

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Wednesday, March 16, 2022 - 12:00 Noon
East Grand Forks Training Conference Room/Zoom Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

Warren Strandell, Secretary, called the March 16th, 2022, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:05p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: In-person - Marc DeMers, Warren Strandell, Bob Rost, Mike Powers, Clarence Vetter, and Al Grasser. Via Zoom - Ken Vein and Jeannie Mock.

Absent: None.

Guest(s): Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Local Government; Kirsten Sperry, FHWA-North Dakota; George Palo, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; J.T. Anderson, MnDOT-District 2; Jon Mason, MnDOT-District 2; Jesse Kadarmas, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; Jason Peterson, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; Anna Pierce, MnDOT; Michael Johnson, NDDOT-Local Government; and Meghan Arbregast, Grand Forks Herald.

Staff present: Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Interim Executive Director and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mock declared a quorum was present.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 16TH, 2022 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 16TH, 2022 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FY2022-2025 TIP AMENDMENT #3

Kouba reported that this is an amendment to our FY2022-2025 TIP. She explained that the NDDOT applied for, and received funds from the RAISE program, which allowed them to fund a Statewide Traffic Operations Center and to study the I-29 Corridor from the South Dakota border to the Canadian border as a Smart Corridor. She stated that the total project cost is \$1.1

million dollars, and the RFP is expected to be released soon by the NDDOT. She said that because this project is in our MPO area we need to amend our TIP to include the project. She added that a public hearing was held at the Technical Advisory Committee last Wednesday, no comments were received, so the Technical Advisory Committee and MPO Staff recommend approval of the amendment.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE FY2022-2025 TIP AMENDMENT #3, AS SUBMITTED.

Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vetter, Grasser, and Mock.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

MATTER OF ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATIONS

Kouba reported that this is a requirement for many of our documents; it is a listing of all the things obligated; all the projects that were obligated in the Year 2021. She said that it is basically looking at the projects that are listed as obligated and how much funding was actually used in those projects, as well as whether or not they have been moved, or if anything has changed between the time they were supposed to be built and now. She stated that there is also a listing of whether or not bike and pedestrian facilities were included in those projects, or if they were listed at all at the time.

Kouba stated that they made that list and created the document, and the Technical Advisory Committee has recommended approval subject to switching the South Columbia Road Project and the University Project on the map.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FY2021 ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATIONS, SUBJECT TO SWITCHING ND11 AND ND13 PROJECTS ON THE MAP.

Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vetter, Grasser, and Mock.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF ATAC SCOPES OF WORK FOR MPO

a. Travel Demand Model Update Scope Of Work

Kouba reported that the first scope of work is for the Travel Demand Model Update. She said that this is pretty important work at this time because we are starting our Street and Highway Plan and moving on to include everything into our Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Kouba explained that the Travel Demand Model will help us understand the traffic situations and will be an element in deciding what projects are going to be prioritized. She stated that previously we had mostly just the vehicle, ATAC did include the option for non-vehicle or multimodal so there would be bicycle and pedestrian included in this model as an option. She said that there would be a cost difference if the bike/ped option and transit option is chosen to be included, but there is also a secondary cost without those options. She stated that the Technical Advisory Committee did recommend approval of the scope of work to include the bike/ped and transit option.

MOVED BY ROST, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE ATAC TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL UPDATE TO INCLUDE THE TRANSIT MODE OPTIONS TASK AT A COST OF \$49,936.00.

Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vetter, and Grasser.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

b. Traffic Counting Program Scope Of Work

Kouba reported this scope of work is for the Traffic Counting Program. She stated that, as many of you know, Grand Forks has set up a traffic counting program using their traffic signals, and as those signals are changed, updated, replaced, or a new one is put in, they will need to be adjusted and ATAC will do those adjustments and provide support.

Kouba commented that this scope of work is for a three-year period, and the total cost is \$66,000 that will be split over the three years at approximately 33% per year.

DeMers asked if this was just the hardware portion of the system or does it include doing the data side as well. Kouba responded that it does include the data side as well. She added that it will make sure that all the components are up to date so if there are any issues, such as if something isn't counting a portion of the intersection, they will go back and check to see why that is happening.

DeMers asked if we have past information on how much we've spent on this; like is it about \$10,000 a year, or what. Kouba responded that she thinks it has been roughly around \$25,000 a year. She stated that any additional intersections that are added to the system are also included in this. DeMers asked if it is Grand Forks employees that are doing this or is it ATAC. Kouba responded that ATAC will do the work on their end, but Grand Forks staff will need to install the cameras and connect them to the system.

Vein reported present.

Grasser asked what the funding split is for this; federal, state, and local sources. Kouba responded that it is generally an 80/20 split, but she will verify that. Grasser asked if this is only

on the North Dakota side. Kouba responded that it is, adding that Minnesota has not been able to connect into it just yet as their traffic signals would need to be updated in order to do so.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE ATAC TRAFFIC COUNTING PROGRAM, AS PRESENTED AT A COST OF \$66,000.00.

Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vetter, Vein, Mock and Grasser.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2050 STREET/HIGHWAY PLAN UPDATE RFP

Kouba reported that this is one of our biggest elements and it is updated every five years. She stated that it is the final cog in our Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and it was last updated in 2018. She said that we are looking for a consultant to work with ATAC, the MPO and both Grand Forks City and East Grand Forks City staff.

Kouba commented that we are looking for them to work on the existing conditions; existing and committed projects, fiscal constraint, goals and performance measures, project timing and especially public engagement for this project.

Kouba stated that there have been a couple of focus needs; the first is from the City of East Grand Forks, they recently had a project in their Industrial Park come up. She said that it was actually the MPO Executive Policy Board that wanted additional information about the project before approving it, and that is basically what this is trying to do, to try to figure out what projects and what their priority is in the Metropolitan Planning process, so with that we are just trying to get that information into our Metropolitan Transportation Plan and hopefully have a better view of regional traffic not only in the Industrial Park, but its connection to the rest of the system as well.

Kouba said that the second area we were looking at is a focus area along I-29. She stated that there are projects and plans going on left and right that are connecting throughout that whole area and we are trying to make sure that all of these projects that are coming from these various plans, like the City's Traffic Analysis for Fufeng and NDDOT's Southend interchange are connecting with everything and how those projects will affect the rest of the system moving forward; and if there is any kind of changes to projects that we previously looked at, and if the priority of those projects has changed due to the impact of all those other traffic studies going on that the MPO is not doing.

Kouba stated that there were some text changes made to the RFP based on input from the Technical Advisory Committee. She referred to the document and pointed out that version one was what was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee and version three is the version being presented to this board. She said that she did receive comments back from Technical

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Advisory Committee members who did have issues with wording, and they approved the wording in version three.

Strandell asked what kind of timeline there is for consultants. Kouba responded that we have a very hard deadline for this study. She explained that we have to have everything completed and a plan adopted by December 31st, 2023, so that the Feds can approve our Metropolitan Transportation Plan by the end of January 2024, so it is a very hard deadline. She said that there have been extensions, but they are few and far between, so it is important that we continue moving this along. Strandell said that we will be looking at some action on this over the next few months. Kouba agreed, adding that once we get this approved then we will hold interviews in April and have a consultant on board in May.

Vein said that the City of Grand Forks is currently hiring a traffic consultant to kind address the Fufeng development transportation issues with impacts to the federal aid system, rail, interstate; is this aligned with that, how do these two studies correlate with each other. Kouba responded that that will be part of the focus because we do understand that the City is doing that traffic study, and we want to make sure that those projects are brought in to our Metropolitan Transportation Plan, so that is what the focus area will do. She stated that from there any projects will be included in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan that are needed and prioritized.

Vein stated that one of the concerns that he had, probably, was the impacts of rail traffic on Highway 2, and even on Interstate. He said that he knows that that is an important part of the study the City is doing; would there be two different studies doing the same thing ultimately. Kouba responded that there wouldn't. She explained that all we are asking the consultant to do is to bring that study into everything and make sure that if there are any differences found by the City's study that would impact the rest of the system that might need to be highlighted in how we prioritize projects for the rest of the system, so it is taking what you've already worked on and bringing it into the rest of the network. She added that those studies tend to be very focused on certain intersections, this is taking that information and expanding it out a little to make sure that no other priorities have changed because of the impacts.

Vein said that there may be some decisions the City will make in advance that as the plan were to proceed there may be impacts that will need to be studied after the initiation of the project that we will have to then address as a part of this transportation plan. Kouba commented that there may be some but we would definitely need a far larger study later on just because once everything is in place, you can only plan so much for so many things, and doing a review after a few years, probably closer to the timeframe when we will be looking at updating the plan again, in another five years, we would want to have a much more in-depth understanding of what is happening due to Fufeng and possibly an interchange further south and how those numbers will change over the years. Vein asked if we, as the MPO, would also be interested in the City's traffic analysis that is done as part of Fufeng, will that be a coordinated effort even before we finish this study. Kouba responded that that is the desire, for there to be coordination. She said that there is access to our traffic analysis that is being accessed, but so far there is just so much that the MPO has been a part of lately.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

DeMers asked what the timeline is for the Grand Forks study. Grasser responded that the consultant has been working on it and they expect a draft soon. DeMers asked if there is conflict between what that study says and what the MPO planning document says, how do we, what is the process for dealing with that. Kouba responded that we would have to amend our Metropolitan Transportation Plan, but since we are in the middle of an update, and that traffic study should be done before we finish our update, that is the reason why we are looking at that emphasis need because we don't want to have those non-meshing points happening.

DeMers asked who the Grand Forks City consultant was. Grasser responded that it was Bolton-Menk. Grasser added that just to comment on all the timing stuff; if you look at what we are doing here, an RFQ is going out, and we aren't even going to hire this consultant until May 2022, and by that time he thinks the City will have their study done and it will become part of the background information in this update, so it isn't like there are two things going on at the same time and conflicting with each other, the City's will be done and will feed into this one.

Kouba commented that she wrote the RFP so that we aren't trying to redo the work, we are just trying to take that work and bring it in and make sure that there aren't additional impacts to the rest of the system, or any changes in priorities.

DeMers asked if there was a timeline for when we know what the scope adjustments, if any, are necessary for the transportation law, when are we going to know that or is that going to be ongoing throughout the whole process. Kouba responded that the major change that would happen in any of the scope would probably happen towards the end of 2022. She stated that by then we will have a better idea as to what is necessary, and if there are any additional changes or any other things that are needed. She added that we will also have a better understanding of what the MPO's 2023 budget will be because we are influx due to; by 2023 we will know for sure whether or not Minot will be an MPO, and we also should have a better handle on what funding will be available between all the MPOs with Fargo being a Transportation Management Area. DeMers asked if we know what the changes will cost, but if we don't know we don't know. He said he was referring to the \$380,000, will there be a 10% change or not that much. Kouba responded that it would probably be enough to have to bring it before the Board for approval.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE RFP FOR THE 2050 STREET AND HIGHWAY PLAN UPDATE, AS PRESENTED.

Grasser commented that these dates; he is wondering about if at the end, the final end delivery; thinking back on some of the past Transportation Plan Updates and he knows that we have run into issues at City Council when we are into December and are needing to approve some of these final documents, and we have that deadline there and questions come up and there really isn't an opportunity then to go back and address some of the comments, we have to approve it or the world comes to an end kind of thing, so he is wondering if these dates that we have in here bring the deliveries in early enough so we can avoid that situation. Kouba responded that they are hoping to alleviate some of those issues by changing some of the wording to say that there will be three meetings before the Planning Commissions and City Councils, specifically; kind of that

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

kick-off, mid and end final document so that hopefully in the mid we can bring forward some of that information so that there hopefully won't be that back-up at the end. DeMers said that the draft should come out in August. Grasser said, though that by the time it gets through here, gets to the Executive Board, goes on to the agendas, you lose a month or better just kind of moving it internally through the process. Kouba added that it will take two readings for it to be adopted because it is part of an ordinance for Grand Forks. Grasser said that it is a little deceiving, he just knows that they have run into problems, he can't remember what all the initial dates were, but it seems like we sometimes run into that.

Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF BIKE/PED UPDATE CONTRACT

Kouba reported that we put the RFP out at the end of January, with a deadline for proposals to be submitted by March 4th. She stated that they received three proposals, one from Bolton-Menk, one from SRF and one from WSB. She said that they used a slightly different scoring version so that we can better track some of the decision points and have our Selection Committee give some description as to why they made some of the decisions they made.

Kouba stated that the top-ranking firm was Bolton-Menk; and a copy of the scope of work was included in the packet. She referred to the scope of work and went over it briefly, explaining that there is one change that will need to be made as Bolton-Menk mentioned using street light data, and unfortunately the MPO does not have a license for street light data and the only way we would be able to access any kind of street light data right now is in Minnesota and it does not cross the river, so it isn't as useful for our MPO at this point in time, but we are hoping that in the future we will be able to work something out with that as it is a very important piece of information in projects, it is origin and destination data, and it can also be down into that bicycle and pedestrian data and they are working on including transit as well, but right now the MPO doesn't have as much funding as other MPOs in North Dakota, so we will have to work around that and it will have to be taken out of the scope of work, other than that everything else will stay the same, they will just use other sources of data.

DeMers asked what a streetlight give us. Kouba responded that it gives origin and destination data so it will tell us where people start their trips and where they end them, and to some extent it will give us the path they take from the start to the end of their trips, so it isn't just a straight line, it can include other streets as well. Grasser asked if it gathers that data via cell phones or how do that get that. Kouba responded that some of it is from cell phone, some is from GPS, they use various sources to get that information, but they try to get it as anonymously as possible.

Kouba stated that we do need to approve the contract with Bolton-Menk with the scope of work attached. She said that their cost proposal is \$119,810.00. She added that they did include some other options that we didn't feel would be beneficial to us.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

DeMers asked if there is any way we can set these consultant budgets, or study budgets, without them being published; it always amazes him how they come in \$100 under the budget every single time, they can always justify exactly that we never get anything that is \$40,000 cheaper, it seems like it is a rigged system. He said he knows we have to publish our budget, but we are basically telling them what they are going to charge us, it really isn't a bid; obviously we have to budget, and we have to figure out what these things are going to cost, but it just seems like an odd system.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE MPO EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIRPERSON AND INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH BOLTON-MENK TO DO THE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE AT A COST OF \$119,810.00.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS FOR NEW BRIDGES

Kouba reported that this was an item that the Executive Board requested at their January meeting, after the Bridge Traffic Impact Study was adopted; to invite representatives from the DOTs, Local Districts, and FHWA to a meeting to discuss what the next steps might be for the bridge study.

Kouba stated that online we have Kristen Sperry, ND-FHWA; Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Bismarck; George Palo, NDDOT-Grand Forks; Jon Mason, MnDOT-Bemidji; Michael Johnson, NDDOT-Bismarck; Jesse Kadarmas, NDDOT-Grand Forks; Jason Peterson, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; Anna Pierce, MnDOT-St. Paul; and JT Anderson, MnDOT-Bemidji.

Strandell said that his thought is that this group, the MPO Executive Policy Board does not make a final decision on a bridge, it has to be done by the City Councils and the two counties, so he thinks our position is to pass on the study information, and probably make a recommendation.

DeMers commented that from his perspective is that one of the things that happened here is; how do we move this, for lack of a better term, from a potential energy to a kinetic energy, what are the processes that we need to make sure are done so that make sure that if this is a plan how do we get it to reality. He said that, obviously this isn't something that is done all the time between two different states, working on a large infrastructure project, looking at what are the timelines, what are the potential funding sources, those types of things that we should be looking at as we present these two, as Mr. Strandell said, how do we present them to the different jurisdictions, how do we make sure or facilitate this action is what we are looking for, in his opinion.

Vein stated that from the Grand Forks side that is the same question they are asking. He said that we have done a lot of studies, we have taken it as far as we know right now, but how do we get it

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

to the next level and what does that process look like, especially with the kind of responsibilities between North Dakota, Minnesota, Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. Powers asked what you consider the next level, where do we go from here.

Kouba said that she would invite any of our partners to chime in and answer some of these questions.

Sperry stated that she can start and give you just from the federal perspective with the new Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law. She said that they do have a power point slide out that shows some of the different pots of money and who is eligible to get some of those pots of money. She referred to slides from the presentation that Federal Highway has out on its website (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request) and went over some of the funding programs available.

Sperry said that ultimately there are quite a few areas that the MPO would qualify under. She added that isn't a whole lot of guidance out but not that the Omnibus Bill was passed yesterday hopefully a lot more information will be coming out about these discretionary areas. She here isn't a whole lot of suggested looking at the entire presentation as she just pulled out some of the ones that she thought might apply more to the MPO.

Vetter just curious, how far along with a project would we need to be before we could we even apply for any of those funds, or to put it another way are there any funds available to help with the planning process. Sperry responded that you did a planning study so the next step would be the environmental phase and doing more of the environmental clearances and doing some of the design. She asked if they are ready to select which option you would want to fund to move forward. Vetter responded that it depends on who you ask, he has been ready for five years. Vein commented that from a City of Grand Forks standpoint, they had selected a location for a bridge previously, it is part of their Long Range Transportation Plan he believes, there have been some questions come up internally so they did additional planning or studying for alternatives to reconfirm the selection that they had, which they just completed recently, so now the idea is how do we take it to that next step and probably some of the environmental you mentioned is probably the next step but we also would like to be assured of what would that long term funding source be at the same time, and he doesn't know if we can do that concurrently, but they have done a lot of studies and the cities are trying to figure out how do we move it forward, we would like to see what that implementation process would look like.

Strandell asked if that environmental study would be for a specific site or for the two locations that are under consideration. Zacher responded that as far as he is aware every summer, fall the NDDOT sends out solicitations to the MPOs, to the LPAs for projects to be submitted through the Urban Regional, the Urban Grant or anything else so his understanding is that is how you would get your project on, just like any other project that the MPOs or LPAs decide to push forward. He added that this is going to be a local structure, based on the last traffic study that was just completed, this would be a local structure so it would have to go through that process.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Kouba asked what would make it an ideal project for funding, what would they need to have beyond the plans. She explained that we have traffic studies, there is a hydraulic study out as well, are we needing to fund the NEPA process on a local level before we can ask for funding of the project. Zacher responded that he isn't totally clear on that process, but his understanding is that usually when a project is submitted to Stacey Hanson, through her solicitation process, it is for the environmental, Mr. Grasser can probably explain it better, he hasn't been through that process but most of the time it is from NEPA, through the design and ultimately through the construction phases.

DeMers asked if there were any special considerations that we should be thinking about as this would be working with, obviously, two different departments of transportation; as we apply for grant dollars on one side or the other, that any of the people that are here could shed any light on. Zacher responded that from his point of view he isn't sure, maybe Mr. Johnson could add to this, but to him it would be Grand Forks and East Grand Forks deciding who would take the lead on this and then going from there.

Johnson agreed, adding that from the North Dakota side of the river, at this point in time, even with the new highway bill, we are still learning the ins and outs of that bill and how certain funding pots will be utilized and dedicated, as Ms. Sperry mentioned, your normal processes for starting a project would apply in this case. He said that most of those things that Ms. Sperry had pulled up on her screen are grant based, so they are application based directly through the Feds, not through the State DOTs; those are application based systems that are typically joint efforts, so the MPO, the Jurisdictions, Cities and/or Counties, and even the DOTs can partner together to submit an application for a project, but again one entity needs to take the lead for that effort, but most of those things that Ms. Sperry showed are application based through the Feds. He added that, at least on the North Dakota side, they do not have anything beyond their normal programs that you would normally apply for. He said that as these new bridge funds and these new formula funds get divvied out, they are going to determine how they get that information out to the locals and how they get a part of it, but they haven't figured that out yet, but at this point in time the process that you have been following for years is still the process you will follow now.

Grasser asked, some of what they run into, particularly on the North Dakota side gets to be the cost constraint, fiscal constraint element that we have to deal with on the MPO, and they have gotten caught in a catch-22 in the past, certainly with the 42nd Street Grade Separated Crossing they did a full environmental ten years ago, but they weren't able to pursue it because we weren't able to put it on the TIP or the STIP because it didn't meet our cost constraints, so making an application directly to the federal process, does that get us past that cost constraint issue, and if not how do we as an MPO get past that particular item as an organization. Johnson responded that to answer the first question; no, it does not get you past that issue, in order to get environmental clearance, or NEPA clearance from Federal Highway there has to be the next phase, or a phase of the project development process within the MPOs TIP and the DOTs STIP. He added that it doesn't necessarily mean it has to be construction, it has to be a next phase of federal authorization. He cited a very large project they have in Williston that the environmental document was just nearing completion, they aren't in a position to fully construct the entire project, so just a portion of that project is going to be constructed and they identified that project

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

and put it in their STIP and they were able to get their environmental clearance and move on with that project. He said that it can be a right of way acquisition, it can be utility relocations that you are using federal funds for, it just has to be a next phase to keep that process moving in order for the Feds to give you environmental clearance. Grasser asked, then, would the study itself be a next phase, preliminary environmental reviews. Johnson responded it would not because the request for a CAD-X or an environmental clearance from Federal Highway is the trigger that asks for the next phase, and you don't get that trigger until you do the document in the study.

Vein said, then, that the next phase step is to do the environmental study, right. Grasser responded that he doesn't want to be the expert on that, but he thinks the answer is yes. He said that that is what they have been following, such as with the grade separated crossing and that is the reason they ended up funding that with 100% local funds, you kind of have to have that bridge between what you can do on a planning level with planning dollars and being able to actually get an identified piece of the project moving. Johnson commented that that is correct, that would be the next step, and then some of those grants that Ms. Sperry pulled up do allow for the request for funds for project development, basically performing the preliminary engineering or finishing the preliminary engineering, so you could pursue one of those grants, not necessarily for construction dollars, but for a smaller number of \$2 to \$3 million dollars to finish your environmental or your design, and then look at possibly either reapplying or looking at funding sources for future construction, it isn't just for construction dollars.

Grasser asked if we have a sense; he knows that this is kind of a new program and nobody has been able to wrap their heads around exactly what we are doing or the implementation process; but between State and Federal Highway do we have a sense of when we might have those programs identified enough to locally make a practical application toward anything, are we talking weeks or months, hopefully not years. Johnson responded that some of those programs are new, however some of them have been around for quite a while and they have their own dedicated websites and application processes and steps. He said that the Feds might tweak a process a little bit from year to year or change the name six times like the RAISE (or old TIGER) Grants, that information is out there and available for you to start looking at preparing an application. He asked if Ms. Sperry knows when the next RAISE grant deadlines are for applications. Sperry responded that she will look into it and get it to the MPO.

Discussion on the pros and cons of applying for RAISE (TIGER) grants ensued.

Vein stated that one of the questions they have always asked is; the cities could obviously get together, they have in the past, but do we determine who should be the lead, which State is the lead, or how best to, even after you get the environmental done, to move the project forward is there some collaborative process. Zacher responded that, again, he isn't sure what the Cities think, but from his point of view the locations from the Bridge Traffic Impact Study that was just completed, it was identified as a local structure, so to him it would be a local decision, or a local discussion as to who should become the lead of that structure. Vein asked if there is a big difference which State DOT would be more appropriate. Zacher responded that he doesn't know if it really makes a difference, he knows that on the MnDOT side they use mostly State funds for

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

the preliminary work and then Federal funds get accessed during construction whereas North Dakota uses Federal funds throughout the process. Mason added that that is his understanding as well; he was more involved with the inner-city study that was recently completed and with some of the parameters around that study indicating that it would potentially be designed for no trucks and different types of things that really indicated it would be an inner-city local type bridge. He said that when it comes to the lead State Agency question he doesn't know if the federal piece of it becomes involved too with the two different FHWA divisions, and as you mentioned Wayne, he isn't sure what the implications would be for a local agency potentially using federal funds to develop a project, it is his understanding it is more MnDOT's internal process as a State DOT that they typically don't use federal funds to develop projects, so he probably muddied the water more than he needed to but there are some things to consider still.

Kouba commented that she might muddy the water even more; we focused on the inter-city bridge, but in reality the MPO does have two bridges, the other has been long located at Merrifield Road, or North 12th Street, so it is further south and has been stated as an intra-state bridge, so there would be truck traffic as well, and it could also be considered a by-pass, is that a different process considering how many more people would have to be involved because it would be considered a State or County bridge. Zacher responded that his initial thoughts on it, and he has seen reports that the NDDOT preferred it and all that other stuff, and he went back to some of the documentation that went back to 1991 and some back to 1970, talking about a southern by-pass, but his initial thought is that basically the study you just completed then is a waste, if you want to go down to that point because the study that was just completed was identified as a local structure that would act similarly to the Point Bridge in that if it gets flooded it gets flooded, so if you're looking to move the location it may mean another study. Kouba stated that they aren't looking to move the location, it would still be an inter-city bridge, she is talking about the second bridge that the MPO has always indicated is needed in the region, which would be Merrifield Road, further south, it would be a by-pass, it would allow truck traffic, and it has already been looked at and gotten to the same point as an intra-state bridge as a bypass. Johnson responded that he would say on that, in those terms, it still wouldn't be any different because that general route are county roads. He added that maybe what you are referring to are bypasses that were done during the oil boom, those were all negotiated directly with management levels at all levels, so they didn't necessarily follow a normal programming process, and if the Merrifield structure were to be built and that was then assigned some sort of bypass route or truck reliever route that would be a county route that would allow trucks, if it was to divert State trucks that would have to be a conversation that the county would have to entertain with the State and figure out if that is something that they want to officially participate in or be a part of or if they would just let the county provide that system on their system, not necessarily rerouting their trucks down there, it would be a coordinated effort, it would be something that would kind of be negotiated between the two entities, when at such time the infrastructure is in place, he doesn't think it would be a cause to create the infrastructure.

Vein said that it sounds like, not to be a local structure, you would have to take on truck traffic, and probably an elevation such that it would be above the 100-year flood plain; would that change how you would categorize the bridge. Johnson responded that it wouldn't. He explained that it would involve many things, those would probably be part of the conversation, but there

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

would also be considerations that it would have to be on the State Highway System, they would have to look at completely redoing their State Highway System, and he isn't saying it doesn't exist, but there is definitely a desire to not dead-end a State Highway at the river so what does that mean on the Minnesota side in terms of implementing a trunk highway on their side that it would also connect too, that would be a tough hurdle to overcome.

Rost commented that he has had discussion with Curt Kruen, who is a local legislator; and he has said that he has had conversation with the NDDOT about the Merrifield Road Bridge, and some of the discussion was that if that bridge were to be built that the NDDOT, there already is an overhead over I-29 at the Merrifield Road, but there aren't any on or off ramps, that those would be added if that bridge were to be built. He said that he doesn't know if you are familiar with conversations with him, but he has brought that back to Grand Forks at the Chamber of Commerce and has talked about that at great length. Johnson responded that those are management level conversations that they are not involved with. He added that there is historical communication between the jurisdictions, Mr. Zacher mentioned it, dating back quite a few years sort of tying that Red River Bridge at Merrifield and an interchange together, but nothing down at their programming and technical level has been officially communicated, identified or programmed, but obviously if that comes to fruition through some sort of other avenue, either directly through their management team or through a legislative mandate, that kind of changes everything we are talking about here today, but that condition exists no matter what.

DeMers thanked everyone for coming today and helping us, we appreciate it.

Information only.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2021 Annual Work Program Project Update

Kouba reported that this is our monthly one-page report that gives the status of all our projects. She said that we are working into our 2022 work program, so we are moving right along and that will be our main focus, the Bike/Ped and Street/Highway Plans will be our main focus for the Year 2022

Information only.

B. Update On Executive Director Position

Vetter reported that the Selection Committee met and whittled it down to four individuals that they are going to interview on March 24th. He said that three are local and one is from out of the area.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GF/EGF MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

C. Approval Of Bill/Check List For 2/12/22 To 3/11/22 Period

***MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE BILLS/CHECKS
FOR THE 2/12/22 TO 3/11/22 PERIOD.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

***STRANDELL ADJOURNED THE MARCH 16, 2022, MEETING OF THE MPO
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:19 P.M.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO
Transaction List by Vendor
February 12 through March 11, 2022

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
AFLAC.							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-517.90
Alerus Financial							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,597.88
Liability Check	02/18/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-1,458.72
Liability Check	03/04/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,573.56
Liability Check	03/10/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-5,071.58
Alliant Engineering							
Bill	02/23/2022	Inv. #...	Work On Futu...	206 · Accounts Pay...		565 · Special ...	-5,035.37
Bill Pmt -Check	02/23/2022	7190	Work On Futu...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-5,035.37
Bill	02/24/2022	Retain...	Retainage Du...	206 · Accounts Pay...		220 · Retainag...	-14,115.52
Bill Pmt -Check	02/24/2022	7192	Retainage Du...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-14,115.52
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2022		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
Brady Martz							
Bill	02/25/2022	Inv. #...	Progress Billi...	206 · Accounts Pay...		515 · Financial...	-5,000.00
Bill Pmt -Check	02/25/2022	7193	Progress Billi...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-5,000.00
Business Essentials							
Bill	03/07/2022	Inv. #...	4 Boxes Of C...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-156.48
Bill Pmt -Check	03/07/2022	7195	4 Boxes Of C...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-156.48
CitiBusiness Card							
Check	02/24/2022	CITIB...	Charges For ...	104 · Checking	X	517 · Overhead	-64.32
City of East Grand Forks							
Bill	02/16/2022	Inv. #...	2022 1st Qua...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-2,513.58
Bill Pmt -Check	02/16/2022	7184	2022 1st Qua...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-2,513.58
East Grand Forks Water and Light							
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2022		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
Fidelity Security Life.							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	AVESIS	50790-1043	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-8.43
Kimley-Horn And Associates, Inc.							
Bill	02/18/2022	Inv. #...	Work On Tra...	206 · Accounts Pay...		548 · EGF FT...	-10,011.38
Bill Pmt -Check	02/18/2022	7188	Work On Tra...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-10,011.38
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2022		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2022		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
Liberty Business Systems, Inc.							
Bill	03/08/2022	Inv. #...	Contract Bas...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-178.93
Bill Pmt -Check	03/08/2022	7196	Contract Bas...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-178.93
LSNB as Trustee for PEHP							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	NWR...		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-123.75
Madison Nat'l Life							
Liability Check	03/02/2022	7194		104 · Checking		215 · Disability...	-69.86
Mike's							
Bill	02/16/2022		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-100.00
Bill Pmt -Check	02/16/2022	7186	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-100.00
Minnesota Department of Revenue							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-201.00
Liability Check	02/18/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-104.00
Liability Check	03/04/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-201.00
Minnesota Life Insurance Company							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	7182		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-111.72
Nationwide Retirement Solutions							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-537.71
Liability Check	03/04/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-537.71
Liability Check	03/11/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-30,611.81
NDPERS							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,116.58
Liability Check	03/02/2022	NDPE...		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,535.92
Peggy McNelis							
Bill	02/16/2022		Cake/Balloon ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-26.41
Bill Pmt -Check	02/16/2022	7187	Cake/Balloon ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-26.41
QuickBooks Payroll Service							
Liability Check	02/17/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-6,502.04
Liability Check	02/17/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,894.86
Liability Check	03/03/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-6,471.37
Liability Check	03/10/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking		6560 · Payroll ...	-3.00

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO
Transaction List by Vendor
February 12 through March 11, 2022

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.							
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2022		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
Bill	03/08/2022	Inv. #...	Work On GF ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		560 · Land Us...	-5,038.03
Bill Pmt -Check	03/08/2022	7197	Work On GF ...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-5,038.03
Standard Insurance Company							
Liability Check	02/18/2022	7183		104 · Checking	X	217 · Dental P...	-118.88
The Exponent							
Bill	02/16/2022	Inv. #...	Public Notice ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-136.86
Bill Pmt -Check	02/16/2022	7185	Public Notice ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-136.86
Bill	02/18/2022	Inv. #...	Public Notice ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-136.84
Bill Pmt -Check	02/18/2022	7189	Public Notice ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-136.84
Bill	02/23/2022	Inv. #...	Public Notice ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-136.84
Bill Pmt -Check	02/23/2022	7191	Public Notice ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-136.84