

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 10th, 2007 – 1:30 p.m.
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A-102**

CALL TO ORDER

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the October 10th, 2007, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:35 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: John Thompson, Grand Forks Assistant City Engineer; Teri Nelson (Proxy for Nancy Ellis), East Grand Forks City Planner; Brad Gengler, Grand Forks City Planner; Paul Benning (via conference call), NDDOT-Bismarck; Dean Wieland, East Grand Forks Consulting Engineer; Dale Bergman, Transportation Superintendent; Les Noehre, NDDOT-Grand Forks; and Ed Pavlish, NDDOT-Grand Forks.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, MPO Executive Director and Peggy McNelis, MPO Executive Assistant.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Haugen declared a quorum was present.

INTRODUCTIONS

Haugen noted that there is a new member present. Noehre introduced Ed Pavlish, and explained that Mr. Pavlish is the new Assistant North Dakota Department of Transportation District Engineer. Haugen welcomed Mr. Pavlish, and asked that everyone please introduce themselves.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2007 MINUTES OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MOVED BY THOMPSON, SECONDED BY WIELAND, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2007, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF CENTRAL AVENUE (MN 220 NO.) STUDY UPDATE

Haugen explained that a representative from JLG was supposed to attend this afternoon's meeting, however, as they are not yet here, he will attempt to give a brief overview himself.

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Haugen reported that copies of the staff report, and presentation materials that JLG used at a couple steering committee meetings, and the open house that was held recently, were included in the packets. He referred to the colored drawings, and pointed out that the first one, Figure 1 deals with urban design considerations. He stated that one of the things that the steering committee has been talking to the consultants about is the fact that this corridor has a lack of urban design. He explained that they feel there is no real consistency, or focus, and, in-fact, there are a lot of mixed uses and designs taking place along the corridor, as well as no bike/ped facilities, and they would like to see these issues addressed in some way. He commented that a part of the study involves bringing in some design considerations using streetscaping to try to soften the corridor, and these drawings illustrate some of the ways this can be done.

Haugen referred to Figure 2, and pointed out that it illustrates one of two concepts that JLG presented as a way to approach the issues of the wide-expansive right-of-way, and the frontage road being too close to the mainline intersections. He explained that in order to deal with those issues they have come up with the concept of putting in a backage road, which would basically entail the removal of the frontage road along the corridor, and instead place all of the access, etc., that the frontage road is currently serving to the rear of the properties.

Haugen reported, however, that in the traffic analysis they did include an aerial photo that illustrates how the backage concept would impact existing buildings, etc.. He commented that if they were able to do this using a clean slate, so to speak, it would have more promise, but since that isn't the case, and there are existing buildings and businesses that impede the backage concept, it probably isn't a real viable option. He then referred to Figure 3, and explained that it actually illustrates a way we can work with the existing frontage road, however, they do suggest reducing the width of the road. He stated that the current width of the frontage roads is roughly 40-feet, and with this concept they would be reduced to 24-feet, which would help eliminate the parking concerns that are currently a problem.

Haugen referred to Figure 4, the typical cross sections, and commented that as he mentioned before, there is a lack of bike/ped facilities along this corridor, so by reducing the pavement width of the frontage road it would create excess right-of-way that could be used to install a sidewalk or bikepath, as well as some landscaping locations along the corridor.

Haugen stated that when staff and the consultants met with the steering committee to present these various concepts, the committee did say that they would prefer the backage option if it were at all possible to do, but because it isn't really a viable option, their second choice would be to reduce the width of the frontage road to eliminate the parking concerns. He added that, as happens with many committees, when given two options, they like various portions of each option, so they asked the consultant to try to do a hybrid of the two. He explained that when you look at the aerial photo you see that there is an alley that serves at least a portion of the roadway on the east side, which would allow an opportunity to do the backage concept on at least that portion of the roadway. He pointed out that there is also more separation between some of the existing businesses that front 220, and the mobile home park where they might be able to squeeze some in, and also a lot of open space near the Technical College, so the committee has

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asked the consultant to look at a hybrid concept that would reduce the width of the frontage road on the west side, and add a backage road on the east side of the corridor.

Haugen stated that he would now like to cover the traffic operations portion of the study. He reported that the traffic operation consultant on this project is SRF, and that copies of the 2035 Traffic Volume Analysis figures were included in the packet. He pointed out that the figures do indicate that we do have some intersections that will have some issues during peak hours. He referred to the drawings, and went over them briefly.

Haugen referred to Figure 3, and pointed out that it suggests traffic signalization at 17th and 23rd. He then referred to Figures 5 and 6, and stated that they suggest modifications be made to 15th Street, specifically that it become a right-in/right-out intersection instead of the three-legged, full turning movement intersection it currently is. He added that this is also suggested for 20th Street as well.

Haugen stated that the new backage road intersections are shown on Figure 6, and Figure 7 shows the same concept for PM peak hours as well.

Thompson asked if the nature of the closure on the east side, in the event a backage road is put in, would involve an island that would only allow right-in/and right-out movements. Haugen responded that that would be correct.

Haugen reported that MNDOT has an access management plan for the trunk highway system, and those right-in/right-out movements would bring that corridor into compliance with their access spacing guidelines. He added that MNDOT is a member of the steering committee, and after the last discussion SRF was asked to consider using roundabouts at the locations they are suggesting have traffic signals installed.

Haugen stated that the last issue the study deals with is how to address the different mixture of land uses, and that is something the steering committee is still wrestling with. He said that they probably do have a desire for different types of land uses along this corridor, but they also have a desire not to displace those businesses that have been there for some time, so that is something that is still being discussed. He added that he does know that there is an opportunity for a couple of things to happen that could help bring in some of the land uses they would like to see here. He explained that the area between 17th and 20th Streets, which currently has some potato warehouses located on the property, is being considered for some townhomes; and the Northwest Technical College is also looking at possible expansion of their facilities, mostly on the east side of the existing facility; and the northwest quadrant of the 23rd Street/220 North intersection is also being looked at by Crary Development for a retail/residential development.

Haugen reported that the study isn't quite complete yet. He explained that the study area does actually go out another mile to the flood protection line, which is the next mile up from 23rd Street, and should look at how developments such as the proposed Crary Development would

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interact with the corridor, and to identify how the existing residential land uses along the east side of the corridor could be compiled into a better access plan for the entire corridor.

Haugen referred to the staff report, and pointed out that the next open house will be held on October 29th, most likely at the Technical College, which is where the last one was held.

MATTER OF MINNESOTA SCHEDULE FOR 2008-2012 T.I.P.

Haugen reported that at the last meeting North Dakota's T.I.P. schedule was distributed, however Minnesota's schedule had not been completed yet, so was not distributed at that time. He stated that the schedule has now been completed, and is included in the packets.

Haugen referred to the schedule, and went over it briefly. He stated that, essentially, all of the projects for the Minnesota side need to be submitted to the MPO by January 2, 2008, which will allow staff to submit it to the Northwest Area Transportation Partnership, or the MNDOT District office by January 21, 2008.

Haugen referred to a copy of letter from Jim Bittman, MNDOT Planning Engineer, and pointed out that the last paragraph mentions that the HSIP program is still in the process of being developed. He explained that this program will no longer be awarded through a local selection process, but will instead be centrally solicited and selected instead.

Haugen commented that by March of 2008, they hope to have a draft T.I.P. available. He stated that a public hearing for approval of that document will be held at the April Technical Advisory Committee meeting, and then final approval will be solicited in June or July 2008.

Haugen stated that there are some projects due November 7th: The Safe Routes To School Program and the Transportation Enhancement Program in North Dakota, and the Safe Routes To School Program in Minnesota. He said that the Technical Advisory Committee will then, at their November 14th meeting, consider those projects and forward them on to the respective agency for their consideration. He added that the first Wednesday in December is when the remaining North Dakota projects are due for processing and submittal to Bismarck; and January 2nd is when the Safe Routes To School project for Minnesota is due for processing and submittal to MNDOT.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Collector/Collector Intersection Study Consultant Selection

Haugen stated that last month we talked about our Collector/Collector Intersection Study, and our hope of having a consultant on board, and we did hire MMM Group (formally ND Lea). He explained that earlier, before the meeting started, we did have a brief discussion on roundabouts, which will be one of the tools that will be looked at as part of our traffic control strategies for these collector/collector intersections.

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2. School Crossing Traffic Control Device Strategy Study

Haugen reported that it is expected that the MPO Executive Policy Board will approve entering into a contract with Ultieg Engineering to do our School Crossing Traffic Control Device Strategy Study.

3. 2008 MPO Annual Unified Work Program

Haugen commented that he hopes to have a final 2008 MPO Annual Unified Work Program completed for consideration by the Technical Advisory Committee at their November meeting. He stated that he did identify that in our current work program we show the 47th Avenue Interchange Justification Report project as being programmed, however that is no longer going to be done, and in it's place we will be looking at doing an ITS Regional Architecture Update, as well as a couple other projects that were previously being considered.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY GENGLER, SECONDED BY THOMPSON, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 10TH, 2007, MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:05 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Executive Assistant