

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, January 9th, 2008 – 1:30 p.m.
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A-102**

CALL TO ORDER

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the January 9th, 2008, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:31 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: James Bittman, MNDOT-Bemidji; Jane Williams, Grand Forks Traffic Engineer; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planner; Brad Gengler, Grand Forks Planner; Dave Leftwich (proxy for Paul Benning), NDDOT-Bismarck; Kent Ehrenstrom, MNDOT-Bemidji; Brad Bail (proxy for Dean Wieland), East Grand Forks Consulting Engineer; and Dale Bergman, Cities Area Transit.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, MPO Executive Director; Teri Nelson, MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, MPO Executive Assistant.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Haugen declared a quorum was present.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 12TH, 2007 MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MOVED BY BITTMAN, SECONDED BY WILLIAMS, TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 12TH, 2007, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF DISCUSSION ON SAFETEA-LU COMPLIANCE

Haugen referred to the packet and commented that a letter from NDDOT concerning SAFETEA-LU compliance issues was included. He asked if Mr. Leftwich would like to explain what the letter discusses. Leftwich responded that he would rather wait until Mr. Benning, who has not yet arrived from a previous meeting, is present since the letter actually came from him. He suggested that we continue on with the agenda at this time, and return to this item once Mr. Benning is present.

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

Haugen stated that, as is typically done at this time of year, we need to show any changes needed for currently programmed, or new Minnesota projects. He pointed out that in this case we have two new projects in 2012.

Haugen referred to the staff report and went over the two new projects as follows:

1. Transportation Enhancement Project for 2012 – Haugen referred to three maps and explained that the City of East Grand Forks has been in discussion with MNDOT for a couple of years now on ways to improve the pedestrian safety and facilities across US #2 at the Central Avenue (220 North) intersection. He explained that this proposal involves the extension of the existing sidewalk systems on both sides of Central Avenue from where they currently end on DeMers Avenue to just north of US #2, and another sidewalk along the northside of the frontage road north of US #2 to connect Central Avenue to the intersection of 5th Avenue N.W. He stated that they also included the cost of upgrading the existing ped-heads as well. He commented that an updated cost estimate table has been completed and asked that everyone please update their table to reflect those changes as follows: total construction cost is now \$195,000.00, the administrative costs are now \$48,750.00.00, and the total project cost is \$243,750.00. He stated that the non-eligible construction costs are \$48,750.00.00, which brings us back to the eligible construction cost of \$195,000.00, of which the local contribution will be \$39,000.00, and \$156,000.00 in federal monies. He reported that this project was presented at the City Council's Working Session last evening, and the council did ask for some clarification on the maps, but we expect that they will formally adopt the application at their next meeting, therefore he would suggest that any recommendation this body would forward would include that it be contingent on the City Council approving the application.

Bittman referred to Map 3 and asked if there would be a sidewalk all the way to the tunnel. Haugen responded that there would be. Bittman commented that the only other thing, and he brought this up previously, is that the issue of making this as bicycle friendly as possible be addressed and implemented before this is presented to the ATP. Haugen stated that the concern was that we are only proposing five-foot wide sidewalks when the typical enhancement project is a multi-purpose path with a wider width, but in our opinion with the connection to the downtown, the driveways along the corridor, and with the curvature this corridor has, an on-road bicycle facility works the best.

Ehrenstrom pointed out that it notes that transit will be delayed for one month and asked if Mr. Haugen sees any appreciable delay in this at all or would they be abandoning one lane during construction. Haugen responded that the transit delay

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is not connected with this project at all. He explained that the reason for transit being delayed is due to the fact that they don't have transit dollars identified for that year of the T.I.P..

2. MNDOT Project – Haugen explained that MNDOT was identifying some possible work to 220, from it's eastern junction with US #2 out by the bean plant and the Mallory Bridge south. He stated that he just received some additional information concerning this project from Mr. Bittman, and asked that he go over that information briefly.

Bittman reported that they just had a scoping meeting on this, and the project will now entail a mill and overlay on a 23.6 mile segment from Climax to the east junction of Highway #2. He added that they are also going to look at the intersection of 220 and old 220 south of the Mallory Bridge. Haugen asked when a cost estimate might be available for this. Bittman responded that they should have one soon.

Haugen stated that these are the only two projects they received, adding that they did not receive any from Polk County, so with the noted addition of this being approved contingent on City Council approval, staff would recommend that these projects are consistent with the Long Range Plan and give them high priority rankings.

MOVED BY GENGLER, SECONDED BY WILLIAMS, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE FY 2009-2012 T.I.P. PROJECT APPLICATIONS AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND GIVETHEM A HIGH PRIORITY RANKING CONTINGENT ON EAST GRAND FORKS CITY COUNCIL ACTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF DRAFT RFP FOR DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE

Haugen referred to the December minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee and pointed out that he did distribute pages of this draft document that dealt with the background of the project and the scope of work, and asked that everyone please review them and forward any comments or concerns they might have. He said that other than some comments from the Grand Forks Engineering staff he did not receive any from anyone else.

Haugen referred to the full RFP included in the packet, and pointed that, as he alluded to at last month's meeting, there is a change to the RFP format. He said that NDDOT has asked all three MPOs to follow a template, and this RFP is based on that template.

Haugen referred to a map of the study area, and went over it briefly. He pointed out that, as noted in the RFP, one of the current downtown plans is the 1994 River Forks Plan, and this is the

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same study area used in that plan. He stated that they felt that because both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks have been more or less following this general study area pattern for all their subsequent downtown plans, it would make sense to use it for this one as well.

Haugen stated that the MPO Executive Policy Board will be meeting on the 17th of January. He pointed out that in the timeline for the RFP they had January 18th as the advertisement for the RFP, but that will probably now be changed to the 17th of January instead. He added that March 3rd is the deadline for submittals, with a two-week review and interview period, and a recommendation coming from the selection committee by March 14th. He stated that a draft document should be completed by the end of November, and the final document by the end of December.

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY GENGLER, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RFP SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF DRAFT RFP FOR MINNESOTA/4TH AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY

Ellis reported that the MPO has been asked to revisit the 1994 Minnesota/4th Corridor Study to look at road conditions and intersection issues where Minnesota turns into 4th Avenue.

Ellis explained that some of the issues being looked with this study are the existing granitoid pavement; the fact that the neighborhood is on the historic register; traffic control devices and safety features for the different intersections, including around the school, etc..

Ellis said that the RFP was sent out to various entities for comments, including the engineering department, the historic preservation commission, which resulted in the need for some minor cleanup of the language, as well as some additional language addressing the fact that it is a historical neighborhood.

Bittman commented that a project similar to this one was just recently done in Duluth. He suggested that it might be helpful to look at how they were able to get their project done.

Haugen stated that certainly conditions have changed quite a bit since the 1994 study was done. Ellis added that the 1994 study did include a schematic, done by the Engineering Department, illustrating exactly what the pavement looked like, including any cracks or repair work that was done to the corridor. She said that although they have increased the budget, they are wondering if they should replicate this same information in the new study as well, however, keep in mind that there is a concern that there may not be enough time or funding to be able to do it.

Discussion ensued on whether or not a current pavement drawing should be done. Williams suggested that they just show any repair work done since 1994.

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Haugen stated that the timeline for this RFP is similar to that of the Downtown RFP just discussed.

MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY EHRENSTROM, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE MINNESOTA/FOURTH AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY RFP.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF INFORMATION ON 2007 ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATION

Haugen stated that this item is strictly informational today, however feedback will be required in the future.

Haugen referred to the packet, and pointed out that he included copies of last year's Annual Listing of Obligated Projects. He stated that last year was the first year we completed this SAFETEA-LU requirement for compliance, and he hopes that everyone has had time to look it over.

Haugen distributed copies of a spreadsheet on which he highlighted in yellow those cells that provide the information we are trying to accomplish. He explained that, basically, what we are now doing for the general public is; after we say we are going to program a project, and we estimate the cost at X amount of dollars, and the federal participation at Y amount of dollars, we then publish a document that shows how close the programmed estimate was to the actual expenditures.

Haugen stated that two things we need to try to accomplish is to create a document similar in fashion to our T.I.P. document, and to highlight any bike/ped facilities that were impacted as part of the project. He referred to the table he distributed and pointed out that it is the 2007 Annual Element of our 2007-2010 T.I.P. document, and explained that these are the projects we need information on. He added that later in 2008 he will be asking for a progress report on your 2008 projects, but for now he would ask that everyone focus on the 2007 projects.

Haugen reported that there were some projects that had amendments done to them last year:

Project #5 in Grand Forks – original T.I.P. has \$1,000,000.00 programmed but we amended the document in April to add an additional \$400,000.00.

Haugen stated that he tried to incorporate all amendments made, as the T.I.P. is supposed to include all amendments, but if anyone notices any that may have been missed somehow, please let him know.

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Haugen commented that there were three projects amended into the T.I.P. on the Grand Forks side: the JARC, New Freedom, and the enhancement project at 55th and Gateway Drive was carried over from 2006; and on the East Grand Forks side, besides transit there were two street projects that required some changes so he asked that Mr. Bittman and Mr. Bail look those over to make sure all changes were noted.

Haugen stated that last year they did not include this document as part of the MPO's final T.I.P. submittal, but this year, when we get to the July/August timeline we have been asked to add this document into our T.I.P. so you will see it again after March as part of the new T.I.P. document.

Haugen referred to the agenda packet, specifically the tables from last year, and pointed out that when you read the guidelines on how to prepare this document it asks if there were any remaining funds. He stated that we did not receive any of that information last time, perhaps there weren't any remaining funds, but in any event he did not try to include the information this time either, but if it is felt it should be included it can be.

Haugen gave an example of what he is asking be shown on these tables. He stated that you shouldn't lose site that if you impacted the sidewalk or bicycle facility in either a positive or negative manner you should make note of that impact as well.

Information only.

MATTER OF DISCUSSION ON SAFETEA-LU COMPLIANCE

Leftwich said that, although Mr. Benning still hasn't arrived, he did have time to look at the letter and would be glad to go over it briefly.

Leftwich stated that the letter is basically pretty self-explanatory. He pointed out that the big thing, before they can approve the Long Range Transportation Plan is that they have to have a public hearing on the draft document. He asked if Mr. Haugen had any problems with any of the items listed for clarification by the MPO. Haugen responded that he didn't have any problems with any of the items listed.

Leftwich commented that the only other thing is that during the next go-around, and this has been discussed many times over the last year or so, is that they would like to see all of the elements done at the same time.

Haugen stated that the only thing he would add is the separate freight document listed. Leftwich agreed, explaining that this is something new that they are looking at including because of the many inter-modal facilities going on around the country, and in North Dakota in particular.

Haugen said that we have until April 1st to clarify these five bullets concerning our existing effort, and then we have until May 1st, 2009 to complete the freight study. He stated that it is our intent to have these responses presented at the next Technical Advisory Committee meeting,

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after which we can schedule a public hearing in March so that we can make the April 1st deadline.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY GENGLER, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 9TH, 2008, MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:15 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,
Executive Assistant