

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Stephanie Halford, Chairman, called the September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 11:03 a.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following member(s) were present: Steve Emery, East Grand Forks Engineer; George Palo, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; and Dale Bergman, Cities Area Transit. Via Zoom: Jane Williams, Grand Forks Engineering; Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Local Planning; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; Ryan Brooks, Grand Forks Planning; Jon Mason, MnDOT-District 2; Ryan Riesinger, Airport Authority; and Rich Sanders, Polk County Engineer.

Absent: Brad Bail, Jason Peterson, Michael Johnson, Lane Magnuson, Nels Christianson, Nick West, and Patrick Hopkins.

Guest(s) present: Kristen Sperry, FHWA-ND; Christian Danielson, Grand Forks Engineering; Bobbi Retzlaff, FHWA-MN; David Murphy, EGF City Administrator; and Durga Vijayakumar, Resident.

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

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Halford declared a quorum was present.

**JANE WILLIAMS' LAST MEETING**

Halford reported that this is Jane Williams' last meeting. She stated that she would be passing the torch on to Christian Danielson, who will be the new alternate when David Kuharenko isn't able to attend the meetings.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 10, 2022, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

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**MATTER OF AMENDMENT TO THE MTP**

Halford reported that our community is growing and its needs are changing, which is why we update our plans and also why we do amendments here and there. She stated that currently our most recent MTP is our 2045, however we are in the process of updating it to 2050.

Halford commented that the City of East Grand Forks is requesting the MPO amend its 2045 MTP to move the Bygland/Rhinehart Roundabout Project from the short-term to the Illustrative Project list. She said that they are also requesting to add a few projects to the short-term, they are:

- 1) 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE (15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> St NE) – Miscellaneous concrete panel/C&G replacement and miscellaneous sidewalk replacement.
- 2) 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE (Highway 2 – 10<sup>th</sup> St NE) – Miscellaneous concrete panel/C&G replacement.
- 3) DeMers Ave (4<sup>th</sup> St to 10<sup>th</sup> St) – Replace stamped concrete crosswalks, remove bituminous pavement from old RR tracks and replace with concrete pavement, miscellaneous concrete panel/C&G replacement, and miscellaneous sidewalk replacement.

Halford stated that this proposed amendment is being presented to both Cities. She explained that even though it doesn't directly affect both communities each City is asked to consider looking at their individual City Comprehensive Plans. She stated that this request is coming from East Grand Forks, both Cities will need to review their Comprehensive Plans and if Grand Forks feels that their plan needs to be updated we will need to go through a two month process, if they don't then they just need to submit a letter from the City to the MPO saying that this doesn't warrant an update to their Comprehensive Plan and to move forward. She said that once we receive notification from Grand Forks we will bring this back to the Technical Advisory Committee.

Halford asked if anyone had any comments or questions on this item. She added that we do have representation from the City of East Grand Forks to help answer any questions you may have. There were no comments or questions.

***MOVED BY WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY BERGMAN, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE 2045 MTP, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Palo, Brooks, Ellis, Emery, Mason, Riesinger, Zacher, Bergman, Williams, and Sanders.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, Kuharenko, Hopkins, West, and Magnuson.***

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**MATTER OF 2023-2026 T.I.P.**

Kouba reported that this has been before you at your meeting last month. She said that it was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee however when it was presented to the MPO Executive Policy Board staff requested that it be tabled in order to include additional public comment on some of the changes that happened since the TIP was released for review and comment prior to last month's meetings.

Kouba stated that there weren't any changes since last month's meetings other than some minor things to the narratives to ensure they reflect the exact same thing that is in the Draft STIPs that are out.

Kouba commented that there one thing that she did change was from the Illustrative Project List to FY2023, and that is the expansion of the Public Transportation Maintenance Building. She explained that this project will include an addition to the building and updating of the equipment. Bergman referred to the table and said that he thinks the grand total is off; he believes it is \$8.6 million, but he will double check and get the correct number to staff.

Kouba stated that they are still waiting to hear on some of the Main Street Initiative and the HSIP funding. Zacher responded that you should have gotten notice on the funding for the HSIP projects, they just weren't included in the Draft STIP. He added that for the Main Street Initiative, his understanding is that the recommendation is to be submitted by October 3<sup>rd</sup>, so they are a little behind on those, and that is about all the information he has at this point, and he still owes this MPO and the other two MPOs the lump sums for the PE. Kouba commented that there will probably be other updates after things have been submitted to FHWA and the approve it.

***MOVED BY BERGMAN, SECONDED BY WILLIAMS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE FINAL FY2023-2026 T.I.P., AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Palo, Brooks, Ellis, Emery, Mason, Riesinger, Zacher, Bergman, Williams, and Sanders.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, Kuharenko, Hopkins, West, and Magnuson.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (TDP)**

Kouba reported that we are very close to getting a final document, and the recommendations received from the public input have been reviewed and will be included in the document.

Kouba said that they have also put together more complete financial and capital plan projects, so they are looking finishing all of that and we will soon begin the final plan comment period.

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

Kouba commented that they are suggesting doing Microtransit, which is an on-demand shared transportation that utilizes technology to operate efficiently and effectively. She said that rides can be requested on-demand or in advance for pick-up and drop-off at certain locations within a defined zone. She referred to a map and pointed out the different areas where Microtransit is being proposed.

Kouba reported that the next few slides cover each what needs to be done both short term and medium term for each of the routes. She went over the information briefly, commenting that they are suggesting that the MPO and CAT work together to do a specific Microtransit plan to ensure we can determine which areas are preferable and how it will work as well as how it will transfer over in a way that isn't confusing to the public.

Kouba stated that they are keeping most of the UND routes as they are simply because UND is in the process of doing a lot of new construction as well as moving some of their schools around, so they have a better management of the school system as a whole. She said, then, that instead of changing things now and then most likely having to change them again later it makes sense to keep things as they are.

Kouba commented that programmatically they have recommendations to keep things consistent and to strengthen some of the website interactive maps and service planning tools, so they will continue to work on strengthening our partnerships. She added that they also have a list of plans that will hopefully help impact those programs as well.

Kouba stated that they did look at Transit Hubs at Columbia Mall, Grand Forks Mall, and the Metro Transit Center. She said that they will have to look into available funding sources, but at least they are on the books and are in our plan for when funding does become available.

Kouba reported that there are several Capital Improvements including replacing several vehicles to keep them in a state of good repair; and they are also looking at doing updates to the Metro Transit Center; and there are some additional infrastructure needs such as equipment, lighting cleaning tools, and Bus Shelters.

Kouba stated that, as mentioned, there is also a Phase II Addition Planned for the Metro Transit Center for 2023, which we recently received funding for.

Kouba commented that we do have some idea of what those Capital Assets are costing us when they are being looked at so we are making sure they are constrained. She stated that we looked at our revenue, as well, so the revenue and any expenses, currently, throughout the system have been reviewed. She added that we have a forecast of revenue, and you can see that we have inflated it, and have used some slightly different inflation rates, but for the most part there is only about a 2% increase per year. She stated that the forecast is about a 4% increase per year so we are looking at baselines as well as some of the ideas of how much capital costs we will be

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looking at as well, so that is also including not just buses but other improvements to other areas of the system.

Kouba said that as you can see there are forecasted expenses shown for Fixed Route, Paratransit and Senior Rider, and for the total system as well.

Kouba stated that, in summary, we are looking at a decrease between our revenues and our expenses each year to the point where we are looking at shortfall in 2029 if nothing is corrected. She said that additional sources of local funding may be necessary to shore up system finances if expenses continue to increase at the forecasted rates.

Kouba said that they are looking at the final plan comment period beginning in October. She added that they are planning on holding a meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup>, a public meeting that will be done both in person and virtually on-line that can be viewed live or at a later date. She said that they will have printed documents available for the public to look at as well and to give public input on.

Williams said that she has one question; the Micro Transit she thinks is a great idea, but were the areas chosen based on potential ridership or some other way. She said that she is just curious about how it compares to the low-moderate income maps. She stated that her neighborhood is just east of Washington, and south of 17<sup>th</sup>, that area, and she didn't know what the criteria was for the areas chosen, but that might be a potential area to consider. Kouba responded that they are currently planning for service to continue with bus routes so that area will still be serviced with our fixed route.

Kouba reported that one of the reasons they are looking at Micro Transit, especially for the northern area, the UND area, is because it is one of our EJ areas, and it also has a low ridership, so we are hoping to be able to continue to provide service for people in that area, but also be able to manage our finances a little better.

Ellis commented that she knows that for the East Grand Forks side, they are doing it because they have such limited ridership yet we don't want to completely remove service totally, so right now, even for Route 12, it is kind of on an on-demand service picking up from some of the fixed routes, but it would be easier for them, because it covers such a large area, to not just drop it completely but not to run a service. She added that another reason is just because they are lacking drivers and the other is that it was just a scattered, not consistent ridership, so that is why, from their standpoint, Micro Transit just makes the most sense because we spend so much money with an empty bus driving around for maybe 10 riders one day and the next day only two and then maybe fifteen. Williams said that she agrees that this is the way to go. She added that she actually thinks there are probably several areas in Grand Forks that could also benefit from it, so she actually likes this idea.

Ellis stated that, if she isn't mistaken, we will be studying it in 2024. Halford responded that that is what they are looking at. She said that they are looking at doing it as a special study on Micro

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Transit in 2024. Ellis added that the study will be on how to implement it because the idea is great, the implementation is just a little bit harder.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

A. 2021/2022 Annual Work Program Project Update

Kouba referred to the Unified Work Program Project update included in the packet and commented that most of our tasks have been completed, and we are focusing on finishing up our Transit Development plan and are hoping that we will have the final adoption of the plan by December. She said that we are also concentrating on our Bike and Pedestrian as well as our Street and Highway plans.

- 1) Bike/Ped Plan Update – Kouba reported that we are on track and are looking at doing another Steering Committee meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. to go over the existing conditions as well as to try to get some input on some of the Safe Routes to School components that we have been working on and to set some goals and strategies and objectives and targets for the plan as well.
- 2) Street/Highway Plan Update – Kouba reported that we have been working on the Street and Highway Update, mostly just on establishing the website and data collection and analysis. She said that they are also working on setting up the first public meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to get input from the public on issues and needs and goals for the plan itself.

B. Agency Updates

- 1) GF-EGF MPO
  - a. Safe Streets For All (SS4A) – Halford reported that she is just working on some follow-up questions for the application.
  - b. Bridge Update - Halford reported that they will be interviewing some consultants this week.
  - c. Programming Update Workgroup – Kouba reported that this is a Minnesota side MnDOT Workgroup to get input from various entities such as Cities, Counties, MPOs and other such entities, especially their districts. She said that Jon Mason sits on this for us, which we are grateful for, and he did send an update.

Kouba commented that the group agreed to make the five bridge recommendations as well as the HSIP.

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Kouba said that they won't be meeting in September, so we won't have an update in September.

Mason referred to Page 5 of the slide presentation and pointed out that the Recommendations to TP&IC lists the five bridge recommendations.

Information only.

OTHER AGENCIES

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>,  
2022 MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 11:35 A.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager