

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, May 13th, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A-101**

CALL TO ORDER

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the May 13th, 2009, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:37 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Joe McKinnon, MNDOT-Bemidji; Jane Williams, Grand Forks Traffic Engineer; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planner; Brad Gengler, Grand Forks City Planner; Stacey Hanson, NDDOT-Bismarck (via conference call); Dale Bergman, Superintendent for Cities Area Transit; and Brad Bail, EGF Consulting Engineer.

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

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

A quorum was present.

INTRODUCTIONS

Haugen introduced Daniel Ollhoff, MPO Intern, and explained that he would be speaking on the Sign Retro-Reflectivity Replacement Plan later in the meeting. He then asked that everyone please introduce themselves to Daniel Ollhoff, and explain which organization they are representing.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 8TH, 2009, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 8TH, 2009, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF 2009 T.I.P. AMENDMENTS

Haugen referred to the packets, pointing out that the staff report identifies that the amendment being processed at this time involves two railroad safety crossing projects that were submitted by

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the NDDOT. He stated that we did advertise that a public hearing would be held at today's meeting, and that we would receive written comments until noon today. He said that no written comments were received, and it appears that there is no one from the public at today's meeting to speak on this item, therefore he would like to open and close the public hearing at this time.

Haugen explained that the project involves upgrading, or switching out the equipment at the crossings of 3rd and 4th Streets in Downtown Grand Forks. He stated that the cost of these upgrades will be involve a 90/10 split.

Haugen said that in order to bring these projects into the 2009 T.I.P., we do need to do an amendment. He asked if Ms. Hanson knew if these two projects, as well as the 5th Street Project, would be completed this year. Hanson responded that she would need to check on that to see if they are all scheduled to be completed this season, but it is her belief that they are. She said she would check into that and e-mail the results to Mr. Haugen as soon as possible. Haugen asked Ms. Hanson if an agreement had been sent to the City of Grand Forks yet. Hanson responded that she does not know if an agreement has been sent yet, but she will check into that as well.

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY GENGLER, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE FY 2009-2012 T.I.P. AMENDMENTS AS SUBMITTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF FREIGHT STUDY

Haugen referred to the staff report and pointed out that it makes mention that when SAFETEA-LU came through, in order to reach full compliance, NDDOT asked us to do a profile of the freight industry in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. He stated that most of the study was completed last year by an MPO Intern, Ali Rood, and a public open house was held on the final draft last Thursday in East Grand Forks. He added that last March this body gave preliminary approval of the draft report, and, although we did have to delay the final approval by a month, we are now requesting approval of the final draft report.

MOVED BY BAIL, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE FINAL FREIGHT STUDY REPORT.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT CONDITION RATING UPDATE

Haugen reported that in our work program we are scheduled to update the pavement rating index that we have in our pavement management system. He stated that we did work with the NDDOT

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to reach an agreement to be able sole source this to GoodPointe Technology, who does produce our pavement management software.

Haugen explained that when we established this five years ago, through our RFP process, once we selected our software package we were only receiving bids for the rest of the system by GoodPointe due to incompatibility issues the other firms had. He stated, then, that last year when we did an update to the right-of-way imaging, while we did not sole source it, we did let everyone know that they would need to be compatible with our software. He said that we only received a bid from GoodPointe at that time, so we decided it would make sense to work with NDDOT to be able to sole source the pavement management condition rating update with them as well. He pointed out that the proposal we got from them that shows a cost of \$70,000 to do the update, and since we budgeted \$90,000 for the project, that is well within our budget.

Haugen reported that they will mainly be updating our pavement rating index, but added that they were also requested to do both Option 1, which involves generating results with the ICON PMS Software; and Option 2, which involves refresher training on the ICON PMS Software, as well.

Haugen stated that both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks did review the Scope-of-Work to ensure that we are having GoodPointe do the service we want them to do, and we have not received any correspondence from either City saying that the Scope-of-Work is not reflective of what is desired, so with that Staff is recommending that the Technical Advisory Committee forward a recommendation to the MPO Executive Policy Board to hire GoodPointe Technology and to execute Options 1 and 2.

Ellis asked if we would be getting a copy of the software. Haugen responded that we would be getting a copy of the software. Ellis asked how many computers can it be placed on. Haugen responded that he thinks it is licensed for one computer for each of the three agencies, Grand Forks City, East Grand Forks City, and the MPO. Williams commented that before we finalize the agreement with GoodPointe it might be a good idea to see how much additional licensing would be because there is always a problem with only being able to have it on one computer. She explained that they currently have a program that is on the server, and then one person at a time can access it, and that seems to work very well, so if there would be anyway something like that could be done with this software, it would be great.

MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH GOODPOINTE TECHNOLOGY TO FACILITATE THE PAVEMENT SURFACE CONDITION SURVEY; AND TO REQUIRE THAT THEY EXECUTE BOTH OPTION 1, SOFTWARE SUPPORT; AND OPTION 2, REFRESHER TRAINING.

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MATTER OF SIGN RETRO-REFLECTIVITY REPLACEMENT PLAN

Haugen reported that last fall, when the MPO was soliciting projects for their work program, the City of Grand Forks identified and prioritized several projects, but they also identified a list of projects they would like to see done should funding become available, with the Sign Retro-Reflectivity Replacement Plan being one of them.

Haugen stated that back in 2008 there weren't enough funds to do any of the un-prioritized projects, thus this project was not included in our 2009 work program. He said that he e-mailed everyone some support material, a copy of which he now would like to distribute as well. He referred to that information, and pointed out that it essentially explains what the Sign Retro-Reflectivity Replacement Plan will consist of. He said that the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices is requiring conversion, or an update of all the signs throughout the area. He commented that they will be creating a maintenance document that will show how these signs will be maintained from this point on.

Haugen reported that one of the things that happened is, with stimulus monies, the City of Grand Forks is updating some of the traffic controls at functionally classified intersections. He referred to a copy of a letter from the NDDOT, and explained that it states that part of their conditional approval of a stimulus project, a maintenance plan must be in place.

Haugen stated that they were a bit concerned as to where the funds would come from to do this maintenance plan, but with the savings we will have with the Pavement Management Condition Rating Update project, including a possible \$20,000 extra, we now feel we will have sufficient funds to do this plan as well.

Ollhoff reported that the MPO will be hiring three teams of two for each shift, thus we will have six people on each shift. He explained that they will go out and gather the coordinates of each individual sign throughout both cities, after which that information will be put into our GIS system in order to be able to create a maintenance schedule.

Ollhoff commented that they will be covering six methods of compliance: 1) Visual Nighttime Inspection; 2) Measured Sign Retroreflectivity; 3) Expected Sign Life; 4) Blanket Replacement; 5) Control Signs; and 6) Other methods, which will be developed based on engineering studies.

Ollhoff stated that during the time of establishing the new sign inventory they will establish the positives and negatives of each of these methods, and, upon completion of the sign inventory they will then be able to make recommendations as to which method or methods would be most suitable for the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks.

Ollhoff reported that the MPO has reserved GPS units, including backpack and receiver, which the two crews of six will use to gather data. He stated that they will be trained on the equipment, as well as the software used. He said that the crews will physically collect the data, and will place tags on signs that will denote age, quality, grade, and series of each of the signs. He

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explained that with this data the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks will be able to apply the stimulus funded sign replacement project as one of the first test of the data maintenance.

Ollhoff stated that once the data has been collected, corrections will be made if necessary, and the information will be incorporated into our GIS database. He added that this data will be available and distributed to various city departments, who will then be responsible for maintaining the database.

Ollhoff commented that the timeline will be as follows: 1) Contact vendors for the training and testing of Trimble GeoXT GPS Units (already done); 2) have software training, installation and testing completed by June 1, 2009 on MPO, Street/Public Works, Maintenance and Engineering Department computers; 3) Data collection and input shall be conducted during June and July; 4) Sign inventory shall be completed by September 1, 2009; 5) Upon completion of project the inventory will be turned over to the Public/Street Works Departments of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, where we will then train the staff to maintain the database to ensure that the database will remain effective and useful.

