

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, September 14, 2005 – 1:30 p.m.

Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A101

CALL TO ORDER

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the September 14, 2005, meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:30 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Ryan Brooks, EGF City Planner; Kent Ehrenstrom, MNDOT-Bemidji; Dean Wieland, EGF City Engineer; Wayne Lembke (Proxy for Cindy Voigt), GF City Engineer; Paul Benning, NDDOT-Bismarck (via conference call); Mark Johnson, FHWA-Bismarck (via conference call); Richard Onstad, GF County Engineer; Dennis Potter, GF City Planner; and Lane Magnuson, GF County Planner.

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

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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Chairman Haugen declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 17TH, 2005, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*A MOTION WAS MADE BY POTTER, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE THE
AUGUST 17TH, 2005, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS
SUBMITTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

MATTER OF UPDATE ON MERRIFIELD BRIDGE BENEFIT/COST ANALYSIS

Haugen reported that copies of a staff report, and memorandum from HDR, Consulting Engineers, were included in the packets. He stated that late last year the Technical Advisory Committee, and the MPO Executive Policy Board approved a Merrifield Bridge Feasibility Study, which HDR and CPS have done, and after it went through MNDOT's offices, and eventually made to one of their economic analysis personnel, they asked that we re-do it using MNDOT's Methodology. He pointed out that the staff report indicates that this has been done; and the memorandum discusses the fact that in using MNDOT's Methodology, as well as working with the OIM office in St. Paul to ensure we were doing it correctly, the benefit/cost was reduced to 2.2 versus 3.3, which was obtained using North Dakota's Methodology in the initial report.

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Haugen commented that this is all just information to bring everyone up to date with what was done, at the request of MNDOT, to show what the benefit/cost would be using their methodology versus what was in the report.

Brooks asked if both North Dakota's and Minnesota's benefit/cost analysis would be shown in the report. Haugen responded that the report has not been changed. He added that because North Dakota is our Lead Agency, we will continue to use their methodology, and that is what the report will show, however, in MNDOT's file, they will have their own methodology. He pointed out that whether you use MNDOT's or North Dakota's findings, it still shows that the cost/benefits are above 1, therefore it is still a project with benefits.

Haugen said that he would like to express his appreciation to HDR for doing this pro-bono, and to OIM for their assistance to ensure it was done correctly.

MATTER OF UPDATE ON 42ND STREET EVENT TRAFFIC INTERIM PLAN

Haugen reported that copies of a draft summary, of what is an Interim Plan for the 42nd Street Event Traffic Study, were included in the packets. He explained that earlier this year we approved the scope-of-work for this project, and in that document it stated that we were going to develop an interim plan during the construction of the Canad Hotel/Entertainment Complex, and then produce a final plan once the complex is operational, and we determine how it actually impacts traffic.

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Haugen referred to the document, explaining that the first sheet is a one-page summary that highlights our findings; the second sheet shows the difference between what it took, based on the computer modeling that SRF has done, to empty out the parking lots during events of 12,000 or more people, prior to the impact the Canad Complex will have; and the third sheet shows what the model estimates it will take to empty out the parking lots after a similar sized event, if the recommendations of the interim plan are put into place.

Haugen explained that the purpose of the interim report was to determine low cost, easily implemental strategies that can be used while construction is taking place. He stated, however, that construction has not started, therefore some of the major modifications in the report have not been put into place. He added that they aren't sure when construction will actually begin, but we do have four weekends in a row coming up during which there will be a UND football game played, which is why we had hoped construction would have already been started, so we could have observed issues that may have been created by this new complex in order to be able to make any necessary adjustments before the final plan is produced.

Haugen stated that one of the biggest hindrances that we foresee occurring during construction will be the inability to use close to 900 parking stalls. He pointed out that about 10,000 to 12,000 people attend the UND events, so the loss of 900 stalls will certainly add to the parking shortage, however, we do have agreements with Altru for off-street and shuttle parking, which will help, but we need an additional 1,800 parking stalls to accommodate events that are over 8,400 people.

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Haugen reported that this is a draft, and they are still working on clarifying things before the final is produced. He stated that the Grand Forks City Council is still discussing the 11th Avenue access/driveway onto the site, and an interim traffic signal at that intersection as well.

Wieland asked if the two persons per vehicle ratio was what was used in the original report.

Haugen responded it was not, that the original used three people per vehicle, however, that was never achieved, so, because two persons per vehicles was the most observed ratio, it was decided to go with that instead.

MATTER OF UPDATE ON EGF GATEWAY DRIVE ACCESS PLAN

Haugen reported that we do have HDR Consulting and Floan-Sanders Engineering on board to assist us in developing an access management plan for Gateway Drive in East Grand Forks. He referred to the packet, and pointed out that copies of a staff report, and the written comments we received at the public meeting, were included.

Brooks distributed copies of a map that indicates alternative access points at three locations, with one location having two alternatives, and went over it briefly. (A copy of this map is included in the packets and available upon request). He stated that all of the alternatives were discussed and supported at the public meeting. He added that MNDOT did have representatives at that meeting as well, and they expressed some concern on the right-in/right-out access on 5th Avenue N.W., stating that they feel there was an agreement that there wouldn't be a full access at this location, but we have not yet seen a copy of that agreement at this time.

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Haugen asked if, on any of the other existing intersections or access points, are there any modifications being contemplated in addition to these. Brooks responded that one of the things that may be combined with the 5th Avenue N.W. access, if it were to be approved, just to the west, would be the removal of the River Road Off-Ramp. Wieland agreed that this was something that had been discussed. He added that an access at 5th Avenue N.W. is really important, particularly for flood protection purposes.

Haugen if any alternatives were being looked at for the intersection of Highway 220 and U.S. 2, or at the intersection of 7th Avenue N.E. or 11th Avenue N.E.. Brooks responded that none were being looked at for any of these intersections at this time, however, we could certainly look at 7th Avenue N.E. at some time in the future if desired, but they are operating fine at this time.

Haugen commented that the next step will be to take these alternatives and plug them into the Synchro-Sim Traffic Model, to see how they will impact traffic flow.

Brooks stated that, even though North Dakota is the Lead Agency, he wouldn't think that they would require that we use their benefit/cost methodology when this only affects Minnesota. He asked Mr. Benning if that would that be correct. Benning responded that they should use North Dakota's benefit/cost methodology. Brooks stated, then, that they would need to use both State's methodologies.

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**MATTER OF SOLOCITATION FOR TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT
PROGRAMS FOR 2007-2010 T.I.P. SCHEDULE**

Haugen commented that even though we approved the 2006-2008 T.I.P. last month, we need to get started on our next T.I.P. process. He referred to the packets and pointed out that it included two items: 1) a cover letter from NDDOT discussing that their Transportation Enhancement Program has about \$1,000,000 available for the thirteen urban cities to compete for, and that the deadline for applications is November 10, 2005; and 2) schedule for the MPO's T.I.P. development process for the 2007-2010 years.

Haugen reported that on the North Dakota side they have started the Transportation Enhancement application process, and just received a copy of the letter Mr. Benning sent out to the urban cities asking for their solicitation of projects. He said that they will follow through on this for the street and highway urban regional projects. He went on to explain that they are not quite ready to begin solicitations on the Minnesota side yet, but he knows that there is a meeting scheduled with the ATP on September 29th, and he thinks they will begin solicitation after that meeting.

Haugen stated that this means that the 2007-2010 T.I.P. process is off and running, and everyone has local processes you need to go through to get projects submitted to the MPO. He referred to the schedule pages, and reminded everyone that these are the dates that the MPO needs to receive projects in order for them to forward them to the State Agencies. He added that they also just received a letter from North Dakota approving our 2006-2008 T.I.P., and that he did receive

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Mr. Benning's e-mail this morning asking for some additional information, which he will get to him as soon as possible.

Haugen reported that there will be some new programs that will be coming on board somewhere down the road, and this doesn't attempt to cover what those programs' processes will be in their timelines, so keep in mind that there will be some additional funds available by the end of this T.I.P. process, and we will need to act accordingly.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Employment Data

Benning commented that he has been working with the MPO in trying to collect some employment data, specifically with Julie Romig. He explained that Ms. Romig requested some information, which, in the past, they were able to obtain through a gentleman at Job Service, however, he is no longer there, and the person he talked to now has stated that he will need to talk to their attorney before giving any such information out, so he hasn't been able to get the information yet. He said that he did get a voice mail from him yesterday, but has been out of the office and hasn't been able to get back to him, but he did say that he talked to his attorney, however didn't give any information so he is assuming that he was told that he cannot give any information out. He stated that he would get in touch with him to find out if that is in-fact the case, and will continue to try to get this employment data for you somehow.

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2. Grand Forks Land-Use Open House

Haugen referred to a copy of the news release, included in the packet, and explained that announces an open house Thursday, September 15th, 2005, from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Alerus Center on the Grand Forks Land Use Plan.

ADJOURN

MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY WIELAND, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2005, TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:00 P.M.. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis

Executive Assistant