

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.  
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A-101**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:40 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Greg Boppre, East Grand Forks Consulting Engineer; Jane Williams, Grand Forks Traffic Engineer; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; Stacey Hanson, NDDOT-Bismarck (Via Conference Call); Charles Durrenberger (Proxy for Brad Gengler), Grand Forks Planning; Dale Bergman, Cities Area Transit Superintendent; and Lane Magnuson, GF County Planning.

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

**SUSPEND AGENDA**

Haugen stated that Charles Durrenberger is running late, and until he arrives we do not have a quorum, therefore he would like to suspend the agenda to hear Agenda Item VII, as it does not require action.

**MATTER OF T.I.P. OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COSTS**

Haugen reported that copies of the staff report, and an e-mail from Stacey Hanson, NDDOT, were included in the packets. He asked that Ms. Hanson explain what is now being required in terms of operations and maintenance costs.

Hanson stated that, based on conversations with the North Dakota Federal Highway Division, we now need to include operations and maintenance costs in our T.I.P.. She explained that they have agreed to allow our current T.I.P. document to continue to move forward without this information, however, we will still need to compile this information and run it through the Technical Advisory Committee and MPO Executive Policy Board approval process for inclusion in the final approved T.I.P. document.

Hanson reported that they need operation and maintenance costs for the federal aid highway system, the State and U.S. Highways, within the MPO area. She commented that some of the

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State and Federal Highways would obviously have DOT operating and maintenance costs, but some of them may also have City operation and maintenance costs as well, such as snow removal, traffic signals, etc., so it is up to each jurisdiction to submit a list of those costs.

Haugen asked, just for clarification, are you talking about just State and U.S. Highways, not functionally classified roadways. Hanson responded that that is correct. She explained that the City's Urban Road System, those collector or arterial streets that qualify for federal aid, are not included, but the actual highway system, which would include Highway 2, Highway 81, Washington, Gateway, 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, DeMers, etc., are included.

Williams asked what exactly they are looking for, are they looking for administrative costs, etc.. Hanson responded that her suggestion is that this would actually be more an estimate of costs, as that is what they will most likely do on their end since they don't actually track how much maintenance time and materials are spent on particular routes or segments of routes, so for this particular T.I.P. they will have to take a look at all the routes in the Grand Forks district and then use a kind of pro-ration for the MPO area, as they don't have another method of tracking costs at this point in time.

Williams stated that what she is asking is, with the exception of Columbia, all the streets here are State Highways, all of the main streets, so are you asking that anytime she might be working on traffic signals that time should be included, her salary, benefits, etc., or are you just looking for actual actions such as filling a pothole, plowing the road, etc.. Hanson responded that we may need to ask Federal Highway for additional clarification as to what they specifically want included, as they only indicated that they wanted operating and maintenance costs included, so she isn't sure at this time how detailed they want this. Haugen commented that he did send some information to Ms. Hanson earlier, and suggested that they may be able to do something similar to what NDDOT is doing with their pro-rated class, just using lane miles. Hanson responded that that may be one way to do this. She added that they will need to look at what they typically might spend, an average of what was spent over the last five or six years, and then, using the current budget do a pro-ration from that.

Williams asked if they were using their entire transportation budget. Hanson responded that in their Draft STIP they have an operation and maintenance budget for the entire state, and they would start by using that budget, and then keep paring it down until they get a pro-rated number that makes sense for each MPO area. Williams asked for a list of those items NDDOT includes in their operation and maintenance budget. Hanson responded that she would check with their Planning and Programming Division and get that information from them, and will also supply any additional information on how they actually pro-rate or pare down their numbers as well.

Haugen asked if they need to show the revenue sources to cover the costs shown. Hanson responded that Stephanie Hickman referred to 23CFR-450.3248, which is the section that outlines this requirement for the TIP, so you may want to refer to that to see what the specifics are. Haugen commented that North Dakota and Grand Forks have maintenance agreements so he doesn't know how much NDDOT maintenance costs there would be within the City of Grand

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Forks. Hanson responded that there may not be much, but there would be costs involved with I-29, as well as some of the highway sections that are outside the urban limits, but still within your MPO boundary, so you would need to try to pro-rate those costs and include them in the TIP.

Haugen said that this is obviously something that we have another month to prepare in order to bring it to our October Technical Advisory Committee meeting. Hanson responded that Stephanie Hickman wanted us to start working on this as she does want to see it in the Final TIP, and of course it isn't in there at this time, so what would be nice would be for all of us to work on these numbers, come back in October and get something approved that will work in conjunction with the approved TIP.

Haugen stated that, for clarity purposes, transit operations are already covered in the TIP. Hanson agreed, adding that they are only concerned with the operations and maintenance costs for the Federal Aid Highway System. She added that she did talk with Federal Highway and they did say that it is the highway system, which would include Highway 2, Highway 81, etc..

Information only.

Durrenberger reported present.

**RESUME AGENDA**

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

A quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MINUTES OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY BERGMAN, SECONDED BY WILLIAMS, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>,  
2009, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF SIGN REPLACEMENT PLAN**

Haugen reported that Daniel Ollhoff, MPO Intern, has been working on this since it was included in the MPO Annual Work Program. He stated that copies of the staff report, and draft plan were included in the packet. He said that Daniel will give a brief power point presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request).

Presentation ensued.

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Ollhoff stated that this presentation is just kind of finalizing what was discussed at the last Technical Advisory Committee meeting. He reported that they had already identified the replacement plan, and are now looking at implementing it.

Ollhoff explained that Grand Forks was divided into 24 quadrants and East Grand Forks into 3 quadrants, in order to make implementation of the plan easier. He stated that the next few slides show the breakdown of the quadrants, specifically how many signs are in each quadrant and when they should be replaced. He added that it also shows the number of parking signs in each quadrant, which are optional, but are suggested be replaced as well.

Ollhoff then referred to slides showing the suggested sign replacement budgets for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and went over them briefly. He pointed out that the suggested budget for Grand Forks is considerably higher than the \$40,000 currently budgeted for sign replacement, with a total combined budget equaling about \$58,605. He added that if you look at the 2019 numbers, \$52,416, that brings the total up even higher. He stated that it would be up to the City to determine how they might be able to fund those higher costs. Williams responded that in addition to the \$40,000 budgeted, they also have a regular maintenance budget as well. She said that this was just the additional dollars the City Council programmed towards this program to help supplement their sign program, so there are additional dollars available.

Ollhoff reminded everyone that parking signs are not required by the MUTCD to be replaced, however it is suggested they be replaced as there are a lot of concerns and questions about the limits and restrictions indicated on the current signs, so they should be considered if possible.

Williams pointed out that the costs shown are based on having an outside firm come and implement the replacement of the signs throughout the community, however most of the sign replacement done here is done internally, so the cost would be much less than shown.

Ollhoff then referred to the suggested sign replacement plan for East Grand Forks, and commented that he doesn't know their current sign replacement budget, but he knows that John Wachtner and Stuart Kovar have indicated that they have already begun the replacement process. He pointed out that the total suggested combined budget is \$9,118, and \$10,826. for the 2019 budget, for a total of \$19,944. He added that they should also take into account the replacement of parking signs throughout their community as well.

Ollhoff reported that the next slides discuss potential costs involved with a 12-year replacement cycle after the required replacement dates have already passed. He went over the information briefly.

Ollhoff stated that the MPO recommendations are that Grand Forks should continue with replacement along primary corridors, followed by quadrant progression throughout the city; that East Grand Forks should also use a quadrant progression replacement progress; and that both Public Works Departments should report all sign replacements to the MPO, IT, or Planning Departments.

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Haugen asked if Ms. Hanson feels this fulfills the requirement. Hanson responded that she feels it would, however she would need to visit with Federal Highway to make sure that it addresses their concerns and requirements as well.

***MOVED BY BOPPRE, SECONDED BY DURRENBERGER, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE SIGN INVENTORY REPLACEMENT PLAN.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Haugen commented that this will be the last meeting that Daniel will be attending, so he would like to thank him for a job well done and wish him luck with his move to the East Coast.

**MATTER OF BRIDGE CLOSURE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

Ellis stated that, as was discussed at our June and July Technical Advisory Committee meetings, during the recent flood event there were a few elements of our Bridge Closure Traffic Management Plan that weren't necessarily followed, some that were modified, some that were ignored, and some things that weren't included in the plan at all, and we wanted to make sure that we have a document that summarizes these things.

Ellis referred to the staff report and went over the modifications made to the plan:

- 1) Bridge traffic closure/reopening action elevations needed to change to accurately reflect the actual closing. Ellis stated that these changes were primarily to the Kennedy Bridge as there were some earthen berms added.

Ellis commented that she does not have new river stages, or elevations at this point as they are still being worked on, but one thing that was commented on at both meetings was the need to include a disclaimer under the traffic closure action elevations table that states: "Elevations for Action 2 activities may change due to weather, manpower, emergencies, and speed of rising river elevations". She said that this statement was added as requested. She reported that another disclaimer was added to the traffic reopening action elevations table as well: "Reopening action level elevations may change due to manpower, weather, time of week, or speed of declining river elevations".

- 2) Westbound left turn movements on Gateway Drive in Grand Forks were closed from 1<sup>st</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> to N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Ellis stated that she added some narrative to address these closures: "Gateway Drive between N. 1<sup>st</sup> St./9<sup>th</sup> Avenue N. and N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (Grand Forks) – Add a ROAD CLOSED sign to the north entrance of 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. N., add a ROAD CLOSED sign to the south entrance of N. 1<sup>st</sup> St., and add barricades to the center turn lane between N. 1<sup>st</sup> St. and N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., as shown in Figure 20 on Page 31. These modifications are recommended with the Point Bridge and the Sorlie Bridge are closed."

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- 3) Northwest left turn lane and southeast right turn lane at the intersection of US 2 and MN SH 220 will be barricaded (turning movements are still allowed). The possible need of law enforcement during peak times at the US 2/MN SH220 intersection and the MN SH 220 and Polk County Road 72 as added to the narrative.

Ellis explained that once the Point, Sorlie and Louie Murray close there is quite a bit of traffic that heads south and then comes back and wraps around on Highway 2. She stated that MNDOT submitted some things they would like to see done and/or changed during flooding events to accommodate this traffic. She said that they added barricades and flashers on the northwest left turn lane and the southeast right turn lane. She commented that they didn't actually discourage turns, but did narrow the roadway down to two lanes and then at the actual intersection allowed for vehicles to turn left or right. She stated that they also mentioned using changeable message signs that flash "Stop Ahead" as well, and to add law enforcement at during peak morning hours, which she did add to the narrative.

- 4) Add the East Grand Forks Emergency Manager to the contact list.

Boppre commented that he feels that Ms. Ellis did a fine job on this, but he does need to apologize that Brad Bail and himself were not able to complete the updated elevations in time for today's meeting, but they are continuing to work on it and will get the information to Nancy as soon as it is complete.

Haugen stated, then, that it appears that everyone is comfortable with these changes, subject to inclusion of the updated elevation information, so we will not have to revisit this again. Boppre commented that, just as a side-note, we need to make it clear that these action levels are just a guide, that they aren't set in stone, and he hopes that everyone is clear on that. Everyone was in agreement.

Haugen said that there is one thing he would like to add, that the City of Grand Forks, and there may be similar opportunities in East Grand Forks, but he knows that there is a Regional Emergency Manager's meeting coming up soon at which they will be doling out close to a million dollars, so he would suggest maybe submitting a request for some of those monies to help with the cost of the detour signage needed. Ellis stated that she will check on this for the Minnesota side.

**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING RFP UPDATE**

Haugen reported that copies of the staff report were included in the packet. He explained that they did receive three proposals: 1) TKDA, who has teamed up with KLJ; 2) URS; and 3) SRF. He added that the selection committee will be meeting this Friday to interview all three firms, after which they will forward a recommendation to the MPO Executive Policy Board for their approval.

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Haugen commented that all three proposals did generally agree with the scope of work we were asking for. He reported that the study is broken into three parts: 1) Quiet Zone; 2) State Mill Spur; and 3) Bacon Road Closure Concept. He explained that the first two items are covered under the MPO process, but, although the Bacon Road Closure Concept is included in the proposal it does have a separate cost estimate, and if it does go forward will be paid for out of separate funds.

**MATTER OF SIGNAL COORDINATION STUDY UPDATE**

Haugen reported that this study was delayed because of the flood, but we are now fully engaged in the study. He stated that Alliant Engineering was here recently and we finalized the timeline, which was included in the packet.

Haugen said that they are currently doing traffic movement counts three days a week at various locations. He stated that Columbia Road should be completed today, and Washington will begin next week, then Gateway, DeMers, and 42<sup>nd</sup>, so that by the end of the month all of the traffic signal locations will have been counted.

Haugen stated that Alliant will be back in town the middle of October, and on Columbia Road they will begin implementing the signal timing plan. Williams stated that all of the 2070s have all been programmed, and are ready to be installed, but they need to be done all at the same time.

Haugen reported that a public meeting is scheduled to occur on October 14<sup>th</sup> to present the concept of signal coordination, to give information on the signal timing plan we are doing on Columbia Road, and to give information on what the future holds for the corridors. He added that we will also be getting more in-depth with the transit priority portion of the study as well.

Haugen commented that we are all assuming that the Department of Energy stimulus funds will be made available at a reasonable time so that we can purchase more 2070 controller units, and get them installed along the corridors so that our schedule can actually be completed by December of 2010.

Haugen stated that the study is now up and running, data is being collected, and Alliant is also doing some Synchro-modeling updates, and their sub-consultants will be doing some of the corridor runs on Columbia and Washington.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Solicitation Letters for 2010-2014 T.I.P.

Haugen reported that yesterday he received solicitation letters from the NDDOT for next year's TIP for Urban Roads; Special Roads; Safe Routes To School; and Transportation Enhancement funds. He stated that November is the deadline for the Special Roads, Safe Routes to School; and December is the deadline for Urban Roads.

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Haugen commented that on the MNDOT side projects are not due until January 20<sup>th</sup>.

2. Stimulus Monies

Hanson reported that they have bid out several of the stimulus projects, and what they are doing is looking at all the projects that were originally capped with 1/3 stimulus funding, and if they don't spend all those funds set aside for projects, they are going to reallocate those funds over to projects that need additional monies.

Williams asked if this includes projects that were taken off the list because we thought we were going to run short. Hanson responded that they are currently looking at any projects that have been bid to date, and if there is any money left it could be moved to any of those projects that may not have had enough funds set aside for it, or it could be saved up and used for projects that aren't bid yet.

Hanson reported that they are currently doing a kind of balancing activity to see how all the projects are coming in, and what dollars might be left. She said that some of their managers have been working on trying to figure out how many dollars are left to use, and where to allocate them, but it is their understanding that the MPOs Sign Replacement Project in October, and the Cherry Street Project in January may be the last two projects you will have money available for, but this will all depend on whether or not there are any funds left after the October project is bid.

Haugen asked if there might be a need for some TIP modifications or amendments. Hanson responded that there is a possibility that there may be a need for modifications or amendments as we get nearer the end of the stimulus run.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY DURRENBERGER, SECONDED BY BOPPRE, TO ADJOURN THE  
SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT  
2.20 P.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Executive Assistant

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