

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.  
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A-101**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:30 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; Charles Durrenberger (Proxy for Brad Gengler), Grand Forks Planner; Stacey Hanson, NDDOT-Bismarck (via conference call); Dale Bergman, Superintendent for Cities Area Transit; and Ed Pavlish, NDDOT-Grand Forks.

Guests present were: Troy Schroeder, NWRDC.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Kristen Benidt, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Executive Assistant.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

A quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Haugen introduced Kristen Benidt, MPO Intern, and explained that she would be working on the Bike/Pedestrian Plan Update. He also welcomed Joe McKinnon, MNDOT, to the Technical Advisory Committee. He then asked that everyone please introduce themselves and give a little background on where they are from and who they are representing.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY DURRENBERGER, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE THE MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

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**MATTER OF ARRA 1511 CERTIFICATION**

Haugen referred to information included in the packet, and pointed out it explains why the certification is required, that, essentially, if we don't sign this certification, transit projects in particular will not receive any of the stimulus monies.

Haugen distributed copies of the table referenced in the draft letter, and stated that it will be posted on the State's website.

Hanson commented that the 1511 Certification is another criteria that we need to meet in order to be able to use ARRA or stimulus funds, so the NDDOT has asked the MPO to go ahead and move forward with this certification for the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks area so that we can maintain our eligibility for our stimulus funds.

***MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE ARRA 1511 CERTIFICATION.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF AMENDMENT TO THE 2009-2012 T.I.P. – E.G.F. SR25 AWARD**

Haugen reported that East Grand Forks was awarded funding for a Safe Routes To School project. He stated that a copy of the award letter was included in the packets. He said that they actually received this information a while back, at which time they thought an amendment would be necessary to the 2009 T.I.P., thus a public hearing was scheduled for this meeting, however, we have since found out that the project will not be done until 2010, so there is no need to amend the 2009 T.I.P.. He said, however, that because the public hearing was advertised we will still need to continue with that at this time.

Haugen opened the public hearing.

There was no one present for discussion, and no comments were submitted prior to noon today.

Haugen closed the public hearing,

Haugen added that we will need to add this project to our Draft 2010-2013 T.I.P. instead.

**MATTER OF DRAFT 2010-2013 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that the Transportation Improvement Program outlines a four-year period of transportation projects that are either receiving federal funds and/or are regionally significant to the MPO area. He stated that the Draft T.I.P. was circulated to our partner agencies for their

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comments prior to it being published and made available to the public. He added that a public hearing notice was placed in the local paper ten days prior to today's meeting. He stated that the notice advertised that a public hearing was to be held at today's meeting, and that comments could be submitted prior to noon today. He said that no comments were received.

Haugen stated that in the T.I.P. document there are the tables that list all of the projects for each City, and he also included some information he received from NDDOT regarding the list of projects in the Urban Program as well.

Haugen commented that the only thing he is aware of that needs to be corrected, or added into this document is the Safe Routes to School project for East Grand Forks, and that will be shown as Project #6 for East Grand Forks in the tables included in the packet.

Durrenberger asked if they didn't need to update Project #6 for East Grand Forks. Haugen responded that that is the project he just mentioned.

Haugen pointed out that there is about \$62,000,000 on the North Dakota side being programmed, and just under \$8,000,000 on the Minnesota side.

Haugen referred to the Illustrative Project list, and reported that the other handout he distributed earlier is a copy of a document which Congress just released concerning high priority project nominations for the next authorization of the transportation bill. He explained that if you are submitting projects, those projects will be listed behind this page in our T.I.P. as Illustrative, which means that they are desired projects, but funding is not currently available.

Haugen referred to the letter from the House of Representatives, and pointed out that it states that these Illustrative projects need to be included in an electronic data base by May 8<sup>th</sup> of this year, and they also require a paper copy be submitted as well, so if you are going to add projects please do so several days prior to May 8<sup>th</sup> in order that this can be done, so it can be included in the Draft T.I.P..

Haugen opened the public hearing.

There was no one present for discussion.

Haugen closed the public hearing.

***MOVED BY DURRENBERGER, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO FORWARD A  
RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE  
DRAFT FY 2010-2013 T.I.P. SUBJECT TO CHANGES AS DISCUSSED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

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Haugen commented that, although this information may not impact our T.I.P., he would ask Mr. McKinnon to give a brief update on possible funding cuts for Minnesota projects. McKinnon reported that about two weeks ago they did receive some direction from their central office in St. Paul, that there will be a cut in state funding, state-wide, of about \$150,000,000, which is due to less income from motor vehicle taxes. He added that in FY 2010 their district, District 2, the cuts will be about \$2,500,000, but then in FY 2011 they will be looking at a \$6,000,000 cut in state funds, so they have started looking at their projects for those two years to see what can be modified or delayed.

**MATTER OF DRAFT COLUMBIA ROAD TRAFFIC SIGNAL RFP**

Haugen referred to the staff report, included in the packet, and other related documents and went over them briefly.

Haugen explained that the MPO Annual Work Program identified that we would continue working as we did on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue with traffic signal coordination plans. He stated that the one we will complete in 2009 is the Columbia Road corridor, although a map has not yet been prepared, but it will include the corridor from Gateway Drive to 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South.

Haugen stated that, as noted in the RFP, they will be selecting a consultant by the middle June, however the traffic counts themselves will not take place until September as it was felt that with the flood traffic, and then with most UND students being gone for the summer, the numbers would be skewed.

Haugen reported that the study basically mirrors the one that was just completed on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, using Synchro and Sim-Traffic computer models. He stated that they try to identify different timing plans, then go out in the field and try to fine tune them to ensure that they are workable in the real world versus the computer world. He added that one thing they have included in this Scope of Work that was not included in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South Scope of Work is to incorporate the pre-emption ability for transit vehicles.

Haugen commented that since the RFP was distributed in the packets, there was some discussion held with Grand Forks about including an option to have the consultant return once a year for the next two years to further fine tune the system. He said that the concern was that NDDOT did not feel that this would be an eligible planning fund activity, so nothing has actually been included in the RFP at this time, but could be added if desired.

Haugen reported that they will continue to do similar studies with other corridors next year so they had a discussion about the possibility of writing just one RFP, and hiring one consultant to perform all of the corridor studies rather than doing separate RFPs both this year and next year. He stated that he has not heard back as to whether the idea was a good one or not, but if it is felt to be a good idea then essentially the scope of work would be covering a two-year period, 2009 and 2010, and would cover not only Columbia Road, but also South Washington, DeMers Avenue, Gateway Drive, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, and any other main roadway in Grand Forks. Williams

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responded that she feels this would be a very good idea. Durrenberger asked if it wouldn't save money as well. Haugen responded it should save a little.

Haugen asked if NDDOT would object to combining all of the corridors into one RFP. Hanson responded that she did briefly visit with Mr. Benning about this, and he said he would like to look into it a little further before making a decision. Williams commented that she would think we would get a better price on doing all of these corridors if one consultant was doing them all instead of just one at a time. Haugen added that, from his perspective, he would like to see one consultant doing all of the work rather than several consultants doing portions of it. He suggested that between now and the MPO Executive Policy Board meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, he would like to try to make sure everyone is comfortable with the language in the RFP. He added that one of the statements would be that this is all subject to funding availability, as most multi-year contracts do.

Durrenberger asked if Mr. Haugen thought that the bids might be higher due to the uncertainty of bidding on a future activity. Haugen asked what he meant by future activity. Durrenberger responded that they would have to take into account the other corridors, they would do one this year, and then next year, and maybe the following year, and things are uncertain, and a lot of the times consultants will bid differently if they have a lot of work versus if they don't. Haugen stated that he doesn't foresee any thing like that occurring. He said that they are going to identify all of the corridors, and the Scope of Work for all of those corridors are pretty similar and straight-forward, using 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue as the standard of the work expected. He added that they will have the ability to read that report, front to back, to see what was done, and what is expected before they submit their proposal.

Durrenberger asked if, on coordination for Gateway Drive, will it cross the river as well. Haugen responded it wouldn't as the signals are too far apart to get any benefit from going across the river.

Haugen stated that because NDDOT has not completed their thought process on doing a multi-year contract staff would ask that the Technical Advisory Committee make a motion to allow the MPO and the NDDOT to try to work towards an RFP that covers a two-year period of all the corridors under one consultant.

***MOVED BY DURRENBERGER, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RFP SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION PLAN FOR COLUMBIA ROAD, AND TO AUTHORIZE MPO STAFF AND NDDOT STAFF TO TRY TO PREPARE AN RFP THAT WOULD ALLOW THAT ALL CORRIDORS BE STUDIED DURING A TWO-YEAR PERIOD BY ONE CONSULTANT.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

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**MATTER OF DRAFT BIKE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE SCOPE OF WORK**

Haugen reported that, again, in our 2009 Work Program we identified that we would update, in more detail, our Bike/Pedestrian Section of our Long Range Transportation Plan. He explained that this update will include the updating of the ADA Curb Ramp Transition Plan.

Haugen stated that this update will be done in-house, utilizing staff only, so there will be no consultant costs included in the project. He added, however, that one of the things we do identify though is, just like we did last time we have invited someone with a little more expertise to give an educational workshop, or seminar, on current practices, particularly when it comes to bike facilities. He said that they will also have a committee advising staff throughout the process, in addition to the Technical Advisory Committee, and other agencies with which we are involved. He stated that there is a group called the Greenway Users Group, which is a group of bike and pedestrian enthusiasts, whom we will also utilize, as well as some others like the Safe Kids Group, etc..

Haugen commented that this is a basic scope of work; they will do an inventory of facilities, of users, of user types; they will take a look at what standards or new things that have been brought in; at best practices; and then try to lay out a future Bike and Ped Plan.

Haugen stated that attached to the Scope of Work was our existing Bike Network Plan, and then at the table, as you walked in today, were copies of our annually updated Bike Map.

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY DURRENBERGER, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD TO APPROVE THE DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE BIKE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Invite To Shared Roadway Markings (Sharrows) Webinar

Haugen reported that he included a copy of an invitation to attend a Shared Roadway Markings (Sharrows) Webinar on Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Planning Conference Room. He explained that they will be discussing sharrows, explaining what they are and how they can be used.

2. Northwest Minnesota Foundation Grant

Schroeder reported that he has one item that ties in with the Bike/Ped update. He explained that the RDC received a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to do a Regional Trails Plan for their seven counties, and they will be looking at tying in with the greenway and the connection with East Grand Forks.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY WILLIAMS, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 1:10 P.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Executive Assistant