

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 8th, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

Stephanie Halford, Chairman, called the February 8th, 2023, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:34 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following member(s) were present: Christian Danielson, Grand Forks Engineering; Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Local Planning; Ryan Brooks, Grand Forks Planning; George Palo, NDDOT-Grand Forks District; and Steve Emery, East Grand Forks Engineering; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; Rich Sanders, Polk County Engineer; Troy Schroeder, MnDOT-District 2; and Dale Bergman, Cities Area Transit.

Absent: Brad Bail, Jon Mason, Michael Johnson, Lane Magnuson, Tom Ford, Nels Christianson, Nick West, David Kuharenko, and Jason Peterson.

Guest(s) present: Kristen Sperry, FHWA-ND; Daba Gedafa, UND; Mulugeta Amare, UND; and Joe Klein, MnDOT.

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.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 11, 2022, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 11TH, 2022, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF UND INTERNSHIP UPDATE

Halford said that she asked Daba and his team to give an update on where they are, how things have been going so far with this study, so there is no action required for this item, it is informational only.

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Gedafa thanked everyone for approving this project and commented that Mulugeta started working on the project even before the contract was signed.

Gedafa reported that so far, they have done a literature review on traffic speed and the safety implications on pedestrians and bicyclists and the effects of traffic calming techniques on traffic speed pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and also have looked at the effects of yield and stop signs on pedestrian safety and traffic speed as well.

Gedafa stated that the plan is to finish the literature review through spring and work on Task 2, crash analysis. He explained that they received crash data from NDDOT for the last six years, and began analyzing that data, then they also got speeding ticket data from the City of Grand Forks Police Department so they will analyze the crash and speeding data as well. He said that the idea is to finalize the locations for data collection starting in maybe June or July, so that is where they are at at this time.

Gedafa said that he hopes you received the progress report, if you have any questions for him or for Mulugeta, feel free to ask.

Danielson stated that he has a couple of comments from the Engineering Department. He said that they went through the draft progress report, and the one thing, generally on the entire report, is they typically like to call out crashes, not necessarily accidents, so there are a couple of places throughout the report that it mentions accidents, and they typically like to call them crashes, just a nomenclature thing.

Danielson said that the next thing they noticed was that a couple of the statistics seem a little bit dated; back in 2009 to 2005, just kind of an over-arching comment for the whole thing to see if we can maybe get a little closer to today's date, maybe the last five years for some of the statistics. He stated that they kind of use the general thumb that anything in the last five years is pretty relevant for traffic data, but just a couple of spots they noticed that they were ten plus years, so if they could get them a little more current that would be preferred.

Danielson stated that they were comparing the objectives from the approved project report or proposal that we approved in October and it appears that the objectives of the study have changed since then, the proposal that was approved in October seemed to have more of a focus on Grand Forks, and the objectives we have in the proposal today seem to pull out a bit and look at more of a national level, and they would like to try to keep this more focused on the Grand Forks area because that was what was approved back in October, so he would be interested to hear if there was a reason that it was pulled to more of a national level for the objectives or if there is still the intention for it to be focused on the Grand Forks area.

Gedafa responded that they will use crash data and crashes consistently going forward. He said that regarding the data, as he mentioned, they will do more literature review and focus more on studies from 2017, 2018 or so going forward. He stated that for the objectives, tdata, is nothing that they changed, the literature review includes national data but the focus is still on Grand Forks so they just try to learn globally but apply what is applicable to our local conditions, so the

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objectives in the proposal have not changed, so if there is any language difference between the proposal and the update, the proposal is governing so they are sticking to the proposal but the literature review includes national data but they are focusing more on areas that could be more relevant for Grand Forks.

Danielson thanked him for the clarification. He said that a couple other things they caught, you have a table for traffic calming techniques in the report they say, one thing they want to point out is that it doesn't necessarily state where that data is collected, if it is right at the calming measure, if it is 100-feet before or 100-feet after, in their experience taking some traffic collection they have found that it does affect your results, where you collect the data, they are assuming that this table was collected directly at the speed hump but they found that the data does differ if you collect it 200-feet before or 200-feet after because most vehicles are going to be slowing down when they hit these calming devices but what they do before or after those devices is also a factor to consider. Gedafa responded that they can include the location, maybe as in a different column in the table.

Danielson stated that the only other thing they had was just, in the summary section of the report they got, there is a little block of text at the bottom that calls out yield and stop signs; and they want to make sure we are careful of how we represent yield and stop signs because as a department, at least for the City of Grand Forks Engineering side, they have to follow the MUTCD for guidance and that one explicitly calls out yield and stop signs to not be used for speed control so they just want to make sure we are being very careful about how we make recommendations in the report and that we aren't going against the standards that they have to follow as a City. Gedafa responded that they are following the current MUTCD for all of the signing and naming of all those kinds of things. Ellis said that she agrees that maybe there should be some kind of comment that states that where yield and stop signs are warranted, rather than just in general, because that is one of the biggest things they get requests on is if somebody is speeding everybody wants a stop sign on their corner, which would create stop signs and yield signs on every corner on every local street so we want to make sure that it states that it is warranted first.

Danielson said that that was all that he had, and he apologizes, he doesn't mean to be nitpicky or critical, but they just want to make sure that we are following some of the guidance that they have to follow as a city and it all meshes well with the report you are preparing, so thank you for listening to the feedback. Gedafa thanked him for the feedback, adding that this is the first update, and they want to be consistent going forward so this was the right time for the feedback.

Information only.

MATTER OF TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS

Kouba reported that North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) brought forward a couple of changes that are needed to our FY2023-2026 TIP going forward, and as you will see they are very minor changes.

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Kouba stated that the first change is moving a project from FY2025 to FY2023, and there is no change to the cost of the project. She said that changing the timeframe of the project isn't significant enough for us to have to do a full amendment, thus we are doing an administrative modification.

Kouba said that we also noticed, when going through the modification process, was a slight cost increase to the Washington project. She pointed out that in our TIP we showed a cost of \$11,150,000 but the updated costs coming in are \$12,175,526. She stated that this cost change is below the 25% increase we are able to make without having to do a full amendment, thus we are doing an administrative modification for this project as well.

MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE FY2023-2026 T.I.P. ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS, AS PRESENTED.

Voting Aye: Brooks, Schroeder, Palo, Zacher, Danielson, Ellis, Bergman, and Emery.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstaining: None.

Absent: Bail, Peterson, Riesinger, Ford, Kuharenko, Johnson, Christianson, Mason, West, and Magnuson.

**MATTER OF SOLICITATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION URBAN GRANT PROGRAM FY2025-2026**

Halford reported that this was just an announcement that solicitation for the Urban Grant Program has opened for applications. She said that we have all seen this before, we've applied for this grant in the past, it is a program that focuses on what we currently have invested in our city and not to expand the system. She stated that even though we are just opening up for solicitation, officially today at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting, we have been approached by the City of Grand Forks, they have submitted an application. She said that they knew it was going to be a quick turnaround so in November they were already setting the stage of what they wanted to submit and be ready to hand it in as soon as it opened, so we have gotten that from them and at this point, if we do get another application, the plan is to bring this back in March, but if this is the only application we get, even though this is just a solicitation, she would look for a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee to just move forward with this application as the recommended application, subject to it being the only application we get so we don't need to bring it back if it doesn't need to be.

Danielson commented that this is a reconstruction project on North 4th Street from 1st Avenue to 2nd Avenue. He said that if you are familiar with the project that just finished up this past summer on 4th Street under the skywalk, it will be an exact replica of that project just a block down and will mimic all of the downtown reconstruction project work that they have been doing the past three years including decorative pavers, the streetscaping elements and full reconstruction of the pavement so it will match all that and they will just keep working their way down 4th Street if they are given the money to do so, so it will be pretty familiar to you if you

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have been following the project they have been doing downtown but they took a break here on the last solicitation to go after Belmont and 5th Intersection improvements so now they are just going back to their downtown reconstruction projects.

Kouba state that she just wanted to point out that in the application that they originally received from Grand Forks there was a missing transit stop at North 4th Street and 2nd Avenue North and they are putting that into the application as well, and then will resubmit the amended application to include that.

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS' APPLICATION FOR THE FY2025-2026 URBAN GRANT PROGRAM, SUBJECT TO NO ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS BEING SUBMITTED.

Voting Aye: Brooks, Schroeder, Palo, Zacher, Danielson, Ellis, Bergman, and Emery.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstaining: None.

Absent: Bail, Peterson, Riesinger, Ford, Kuharenko, Johnson, Christianson, Mason, West, and Magnuson.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2022/2023 Annual Work Program Project Update

- 1) Bicycle/Pedestrian Element Update: Halford stated that we are so close to completion of this project, but there are a few things that we are still kind of reviewing in that final document, so we are working through that. She said, however, that it might be delayed another month, but we will see where it goes in the next couple of weeks.
- 2) Street/Highway Element Update: Halford said that they had a good conversation talking about East Grand Forks' Industrial Park, which has been a focus in the past and we are shining some light on that area and coming up with a good plan.
- 3) Aerial Imagery: Halford stated that the RFQ has been sent out for this project. Sperry said that she has one thing on the aerial imagery, and maybe you won't have the same companies that Bismarck received for their aerial image, but they received a request from one of their vendors ask if they could have off-shore labor participate in their product and they wanted to know if that would violate Buy America, and it took a long time but she finally received information from FTA that said they were okay with it but they also had some legal clauses they said they should have in the contract so that if they didn't get the product they wanted they could sue them in the United States, and then

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she also found out that it does not violate Buy America if you end up with the same vendor and you get a similar question. Kouba said that she did get that question and she had no answer other than “so far not yet” but if you could send that language to her that would be great.

- 4) Safe Street For All (SS4A): Halford stated that, if you haven’t heard yet, last week we were notified that we did receive the grant that we applied for for Safe Street For All. She commented that in the State of North Dakota Williston received \$320,000; FM/COG received \$200,000; we were awarded \$400,000; and NDSU received \$1 million, so we are looking at close to \$2 million for the State of North Dakota, which is pretty exciting. She said to stay tuned, we will be starting to put language together and starting that whole process of putting a plan together and hiring a consultant and all that so that will be a whole new thing that we’ve never done before, but we are all very excited.
- 5) Bike Map: Kouba said that we are working on getting this out and getting some feedback on it. She stated that she did receive some and has incorporated it into the copy that is currently out, that she distributed here today, as well as distributed it to others as well. She said that they are looking to receive feedback and comments by February 24th, and that is also going to include some of our Bike Advisory Committee comments that we get as well.

B. MPO Updates

- 1) Bridge Update - Halford reported that she would open this up to the East Grand Forks side on this, she wasn’t able to check with David Murphy before this meeting but has this gone to the counties to get their approval yet, whether they are going to be playing ball or not with the share cost. Ellis responded that there is a chance that Polk County will look at it this month, but David heard from Grand Forks County that it was not on their agenda and they didn’t know when it would be, so we are still waiting.
- 2) March TAC Agenda Items – Halford stated that so far, we will be looking at what we get submitted for the Carbon Reduction Program applications that were talked about at our previous meeting, they will be due and we will bring them forward for your approval at you March Technical Advisory Committee meeting. She added that there will be a small amount of work program amendments for approval as well.

B. Agency Updates

None.

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ADJOURNMENT

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 8TH, 2023
MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:02 P.M.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager