

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Council Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Secretary, called the January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:12 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Punky Beauchamp, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Art Bakken, Greg Leigh, Dick Grassel, Steve Adams, and Doug Christensen.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Secretary Malm declared a quorum was present.

**ELECTION OF CHAIR FO FULFILL REMAINDER OF PAST CHAIR'S TERM (EGF REPRESENTATIVE)**

Secretary Malm opened the floor for nominations of an East Grand Forks Representative to fulfill Steve Gander's term as chairman.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO NOMINATE PUNKY BEAUCHAMP TO REPLACE STEVE GANDER AS CHAIRMAN OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF HIS TERM.***

There were no other nominations.

Secretary Malm closed the nominations.

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Beauchamp assumed the chair.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE AND LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO STEVE  
GANDER**

Chairman Beauchamp read a letter of appreciation for Steve Gander into the record. A copy of the letter and a plaque were presented to Mr. Gander in appreciation for his years of service and dedication to the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization, and to the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>,  
2007 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, and Adams.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF SAFETEA-LU COMPLIANCE LETTER FROM NDDOT**

Haugen reported that back in November, when we adopted the 2035 Street and Highway and Long Range Transportation Plan we knew that our federal and state partners would like the chance to review our documents to ensure that we are in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

Haugen referred to a copy of a letter he received from NDDOT, dated December 27, 2007, and explained that it discusses some issues that they would like us to clarify, identifies some things they would like to see us emphasize more with our next go-around, and provides a timeline for our next update.

Haugen commented that the letter has a list of comments or additions that need to be clarified in the current draft Long Range Transportation Plan by April 1, 2008. He stated that staff doesn't have any problems or concerns with any of the issues listed. He added that one thing we will have to do is to schedule a public hearing sometime before April 1, 2008, to formally adopt everything into one document.

Haugen reported that the only other thing we need to do is to make some adjustments to our work program to include a freight study document, and this needs to be done by May 1, 2009, so we will be working with them to get this done.

Christensen reported present.

**MATTER OF 2009-2012 MINNESOTA T.I.P. PROJECT SUBMITTALS**

Haugen referred to the monitors, and explained that the East Grand Forks City Council has approved a request to do some sidewalk improvements across US #2. He referred to the front page of the application and pointed out that the total project cost is just under \$200,000, with the

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

federal request being just under \$150,000. He said that this project is programmed to be done in 2012.

Haugen referred to drawings of the proposed sidewalk additions and went over them briefly. He commented that MNDOT has requested a connection along the frontage road, west to connect with the existing sidewalk, which will also connect with the full intersection at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. when it completed in 2010.

Haugen referred to photos of the existing pedestrian islands along the corridor and stated that they are not currently full ADA compliant so they will most likely need to be replaced with newer structures. He added that we do have existing ped-heads and it is possible that they may be augmented with count-down numbers. He stated that we are still expecting MNDOT to send a letter of support for this application so that when we go before the ATP it will be competing against other T.E. projects from the Northwest part of Minnesota. He added that they should have a pretty good idea if this will be funded or not by the end of February.

Haugen reported that East Grand Forks is on a rotation scheduled with Thief River Falls, Bemidji, and Crookston for the City Sub-Target pot of monies, so they only get those monies every four years. He stated that in 2010 the City will receive those funds for the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. full intersection, so until 2014 you won't see much for city projects in our T.I.P. process.

Grassel referred to the map, and asked about the section of Business Highway #2 from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Highway 2, whether or not it will have an overlay this summer. Haugen responded that it would. He added that the only other application they received for the 2009-2012 T.I.P. cycle was from MNDOT to do an overlay of Highway 220, from where it currently connects with US 2 south to Climax. He stated that part of this is within the MPO's study area, which is why it is before us today. He added that the information we have received from MNDOT does not have a cost attached at this time. He explained that one of the reasons for this is due to our asking them to consider adjusting the intersection of the old 220 and the new 220.

Haugen commented that this has been presented to the Technical Advisory Committee, who, along with staff, recommend approval.

Strandell asked if there was a timetable for the mill and overlay. Haugen responded that it would occur in 2012.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2009-2012 MINNESOTA PROJECT APPLICATION AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY RANKING.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, Adams, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

Haugen reported that he sent everyone an e-mail earlier regarding correspondence he received from MNDOT discussing their request for the ATP to prepare itself for a possible 15% reduction

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

in funding in 2009. He explained that in his e-mail he did identify that he doesn't expect that reduction to impact East Grand Forks, or other projects within our MPO area in 2009, however it could impact our 2010 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. project. He stated that this is still up in the air at this time, but we should be prepared in the event it does occur.

**MATTER OF RFP FOR DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that in the MPO's Annual Work Program for 2008 we identified that we would do an update of the downtown plans for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. He commented that, as noted in the scope of work, we still have the 1994 River Forks Plan as part of each City's adopted comprehensive plan, however since the flood of 1997 there have been several recovery documents prepared, and in 2002 the MPO did a traffic circulation update so it was felt that this would be the appropriate time to prepare one concise downtown plan for both cities. He added that in addition to this update, Grand Forks has also programmed traffic signal coordination improvements along DeMers Avenue in their next T.I.P. program so this study will help identify and solidify what the project will entail as well as cost estimates to implement it.

Haugen commented that there are some additional issues that this study will address, at the request of both communities; including downtown parking issues for both cities, downtown design guidelines for Grand Forks, and traffic circulation and components for both cities.

Haugen stated that there is a deadline of March 3<sup>rd</sup> for proposals to be submitted, and we hope to have a consultant on board by mid-March, and completion of the study at the end of 2008.

Haugen referred to a map of the proposed study area for this update and stated that there is one modification on the East Grand Forks side that needs to be implemented. He explained that because most of the BN Triangle has been developed we will most likely move the boundary down and include just the one undeveloped tract of the property remaining.

Haugen reported that once they come up with a recommended plan it would be processed as a comprehensive plan amendment through both cities planning commissions and city councils prior to coming back to the Executive Policy Board for final approval.

Beauchamp referred to the study area map and commented that the housing area across from the pool is currently included but you are now suggesting that it be removed, correct. Haugen responded that he is not suggesting that. Beauchamp asked that Mr. Haugen show where he is suggesting the boundary be moved. Haugen responded that he misunderstood Mr. Beauchamp's question, that when he asked if the housing area were going to be removed he thought he was inferring that the homes would be removed, but that is in-fact the area he is suggesting be changed on the map. He referred to the map and pointed out the boundary line he is suggesting be moved. Beauchamp commented that the reason he asked is because of future planning. He explained that there was a time when the people that lived in those homes would get very upset if anyone even mentioned development, but since the flood those homes have been bought and sold to others, and some owners have asked to be bought out so maybe for long range planning he

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

would think that that area should be included in the study area. Haugen agreed that having the consultants look at potential redevelopment of this area wouldn't impact the study much.

Christensen commented that this is a \$110,000 project. He asked what the MPO's total budget is for 2008. Haugen responded that it is just shy of \$600,000. Christensen asked, besides salaries, what studies do we have planned because this one study will use about 25 to 30 percent of the budget. Haugen responded that the other studies we have planned for 2008 include the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor study, an update to our ITS Regional Architecture Plan, a Signal Coordination Study of the arterial roadways, and now with the NDDOT compliance requirements a Freight Study document will need to be prepared. Leigh asked if this study was included in the budget when it was set. Haugen responded that it was.

Christensen asked if the MPO helped pay for the Land Use and Extraterritorial Study. Haugen responded that the MPO did fund primarily all of that work, and all of the code revision work that was done for Grand Forks as well.

Christensen asked if this study would include all of the renaissance zone areas in Grand Forks as well. Haugen responded that there are some renaissance areas that are outside of the study area. Christensen asked if the northwest boundary includes all of the renaissance zoned area plus some additional land. Haugen responded that it does not include the renaissance zoned area to the northwest. Christensen asked, then, that the boundary line be extended to include all of the renaissance zoned areas since it wouldn't make much sense to have a plan for the downtown uses when we have the renaissance zone available. He added that he would also like to know if the study would also include the ET area in East Grand Forks, if it is even germane. Beauchamp stated that he doesn't have a problem with not included that because this isn't so much about rezoning as it is about ideas on how to improve the area. Haugen responded that the boundary does extend to the south, and does have a larger footprint than what has traditionally been considered the downtown area. Beauchamp commented that he just sees this as a continuation of the River Forks Plan. He stated that the MPO spent a lot of money doing the River Forks Plan, and then the flood hit and the River Forks Commission was basically disbanded and each City kind of did it's own thing for a while by creating their own downtown design plans, and while some of the things created in the River Forks Plan were implemented into the East Grand Forks Downtown Plan, some were not so anything that can be done to improve the attractiveness of the downtowns is welcome.

Christensen asked if East Grand Forks' campground is included in the study. Beauchamp stated that it probably wouldn't need to be. Christensen said that if he lived in East Grand Forks he would want his campground looked at because if there are some things you would like to see done with it, and you could get funding to do those things by including it in the study, he would want it included. Beauchamp asked if there were opportunities for federal dollars to go to the campground. Haugen responded that the campground is one facility that wouldn't have a lot of traffic issues involved with it so he would have to say no. He added that it is already there and how it plays with the other downtown development is already identified in the RFP but not shown in the study area.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

Christensen stated that what he was concerned about is that this is a \$110,000 study, and he noticed that there are supposed to be three meetings with the group of people that have been selected to do this, so it seems to be a kind of in-house thing and he just wants to make sure there are more public meetings, that there is more opportunity for public input to get ideas from people that don't just sit in rooms all day, and that is why he would like the Grand Forks side extended to include it's renaissance zone areas, but if East Grand Forks doesn't want it's campground included that is up to them. Grassel responded that he doesn't think there would be anything wrong with including the campground but it is owned by the State of Minnesota so in order to get funding to do anything with it the City of East Grand Forks has to go to St. Paul and lobby for it.

Beauchamp asked who would be invited to the public meetings. Haugen responded that the meetings are open to both the downtown business owners and the general public. He explained that there are up to seven steering committee meetings scheduled, which would be advertised well in advance for participation by the general public, and at least ten separate meetings of just the consultants as well.

Malm stated that everytime we do something like this he sees a new line drawn on a map and he would like to know if there has ever been any coordination between what is considered the downtown area and the River Forks Plan to establish certain boundaries on both sides of the river. Haugen responded that the boundary shown on the map is what was used in the River Forks Plan. He added that for the most part all of the other study documents developed have used that with the exception of the ren zone which allowed more blocks than what the study area map shows could be included, otherwise everything else has been following these boundaries. Malm stated, then that Mr. Christensen is suggesting that we should include that particular zone because otherwise something may be left out, and it doesn't go that much further in any event, but if East Grand Forks isn't concerned about including the campground since the State has jurisdiction, that is up to them. Christensen agreed, but added that if you are lobbying for something in the campground, and you need ammunition, including it in the study may help with that, and it won't cost anymore to include it.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RFP SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE SUBJECT TO THE INCLUSION OF ANY EXISTING AND ANY PROPOSED EXTENSIONS OF THE GRAND FORKS RENAISSANCE ZONE TO THE SOUTH AND/OR TO THE NORTHWEST, AND THE EAST GRAND FORKS CAMPGROUND.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, Adams, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF RFP FOR MINNESOTA/4<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY UPDATE**

Ellis reported that this will be an update of a 1994 study that was done by the MPO. She commented that the 1994 study did look at the deteriorating pavement and the intersection at

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

Belmont and 4<sup>th</sup>, which it adequately addressed at that time. She said that what they are proposing is that they take the 1994 study and update it as the pavement is continuing to deteriorate. She explained that a mitigation plan was developed in 1994, which at this time is not being followed, and because things have changed somewhat since the flood of 1997 it is felt that we now need to go back and address those changes and determine what needs to be done now to deal with the issues concerning this corridor.

Ellis stated that the study will cover that area from the Pointe Bridge to Cherry Street. Leigh asked what the major differences are between the 1994 study and this one. Ellis responded that in 1994 there were some ideas in the Street and Highway Plan as to where new bridges would be located, and now we have a better idea of what may actually occur in terms of additional bridges in the future. She added that they also discussed intersection concerns at Belmont and 4<sup>th</sup> and how to address the granitoid issue in the 1994 plan, and because so many things have changed, such as different homeowners, different members on the Historical Preservation Society, and state representatives, it was felt that an update was necessary. Christensen stated that this study is the result of Mr. Grassel asking that it be revisited.

Discussion ensued.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY BAKKEN, TO APPROVE THE  
MINNESOTA/FOURTH AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY RFP.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, Adams, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Thompson Bridge Funding

Haugen commented that he did talk to Mr. Strandell earlier regarding the article in today's Grand Forks Herald concerning Minnesota Governor Pawlenty's proposal that does include some funding for the Thompson Bridge. He asked if Mr. Strandell had anything to add to this.

Strandell stated that he hasn't seen anymore than what has been in the news, but he does know that the first proposal they got through the Association of Minnesota Counties included a considerable amount of traffic and transportation issues, mostly within the Twin Cities area, so this latest \$7,000,000 was apparently in the Governor's Bonding Proposal rather than in the Transportation Bonding Program, so we are now waiting to hear more information on it.

Beauchamp asked what the total cost is of the bridge. Strandell responded that the estimated cost of the bridge is \$9,000,000. Malm agreed, but added that when you add the approaches it could be higher. Strandell stated that in the funding arrangement it is his understanding that local government is liable for about 20% of the total cost, which comes to about \$1,000,000 apiece for each of the two counties. Haugen reported that the way it is listed in the Governor's Bonding

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

proposal is that the Thompson Bridge would receive \$7,000,000, shared with North Dakota, so the question is what does “shared with North Dakota” mean, does it mean they are going to allow North Dakota to benefit from the full \$7,000,000 and not contribute to the cost, or what. He stated, however, that at least it is in someone’s proposal to get funded.

Information only.

2. E-Mails Concerning National Surface Transportation Policy And Revenue Study Commission And How To Move Forward With Our National Transportation System

Haugen explained that this is just like the bonding proposal above in that it has the legislative process to go through yet. He stated that our current authorization ends in 2009, and there are issues with the current revenue coming in, so congress asked he National Commission to come up with a proposal, and this is the result of that request.

Information only.

3. New Meeting Dates

Haugen commented that with a new chairperson in place he will work on setting a new meeting schedule and get that out to everyone as soon as possible. He added that in most instances the board will meet the third week of each month. Beauchamp asked if Thursdays worked for everyone. Consensus was that it did so Mr. Haugen will develop a meeting schedule for the third Thursday of each month unless otherwise required.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2008, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:51 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Beauchamp, Malm, Strandell, Grassel, Bakken, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Executive Assistant