

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, May 12th, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the May 12th, 2021, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:33 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present via Zoom: David Kuharenko, Grand Forks Engineering; Ryan Brooks, Grand Forks Planning; Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Local Government; Jason Peterson, NDDOT-Grand Forks; Ryan Riesinger, Airport Authority; Steve Emery, East Grand Forks Engineering; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; Jon Mason, MnDOT-District 2; Nick West, Grand Forks County Engineer; and Dale Bergman, Cities Area Transit.

Absent: Brad Bail, Stephanie Halford, Jason Peterson, Jesse Kadrmas, Michael Johnson, Lane Magnuson, Lars Christianson, and Patrick Hopkins.

Guest(s) present: Sandy Norby, Grand Forks Resident; Anna Pierce, MnDOT-St. Paul; Tim Burkhardt, Alliant Engineering; and Mike Kondziolka, Alliant Engineering.

Staff: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Haugen declared a quorum was present.

INTRODUCTIONS

Haugen stated that we do have someone in the audience today, so he would ask that everyone please state their name and the agency they are representing.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 14TH MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kuharenko referred to Page 3 of the minutes and pointed out that the motion for Item 5 should state "...TA Project Along 32nd Ave. So...".

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MOVED BY KUHARENKO, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 14TH, 2021 MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS CORRECTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF NEW DEFINITION OF T.I.P. REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

Haugen reported that, as you recall, we spent a couple of months discussing this; NDDOT and the three MPOs worked together on trying to develop a common definition. He stated that included in the staff report is the latest update; NDDOT is staying with their original definition for regionally significant, and how it will affect primarily in their rural areas of the State of North Dakota. He added that the three MPOs will adopt something that is slightly different for each unique MPO, but common in that it is defined that it is three different items, and so on the front page you can see the three different ones; and you have seen this before, so the motion that we are asking for today is to officially recommend that the MPO Executive Policy Board adopt these into our T.I.P. Procedural Manual so that we can then work with the NDDOT and partnering agencies on identifying what projects in our T.I.P. document warrant these new regionally significant definitions. He said that included in the packet was the section of our T.I.P. Procedural Manual in which these changes are being highlighted, and again the NDDOT outside of the three MPO study areas will be using their definition of regionally significant. He added that MPOs are using a common one that might have some unique, slight modifications; the one that we are adopting here in Grand Forks/East Grand Forks he believes is exactly the same, word for word, perhaps as the one adopted in Fargo/Moorhead.

Kuharenko asked if there had been any additional comments come out of Fargo COG or Bismarck MPOs regarding this definition. Haugen responded that he isn't aware of any.

MOVED BY KUHARENKO, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE NEW DEFINITION OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANT IN RELATION TO T.I.P. PROJECTS, AS PRESENTED.

Voting Aye: Brooks, Mason, Zacher, Kuharenko, Peterson, Ellis, Emery, and Riesinger.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Bail, Halford, Bergman, Sanders, Kadrmas, Christianson, Hopkins, Johnson, West, and Magnuson.

Haugen said that, assuming the MPO Executive Policy Board follows suit next Wednesday on this, our next T.I.P./S.T.I.P. cycle we will be utilizing this regional significant definition. He added that we have already implemented the phasing for all of the non-regionally significant projects, those will continue, so if you think you might have something it would be best to get in contact with us early and often so we can work it out and make sure we have properly implemented this regional significant definition.

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Zacher commented that he would like to make one point that for the non-regionally significant projects there will be four tables, or four areas; one for each year, and then each year will be broken into the four phases also.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF RFP FOR TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Kouba reported that this is the kick-off to the update of our Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and so this is taking over where the last Transit Development Plan left off, so we are looking at the years 2022 to 2027. She added that in this RFP we are also going to ask that the consultant look at a ten-year outlook as well so that we have a greater horizon and understanding of the needs of our transit system. She said that we will be looking at range of service, route evaluation, capital, and financial alternatives. She added that they are hoping that the public involvement and outreach will be a focus in this plan as well.

Kouba commented that East Grand Forks had added some additional 5307 funding toward this project, and we have a budget of \$225,000 available for the consultant.

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR THE TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN, AS PRESENTED.

Voting Aye: Brooks, Mason, Zacher, Kuharenko, Peterson, Ellis, Emery, and Riesinger.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Bail, Halford, Bergman, Sanders, Kadrmias, Christianson, Hopkins, Johnson, West, and Magnuson.

MATTER OF UPDATE ON FUTURE BRIDGE TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY

Haugen reported that included in the staff report are four items that we will touch on.

A. 2nd Ad Hoc Group Meeting – May 14th

He said that the first one is just to let everyone know that next Friday morning is the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Group; the presentation that was prepared for that meeting was included in the packet and it is all stuff that we have already reviewed and commented on at one time or another, so we weren't intending on spending a lot of time on it today.

B. Revised Transportation Conditions Technical Memo

Haugen stated that the second item is; we have asked you previously to look at the traffic network facilities that are out there, Tech Memo #2: Existing and Future Conditions, was posted on the www.forks2forksbridge.com/info website. He referred to the memo and commented that, again, this is displaying the basic conditions of facilities that are out there. He added that this

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draft has incorporated all of the comments they have received and has been updated to represent the latest and greatest information. He said that it is still open for some review, but hopefully there aren't too many more changes that will be necessary since we have already had a one-time chance to do that.

C. New Traffic Counts Technical Memo

Haugen stated that the third item is regarding the traffic turning counts, traffic counts that Alliant is currently working on. He said that Alliant will take over for a brief presentation on this item. He added that the Tech Memo for this item is included in the packet as well.

Burkhardt said that, again, this is the traffic methodology, it isn't the exciting traffic results and full feature forecast detail that everyone is waiting for, but it does show you where we are headed. He referred to the schedule overview and gave a brief update on where they are at on the project schedule. He then referred to the Tasks and Deliverables Status slide and pointed out that it shows what has been completed, what is currently being worked on, and what will be coming up.

Kondziolka stated that he will talk through Tech Memo 3A that they have completed. He said that it is really focusing specifically on the traffic volumes developed for the study, so he will just go through data sources, look at the methodology that they have for any adjustments to get the existing volume data set, and then take a look at the regional traffic patterns, and then also look at their forecasting methodology and the volumes as well.

Kondziolka referred to a slide presentation and went over it briefly (a copy is included in the file and available upon request).

Presentation ensued.

Kondziolka commented that one component is looking at the regional traffic patterns, or trips starting and ending in Grand Forks or East Grand Forks going across the river. He stated that ATAC conducted an Origin-Destination analysis using StreetLight, using data from March through October of 2019; and this was done looking at trips that were crossing all of the river crossing bridges connecting Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. He said that what they did was that they isolated the data specifically for the Point Bridge, and what is shown on the maps are concentrated areas where more trips are either starting or ending going from east to west or west to east. He added that this is included in the report or the Tech Memo and it kind of provides a little bit of regional context to where are the trips that are using the Point Bridge going to or coming from and it helps to show where the demand is, and the darkest areas are those that are closest to the bridge, but outside of that you can see, on the Grand Forks side there is a kind of a darker concentration in the southwest area and that is useful information to know, where we have some demand that is using the Point Bridge that is coming from a more southern area from each of the cities where there might be some demand that might be able to use a new river crossing bridge south of the Point Bridge.