Haugen stated that two actions are necessary, however they can be done in one motion. He explained that the first action is to recommend amending the MPO Work Program to bring in this activity, and the second action is to approve the scope of work for the study.

Williams said that she would like to thank the MPO for doing this study. She stated that when she wrote that letter in March, she honestly thought this was already in the work program, so when Mr. Haugen brought the letter over to her and told her it wasn't, she was very surprised, so she is very pleased that we were able to get it funded. She added, however, that they would have gotten it done somehow in any event, but she is pleased that wasn't the case.

Haugen asked if the signs that are located in parking lots part of this requirement. Williams responded that they fall into this requirement, but it is the individual property owners that are required to keep track of them, not us, but, as site plans come through it might be a good idea to make them aware of this.

MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY GENGLER, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE AMENDING THE 2009-2010 UPWP TO INCLUDE THE SIGN RETRO-REFLECTIVITY MAINTENANCE PLAN AND THE PLAN'S SCOPE OF WORK AS SUBMITTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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OTHER BUSINESS

1. Bridge Maintenance Closure Plan Issues

Haugen reported that he just distributed copies of an e-mail he received from Les Noehre, NDDOT-Grand Forks Division, concerning some issues he has with the Bridge Management Closure Plan, and in particular how the Sorlie Bridge was reopened without sufficient communication at the district level.

Haugen explained that the problem was that an agreement was reached as to when the Sorlie should be reopened, but then, without further discussion with the district, it was actually opened at an earlier date and time than was originally agreed upon.

Haugen referred to the flip side of the document, and commented that he also wanted to note some of the issues, or difficulties they had in getting proper traffic control signs at the Mallory Bridge intersection. He said that he told Mr. Noehre that he would find out if the Technical Advisory Committee would object to having A.T.A.C. come in and do a post-event update of our Bridge Maintenance Plan in order to determine what worked well, and what might need to be worked on.

Haugen reported that the plan does have identified action levels of when bridge closures occur, and there are certain elevations identified for each bridge, and what he saw with this flood fight was that there wasn't any good correlation between what the document said, and how the actual closures were occurring. He stated that he wonders if we might need to take a look at the timing plans, but in any event he feels we may need to update the information in the document to ensure that communication is better established between the various entities involved with closure of the bridges.

Haugen stated that Mr. Noehre wanted his concerns to be part of the record, and we have done that by distributing copies of his e-mail, and by holding this discussion today. He added that he also thought that we should use this opportunity to have A.T.A.C. come, since they did the original plan, and do an update to help us capture what might need to be worked on for future flooding events.

Bail asked if it might not be better to just get the groups involved together to discuss these concerns. Haugen responded that that might be a possibility, but one of the things that never got completed with the study was that the Concept of Operations Document, which MNDOT was a proponent of, never got signed.

2. Federal Funding Programs

Haugen asked if Ms. Hanson knew, with this Stimulus Package, if some of the other federal agency's funding programs, specifically the Department of Energy's Block Grant Program's monies would need to go through any vetting of the T.I.P./S.T.I.P. process if they are used for transportation purposes. Ms. Hanson responded that she isn't sure, but that is something they

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would need to visit with Federal Highway about to see if that is something we would be required to follow through in the T.I.P./S.T.I.P..

Haugen stated that he asks this because one of the projects that Grand Forks will most likely pursue, which Mr. Noehre identified as a district priority, and which were not prioritized on the street side, but were identified as priorities on the transit side, and not funded with stimulus monies, but now with this energy money it might be able to be partially funded. Hanson asked that Mr. Haugen send her an e-mail with this information she would be glad to work with Federal Highway to see if there are any requirements that need to be followed as part of the T.I.P. process to be able to utilize these funds.

3. Merrifield Bridge/Interchange

Haugen reported that the MPO Executive Policy Board, at their last meeting, tasked the MPO staff to provide quarterly updates on the progress of getting the Merrifield Bridge and Interchange constructed. He stated that you will now see, quarterly, this item on the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 13TH, 2009
MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:10 P.M.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Executive Assistant