

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Earl Haugen, Chairman, called the October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:47 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Brad Bail, East Grand Forks Engineering; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; and David Kuharenko, Grand Forks Engineering. The following members were present via Zoom: Michael Johnson, NDDOT-Local Government; Ryan Brooks, Grand Forks Planning; Patrick Hopkins, MnDOT-District 2; Jason Peterson, NDDOT-Grand Forks; and Ryan Riesinger, Airport Authority.

Absent: Steve Emery, Stephanie Halford, Jesse Kadrmas, Rich Sanders, Wayne Zacher, Nick West, Lane Magnuson, Nels Christianson, Dale Bergman, and Jon Mason.

Guest(s) present: Kristen Sperry, FHWA-ND; Bobbi Retzlaff, FHWA MN; Anna Pierce, MnDOT-Central Office; 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.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2021 MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS SUBMITTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON FUTURE BRIDGE TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY**

Haugen reported that as noted in the staff report, there are two things that we will discuss today.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Haugen stated that first, the school surveys were done at the end of September, but Safe Kids is still tallying the data, so he hasn't seen any of the results yet. He added that, just to refresh your memory during that last week of September they asked teachers in the first period class at all the schools to canvas their students to see how they got to school that day; they did that for two days during that week, so that is one thing we will get. He said that the second thing they did was to send a survey to all of the parents of all the students with a series of questions, and that data is also being tallied as well.

Haugen commented that a more important item is, during last month's MPO Board meeting there was discussion about looking to mitigate to a Level of Service C certain intersections that we were just mitigating to a Level of Service D, and pretty much all the information in the Tech memos was relating to 2045 forecasts so he did ask Alliant if they could give us some information on Level of Service in the 2030 forecast numbers so he will turn the screen over to Mr. Burkhardt and Mr. Kondziolka.

Burkhardt said that he would like to chime in with some context, at least from his perspective, that in doing the study as a whole and just updating you on that more generally they are in the midst of documenting the evaluation of the two corridor options at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Elks Drive against the future no-build. He stated that they had hoped to present that to you today, but it isn't quite ready so they are not giving that after all, but that is really where their focus is, to try to pull out from the information they have to really get a good understanding of what the difference is between the benefits of a new bridge on the system and then the differences between the two, and there is criteria that you have seen before and will be familiar with in terms of how to that, a lot of it definitely does come down to traffic operation; sort of increases/decreases and just traffic volumes and then performance against standard; so getting specifically to this question about level of mitigation, for the purpose of the study they have been focused on that relative comparison and using a consistent methodology that builds off of what we laid out early on with our methodology memo for how we were going to do the study, which took us to the Level of Service D mitigation, which was pretty standard practice for a study like this, so on one hand he is holding on to that and trying to say that we want to stay with that big picture and do that apples to apples comparison for the purpose of this study, but he understands the request from the City of Grand Forks to look into what it would take to get to a Level of Service C, so we'll talk about that and depending on where that conversations goes we can figure out what is next either for the study itself or for sort of side piece sort of outside the study.

Burkhardt stated that as an initial step to what would it take, or what would it look like to mitigate to a Level of Service C, they did an outline, and he will turn this over to Mr. Kondziolka to go through this for you.

Kondziolka said that part of this request was to look at what the 2030 volumes are at those intersections where we were showing the 2045 mitigated conditions at a Level of Service D or worse so they looked at them with the 2030 volume levels to get an idea of what the level of service at those intersections would be in 2030, closer to the potential opening date, so just to refresh and go over this, there were four locations that had a Level of Service D or worse operations in the 2045 mitigated option or scenario, so in the no-build alternative DeMers and

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Washington was operating at a Level of Service D or worse; in the Elks Drive Bridge Alternative we had 32<sup>nd</sup> and Belmont Road intersection operating at a Level of Service D in the p.m. peak hour; and then at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge option we have 32<sup>nd</sup> and Cherry and 32<sup>nd</sup> and Washington operating at a Level of Service D.

Kondziolka stated that they looked at those four intersections, under those conditions, but with 2030 volume levels and found that essentially the two intersections on Washington Street, under the 2030 volume levels, are still operating at a Level of Service D or worse, they were not at a Level of Service C or better for the 2030 conditions, so those two do not change. He said that the two on 32<sup>nd</sup>, to the east of Washington, so 32<sup>nd</sup> and Belmont and 32<sup>nd</sup> and Cherry both were operating at a Level of Service C or better with the 2030 volumes.

Kondziolka commented that essentially the big take-a-way from this is that the two smaller intersections at 32<sup>nd</sup> and Belmont and 32<sup>nd</sup> and Cherry were a Level of Service C at the worst, so 32<sup>nd</sup> and Belmont, which was at a Level of Service C and D by 2045 would be at a Level of Service B and C by 2030, and then under the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge Alternative the 32<sup>nd</sup> and Cherry, which was projected to be at a Level of Service D and A would be at a Level of Service B and A in 2030.

Haugen said that, just to give some more background, during the MPO Board discussion the concern was expressed that in just looking at the 2045 numbers, if we opened the bridge right away the traffic volumes that we were showing would be at this lower level of service, and so they felt the impact to the community was kind of tough and then not only are we may be putting a bridge through a neighborhood, but then we are also indicating that it is going to have a lower operating service, so it is doing double harm; and the one way of saying it, but all of the information we were showing them was the 2045 volume and if the bridge was built earlier would we have those level of services right away once the bridge opened so we had the 2030 data and so that is why we said that if we went and used the 2030 data would all of these four intersections still be at a Level of Service D, and what Mr. Kondziolka is telling us is that the Washington ones would but the two others, off the State Highway System, would not, they would be at a better level of service.

Haugen stated that the question then is if the timing of the bridge being built is prior to 2030, or soon after 2030, with the current travel demand model forecasts, then are we still looking at two of the four intersections or are we trying to do a better service even at the two that are at the B/C level.

Kuharenko thanked everyone for covering all that information; he added that he knows that it wasn't necessarily included in the Technical Advisory Committee packet, so would it be possible for them to send out those 2030 Level of Service information to all the Technical Advisory Committee members. Burkhardt responded that they will do that.

Burkhardt asked if there was any follow-up required. Kuharenko responded that he thinks, in general the main concern that Mr. Grasser expressed at the MPO Executive Policy Board, and Mr. Haugen covered that very well, is that we don't want to have a bridge installed and then have

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

an overly congested, or an intersection that is performing at a Level of Service D when we first implement it, first construct it, so he thinks the fact that we've got 32<sup>nd</sup> at Belmont and Cherry, and we know that it will be at a Level of Service C, which is fairly reasonable, but when it comes to DeMers and Washington, he thinks that that intersection, in general, has its own issues and the MPO has studied that and we recently had a road safety review at that intersection and there are a number of other constraints at that intersection that he thinks studying it in more detail probably isn't worthwhile. He added that Washington and 32<sup>nd</sup>, that is still being listed. He asked what the a.m. and p.m. level of service in 2030 at that intersection. Kondziolka responded that 2030 it will be at a Level of Service C in the a.m. and D in the p.m. Kuharenko said that it is still at a Level of Service D in the p.m., which isn't the best, but we might be able to figure out something else in that area, and he thinks they have looked at a number of alternatives previously at that intersection, or considering that as part of this project, so he thinks the big thing is just making sure we are not having Level of Service D and E situations there from the get-go, so he thinks that is the big thing that they were concerned about; they don't want to implement a bridge, they don't want to start the bridge and have poor traffic conditions right from the get-go.

Haugen stated that it seems like there were three questions kind of leading in; if we wanted to do a better mitigation than a Level of Service D, the first question was is that eligible for planning dollars, and then the second one would be is there a difference between the State system level of service versus the local level of service, and then the third question was if we showed that 2030 volumes were reasonable (the term used at the board level), Level of Service C being reasonable, perhaps, do we still have to do further study to mitigate to a higher level of service, and so we do know that DeMers/Washington is under a separate review taking place, it was recently reviewed with the underpass project, and also with the corridor study that was done a while ago. He said, though, that we also know from the State's response, that if we wanted to go to a mitigated Level of Service C at any of the corridors, it is eligible, but the State emphasized that they would only participate in mitigation to a Level of Service D, and anything that was beyond that, trying to achieve that Level of Service C, would be at 100% local cost.

Haugen said that it is sounding like we may not have to do any additional level of service analysis because we are showing that if we open the bridge up before, or shortly after 2030, we might have reasonable traffic capacity being taken care of. Kuharenko responded that that is correct. Haugen stated, then, that we probably don't have a need to ask for any additional Level of Service mitigation alternatives for any of the intersections, that is what the Technical Advisory Committee's recommendation might be to the MPO Executive Policy Board.

***MOVED BY KUHARENKO, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE NOT PURSUING ADDITIONAL STUDY SCOPE OF WORK TO MITIGATE TO LEVEL OF SERVICE "C".***

Haugen asked for confirmation from Mr. Burkhardt and Mr. Kondziolka that they understand what the motion is asking. Burkhardt responded that they do, adding that he thinks this additional information from today helped answer the question of what those intersections would look like at a 2030 opening day, and given that the two local intersections operate at a Level C or

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

better and the two others are sort of, as Mr. Kuharenko said, the one at Washington and DeMers has its own issues, or are not able to mitigate reasonably that we would leave those be given that they are also on the State system.

Burkhardt commented that they will proceed with what they have and will share these results with you, so you have that documented.

Haugen stated that part of our message to the public would be that we are agreeing that the level of service will be reasonable if the bridge is opened before or soon after 2030; so that the message is that we think that, yes, you will have a change in your traffic pattern, but it is still from our level of service point of view acceptable and reasonable.

***Voting Aye: Peterson, Ellis, Bail, Brooks, Hopkins, Johnson, Kuharenko, and Riesinger.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Kadrmas, Emery, Halford, Christianson, Mason, Zacher, Bergman, West, Magnuson, and Sanders.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO 2045 MTP**

Haugen reported that the past several months we have been discussing possible amendments; a couple of months ago we gave preliminary approval to some projects, but the MPO Executive Policy Board tabled one of them, so we are moving forward with the ones they gave preliminary approval to.

Haugen stated that we did send letters to both Cities asking for their consideration either to process it as an amendment to their City Plan, or to let us know if they feel that isn't necessary so that the MPO can move faster and we did receive letters from both Cities stating that they didn't feel it was necessary for them to do so so that is why this is before you today.

Haugen commented that we did advertise that a public hearing would be held at today's meeting on these amendments. He said that they did not receive any comments about the proposed amendments, so the action today would be a recommendation that we approve the proposed amendments to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Haugen stated that the projects are the same; one on the Minnesota side and four on the North Dakota side.

***MOVED BY KUHARENKO, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE 2045 MTP, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Peterson, Ellis, Bail, Brooks, Hopkins, Johnson, Kuharenko, and Riesinger.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

*Absent: Kadrmas, Emery, Halford, Christianson, Mason, Zacher, Bergman, West, Magnuson, and Sanders.*

**MATTER OF SOLICITATION OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE NEXT T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that in the staff report, and again we had a little discussion last month about this, we are formally opening up solicitation of candidate projects for many of the programs. He said that they also want you to know that the T.I.P. Procedural Manual has further information for you to utilize and understand fiscal constraint. He added that some of our projects have been cost estimated and listed in a fiscally constrained document for several years now, so we are really trying to focus on the added year to each of the programs instead of trying to squeeze new projects into programs that have already been fiscally constrained for many years.

Haugen said that he does have a presentation, which he did email to the Technical Advisory Committee members earlier (a copy of the presentation is included in the file and is available upon request) that he would like to go over.

Presentation continued.

Haugen went over the various programs and project submittal dates for both North Dakota and Minnesota programs.

Pierce gave links to the Minnesota DNR Federal Recreational Trail Program: [https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails\\_federal.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_federal.html) (due in February); and the Minnesota Regional Trail Grant Program: [https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails\\_regional.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_regional.html) (due in March).

Haugen concluded that staff will keep everyone abreast of any changes that may be required because of action by either Congress or if other project programs open up.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. 2021 Annual Work Program Project Update
  - 1) Aerial Photo Update
  - 2) Pavement Management Update
  - 3) Transit Development Program Update
  - 4) Grand Forks Land Use Plan Update
  - 5) East Grand Forks Land Use Plan Update

Haugen referred to the monthly report, included in the packet, and commented that on the Land Use Plans, visit the websites as they will give you the best information. He added that East

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Grand Forks has a draft that is out for review and comment, they will be approving that in November. He stated that the Grand Forks side is, again the first quarter of 2022.

Haugen commented that we already talked about the bridge study.

Kouba reported that the consultants are going to start doing some of the analysis for the Pavement Management System Update.

Kouba stated that they will be doing some pop-up events for the Transit Development Program, and there is a survey that will be released at the end of the week. She added that there is a website available as well at: [www.cattransitplan.com](http://www.cattransitplan.com) where you can find information and updates on the project as well as to take the survey. She commented they will be doing pop-ups at UND, Northland, the Transit Center, and at the Main Hub at Mid-Town.

Kouba said that she has begun distributing the Aerial Photo and is waiting to hear back from everyone who got it to make sure it is what they want or if they see something that should or shouldn't be there or something. Kuharenko commented that they got the aerial photo, and it is on the City of Grand Forks GIS system and is available for download if there are any consultants or engineers out there that are looking for it. He said that he has been into it a couple of times and it is very nice, the resolution is great, so it is looking really good, and a lot of their engineers are really excited to start using that this winter, so thank you again.

Information only

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY KUHARENKO, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup>,  
2021 MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:29 P.M.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager