

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

**Friday, May 5, 2006 – 12:00 Noon
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A102**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Doug Christensen called the May 5th, 2006, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board at 12:03 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

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

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

Guests present were: Wayne Lembke, Grand Forks City Traffic Engineer and Brad Gengler, Grand Forks City Planner.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairman Christensen declared a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 14TH, 2006 MINUTES

MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 14TH, 2006, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.

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

Voting Nay: None.

MATTER OF AWARDED CONTRACT FOR STREET AND HIGHWAY PLAN UPDATE

Haugen referred to the packet, pointing out that copies of the proposed scope of work were included, and added that the RFP was submitted in January. He stated that the selection committee consisted of staff from both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, as well as from the MPO.

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Haugen reported that the selection committee interviewed URS Consulting, whose sub is Houston Engineering, and are recommending approval. He explained that while URS was the only firm to submit a proposal, through discussions with NDDOT, they were reassured that URS was a very competent firm, and have, in-fact been working a lot in Bismarck and Mandan recently. He added that Bill Troe, Project Manager for URS, was involved in the 1991 Street and Highway Plan for Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, so they do have a history of working with us as well.

Haugen commented that the key items in the scope-of-work include: 1) meeting SAFETEA-LU requirements; 2) addressing some of the operational issues; 3) update and create a computer model of our signal timing in order to try to get better signal coordination; 5) look at a central spine concept in East Grand Forks for the north/south connection of roadway from the Louie Murray Bridge to Central Avenue; and 6) determine how to fulfill SAFETEA-LU's requirement for more public involvement.

Haugen stated that the recommended action is to award URS the contract to perform the Street and Highway Plan Update, at an amount not to exceed \$195,000. He added that the timeline for this project does occur over a two year period, to be completed in May 2007. He stated that we did program \$120,000 for this this year, and will program the remaining in 2007, for a completion date of July 2007.

Kerian asked why we only received one proposal. Haugen responded that one of the things that SAFETEA-LU has created is more work for the consultant when doing studies, therefore, because we are the most remote MPO for most of these consultants, and they want to stay closer to home, we had less proposals than before. He added that another thing that SAFETEA-LU provides, not so much for us, but more for the other MPOs in other states is more money to do more, and smaller duration studies.

MOVED BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY BEAUCHAMP, TO APPROVE ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT WITH URS TO UPDATE THE STREET/HIGHWAY PLAN OF THE MPO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$195,000.

***Voting Aye: Kerian, Christensen, Kweit, Grassel, Beauchamp, Malm, and Strandell.
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF AWARDED CONTRACT FOR GRAND FORKS DOWNTOWN
PARKING STUDY**

Brooks reported that interviews were conducted on Tuesday, May 2nd, 2006. He explained that they did receive four proposals, but only interviewed the top two firms, of which ND LEA, Inc., whose sub-consultant is EAPC, which is a local contact, was the unanimous choice of the selection committee.

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Brooks stated that once the committee made their selection they opened up the cost estimate, which is our practice, and found that ND LEA had an estimate of \$45,000, which was \$10,000 over our budgeted amount of \$35,000, so negotiations were held, with the result being ND LEA's willingness to lower their costs to \$40,000. He added that they will be looking at trying to get the additional \$5,000 from other sources.

Brooks distributed copies of an amended staff report, and reported that the proposed work plan is attached. He referred to that document, going over it briefly, and pointing out that the three tasks that will be performed include: 1) data gathering; 2) parking plan; and 3) recommendations and deliverables. He added that public involvement is an important component of this study, as it is with all of our studies, and they will be doing some various forms of public consultation, including some stakeholder interviews, and hosting two open houses, in order to get input from the public.

Brooks stated that ND LEA has lots of parking experience, and have done studies in Fargo and Winnipeg, and have dealt with issues that are similar to ours, therefore, it is felt that they will be a good fit for us on this study. He added that EAPC, who is our local contact, has done parking in Grand Forks in the past as well, therefore the committee is recommending we enter into a contract with ND LEA, not to exceed \$40,000, to perform our downtown parking study.

Christensen commented that at the City Council meeting there was some conversation regarding studying the funding of parking downtown. Brooks responded that that is one piece of this study. Christensen asked if it was included in the scope of work. Brooks responded it was. He added that ND LEA was the only firm that actually addressed this issue, which was included in the RFP. He stated that Greg Hoover also asked them a lot of questions regarding this during the interview as well.

Christensen asked when this study would be completed. Brooks responded that ND LEA estimates the process will take them 14 weeks, which would put us at roughly mid-August. He stated that in any event, we would probably not be implementing the plan until next year, but by early August we should have a very good understanding of where we need to be.

Christensen asked if two public meetings would be enough. Brooks reminded the board that there are four steering committee meetings scheduled as well, which will allow the key stakeholders to be involved as well. He said that this means there will actually be six total meetings.

Haugen referred to ND LEA's schedule, and pointed out that the month of May will involve a lot of data gathering, and will, in-fact, entail doing the utilization study in which they will be canvassing all of the parking in the downtown to get the utilization rates. He went on to explain that in June a lot of discussion about the alternatives, how to improve the parking in the downtown, will take place; and then all this will be put

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together for finalization in August. He stated that this means that by June we should be able to have some good, healthy discussion on alternatives.

Brooks commented that the steering committee will be assisting as we go along, and will have a lot of this information, so they will be very involved in the entire process.

MOVED BY BEAUCHAMP, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT WITH ND LEA TO PERFORM THE GRAND FORKS DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000.

***Voting Aye: Kerian, Christensen, Kweit, Grassel, Beauchamp, Malm, and Strandell.
Voting Nay: None.***

MATTER OF ADVERTISING TO FILL VACANT SENIOR PLANNER POSITION

Haugen reported, with regret, that Julie Romig will be vacating her position with the MPO. He explained that Ms. Romig's husband has accepted a faculty position at Texas State University, in the Geography Department, and they will be moving there, therefore he is requesting approval to advertise to fill this position as soon as possible.

MOVED BY KERIAN, SECONDED BY BEAUCHAMP, TO APPROVE ADVERTISING TO FILL THE SENIOR PLANNER POSITION.

***Voting Aye: Kerian, Christensen, Kweit, Grassel, Beauchamp, Malm, and Strandell.
Voting Nay: None.***

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY BEAUCHAMP, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 5TH, 2006, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:15 P.M.

***Voting Aye: Kerian, Christensen, Kweit, Grassel, Beauchamp, Malm, and Strandell.
Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis
Executive Assistant