

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

**Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Council Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Punky Beauchamp, Chairman, called the June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:03 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Punky Beauchamp, Don Diedrich (Proxy for Warren Strandell), Art Bakken, Dick Grassel, Greg Leigh, and Doug Christensen.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Ali Rood, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Beauchamp declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MAY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2008, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY DIEDRICH, TO APPROVE THE MAY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2008 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Diedrich, Bakken, Leigh, and Beauchamp.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF NDDOT JARC/NEW FREEDOM APPLICATION**

Haugen distributed copies of updated cost estimates for the JARC and New Freedom projects that the City of Grand Forks is submitting. He explained that JARC stands for Job Access Reverse Commute, and New Freedom is a program for the use of transit projects that help the disabled and elderly.

Haugen referred to the staff report, and pointed out that it identifies that the City of Grand Forks' Cities Area Transit (CAT) is applying for JARC funds to be used to continue their Route 12/13; and for New Freedom funds to allow them to extend their Saturday night bus service to start at 4:00 p.m. and run until 10:00 p.m.; and to purchase a Dial-A-Ride vehicle. He stated that all three of these projects are consistent with the Human Services Coordination Plan we adopted a

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couple of years ago, and was approved by the Human Services Coordination Committee, staff, and the City Council. He added that because of the very tight timeline, the Technical Advisory Committee was not given the opportunity to review and approve this application, but staff is recommending that the MPO Executive Policy Board approve it.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY BAKKEN, TO APPROVE THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS' APPLICATION FOR NDDOT JARC AND NEW FREEDOM FUNDS AS SUBMITTED***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Diedrich, Bakken, Leigh, and Beauchamp.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON CENTRAL AVENUE STUDY**

Haugen referred to the staff report and pointed out that it identifies where we are at in the process. He explained that the East Grand Forks City Council sent this study back to the East Grand Forks Planning Commission for further review, and their first meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. He reported that once the Planning Commission has determined what, if any changes need to be made to the study the revised study will be presented to the steering committee and business group. He stated that a public hearing will then be held in either August or September and the revised study presented to the City Council for their approval. He said that once the City Council approves the document, it will finally then be submitted to this board for it's approval.

Leigh asked, when you talk about putting in a bikepath along this corridor, was the possibility of putting it behind the businesses rather than on either the easement or on the road itself ever explored. Haugen responded that Ms. Ellis will actually be presenting that alternative at the meeting on Monday. He added, however, that it is somewhat more viable on the east side of the corridor than the west side as there are more impediments on the west side that would have to be contended with.

Grassel reported that the East Grand Forks City Council held a public hearing last Tuesday evening regarding the repair of the section of frontage road between 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, which is in terrible shape. He stated that there will be further discussion on what should be done, but he is sure the project will be done this year.

Information only.

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

Haugen reported that the Executive Policy Board did receive, via e-mail, notification of the next meeting on the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Study. He added that copies of a newsletter, reporting what has already transpired concerning this study, were also sent out.

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Haugen referred to the staff report, and commented that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, adding that the Steering Committee will meet at 2:00, and then an open house will take place at 5:30 at Phoenix Elementary. He stated that KLJ, the consultant working on the study, will be attending both meetings and will be proposing concept alternatives to address the possibility of removing the granitoid and how to mitigate that removal. He said that staff would be providing this body with those concepts once they receive them from KLJ, either later today or tomorrow in order to allow you to review them prior to the meetings.

Grassel asked if the study discusses widening 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue at all. Haugen responded that there isn't a need to do so, at least from a traffic standpoint, but that isn't saying that it wouldn't be widened for other reasons, so he isn't sure if that issue will be addressed or not at this time. Grassel asked if anything was planned to address the curve where Minnesota and 4<sup>th</sup> connect. Haugen responded that even the current document addressed this issue, however since that document was done in 1994, particularly since the watermains went out to the Industrial Park, modifications were added and KLJ is looking at that information to determine whether or not it is still viable or if further modifications are required. Leigh asked if a portion of the existing park would be removed in order to do this. Haugen responded that a portion of the park would need be removed. Leigh asked if any of the granitoid, should it be removed, would be saved for historical purposes. Haugen responded that many different suggestions have been made as to how we can best preserve some of the granitoid. He added that when the watermains were put in several segments of the granitoid were removed, and some of it was put into storage already.

Haugen reported that there is a movement, locally, to try to get the City of Grand Forks to come to an agreement with both the Grand Forks and State Historical Preservation Societies to really focus in on 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, where the pavement is in much better condition than elsewhere along the corridor, and let the rest of the granitoid be removed, but this hasn't been accomplished at this time.

Information only.

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON DOWNTOWN PLAN STUDY**

Haugen reported that last week several public meetings were held on the Downtown Plan Study. He stated that these meetings were well attended, and a lot of good feedback was received, including the fact that everyone seems to feel that the consultants doing the study are doing a very good job.

Information only.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Haugen reported that this is just a follow-up. He reminded the board that at their last meeting he informed everyone that the MPO had been given an April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline to submit materials to the DOT showing that we had, in-fact, complied with SAFETEA-LU requirements. He said that they finally responded, and did concur that our Long Range Transportation Plan is in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

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Information only.

Christensen reported present.

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON THE SCHEDULING OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE  
KENNEDY AND SORLIE BRIDGES**

Haugen reported that an additional packet was distributed to all of the members the other day regarding an update on the scheduling of improvements to the Kennedy and Sorlie Bridges. He added that he also e-mailed prior e-mail exchanges made between MNDOT and NDDOT officials concerning the issue of replacing the Kennedy Bridge.

Haugen commented that the main concern noted in those e-mails is the fact that North Dakota's annual bridge program is allocated \$8,000,000, and if MNDOT's estimate of \$70,000,000 or more for the North Dakota Share of replacement of the Kennedy bridge is correct, it would take all of the their ten-year program.

Haugen stated that another thing to keep in mind is that under the federal funding program, neither the Sorlie nor the Kennedy would be eligible for federal funds for replacment. He said that Minnesota plans on replacing them with their state funds, and are identifying one of the causes for them needing to be replaced as being fracture critical structures. He commented that there is a difference of opinion on the need for replacing these bridges, particularly the Kennedy, at this time, although North Dakota might be a little more receptive to replacing the Sorlie as it is the least costly of the two bridges, and the oldest as well.

Haugen said that this is just the start of discussions on what we want to see included in our Long Range Transportation Plan regarding these two structures.

Leigh asked if they do consider replacing the Kennedy Bridge, will them be considering the inclusion of pedestrian walkways. Haugen responded that both structures would include pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Christensen asked what the need is for us to engage in this conversation at any level until such time as funding is secured. Haugen responded that for the North Dakota side, currently in Fargo, staff are observing the North Dakota Legislature's Interim Transportation Committee's session at which they are trying to address the need for additional funding for the North Dakota Bridge Program. He explained that there is close to a billion dollar surplus in North Dakota, so if we are going to try to actively seek additional funds this is our opportunity to do so as we may not be in a similar situation in the future, which would mean we would not have the funds necessary to match Minnesota's share of the costs needed to replace either of these bridges. Christensen stated, then, that this involves politicians at a higher level than this group. Haugen responded that that would be correct, although part of the process of replacing a bridge would involve determination of the elevation and approach span of the bridge, which is something we would be involved in.

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Haugen commented that Grand Forks would also have a 10% commitment cost should the Sorlie Bridge be cited for replacement. Christensen asked what that meant. Haugen responded that it means the City would be responsible for 10% of the North Dakota portion of the cost. Christensen asked if that cost is estimated to be \$70,000,000. Haugen responded that the cost estimate for the Kennedy Bridge is \$40,000,000 to \$70,000,000 for each City. Christensen asked if the cost of replacing the Kennedy Bridge is estimated at \$140,000,000 or \$70,000,000. Haugen responded that the full cost of replacing the Kennedy Bridge is estimated to be anywhere from \$80,000,000 to \$140,000,000, with each state paying half, but they have not determined what the cost would be to replace the Sorlie Bridge. Christensen asked, then, if that means that the City of Grand Forks has to come up with 10% of the North Dakota share of the costs. Haugen responded that Grand Forks would only have to come up with 10% of the North Dakota share for the Kennedy, not the Sorlie.

Grassel commented that he thinks we will have a real problem with the Minnesota State Historical Society if it is determined that the Sorlie should be replaced. Christensen stated that he thinks we should receive and file this information, and we shouldn't spend a lot of time on it at this time as a much higher entity will be working on this issue than this board. Grassel agreed, adding that the e-mail he received discussed that fact that the Minnesota Legislation passed a bonding bill to repair bridges, so the transportation people at MNDOT have to follow their direction, so it isn't for us to decide what will and won't be done, and we need to let North Dakota and Minnesota battle it out. He said that we also have the Minnesota and North Dakota delegations out there in Washington that will be working for each city, so we don't need to get involved at this time.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO ADJOURN THE JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2008,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:50 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Diedrich, Bakken, Leigh, Beauchamp, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Executive Assistant