

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

CALL TO ORDER

Warren Strandell, Chairperson, called the November 16th, 2022, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:01 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Warren Strandell, Marc DeMers, Tricia Lunski, Mike Powers, Clarence Vetter, Bob Rost, Ken Vein, and Al Grasser.

Absent: None.

Guest(s) present: Brad Wentz, UGTPI; Mike Bittner, Bolten & Menk; and Chelsey Hendrickson, GF Herald.

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

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Strandell declared a quorum was present.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 19TH, 2022 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY ROST, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 19TH, 2022 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

SUSPEND AGENDA

Halford reported that she would like to suspend the agenda to move Item #7 – Matter Of Strengthening Mobility And Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant program up for discussion.

***MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE MOVING AGENDA
ITEM 7 UP FOR DISCUSSION.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**MATTER OF STRENGTHENING AND REVOLUTIONIZING TRANSPORTATION
(SMART) GRANT PROGRAM**

Halford reported that she will give just a quick intro to this item then she will turn it over to Mr. Wentz and Mr. Bittner. She said that over the past few months we have been talking about the Safe Streets For All Grant, and that was just a better way of building up some partnerships, so we put in the application with both cities, and that was a good partnership, and now we have been approached by Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute and Bolton and Menk about the SMART Grant application they want to submit. She stated that they want to team up with the Fargo-Moorhead MPO as well as the Grand Forks MPO and have us be part of a that conversation.

Wentz commented that they are always looking for grant opportunities to help out their partners at the NDDOT and the MPOs and this SMART grant came about recently and sounds like a really great opportunity to see some of the SMART Technologies that we have been talking about with the MPOs in the past implemented.

Wentz said that he is going to cover some of what our requirements are for the grant then will turn it over to Mike Bittner, Bolton and Menk, who is assisting with putting this application together and will assist if we get the grant as well.

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

Wentz stated that this grant comes in two stages; Stage 1 is a planning and prototyping phase, and then Stage 2 is for actual implementation grants for things that get identified in the planning and prototyping phase. He said that you can't apply for the implementation grants until you have actually applied for, and been accepted for a planning and prototyping grant, so that is the stage we are at, looking to put in a planning grant application for this project so that we can be eligible for implementation grants. He stated that the DOT anticipates awarding 30-50 Stage 1 grants for FY2022. He said that this has been pretty quick in that NOFO just recently opened this and it is already closing on November 18, 2022, so we have a lot of work to do to get this application in for this grant.

Wentz reported that this is \$100 million dollars annually, split into three funding allocations; so there is large and medium sized communities, and then rural communities, and we fall under the medium size communities. He said that one important thing to note here is that there is no local match required for these planning grants, so there would be no funds that you would have to come up with to try to match the federal match, which is usually how it is done, but in this case there isn't any.

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Wentz stated that UGPTI, as a State Agency, will submit the application and then we are partnering up with FM-COG, GF-EGF MPO and NDDOT who will all be listed as partners to participate in the development of the plan.

Wentz said that Mike Bittner will cover what we are looking at for these technologies; mostly we are focusing on building a Transportation Operation Center and some SMART Mobility Applications to support that.

Bittner stated that he wants to introduce what is going on at the Statewide level; they are actively working on the Transportation Management Center project which we are a part of. He added that the goal of this project is designed to look at all those blind spots that we have throughout our planning processes. He said that we spend a lot of time trying to resolve our recurring bottlenecks, but really what we see on a national level is that about 50% of our delays or crashes are related to weather, work zones, traffic incidents or special events and so a Transportation Management Center is really designed with the idea that we are trying to resolve some of these unrecurrent issues that are hard to plan through better cooperation, better monitoring and better technology to monitor these items. He referred to a slide showing a crash that occurred near Fargo and explained that it resulted in fifteen crashes, six injuries, and over \$2 million dollars in cumulative impacts, and you can see traffic distributing throughout the system creating different delays on different routes. He said that as you look at the impetus of that project it is really to be built around I-29 and you will see some transformative technology changes, which it obviously has some impacts through Grand Forks and Fargo, so it really creates a sandbox to be able to start to look at some of these more advanced technologies.

Bittner said that a big factor is to do a Transportation Management Center you need a building, you need staff, you need a culture, you need work force, and so as we start to think about the needs in Grand Forks and Fargo it really does stop at this Statewide Project at the Interchange ramps; we know that the operations, the weather issues, and all the other maintenance issues continue to these major urban centers, so the inspiration for this SMART Grant was really to find a way to connect these two projects together. He referred to a slide and pointed out that at the top you can see the ongoing planning effort by the State and at the bottom is how this SMART Grant could be applied to leverage the powers that are already moving forward to start building some economies of skill, but also just to ask those questions, at some point do we need a better maintenance and operations, do we want this to be 24/7, can we leverage the Statewide plan to better help Grand Forks, and if we don't ask those questions at the right time a building that doesn't fit is allowed to facilitate and so it really does create an opportunity to provide upwards of \$2 million dollars' worth of planning, which then allows us to then facilitate future technology applications.

Bittner commented that there has been a lot of good planning done throughout Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, a great example is through downtown, where we found that about a 40 to 60 percent reduction in delays and reliability through major event scenarios could occur through adaptive signal control, and that is just one application that we could start to engage with this process; or some of the rail routing issues that we've seen throughout the metro to be able to

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better inform drivers and just to have better reliability, better responsiveness and typically these TMCs have been found that they, through better collaboration and monitoring we can reduce our response times for emergency events by about 50%.

Bittner stated that the most important aspect is that this planning grant is designed to have the conversations with all of you through the process to have funding to be able to build this, and build a plan that is tailored, that maybe does include parts of these ideas, or none of them, but really to fund and create an opportunity to allow Grand Forks to maximize its opportunity for technology funding.

DeMers said that he is just wondering, like a 20,000 foot view of this, how does this increase the efficiency of Grand Forks to access funds when it appears; like the problems that we want to be solved, this MPO, and specifically the members from Grand Forks have taken their priorities, and they know what they want for these corridors; how is this not just taking money out of the system to look at projects that this organization already wants to look at. Bittner responded that this is a national funding pot and grant that doesn't require a local match, so it is all new money so you actually don't get into the program, and it is opening a new huge pot of money that will be new to the area, so it won't take away what you already have. DeMers asked, though, is this different than the SMART planning dollars that we are currently going after. Halford asked if he was referring to Safe Streets For All Grant. DeMers responded that that is what he is referring to. Halford said that it is a different pot of money but added that it does feel the same because we have to put in that plan first before you can go after the implementation money, which is the same as Safe Streets, but this time there isn't a match like there is for Safe Streets. She said that there is also the implementation part so we are talking about a building after we do a plan, who will take that on and kind of run with what is being proposed. DeMers stated that that was his second question, what is the governing, will we need to set up another board or organization that doesn't exist or would an organization that already exists be the head of, or the administrator or organizer of this operations unit. Halford stated that this is a good question, she asked if either Mr. Wentz or Mr. Bittner had an answer to this. Wentz responded that this application is just for a plan, so all those things would be discussed through the planning process; whether the Traffic Operations Center becomes just a virtual operation center, an actual building, that would all be run through during the overall planning process and then be determined when or if something needs to be done there, maybe there is some partnership, it would depend on what comes out of the planning process. Bittner added that all of your leadership would be leverage before and you would help guide the process and help create those decisions if any changes need to be made as to whether there needs to be additional groups because this is important enough, or if it can be held within the existing bodies. Halford stated that when she was approached on this she told them that she would want to bring this to the Executive Policy Board and get your blessing and approval because that is how we treated the Safe Streets For All Grant, as well as, even though this is 100% funded, and no local share is required, being invited to that conversation will still take MPO Staff time so it will take time from other things so she wanted to get your input and blessing that what we are being approached with is this the direction you want us to be using our time on, and is it something that you want to be looked at.

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Vetter said that he is confused, normally the MPO applies for the grants and then we go out and hire you individuals to do all the study work, it sound like it is kind of reversing, you are applying, are you looking for us to put a stamp of approval on this, and if we are in favor of it you will go ahead and move forward, or are we partnering with you and we are going to receive some of the funds, who is managing the funds, it just isn't very clear. Wentz responded that it is being submitted through UGPTI, we are a State Agency, and in the Grant there are requirements on who can submit applications for a grant, and it can multiple agencies partnering together, which is kind of what we are doing, so it will be FM-COG, GF-EGF MPO, partnering with UGPTI and NDDOT all as part of the application so what they need from the MPO right now, both MPOs, is just a letter of support and a letter of commitment that will go with the Grant application. He said that in addition to the letter of support they also need a budget that can be included with the application as well to cover any of the MPO staff time that may be spent on attending meetings, and to line up the stakeholders, etc., so the grant will provide funding for that. He said that in actuality it is being submitted by UGPTI and it is a partnership of UGPTI, the MPOs, and the NDDOT.

DeMers stated that he has two quick questions. He said that he saw the stakeholder's list you talked about, like MnDOT Districts that are probably on the west side of the state; have they given a recommendation, or have they signed off on this to the same extent as the NDDOT, or have they even been approached. Wentz responded that they have not; he added that they are going with using the MPOs, and they are stakeholders of the MPO, so if GF-EGF MPO or FM-COG want to get signatures or letters of support from those constituents of the MPO they can but they aren't requiring that as they don't feel they need to have other letters of support from those agencies, but they will be included in the whole planning process as being part of the MPO. DeMers said that it is kind of being run by NDDOT in some respects, but he was just wondering how aware MnDOT is of this as they don't always have the same vision.

DeMers asked who is eligible for this SMART Grant, is the MPO individually eligible for this grant, could we apply for it ourselves. Wentz responded that you can be a group of two or more, local agencies can go together, but it has to be a partnership of two or more eligible agencies.

Grasser asked what the temperature of FM-COG is on this, are they all in or are they hesitant, he is just kind of wondering what our other major partner is thinking at this point. Wentz responded that they are definitely all in, they are very supportive and have all of their letters of support and their commitment letters in. He added that they have had recent discussions with MnDOT and District 4, Moorhead, and different agencies that really are supportive and feel there is a real great need to have this type of traffic operation center just to communicate all the issues happening out there in operations with the different agencies and this is the opportunity to bring them all together and have them be able to communicate with each other and respond to emergency incidents and different things regardless of the jurisdictions that things are happening in, so this is kind of timely with things they have been talking about and it is really pretty important to what their vision is. Bittner added that he thinks they are probably more worried about not getting in on the funding as opposed to whether they are going for it or not, they had some experience last summer with the work zone on I-94 that some fatalities and some delays that spilled across the region and they didn't have any infrastructure in place to communicate and

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to be able to try to mitigate those problems and that really underscored the need for some improved collaboration and technology to be able to help monitor and respond to those types of issues.

Grasser commented that, as something that doesn't need a local cost share, you are able to kind of sidestep some of the other questions, and not having to answer them right now, we probably don't have the answers; is part of this grant going to look at how a system like this would be supported operationally and financially, kind of assuming that the feds aren't going fund this zero cost share forever, so will that be part of what will be looked at under this grant. Bittner responded that it would. He explained that that is part of the statewide DOT process and that is why they are the primary partner that are pushing. He added that it is very difficult for some of the smaller communities to support a grander vision from the aspects you said, from a staffing or financial aspect, but if you are able to collaborate with the larger entities it can be a shared vision that can accomplish a lot of these things and making sure that we are part of that conversation and having the planning dollars to be able to do so would be helpful. Grasser stated that it seems that at some point this should be a NDDOT or MnDOT lead type of project, beyond Upper Great Plains, an organization that can actually have funds and bring that into the picture so, he was just curious as long as some of that gets looked into under this grant; it is hard to turn down no cost money, but at some point in time they do turn into something that has some funding associated with it.

DeMers asked for a review of what the Technical Advisory Committee's discussion was on this. Halford responded that the Technical Advisory Committee was pretty supportive, and they didn't have a lot of questions; and there is no local cost share associated with it so that is very appealing to them. Kouba agreed there weren't many questions, but because this is the planning side of this, in that planning process you have projects to implement it and that is where you will get into the side of implementation funding and to have those partnerships established so when the implementation happens it is easier to continue on to the next steps and expand them throughout when you're adding them to a system that is already there.

Vein asked if there is a down-side to doing this. Halford responded that big picture, she sees it as another way to build relationships and get some more funding because we can put in a share of what we think we are going to use for staff time and budget that in and say this is what we will probably need to reimburse ourselves for staff time, so looking at that that is a positive thing. She said that the only negative is that things are still getting planned out so we don't have the answers so that is why there is a plan and implementation part would be MPO time spent on this, but even if we put money in or asked for money, she hopes that we would still be part of the conversation since it is in our area.

DeMers asked if, once the plan is approved or done, and you decide to work on the implementation side of the grant and look for money, do you have to go back up through this group in order to do it or are we able to access SMART Grant dollars through the feds, directly through the MPO to do this. Halford responded that she isn't 100% clear on that, but it sounds like once the planning part is done UGPTI will step away and the local areas will take it on. Wentz commented that that is correct, adding that UGPTI can't apply for the implementation

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grant so that then would be as if, throughout the planning process if you identify some of the implementation projects that you want to proceed with, or maybe the whole thing, then either the NDDOT or the MPOs would put in directly for the SMART Implementation Grants. Halford stated that this is an annual application process for the next five years. She added that she thinks this planning process will be about an 18-month process.

Halford reported that if we get this grant, we will need to amend the work program to include it at that time.

Grasser commented that, and correct him if he is wrong, but what he is envisioning by this discussion is that we are going to end up with a planning document that will probably have items in there that are more appropriately led and funded at the local level and some that may be a larger expansion that might be more appropriate for the DOT but it will be kind of an encompassing list, so we aren't paying for a border crossing increase at Pembina out of the GF-EGF MPO, our type of things will be more internal to our own system; he is kind of interpreting it that way, that the appropriate agency will pick up the appropriate piece out of those different planning implementation strategies. Wentz responded that that is correct. He added that there will possibly be some technologies identified, like maybe your signal performance measures, HEMS Signal Performance Measures, because your signals are all capable of that and we have been considering doing that, so that might be something you want to proceed with, and that is where this whole planning effort, and it was probably identified in the planning effort, so then we would be eligible to apply for a SMART Implementation Grant, or to implement signal performance measures on the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks signal system through that grant process, but if you don't have a Stage 1 Planning Grant approved then you wouldn't be eligible to apply for those signal performance measures smart grants in the future.

Grasser stated that, again, his perception, and kind of working back to Mr. DeMers' question a little bit, it seems like at the federal level they implemented a lot of dollars right, but along with it it seems like they created a ton of different slivers of where that money goes to so nothing, or very little of it seems to be going into kind of the old traditional pots. He said that he doesn't know what is going to happen in the future, five and ten years from now, when some of this money goes away, are they still going to retain that philosophy that, hey, I can make money go further if I spread it thinner, which is crazy. He stated that his concern is if they do decide to keep these slivers of money open, if we don't get in on the ground floor then we may not be able to access that bigger pot of money, so to him this investment is a little bit of insurance allowing us to make sure we have the opportunity; what we do five years from now when it starts to look like, when the programs change, that is just his thought.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE GRAND FORKS-EAST GRAND FORKS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ENTER INTO A PARTNERSHIP FOR THE SMART GRANT PROGRAM.

DeMers said that he is also concerned about what this looks like in five or ten years. He stated that we go through this planning phase, and we have all been through planning phases, we go through it multiple times in multiple years, so in five years when this plan needs to be updated,

or in three years when it needs to be amended, what will that process look like. He said that if it is going to be a plan put in place by UGPTI and Bolton-Menk, and then they walk away, in five years when we have to update it is there going to be funding for that, what is going to happen once it is done. He added that he agrees that we are going to have to play the game a little bit, he thinks it is a Fat Game, he thinks there is a lot of bloat in this game, and he worries about that, but you almost have to play the game because it is the game that is in town, but he worries about local control, he really does, he thinks we are giving away the planning side, obviously we do have MPOs on tap with it but at some point you push that further away, and you just kind of give up control, so he will vote for it but he just sees a lot of problems going forward.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

RESUME AGENDA

MATTER OF PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE UPDATE TO THE TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Kouba reported that we have Chelsea Hendrickson, Kimley-Horn, on Zoom; she has been working with us on this plan and we are here today for preliminary approval. She added that we have been working through the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks' approval process because this document is part of their Comprehensive Plans as well.

Kouba that we have done a lot of work on this throughout the whole process, which started back in September 2021, and we now have a final draft of the plan that has gone through our public process, and now the Cities are putting it through their public and adoption process as well.

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 stated that in working on the service improvements portion of the study they discussed the possibility of implementing Microtransit. She explained that Microtransit is basically taking an area and having specific places to stop within that area to pick up people. She said that people will call in or use an app requesting a pick-up at one of those locations, and then they can be dropped off at a location within that area or be taken to a transit center or another stop in order to move on within the system.

Kouba referred to a slide showing potential Microtransit locations throughout the service area and commented that some of them are for daytime and nighttime pickups. She added that they area also looking at further studying possible Industrial Park service, whether it is the Microtransit concept or a new route.

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Kouba commented that they also have some short-term recommendations, most of which is to keep things basically the same as it is currently, just because we have a lot of different things that we would want to study before we make any changes, such as the Microtransit concept, which would replace Route 1 and 2. She stated that they did do a review of UND's Campus routes. She said that UND wishes to keep those routes the same for the short-term until most of the projects they are doing on campus are completed. She added that they are also wanting to add a night-route Microtransit area as a pilot as well.

Kouba stated that some of the recommendations they just made on a program level is to make sure we are doing our due diligence in making necessary changes to timing and schedules to ensure they are meeting up at various routes. She said that they are also trying to ensure that on-line information and communication for riders is updated and that they are working with other human services and things like that to strengthen those partnerships.

Kouba reported that they reviewed transit hubs at the Metro Transit Center, Columbia Mall, and the Grand Cities Mall, and those findings will kind of wrap into the Existing Capital Assets, including the financial aspects. She referred to the Existing Capital Assets slide and pointed out that they have several buses that are in need of being replaced in the near future, and also that some of the equipment and facilities need to be updated and/or replaced as well. She stated that she knows there is a need to replace about 20 vehicles, and they are looking at whether or not they should replace some of the larger buses with smaller buses, making sure the larger buses are still needed. She said that the Metro Transit Center needs some updates to extend its useful life, and we also need to update our fare collection equipment as well. She stated that they also have an additional phase, Phase II, for the bus facility, and we did receive a grant for that addition and construction is planned to begin in 2023. She stated that we like to make sure we are looking at those cost estimates into the future so that when we go into what we will do on a financial level it makes sense and we aren't trying to overextend ourselves.

Kouba stated that we looked at what other studies will need to be done in the future, just to be able to definitively answer the questions the public asked such as airport connectivity and the industrial park, we want to make sure we are doing what is the most cost effective and that benefits the most people.

Kouba reported, again, that we are going through our adoption process. She pointed out that Grand Forks has a two-step process so the plan was presented to the Grand Forks Planning and Zoning on November 3rd and it will be presented to the Grand Forks City Council on November 21st, and then it will be presented to Grand Forks Planning and Zoning for final approval on December 7th and to the Grand Forks City Council on December 19th. She added that East Grand Forks has a one-step process so it will be presented to the East Grand Forks Planning and Zoning on November 17th and to the East Grand Forks City Council for final approval on December 6th. She stated that we will be bringing the document to the MPO Executive Policy Board for final approval on December 15th.

Kouba commented that we are planning other things, we are having our other plans that are connected; we've had a public meeting on November 3rd for our Streets and Highway Plan and

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November 23rd is the deadline for any comments. She stated that www.gfegfstreets.com is the website, so you can take a look at the various questions the public has asked and there is an interactive map to share comments and questions as well.

Kouba stated that we are also getting to the end of our Bike/Ped Plan, and we are holding an open house tonight in the East Grand Forks City Hall Rotunda from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. She added that you can also go to the website at: www.theforks-bikepedplan.com to comment. She said that they are taking comments until December 2nd.

Kouba said that the full plan can be found at: www.cattransitplan.com , which is the main website for all that information that has been gathered throughout this planning process, and on the MPO website at: www.theforksmpo.org as well.

Lunski asked if the Microtransit plan is kind of like “Uber” for bus. Kouba responded that it is and isn’t, she explained that it works a lot like uber where you call or use an app and put in the time and area you want to be picked up, it won’t pick you up at your door, it is going to pick you up at a specific stop inside a specific area, it won’t leave that area though. Lunski said, though, that it will take a different route. Kouba responded that it will take the shortest route, and it won’t necessarily go straight to the stop you want to go to it might pick up along the way depending on if there are other close pick-ups along the way.

MOVED BY ROST, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO APPROVE GRANTING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE FINAL 2022 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN, AS PRESENTED.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE 2023-2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Halford reported that she will just skim through this and give brief explanations and highlights of a few things as she goes through it; hopefully you were all able to go look through it, and please stop her if you have any questions or comments. She stated that she did present a little different draft to our MnDOT, FHWA, and NDDOT partners earlier, but this version is a bit easier to edit so the final draft will have a lot more graphics and a few other things that we normally don’t see.

Halford referred to the document and scrolled through all the intro pages and supporting documentation that we need to include. She stated that if anyone wanted to go through any of it in more detail, she would be happy to do so, or we can go straight to the meat of the document where we are talking about projects and funding. Consensus was to skip the intro information and go to the meat of the document.

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Halford continued scrolling through the intro pages of the document, giving a brief overview of the information in them.

Halford stated that there are three program areas, 100.0 - Program Administration; 200.0 – Program Support and Coordination; and 300.0 – Planning And Implementation. She referred to the document and went over the three program areas as follows:

100.0 – Program Administration

- 100.1 – General Administration – Halford commented that this is where a good portion of Peggy’s time is spent on managing and coordinating MPO accounts, records, and contracts and performing general administration duties.
- 100.2 – Unified Planning Work Program Development – Halford stated that this is where staff time is charged to implement, amend, and update the Unified Planning Work Program. She said that time spent setting up, attending, and the Technical Advisory Committee and Executive Policy Board meetings are also charged to this item.
- 100.3 – Financial Management – Halford said that work on financial management and oversight of the MPO accounting system is charged to this item.
- 100.4 – Facilities and Overhead – Halford stated that this is where we monitor and track non-salaried administrative items such as rent, office supplies, postage, etc.

200.0– Program Support and Coordination

- 200.1 – Interagency Coordination – Halford said that she added more staff hours to this item. She stated that she thinks this is an important item where we need to ensure that going forward, we are more present and more available for meetings or anything else we need to be a part of so as to allow for more coordination, so she added more staff hours to accomplish this.
- 200.2 – Public Information and Citizen Participation – Halford stated that there weren’t any changes to this item, which involves making sure we get broad based citizen input into our planning process and to update and maintain our Public Participation Plan.
- 200.3 – Education/Training and Travel – Halford said that she added more funding and hours to this item because she feels it is important that we not only network and build relationships, but also that we get necessary training so that we are better prepared for the future with not only these different grants happening, but learning new technology and things like that.
- 200.4 – Equipment – Halford stated that she added more funding to this item as well so that as we are moving into the future, to better serve our partners, we are by looking at remodeling our office space, specifically her office, to accommodate another person. She explained that, if you have been to her office you know that there is a conference table in a portion of it and we are

looking at splitting the office in half by putting in a temporary wall and getting rid of the conference table and moving Teri into one half, and out of the area she is currently in, which is basically a storage room without a window. She added that she would like to hire another planner next year, so it also frees up that space to get more of an entry level person in there. She stated that not only are we adding more money in to do this, but also, we already have support from both Cities, both City Administrators have said that they will chip in some money too so that partnership is important, and investing in us is important, so that is exciting.

300.0 – Planning and Implementation

- 300.1 – Transportation Plan Update and Implementation – Halford stated that this involves updating elements of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
 - 300.12 – Bike/Ped Element – Halford commented that the Bike and Ped Element Update will carry over into 2023.
 - 300.13 – Street/Highway Element – Halford stated that the Street and Highway Element will carry over into 2024.
 - 300.12 – ITS Architecture – Halford said that our ITS Architecture will begin in 2024.
- 300.2 – Corridor Planning – Halford said that this item includes traffic counting and looking at being involved with Planning and Zoning on both sides, helping with their PUD and POD process.
- 300.3 – TIP And Manual Update – Halford stated that she added more hours and funding to this item, and we will be looking at our policies and procedures to make sure they are up to date, that they make sense, and we also want to take some time to update our TIP Manual as well.
- 300.4 – Land Use Plan – Halford that we aren't going to be updating the Land Use Plans at this time, but she didn't want to not have some funding set aside in the event we need to have conversations with either Grand Forks or East Grand Forks Planning and Zoning in the interim, gives us the flexibility we need to have preliminary discussions for our future Land Use Plans.
- 300.5 – Special Studies
 - 300.51 – Future Bridge – Halford said that she left this item in just to make sure we are able to budget some time to be available, if needed, for conversations on future bridges.
 - 300.52 – Policy and Procedure Updates – Halford said that there are several Policy and Procedure Manuals that need to be updated, and we want to have some time set aside to do this. She added that a lot of the

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- manuals haven't been looked at for ten or more years, or from the beginning of time, and it needs to be updated.
- 300.53 – Safe Streets For All (SS4A) – Halford stated that even though we haven't heard back on whether or not we were awarded funding for this, we wanted to show this item in the event we are awarded funds, but there are none attached at this time.
- 300.54 – Grand Valley Study – Halford commented that this is a study that the City of Grand Forks has requested we consider, and it will look at where pedestrian crossings/underpasses may be needed as the city grows to the south.
- 300.55 - Microtransit Study – Halford stated that as we just heard with the Transit Development Plan discussion, it was determined that Microtransit should be further studied.
- 300.6 – Plan Monitoring, Review and Evaluation – Halford reported that this is a data collection and plan monitoring section.
- 300.7 – GIS – Halford commented that this year has been kind of rough with transitions so we haven't been able to spend a lot of time on this item, but hopefully with things kind of smoothing out, and hopefully getting another person we can spend more time here.

Halford continued going through the appendices briefly.

Halford reported that for FY 2023 it looks like we will do the Grand Valley Study. She explained that Grand Forks Engineering has approached us, and Grand Forks said that they were interested in seeing if there needs to be any kind of pedestrian crossing in the Grand Valley area in south Grand Forks. She stated that in FY 2024 we plan to do one of those studies that is being recommended out of the Transit Development Plan, which is the Microtransit study.

Vein said that you talked about some staffing changes and additions that are coming up, and it sounds like an important thing to do, and we probably have a backlog of work that needs to be done and you are trying to get your office in order to be able to do all of that, and to do that you are trying to make space to do that, will you not have a conference room then after you do that. Halford responded that we really don't use it much and there are other conference rooms available if we need them.

Vein said that the other thing he wanted to talk about is the Future Bridge, he didn't know if it would be here or when you would have discussion, but it didn't pass through committee on Monday, and he isn't sure it will be any better when it goes through Council, so he is thinking we need to start talking about Plan B, whatever that might be. He stated that the reality of it is, for himself, is that he thought it should have been in the MPO to begin with because you take away some of the politics back and forth, and we work as a metropolitan organization; it already has both cities and both counties in it, we represent them already, we already have a committee that can address that issue, not only can, it has, and so is there a way, should that process fail,

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and he has been trying to get ahold of Mr. Feland to get some answers to where the City might be going, but in lieu of not doing that, he would like to see this body really take leadership of that, is probably what he is thinking needs to happen and it needs to somehow be incorporated into this document without getting into any of the details. He added that we have done the transportation plan, we oversee that process, it still goes through both cities, that has already been done and approved, and we will be starting a new one but there was confusion about how you would implement it because it wasn't aligned with some of the federal aid street systems, or however we would do that, either way it was a little more complex and required some assistance, if you have a staff person maybe we can do it internally through a staff person or else we have to do it through a consultant, either way it can work, and there are pros and cons to both, but either way shouldn't we start thinking about how we are going to proceed and that that is built into the plan. Halford responded that a quick answer, and what comes to mind first, is that we can amend this plan, so as of now she thinks we should wait for things to play out a little bit, and maybe with what you are proposing we can keep it in the back of our mind as maybe an option, but as of now we can leave it here as discussion and we can always amend this plan and look at it in early spring or in January or February and maybe make a motion saying that you want the MPO to take a lead, or have a different roll than what it currently has right now, and we are invited to more conversations than we ever have been before, and there are grant applications and money that has been out there that we haven't seen in a long time, that she would like to be a part of and apply for, so having another staff person will help with that and remodeling our office to house that will set us up for those opportunities or whatever things how things shake out that we can be that for our partners. Vein added that the thing that follows that, of course, is the money, having the financial ability to add staff and/or hire a consultant. He asked if we have funds available for either of these. Halford responded that as of right now, she did put in the budget how we could fund another staff member. She referred to the budget sheets and went over the proposed staff hours for the current staff and proposed additional staff members. She explained that Peggy has let us know that she will be leaving in the near future, probably the beginning of 2024, so she would like to hire someone several months prior to her leaving, probably a good four to six months before she leaves so they can go through an audit with her and go over all the things they will need to know, and as of now we do have funds available, but even getting more grants and stuff will give us an opportunity to do even more, but as of now we can do that.

Vein said that at least this last study was around \$150,000 for the bridge, do we have those kinds of funds built into this budget. Halford responded that she could probably move things around, it would probably take away, because not only looking at the money, but also time, something that was done before, and she didn't really understand why, but she changed the numbers in the bottom line, 2080, is what a full time employee would work if they didn't take any vacation or sick time, and before the budget showed 1,760 hours, so instead she put into general admin that at least two weeks of vacation would be taken by each staff member, so it isn't only looking at money but time as well. She added that she also knows that this staff person will be spending this much time on this project, and where does that all shake out, do we actually have the physical hours to dedicate to it as well, and right now we wouldn't. Vein said, though, that if we wanted to get a consultant, there is value to using a consultant because they have the experience that a new staff person might not have, and he was just wondering if there would be the ability to

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finance this actual proposal if it falls through and the cities can't do it, what he almost thinks is to work around already and get it back to where he thinks it should be that we can to it, and you can do it through amending and moving and changing, he isn't saying it needs to be there now, but is there a way to get that accomplished if we decide it is a higher priority. Halford responded that there would be a way, there is a possibility that the Grand Valley Study for next year would have to be dropped because we would have to use that money to pay a consultant as well as staff hours that would be dedicated to that. Vein asked if we could build that additional amount into the budget here now in a different place instead of cutting something else. Halford responded that it is dollar amount as well as hours, like right now everyone's hours are maxed to what is being proposed right now so that would also have to be looked at. Vein asked how we could do that, either build more hours or more money for a consultant. Halford responded that it is possible, but even with a consultant, the bike/ped and street and highway projects are all consultant lead, but we still have to use quite a bit of staff hours still to be part of them, so short answer, it is possible but there would have to be some maneuvering and maybe some subtractions that would have to happen. Vein asked, without maneuvering is there a way to build it now without having to maneuver. Halford responded that it probably couldn't be done, she thinks it is too much of a moving target. She added that she is fine coming to this whenever you guys want to, looking at this work program and doing amendments. Vein said that these amendments have to come from internal, is there a way to bring more external money in now. Halford responded that there is a possibility, but with this though, it needs to be approved at our December meeting or we risk not getting our federal funds, so we need to move forward with what we have today and then we can look at it in January and February and amend it if necessary.

DeMers asked what the idea for additional revenue would be. Vein responded that that is what he is wondering, money has to come from someplace, we have to have a source, are there sources available.

Halford asked to pause discussion on this briefly as some members have to leave in order to discuss moving the December Executive Policy Board meeting from the 21st to either the 15th or the 19th of December. After some discussion it was decided to move the meeting to December 15th.

Strandell stated that some years back there was an employee that was let go and he doesn't recall if that position has ever been filled. Halford responded that it really comes down to funding, but that is the unfilled position that is shown in the budget.

DeMers asked if this work plan is based on the allocations with Minot becoming an MPO or is it based on allocations without that happening. Halford responded that we were hoping to hear at the end of this year if Minot was going to become an MPO, but as of now it won't happen until probably the beginning of next year, so this budget is based on what we would be getting if they aren't designated an MPO so it could change. DeMers said that he is wondering because he would hate to add a planner and then all of a sudden funding gets split by four instead of three and is reduced and then you have to possibly let them go, he doesn't think that is a great look, so that would be one case where you might have some extra money. Halford commented that she didn't squeeze them really tight, they are all kind of more on the fluffier side, so there is some

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room, as well as the fact that Fargo will become a TMA, so they will get their part of the money and there will be a little bit of a switch in funding as well. She said that it is definitely something to keep an eye on and be concerned about, but she is feeling pretty good about it.

DeMers stated that his only thought with Mr. Vein's idea is, he agrees that maybe bringing the plan in here is a much more efficient way to do it, but his fear is that \$150,000 is kind of a baseline figure for the initial phase, and in his mind he thought we were always planning on like as you proceed there will be billable hours, or extended contracts, or amended contracts, or whatever, so he planned on that number going up so it isn't just one shift, it is kind of a four year or five year shift, so that would be something to consider. Halford added that we are an MPO so we can only take plans so far as well, so as that bridge discussion develops, we can only go so far. DeMers said that that was his opinion as well, at some point we are going to require money, so it kind of just pushes that planning, and at some point we are going to need buy-in and buy-in means dollars from the different jurisdictions, so if you are putting that off just for the planning he gets that but then at some point then we have a plan that still needs a buy-in, and if we can't get buy-in now how are we going to get buy-in after we have a plan. Vein said that he was hoping that \$150,000 would be going towards explaining the process and developing better information because it is too vague right now and how do you support something if you don't know it, how can we get there because it is in our Transportation Plan. DeMers commented that, to that point, it is not a knowledge question, we could have an encyclopedia of knowledge about why this is the right decision, and he doesn't know if it will ever sway a certain part of the populations perspective, that is his only fear, that we could be beating our heads against the wall explaining and doing that; not that we should stop because that is the only logical responsible path forward, he just doesn't know what type of information is going to convince people when, even in that meeting, it is purely political which is shorthand for emotional or tribal, or whatever it is it is not a logical decision necessarily. Vein stated that he thinks of it two ways, and you are getting part of it, but it is getting to figure out even if you can do it how can you do it and what is the cost to do it, is it even affordable because we don't know in this case; and the other piece, that he has seen at least, is that it is an education project but it is a public safety issue, that is the reason why we are doing it, who wants to add another bridge unless there is a purpose, and he thinks that is what we looked at, but we have to do it differently, and he thinks the process, you know that we were accused last time of not having enough public input, or earlier input, and all of that, so he thinks this time around it has to be just different, not that the last time was wrong, it just wasn't right.

Kouba stated that she thinks the other stumbling block is, as we said, the MPO is a planning entity, and that is when you are starting to get into that NEPA process where you need the engineers to do that work, the idea of a planning and engineering linkage is where we are trying to get to, North Dakota doesn't have a process on doing that, Minnesota does, but there is a small bit of planning that goes into that NEPA process that could help link things through, but without guidance from North Dakota, who is our lead agency, the MPO always falls to Minnesota, but at the end of the day then the engineers will come back and do that NEPA process, and that is the gray area we are in until we get buy-in and get into having engineers work on designing and all that goes into that, that is where we get stuck. Vein said, then we have to figure a path through

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that, and maybe we don't need the whole \$150,000 to get through that, maybe it is something different, but we have to figure out what that path looks like.

Grasser said that he has a comment on a different subject that might fit into that Grand Valley Study, but when he looks at our bike/ped usage in Grand Forks and there was a lot of usage on the recreational side, a lot of Grand Forks' is going along the coulee and all those kinds of things, they have bike paths along transportation routes, when you have major transportation routes you have to get your cars and pedestrians across from each other, and he would like to see a more comprehensive approach on our planning in that he thinks we should have a recreational type trail system that goes through, he just call it the center of each section of land, and the reason is because if you do these grade separated, these tunnels so to speak, you can't have an intersection there right so you've got to figure out where to put them ahead of time so they conflict with too many of your transportation routes, and our developers that he has seen right now haven't prioritized looking at that kind of thing so what happens then is concept plans get developed, platting starts to happen and pretty soon you are missing all the pieces that you need to actually implement them, you can't get the property because you didn't get the plat because you didn't know where, you know, and then those kind of activities, so he would like to see that vision expanded a bit into how can we get pedestrians across, especially our major transportation routes, without having to do that at an intersection, because he thinks it is a better recreational use and it less disruptive to the traffic and stuff if we do that. He added that what they are doing at Columbia Road right now and 40th Avenue, a four way stop, all the traffic and no right turns and nobody do nothing, well that is okay for now but what happens when our traffic triples on Columbia Road, and when you do that you back up traffic for a block and a half in either direction, it is going to be a problem. DeMers said that it is probably cheaper to do it outside the intersection because it is less congested. Grasser responded that that is correct, he said let's look at Grand Valley, at the intersection of South Washington and 62nd Avenue South, what do you do, well you essentially raise the whole intersection and put a bunch of traffic signals on top and have tunnels underneath, wow! He said that he thinks we should expand some of those concepts because he thinks if we don't push the developers into thinking of those and identifying some of those corridors it just isn't going to happen naturally.

DeMers asked, one other thing with the planning hours, does this have hours for, granted we don't have to allocate dollars, but hours for the SMART Grant planning process. Halford responded that the SMART Grant hours are not included at this time. DeMers asked how many hours we think we will need for that. Halford responded that she was thinking about probably 200 hours. DeMers said, then, that we will need to find that somewhere. Halford responded that we would have to take some hours from some other projects. She said that that was her only concern with that, that we are pretty strapped for time. DeMers asked if we need to account for that in approving it now, or would we need to amend the plan in the future. Halford responded that if awarded we would need to look at amending the budget at that time. She said that she knows we will be looking at this again at the beginning of next year.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO GRANT PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE FY2023-2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM, AS PRESENTED.

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Voting Aye: DeMers, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Lunski, Rost, Vetter, and Grasser.
Voting Nay: None.
Abstain: None.
Absent: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2021-2022 Annual Work Program Project Update

- Street/Highway Element Update – Halford reported that we had a Public Open House and had a few people attend, but the Stakeholder meeting they had earlier that day they had a really good array of people; from Altru, the Sheriff’s Department, the Police Department, so different people using our streets and they use them in different ways and look at them differently, so that was a good healthy discussion.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Element Update – Halford reported that they had a Public Open House as well.

B. MPO Updates

- Halford reported that in December we will be looking at approving the final Transit Development Plan, the final Unified Planning Work Program, and we will also be looking at the Performance Targets, and there will probably be some TIP amendments, so December will have a healthy agenda.

C. Approval Of October 14, 2022 To November 11, 2022 Bills/Checks

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE BILLS/CHECKS FOR THE OCTOBER 14, 2022 TO NOVEMBER 11, 2022 PERIOD.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

STRANDELL ADJOURNED THE NOVEMBER 16TH, 2022 MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:22 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis,
Office Manager

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO
Transaction List by Vendor
October 15 through November 11, 2022

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
AFLAC.							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-395.98
Alerus Financial							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,209.34
Liability Check	11/10/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,209.34
APA							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	APA Dues Fo...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-472.00
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7305	APA Dues Fo...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-472.00
Bolton & Menk							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Work On Bike...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-10,439.99
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7306	Work On Bike...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-10,439.99
Cardmember Service							
Bill	10/31/2022	Acct #...	Travel Expen...	206 · Accounts Pay...		530 · Educatio...	-285.12
Bill	10/31/2022	Acct. ...	Travel Expen...	206 · Accounts Pay...		-SPLIT-	-447.27
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7307		104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-732.39
City of East Grand Forks							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	3rd Quarter 2...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-2,513.58
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7308	3rd Quarter 2...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-2,513.58
Constant Contact							
Check	11/04/2022	E-Bill	Monthly Subs...	104 · Checking		517 · Overhead	-20.00
East Grand Forks Water and Light							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	3rd Quarter 2...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-598.74
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7309	3rd Quarter 2...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-598.74
Fidelity Security Life.							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	AVESIS	50790-1043	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-30.42
Grant and Contract Accounting							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Work On 202...	206 · Accounts Pay...		550 · Corridor ...	-7,923.96
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Work On Trav...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-3,495.03
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7310		104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-11,418.99
HDR Engineering, Inc.							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Work On 205...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-9,719.49
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7311	Work On 205...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-9,719.49
Intrado Interactive Services Corporation							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Year 4 CivicLi...	206 · Accounts Pay...		525 · Citizens ...	-4,260.00
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7312	Year 4 CivicLi...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-4,260.00
Kimley-Horn And Associates, Inc.							
Bill	10/31/2022	Inv. #...	Charges For ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-10,704.43
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7313	Charges For ...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-10,704.43
Liberty Business Systems, Inc.							
Bill	11/09/2022	Inv. #...	Contract Bas...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-273.28
Bill Pmt -Check	11/09/2022	7317	Contract Bas...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-273.28
LSNB as Trustee for PEHP							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	NWR...		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-123.75
Madison Nat'l Life							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	7302		104 · Checking		215 · Disability...	-64.74
Mike's							
Bill	10/19/2022		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-108.00
Bill Pmt -Check	10/19/2022	7301	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-108.00
Minnesota Department of Revenue							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-462.00
Liability Check	11/10/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-462.00
Minnesota Life Insurance Company							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	7303		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-44.46
Nationwide Retirement Solutions							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-510.56
Liability Check	11/10/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-510.56
NDPERS							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,941.76
Liability Check	11/10/2022	NDPE...		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,535.92
Peggy McNelis							
Bill	11/04/2022		Reimburseme...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-48.59
Bill Pmt -Check	11/04/2022	7315	Reimburseme...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-48.59
QuickBooks Payroll Service							
Liability Check	10/27/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-6,127.44
Liability Check	11/09/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-6,127.44
Standard Insurance Company							
Liability Check	10/28/2022	7304		104 · Checking		217 · Dental P...	-243.72

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO Transaction List by Vendor October 15 through November 11, 2022

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
Stephanie Halford							
Bill	10/18/2022		Reimburse Fo...	206 · Accounts Pay...		530 · Educatio...	-102.50
Bill Pmt -Check	10/18/2022	7300	Reimburse Fo...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-102.50
Bill	10/31/2022		Travel Reimb...	206 · Accounts Pay...		530 · Educatio...	-1,645.44
Bill Pmt -Check	10/31/2022	7314	Travel Reimb...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-1,645.44
The Exponent							
Bill	11/04/2022	Inv. #...	Public Notice ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-145.00
Bill Pmt -Check	11/04/2022	7316	Public Notice ...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-145.00