and argue that this is part of our Merrifield decision making process, that we can't make the decision on Merrifield until we know what is going to happen with the Thompson Bridge, and the Counties have taken this as far as they can, so, because we are almost to the end, we are asking that they let us have clearance to do this study.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Tuesday, August 23, 2005**

Christensen stated that this would certainly work for him, and if everyone is in concurrence, we should direct staff to try to get approval from the State to do this study, and give the Finance Committee permission to approve the contract.

Grassel asked if there was a separate bonding process in Minnesota for bridges. Haugen responded there was. He explained that it is tied-back into replacement, and the State's bonding is not available for new bridges, and, in his opinion we need to tie this into the Thompson Bridge by making a decision not to replace the bridge, to take what we could have spent to replace it and put it into the Merrifield Bridge which could ultimately attract more traffic than the Thompson Bridge, thus the benefit would be greater at Merrifield than at the Thompson Bridge.

***MOVED BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO DIRECT STAFF TO SEEK APPROVAL FROM THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO COMPLETE A STUDY OF THE THOMPSON BRIDGE IN ORDER TO DETERMINE NECESSARY REPAIRS.***

*Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Gander, Kerian, and Christensen.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

Christensen asked if the only solution to get 48<sup>th</sup> done would be to get funds earmarked. Haugen responded that the simple answer is that the City of Grand Forks has some Urban Roads monies, enough to pay for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Underpass, and by 2010 you would have enough to do at least half of 48<sup>th</sup> Street as well. He added, however, that if you don't want to wait until 2010, you also have the ability to advance construct it, using local dollars, or you could shift funds from the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Underpass project to the 48<sup>th</sup> Street project. He reported that he does know that the Mayor is working with the Congressional Delegation to get earmarked funds for 48<sup>th</sup> Street as well.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2005, MEETING OF THE GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:30 P.M.***

*Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Gander, Kerian, and Christensen.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis  
Executive Assistant