

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Thursday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 9:00 A.M.  
Grand Forks City Hall Conference Room A102**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman, Gary Malm called the August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, and Dick Grassel.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO FINANCE COMMITTEE**

***A MOTION WAS MADE BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO FINANCE COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF ADDITIONAL PLANNING FUNDS**

Haugen stated that, as you will recall, at the July MPO Executive Policy Board meeting the board approved the MPO accept an additional \$300,000 in planning funds, and we now have to determine how we want to use those monies.

Haugen reported that, in addition to working with staff from both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, we were also required to do public notification soliciting work activities for these funds. He stated that ultimately they were able to identify four corridor studies on the North Dakota side, which, he explained was because of a stipulation from the NDDOT, that they preferred to

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see the work done on the North Dakota side unless there was a project that benefited the entire metro area, which was shared with staff.

Haugen commented that Service Safety received these recommendations from staff, and forwarded them on to the City Council without much comment. He said, however, that the one concern they had was that the dollar amounts that are shown as a preliminary budget. He referred to the City's Staff Report, and explained that these are estimates that include the consultant and MPO staff costs required to complete these studies, and we are fairly certain they are pretty accurate as to what we will receive for consultant costs.

Haugen reported that one thing he is requesting as part of the approval of this amendment to the work program is to also approve the creation of a contract position. He explained that with these additional projects, the work involved to do them will be above and beyond the work we already have scheduled, therefore we are proposing to create a position titled "Planning Technician", at a pay grade 30.

Haugen commented that, just to give you an idea of where that grade fits with our current staff salary levels; the Senior Planner is at a grade 47, the Planner is at a grade 40, the Office Manager is at a grade 35, and the Executive Director is at a grade 66. He stated that the end result, provided the position is approved, we would have a contracted position that will last until December 2011, with an annual salary of just over \$32,500, or \$42,000 with benefits.

Haugen reported that the person we are considering for the position is our current intern, Matt Leal. He stated that Matt started working for us this past January, and has been diligently working on the Land Use Plans for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and by all reports has been doing a very good job. He added that in addition to working on these additional projects, Matt will continue to work on the Land Use Plan Updates as well.

Haugen gave a brief summary on some of the additional work involved with these new projects, including traffic counts, etc..

Haugen commented that it is understood by both parties that this is a temporary contracted position, and that we don't expect it to become a permanent position in the future.

Strandell referred to the staff report, and asked about the wording for the second project; specifically where it states: "South of Target, and East of Columbia Road", and whether or not that is correct. Haugen responded that it is not. He referred to a map and pointed out where the project is located, explained that it is actually West of Columbia Road. He explained that this is a study that we were asked to do back when the Wellness Center was proposed to be located here. He stated that the Park District has park land there, and the drainway is located there, and there is a disagreement between the Park District and the City as to whether or not the right-of-way actually exists. He said that the Park District believes it does not, but the City believes it does, so they asked the MPO to try to help resolve this by determine what the basic grid pattern for that area should be.

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Haugen referred to Project #3, and pointed out that you get back to the issue of the Wellness Center siting issue. He explained that because they are proposing the Wellness Center be located out here, therefore this study will assist in helping ensure the necessary traffic infrastructure is in place. He added that there is also speculation that the Library may also locate out here as well.

Haugen stated that the intent is to start the RFP process for Projects 1 and 2 right away. He said that Project 3 will start sometime before the end of the year. He explained that the reason for waiting until then is to try to identify all the developments that might be locating there. He said that the last thing they would want to do would be to get a study going based on a certain set of assumptions, then have those assumptions thrown out and a whole new set of assumptions come in on us, so, because of the risk involved here, we aren't going to jump into this study right away.

Haugen mentioned that they did not identify here, but staff strongly considered doing a study on University Avenue. He explained that with the change in presidency, there has been a little more focus on making that corridor more pedestrian friendly. He stated that back in 2002 we did a study to try to accomplish just that, but the president at that time was not interested in the findings, so that study was ultimately thrown out of our planning books, so we are now back at looking at what could be done on University Avenue to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Haugen commented that another thing UND has done is to develop a Climate Action Plan. He said that one of the actions included in that plan is to ultimately see University Avenue closed to through traffic, so we need to help walk them through all the ramifications doing that would create. He stated that we will be doing that study under our next normal work program, so we aren't saying we won't do it, just that we aren't going to do it this fall.

Haugen reported that, with the additional \$300,000 in funds, we will also need to have an additional \$75,000 in local match. He explained that if we create the contracted position, we will utilize about \$50,000 to \$55,000 of that \$375,000 for that position, and the remainder would be used toward consultant costs. Strandell asked where the \$75,000 will come from. Haugen responded it will come from the City of Grand Forks. Malm asked if they agreed to give that amount. Haugen responded that they did.

***A MOTION WAS MADE BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THE THEY APPROVE AMENDMENT #3 TO THE FY2010 UPWP, AND APPROVE THE CREATION OF A PLANNING TECHNICIAN JOB DESCRIPTION.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***THE AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO FINANCE COMMITTEE  
ADJOURNED AT 9:36 A.M.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager