

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Stephanie Halford, Chairman, called the May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:32 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following member(s) were present: Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Local Planning; Ryan Brooks, Grand Forks Planning; Nancy Ellis, East Grand Forks Planning; Jon Mason, MnDOT-District 2; Rich Sanders, Polk County Engineer; Steve Emery, East Grand Forks Engineer; George Palo, NDDOT-Local District; Nick West, Grand Forks County Engineer; and Tom Ford, Grand Forks County Planning.

Absent: Brad Bail, Troy Schroeder, Michael Johnson, Lane Magnuson, Nels Christianson, David Kuharenko, Christian Danielson, and Jason Peterson.

Guest(s) present: Erika Shepard, MnDOT; Kristen Sperry, FHWA Bismarck; and Tim Finseth, NWRDC.

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 APRIL 12, 2023, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY FORD, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2023, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE URBANIZED AREA**

Kouba said that we did talk about this at last month's Technical Advisory Committee meeting. She stated that she did pass around an updated version of the maps that she presented at that

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meeting and then took the comments she received and came up with the maps included in the packet.

Kouba referred to the maps and briefly went over the changes made to them. She pointed out that we are also updating the MPO Boundary as well.

Zacher referred to the map, to the curve next to the Airport and said that it seems a little bit goofy, not that anything is wrong, but he didn't know if it made more sense to square it off and move that whole thing over a mile or whatever it is to give yourself some room and to make sure that the road is inside or outside the parameters, so that you are keeping to the square lines, and again not saying it is wrong, but he just questions if that is really how you want it. Kouba responded that she doesn't know what the future of the old road there is going to be. Palo responded that it is going to fall within the Airport boundary, but his understanding from all his time out there is that 17<sup>th</sup> Street N.E., on the west side of the Airport is the City's annexation boundary, that is as far as the City is able to annex so that extra little curve was purchased by the Airport for their runway expansion, so he doesn't know how much further west you want to go, if you want to square it off, but he believes that from our discussion at our last meeting that the expansion won't go past the old road, but that was just a clear zone they had to purchase for the expansion. Kouba added that we don't want to go beyond the Airport, since the Airport is technically inside the Urban Area, we want to just make sure it stayed just the Airport area. Zacher said that he just wasn't sure if there was a need to follow the same line because we want to make sure that even though on paper it looks like they are on top of each other we have run into issues in the past where they have actually crossed back and forth, so we probably could we still want to make sure we offset it a little bit so we can see they are separate lines but again he just questioned, again, from the curb standpoint, and again the information they are looking for by the first isn't necessarily the final, it certainly could be, but it is a start, it was more to make sure we started thinking about it and looking at things rather than waiting until the end of December and everyone coming in at the same time type of thing, but if we want to start here he is fine with it, just questioned if we wanted to square it up.

Brooks asked if the recommendation was to approve Map C. Kouba responded that that is correct.

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE MAP C - THE DRAFT MPO STUDY AREA AND ADJUSTED URBAN AREA, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Brooks, Zacher, Ellis, Ford, West, Mason, Sanders, Emery, and Palo.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Schroeder, Kuharenko, Riesinger, Bergman, Danielson, Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, and Magnuson.***

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**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE 2023-2026 TIP AMENDMENT #3**

Kouba opened the public hearing.

There was no public present for discussion and no comments were submitted prior to the meeting.

Kouba closed the public hearing.

Kouba reported that we did receive some input on this item, and she will get to that in a bit.

Kouba explained that we received a few requests to update our 2023 T.I.P., and most of the amendments will occur in 2023. She said that there are a few items that are being listed just in the event they are bid early, and they need to be included in the T.I.P. in order for them to be bid on, so that is the only reason why the 2024 year is being updated as well.

Kouba referred to the staff report and pointed out that the first project is in 2023 on the North Dakota side, on University Avenue, to rehabilitate the surface and lift the railroad crossing. She said that this will be done with 100% federal funds, and it is a new project. She added that at the same intersection they are also planning on doing an installation of a new crossing signal and we have it in 2024, but depending on when it is bid and when the years fall out after this, if it changes to a 2023 project it will just be an administrative modification to the T.I.P., and once again it is 100% federally funded.

Kouba said that the next project is on the Minnesota side. She explained that there are carbon reduction program funds for the City of East Grand Forks, and their application was approved through our Technical Advisory Committee and Executive Policy Board a month or so ago, and those projects were approved so we need to put them into our T.I.P. She said that in 2023 they are putting 11 preemption emitters on their fire trucks.

Kouba stated that in 2024 there is a CRP project in East Grand Forks to install a sidewalk and trail along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W., but the bidding will take place in 2023, and this also needs to be included in our T.I.P.

Kouba commented that MnDOT has also acquired funds to do a reconstruction project on Minnesota 220 from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to CSAH 22. She said that this project is scheduled for 2024, but again the bidding will take place in 2023, so this project also needs to be included in our T.I.P. She added that MnDOT also brought forward some different more descriptive wording for this project so we are adding wording that it will be the City of East Grand Forks installation to ensure it is as descriptive as possible for everybody. She referred to a photo of the project and explained that it is a CRP project for the City of East Grand Forks to install sidewalk along 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.W. from 4<sup>th</sup> Street N.W. to the bus shelter north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street N.W. and to install a trail along 4<sup>th</sup> Street N.W. from 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.W. to the existing trail to the west of the floodwall. She said that we also need to include the total length of the project as well and asked if Mr. Emery had that information. Emery responded that the general alignment shown in the project photo is

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correct, what they are proposing is a little different and he can provide an actual conceptual drawing that they have, and he can get the length as well, but he doesn't have it off the top of his head. Mason stated that that would be helpful; as Ms. Kouba mentioned MnDOT's requirements for the S.T.I.P. are kind of stringent, they need to be a little bit more specific on the from and to, and he read through the application and that was kind of what he was able to gather, so it was partially a question as well as a request that we make sure that we have the right information. Emery said, then, that he should get that information to both Teri and you. Mason responded that that would be most helpful. Emery said that they need to request an SP number for that too, correct. Mason responded that Brian Ketring is aware of that and is trying to work through this process, particularly with the emitters for the Fiscal Year 2023 project, he doesn't think they have ever assigned a project like that, and they had some different sequences, and he thinks Brian is looking for a little bit more direction out of their St. Paul office on which numbers should be assigned so we don't get to a point of authorization and have to hit the brakes. Emery commented that Brian told him that we just go through out typical request for an SP number, just go through the normal request process, so his plan was to try to work on this this afternoon to try to get project number for both the CRP projects that East Grand Forks has. Mason said that that would be great to get that process initiated and get that group what they need to start assigning those numbers. Emery said that he will try to get the information to Brian and Tim this afternoon. Mason said that once they get those numbers from you then he will share them with the MPO as well, because we will need to plug those into the T.I.P. and then the S.T.I.P. they can't fully approve these until we have the number assigned otherwise it would be very challenging to track them based on description, so that is kind of the final step of these T.I.P. and S.T.I.P. amendments. Kouba asked if there would be a chance we could get the numbers by next week. Mason responded that he would anticipate that could be done. He added that it is his hope that they would be able to jump right on that once Steve gets that other information, they have been looking into it so he thinks they know what they are doing. Kouba stated that that would be good because Erika is pointing out that we can't approve our T.I.P. until we have those numbers. Mason said that on MnDOT's side we should be able to take the MPO's action here today, and then he might send her a suggestive email to include that number in there as part of what the MPO approved, but they will need that to enter into MnDOT's system and go through that process.

Kouba stated that those are the only amendments, and we did send notifications to both the NDDOT and MnDOT, so we are looking for approval of the amendment to include the new verbiage for the CRP project.

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE 2023-2026 T.I.P. AMENDMENT #3 SUBJECT TO INCLUSION OF THE NEW VERBIAGE FOR THE CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS' CRP PROJECT AND THE STATE PROJECT NUMBERS.***

***Voting Aye: Brooks, Zacher, Ellis, Ford, West, Mason, Sanders, Emery, and Palo.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

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*Absent: Schroeder, Kuharenko, Riesinger, Bergman, Danielson, Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, and Magnuson.*

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE 2024-2027 DRAFT T.I.P. PROJECTS**

Kouba opened the public hearing.

There was no one from the public present for discussion and no comments were submitted prior to the meeting.

Kouba closed the public hearing.

Kouba reported that we did put out a public notice for this item, and as you all will notice we are using a new format for the project listings and are doing it as a whole MPO, so it will be used for Minnesota Transit Projects, North Dakota Transit Projects, as well as the DOT, Cities, and Counties Projects.

Kouba referred to the spreadsheets included in the packet and explained that the projects are all listed in one spreadsheet format. She pointed out that there are multiple State funding sources included for the simple reason that Minnesota shows a couple of different funding sources and if we just show it as Minnesota State they assume it is the Trunk Highway funds but they do have other sources of funding that is strictly State funding so we want to make sure that it is shown, as well as having opportunities for locals to go into partnerships for other sources of funding as well for various projects.

Kouba commented that these are the 2024 to 2027 projects listing, and we will be trying to get updates before the final T.I.P. document on our 2023 projects for our Annual Listing of Obligations.

Kouba said that under the description column you will see that all of the Minnesota projects will be shown in capitalized letters and will have the exact wording to match what exactly is going to be in the State T.I.P. as well. She asked if anyone noticed any projects that were missed or that should not have been included, she is looking for any input as well as a recommendation to approve the draft T.I.P.

Sperry commented that she really likes how you reformatted it, it looks really good. Kouba added that this format also uses less pages for the document itself.

Mason said that the one comment he would have is that for the 2024 CRP project we just talked about you make sure those descriptions match from the T.I.P. amendment here to the final document. He said then that this will be the draft request to approve here and then what is the date for final approval. Kouba responded that we will be submitting our final full draft document, which would include the project listing, in August. Mason said that they will stay in touch, the deadline at the District office is the July timeframe, so they will have to stay in touch,

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but he isn't anticipating changes to the Minnesota projects. Kouba said that she just has to make sure that everything matches the description, she just noticed one that she will get changed.

Ellis said, then, that this is the draft T.I.P. and the document you sent by email then is... Kouba responded that the emailed document is the document itself, which is what we will be approving in August. Ellis said that today we are just approving the projects. Kouba responded that is correct because she wanted to give everyone enough time to get in comments and things like that so she can put them into the document itself as well as to give our Federal Partners a chance to see anything before approval is needed.

Zacher stated that he sent an email the other day, but the NDDOT is expecting a Juneish timeline for project lists so he really can't comment on anything until then, but he knows that Mike Johnson is working on a project for the potential South 47<sup>th</sup> Interchange, which is coming up on environmental clearance, but in order to get environmental clearance the next phase needs to be in the S.T.I.P. so the PE may be added, whether it is this year or 2024, so that would end up being one of the phases because it met the regional significant criteria. Kouba asked if it would have a project number and everything else at that phase or will it be part of the lump project. Zacher responded that it would probably be the same project number, but the funding would be for the PE side of it. He added that if you recall a couple of years ago we had the regionally significant discussion and how we would need to separate those phases out, and he knows you have the tables at the end for the lump sums, but in addition to that, so the regionally significant numbers would actually be pulled from that lump sum table, to it wouldn't be included in that lump sum table, so you may have up to four phases for the same project listed in different years type of thing, so right now we did the environmental document, and we may have the PE coming, right of way and utilities or other phases where we would ask Federal Highway for authorization and so that is really where we are using our keys, and then ultimately we would have construction.

***MOVED BY BROOKS, SECONDED BY FORD, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE THE 2024-2027 T.I.P. PROJECTS, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Brooks, Zacher, Ellis, Ford, West, Mason, Emery, and Palo.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Schroeder, Kuharenko, Riesinger, Bergman, Danielson, Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, and Magnuson.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION TO THE NDDOT OF THE FUNDING FORMULA**

Halford reported that for the last little bit the MPO Directors on the North Dakota side have been meeting on a regular basis, talking about any kind of things that have been going on and sharing ideas and picking each other's brains, but the most recent topic that they have been discussing is revising the funding formula.

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Halford referred to the staff report and said that it has sort of an overview of what each MPO has been receiving from 2013 to 2022, it kind of gives you an idea of where we've been. She pointed out that the current formula starts out with a base amount of \$120,000 and then goes up based on population, so they have been really looking at this because the 2020 census numbers have come out. She added that not only have those numbers come out for the MPO Planning Areas, but also Minot is going to be becoming an MPO as well, so there were two very good reasons to relook at the formula.

Halford stated that as they were discussing this, they came to an agreement on a scenario that we will bring forward to the NDDOT, and she would like to highlight that this is a recommendation to the NDDOT, but they will have final say on what happens, but where we sit as directors is with the scenario highlighted in green, where Bismarck's base amount will now start at \$300,000, Fargo/Moorhead's will start at \$500,000 and they are becoming a TMA so they have a lot more responsibilities, and the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks MPO will start at \$300,000 and then Minot will start at \$200,000 as they will just be getting started. She added that this is for 2024, so it will start next year as Minot isn't currently using any funding, but they will be starting to receive funding next year. She said that this is only highlighting the North Dakota side and doesn't include what we get on the Minnesota side.

Halford pointed out that it was also brought forward that Bismarck is going to present the scenario below is to their board as well, and she knows that Fargo and Grand Forks are not supporting this one as we clearly would be getting less funding, but all three directors feel like this is a good way to go, and it seems fair, so really she is asking for any input or thoughts you may have to bring forward to the NDDOT, as well as a motion to support what the Directors have come forward with.

***MOVED BY FORD, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE MOVING FORWARD WITH SUBMITTAL OF THE RECOMMENDED FUNDING FORMULA TO THE NDDOT.***

***Voting Aye: Brooks, Zacher, Ellis, Ford, West, Mason, Emery, and Palo.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstaining: None.***

***Absent: Schroeder, Kuharenko, Riesinger, Bergman, Danielson, Bail, Peterson, Johnson, Christianson, and Magnuson.***

**NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

A. 2022/2023 Annual Work Program Project Update

- 1) Bicycle/Pedestrian Element Update: Halford stated that we are still working on wrapping up a few things. She said that Grand Forks Engineering had a

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few comments and a last look at the final draft before we take it through the approval process, so we are finishing up that and putting a presentation together that we will be bringing forward to the Technical Advisory Committee and the Executive Policy Board and both City Councils, and that will start at the beginning of June and then final approval will take place in July.

- 2) Street/Highway Element Update: Halford said that we received the Traffic Demand Model, so that is being reviewed and the consultants are having a look at it.
- 3) Aerial Imagery: Halford stated that they have been given the green light to do the aerial imagery, so we are just waiting for the right time as the river is still a bit high, but there is a very fine line for doing this as we don't want photos when there are leaves on the trees either.
- 4) Safe Streets For All (SS4A): Halford stated that we did get a template of what the agreement will look like, so she will be working on that with a few partners, and put that together so stay tuned for more details on that next month, so things are starting to move forward with it.

Zacher asked if, with the Safe Streets For All and the agreement, is the RFP included with that, not that he is pushing it in any sort of fashion, but he just wanted you to be aware that Fargo's RFP is out, and he did also have Kristen Sperry take a look at that being it is a direct grant from Federal Highway, just to make sure that there isn't anything special that needs to be included, so when we do get to that point he will have Kristen take a glance at yours as well.

Sperry commented that one thing that Fargo added in their RFP was a note that said that, yes this RFP is out there, they are looking for consultants to bid on the proposal, but they did have a statement in there that said that no work can be advanced until final approval from Federal Highway so that there wasn't that expectation that as soon as it was signed that they could begin working on it so you might want to add similar verbiage in yours as well. Halford said that we will do that.

**B. MPO Updates**

- 1) Bridge Update - Halford reported that there isn't anything to share at this time. She asked if anyone else had anything to share. No one had anything to share at this time.
- 2) Transportation Planner/Senior Planner - Halford reported that we are looking for a new Planner/Senior Planner so if you know of anyone that would like a



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dream job we are hiring and these are a couple of the posts we are putting out there, the job description, and it is all on our website too so if you know of anybody, or would like to jump ship and hang with us you're welcome to apply.

- 3) June Technical Advisory Committee Agenda Items – Halford stated that as she said before we will probably have the draft Bike/Ped plan come through. Kouba added that we will also have to approve an extension on our contract with ATAC for our Traffic Demand Model, and we might also update the Technical Advisory Committee on where we are at with the model and the information in the model.

Zacher commented that we talked a little about where the annual contracts for the Unified Planning Work Program or the MPO contracts are and he anticipates having agreements available before the June meetings so that we can start going through that and then we will have to start working on the next round for the 2024 contract, so just so you are aware that something will be coming.

**B. Agency Updates**

- 1) 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bid Letting – Palo reported that the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Reconstruction project will be bid on Friday, so we should know the final numbers.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY BROOKS, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023  
MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:09 P.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted by,  
Peggy McNelis, Office Manager