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Kuharenko said that he knows that we have data points on 24th Avenue South, 32nd Avenue South, and 4th Avenue; are there any concerns that we don't have, especially kind of looking at this Origin-Destination information, is there any concern that we don't have any information on 17th Avenue South. Kondziolka responded that this is going to capture everything within the entire zone, it will capture every trip that starts on every cross-street within the traffic analysis zone, although he may not be understanding the question right if that doesn't answer it, but this is capturing every trip that is within one of the highlighted areas, it is assigned to one of the zones so it is represented in the graph. Kuharenko said that he knows we've got, in our tech memos, various intersections where we are doing turning movement counts, so you have that data as well; but is missing 17th Avenue, that connection from Washington to Belmont, an issue at all; in looking at this data, especially considering that you've got some of those darker colors just south of 17th Avenue, between 17th and 24th. Kondziolka responded that, if he is understanding correctly, the trips that are using 17th going east and west are represented within the data set here, it is just whether they are getting shown in one TAZ or the other. Burkhardt commented that all the locations where we are doing counts at intersections, we have that listed in the Tech Memo. Kondziolka stated that we don't have the full list on the presentation here, this is a partial list, so for the origin-destination analysis all trips that are using 17th are captured in here, and then for the larger traffic analysis, internal traffic shifts resulting from the different bridge alternatives, are being captured on a regional scale, or trips that are using Belmont or Washington are all getting captured within the data set that we have. Burkhardt said that he was trying to ask what he thinks Mr. Kuharenko is asking; did we have any data counts on 17th Avenue, does our intersection list include 17th. Kondziolka responded that 17th is not included on the list, we have east-west corridors at 4th, 24th, and 32nd, and we have primarily east-west connections that are going to be influenced by traffic that is using bridges, it is going to be primarily using that 32nd connection for the southern 32nd alternative and then the 24th connection gets primarily used at the Elks Drive which is going to capture the east-west impacts, but we still get accumulative impacts on each of the roadway segments, the north-south segments that would be attributed to the 17th east-west traffic as well.

Kuharenko commented then, that we don't have much of a concern of having to do 17th is kind of what he got out of that primarily because of traffic being shipped over to 24th or 32nd. Kondziolka responded that that is correct, adding that the major shifts that they are seeing in the forecasts are being more concentrated on the major east-west roads that are closest to the bridge connections, which would be the 24th and 32nd roadways.

Kondziolka reported that kind of what the methodology to develop these forecast turning movement volumes was they used the Travel Demand Model output that was produced by A.T.A.C., and this is consistent with the prior River Crossing Analysis Study. He said that they were provided forecast turning volumes resulting from the Travel Demand Model for three scenarios; the no build being no additional new river bridges, a bridge at Elks Drive, and a bridge at 32nd Avenue, and they were provided forecast daily volumes for 2030 and 2045 forecast years in addition to the base year of 2015, so they used that data to scale their turning movement volumes based on the differences that were being shown in the Tech Memo for each of these roadway segments starting with the study intersection and then at the bridges and near the bridges there is going to be some shift in traffic patterns so they developed turning movements

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based on the daily volumes they were seeing from the forecasts in order to develop new turning movement counts; what is shown in the figure is the 32nd Avenue Bridge, so that connection over on Rhinehart there isn't an existing intersection to develop the turning movements so they went through and kind of distributed traffic to capture the changes in original patterns so they would be associated with the river bridges.

Kondziolka said that wraps up the methodology they used it to develop their 2030 and 2045 volumes for each of the three scenarios, and that is what is presented at the end of that Tech Memo 3A. Burkhardt added that they are presenting all the details and then they are walking through each intersection, so if you have that memo you will see there is a lot of interesting data. He said that they did have some back and forth with Mr. Haugen, as the person on the ground, to kind of review some of the numbers and make some adjustments for what we expect the future might look like based on the forecast, so just in case you are wondering what any of the circles has in it, feel free to ask them any questions you might have as you look at those.

Burkhardt asked if there were any questions. There were none. Haugen stated that the intent would be to ask for feedback from the Technical Advisory Committee over the next two weeks. Burkhardt asked if that time schedule for feedback works for Mr. Kondziolka. Kondziolka responded that it would, but the sooner the better would be preferred. He added that they want to make sure that we are all comfortable with our volumes, of course, before we add them to the analysis, so the sooner the better.

D. Bridge Capacity Growth Needed Scenarios

Haugen reported that one of the things we discussed last month was trying to show a growth scenario that would say that a two lane bridge being built would be beyond capacity, so included in the packet are a couple of graphics to give us some sense of what additional growth would have to occur for that forecast to come about.

Haugen stated that there are a series of four maps; two of them are showing what we already assume to be the growth happening by 2045.

Haugen referred to the maps and pointed out that the first map depicts the housing growth in both communities, and as you can see we have both internal infill occurring and then we also have some periphery growth occurring as well; the second map depicts employment growth, adding that this information is already built in to our travel demand model already so we are building off that scenario to show a considerable amount of employment growth would have to occur, again out in the periphery to get us to a forecasted volume on either of these river crossings to be at capacity. Haugen commented that these have been run both with and without a Merrifield Bridge, and again, as we are finding out and keep repeating to you; Merrifield in our modeling does not attract much of the city-to-city traffic movements that Elks or 32nd are needing to satisfy the transportation facilities for that movement, and so we aren't seeing significant differences in the forecasted growth with Merrifield or without Merrifield at these river crossings.

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Haugen stated that he did preview these maps with both planning staff and we seem to have some reasonableness of comfort that they are depicting considerable more growth would have to occur, and these are generally the areas that would be anticipated the growth would be.

E. Safe Kids Grand Forks Surveys

Haugen said that we don't have any information on this item, but it has to deal with the Safe Kids school surveys. He stated that they had a meeting Monday with the Grand Forks School District to iron out and finalize the survey. He said that he had communication with Safe Kids personnel both yesterday and today, but he hasn't received any feedback from them, and last he heard is that next week they are going to implement the surveys. He added that there is a Safe Kids meeting tomorrow so maybe we will find out then, if not before, the status of that.

Haugen stated that those are the four items they wanted to cover. He said that there is an Ad Hoc Group meeting scheduled for Friday morning at Grand Forks City Hall Council Chambers at 9:30 a.m. He added that the information/invitation is included in this packet that we will be sharing with them, and he is requesting that you review this new Tech Memo 3A and give feedback on it.

Kuharenko commented that he currently only sees on the website memo one and memo two, is memo 3A going to be added to the website or just in what we have in the packet. Haugen responded that on the www.forks2forksbridge.com/info site the memos are posted after we have had the review and comment by the Technical Advisory Committee.

Information only.

Nick West, Grand Forks County Engineer, joined the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2021 Annual Work Program Project Update

Haugen reported that this is our monthly project progress report on the various activities we are doing.

1) Grand Forks Land Use Plan

Haugen stated that both land use plans are progressing, adding that yesterday there was a big public workshop on the Grand Forks side. He commented that there is a survey available until June 4th at: www.gf2050plan.com.

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2) East Grand Forks Land Use Plan

Haugen said that on the East Grand Forks side they also had a survey and did receive comments. He reiterated that East Grand Forks is about 6 to 8 months ahead with their Land Use Plan update so currently there are some draft goals and policies that the consultant, city, and MPO staff have reviewed.

Haugen referred to the progress report and commented that we just had a discussion on the Future Bridge and Pavement Management. He reiterated that the RFQ is out and the proposals for the Pavement Management project are due May 21st, so we assume that in June we will be asking the MPO Board to take action on engaging a consultant to get our pavement management up to date. He said that we also just took action on the RFQ for the Transit Development Plan; and the images and LIDAR have been captured and they are in the processing phase.

Information only.

B. State Transportation Plan Update

Haugen reported that this item covers both State Transportation updates. He referred to the packet and pointed out that Minnesota did provide some information regarding engagement opportunities for you to participate; particularly about electric vehicles. He said that since the packet went out a separate Constant Contact e-mail went out and he hopes you received some story boards about transportation on the Minnesota side.

Haugen stated that on the North Dakota side he believes they are about to finalizing and release the final Statewide Transportation Connection document.

Kuharenko said that he knows that we just saw the Transportation Development Plan update, and it looks like it is on the same timeline as the Bike/Ped update; when can we expect to see the RFP for the Bike/Ped Update. Haugen responded that it should be out the latter part of this year.

Information only.

C. Earmarks

Haugen commented that last month we spent some time talking about earmarks; since then all of the requests have been on the House side and have been published. He said that neither of our two House representatives in our area provided or submitted any member designated projects. He added that the Senate side is open and active, so if there are any earmark requests that people want to try on the Senate side, there is opportunity for you.

Information only.

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ADJOURNMENT

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY KUHARENKO, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 12TH,
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AT 2:19 P.M.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager