

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 - 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks Training Conference Room/Zoom Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Warren Strandell, Chairperson, called the March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:02 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Warren Strandell, Brian Larson, Mike Powers, Clarence Vetter, Al Grasser, Ken Vein, and Mark Rustad.

Absent: Tricia Lunski.

Guest(s) present: Micah Dickman, Urban SDK.

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 FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2023, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 TO MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS**

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY RUSTAD, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 TO MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN CONTRACT  
AMENDMENT**

Halford reported that we need to amend the contract with Bolton and Menk. She explained that originally we would now be going through the final adoption process of the plan, but a few things came up when they were going through the final draft of the document. She said that are concepts and ideas in there that were submitted to the Stakeholder group, and they didn't want to repeat mistakes that were made in the past and they wanted to make sure that there is buy-in not only from the stakeholders, but also from the neighborhoods that we are looking at implementing these concepts, so what we want to do, and what we would be moving forward on is to hold some public input meetings for the corridors that we are looking at doing these concepts at. She stated that this would include University Avenue, and they would all be done virtually, and in order to do that we have to amend the contract to extend the timeline. She added that they aren't asking for any additional money, just changing the completion date.

Halford said that the Technical Advisory Committee and MPO Staff are recommending approval of the amendment to the contract.

Vein asked what concepts are being looked at. Halford responded that they aren't radical designs, but, for example the main one that we had the biggest concern on is on University Avenue. She explained that in the past plan the concept that was in the Bike and Ped Plan was to have the bike lanes extended from North 3<sup>rd</sup> all the way to the University Bike Lane, but when the Engineering Department was ready to put them in the Neighborhood had concerns about what it would do to their parking, so things like that, so there isn't anything radical, we just want to make sure that everyone is aware of what is being proposed.

***MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT  
EXTENSION WITH BOLTON AND MENK FOR THE GF/EGF BICYCLE AND  
PEDESTRIAN PLAN, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Larson, Rustad, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Grasser, and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Lunski.***

**MATTER OF NORTH DAKOTA SOLICITATION OF URBAN ROADS AND URBAN  
REGIONAL SYSTEM PROJECTS FOR FY2027**

Halford reported that just like last month, timelines on the North Dakota side have been a little bit tighter so this is kind of an application/thoughts on applications, which is a good thing that Grand Forks Engineering is on the ball and are being very proactive, especially with grants like this, we know they come around every year and we know that it is probably better to just start putting the applications together rather than to wait until they make the announcement that there

is funding available, so these applications are for the Regional and Urban Roads so they made the announcement that solicitation has started, and we got applications from the North Dakota side that have already been vetted through their City Council, so everything has been approved on their side and the Technical Advisory Committee also felt that they were good applications to move forward, so we are looking for approval to move them forward.

***MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE RECEIPT OF NDDOT SOLICITATION OF PROJECTS FOR THE FY2027 URBAN ROADS AND URBAN REGIONAL SYSTEM, AND TO APPROVE THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS FY2027 URBAN ROADS AND URBAN REGIONAL SYSTEM APPLICATIONS, SUBJECT TO NO ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS BEING SUBMITTED, AND TO GIVE THEM PRIORITY RANKING.***

***Voting Aye: Larson, Rustad, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Grasser, and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Lunski.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM APPLICATIONS FOR FY2023 AND FY2024**

Halford reported that this is on the Minnesota side only. She stated that there is funding available, and this is a new program that has a lot of flexibility for ways that we can reduce the carbon footprint, such as bikeshare, sidewalks and a lot of other things that could fit, so it leaves us with a lot of wiggle room. She said, though, that the only thing is they haven't given us a big budget, each MPO is given a certain amount of money on the Minnesota side, so we reached out to our partners asking what are your ideas for an application for 2023 and 2024, each year they have given us a pot of money of \$20,000 each or we can combine years and do a \$40,000 project so East Grand Forks came up with a couple of projects they would like to do; the first is a 2023 project that would entail the purchase of 11 pre-empting emitters for the fire department vehicles at a total cost of \$6,225.00, of which \$4,980.00 would be CRP funds and \$1,245.00 would be local match and the second is a 2024 project that would install a sidewalk along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. from the bus shelter/stop to the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.S. and 4<sup>th</sup> Street N.W., as well as across 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW to fill-in the gap and connect to sidewalks on both sides of 4<sup>th</sup> Street N.W. and to install a new 10-foot trail on the north side of the flood control wall that runs through the State Campground and park areas at a total cost of \$104,149.00, of which \$35,020 would be CRP funds and \$69,129 local funds from the City's State Aid Maintenance Fund.

Halford commented that these applications were approved by the East Grand Forks City Council.

Grasser asked if it would be possible to do a study utilizing these funds. Halford responded that they were looking more for implementation, it was very gray, but they might be open to it. Grasser said that he isn't suggesting we change it, but they have had a comment come up a couple of times about things like enclosing the Columbia Road Overpass, so it might be interesting to maybe do a study on that to find out what the cost and implications might be to do

it. Halford stated that in the future there might be some funding like this on the North Dakota side, but they haven't vetted their process yet.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE THE CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM APPLICATIONS FOR FY2023 AND FY2024, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Larson, Rustad, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Lunski.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF AERIAL IMAGERY CONTRACT**

Kouba reported that RFPs were sent out in January, with a response date of February 17<sup>th</sup>. She said that we received four proposals, and the Selection Committee interviewed all four on March 1<sup>st</sup>, with their top choice being Fugro.

Kouba commented that we are looking at doing these every two years as Grand Forks is growing quickly.

Kouba stated that the entire area will be done in 3-inch pixel resolution.

Grasser said that he sees that the Technical Advisory Committee got this as informational only, and he is wondering why they didn't act on it. Kouba responded that in the past they have never had the Technical Advisory Committee give a recommendation on contracts. Grasser said that he struggles a bit with that because in his mind the process should have a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee on something like this, a lot of those members will have worked with some of these companies before, and can give good input in their capabilities and liabilities, etc. Kouba responded that that is why members from the Technical Advisory Committee are generally on the Selection Committee, and their experience with some of these consultants and firms was very valuable in choosing which firm we went with. Halford said that even though we haven't asked for a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee in the past, we can try to be a little bit more transparent and keep them involved in the future and have them give a recommendation. Grasser said that that would be his request to do that, he would like to see that group give their thoughts on pretty much anything financial and such.

***MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH FUGRO TO PERFORM DIGITAL ORTHOPHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE MPO AREA AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$55,000.***

***Voting Aye: Larson, Rustad, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Lunski.***

**NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**MATTER OF URBAN SDK PRESENTATION**

Kouba reported that, going back to January of last year when we were looking into origin destination data and how we can get that information for our traffic demand models and things like that, as we were looking into that we were able to talk to different companies that provide that information and one of those was Urban SDK, and while they do provide origin destination data, through discussions with them we found that they also provide a lot more data that we could very much take advantage of, especially with our small staff, and give us the ability to also find some cost savings or future corridor studies and things like that. She stated that Micah Dickman of Urban SDK has been gracious enough to brave the North Dakota weather all the way from Florida to give us a brief presentation on what Urban SDK can offer us.

Presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request) ensued.

Dickman said that what he wanted to do was to take you through a little bit of the company's history for couple of minutes and then talk a little bit about the solution they have been looking at with Stephanie and Teri over the last year, some of the work that they are doing with the Fargo MPO as well, and how they are utilizing not just their data but their services and staff as well to help them not must save money on future projects but also to help the community make quicker decisions.

Dickman gave a brief summation of Urban SDK's history.

Dickman said that they work with clients from counties, cities, DOTs and MPOs all across the country. He pointed out that one of their earlier clients was TY-LIN, and Brandon Orr is actually the director of planning now at Urban SDK, so one thing they have tried to do is encompass what the insides look like at a governmental or transportation organization; they've staffed themselves with consultants, planners, GIS Analysts, Data Scientists they hired out of the Academia and the CUTR School of South Florida to be able to support our clients as well because one problem they noticed was that as your building a business it is just like anything else, you run into a lot of hurdles and blockers and what they found was that you cannot just provide governmental agencies with big data and big solutions and big software, you have to be able to support those clients so what they did was to stack themselves to be able to mimic what they look like so when they call in, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., whether it is writing a long range plan, whether that is helping them out with data, cleaning it up, putting together performance reports for meetings like we are having today, they have the ability to do that and what they had found was that a lot of the smaller communities that they worked with across the country is where they had the biggest impact. He stated that they work with the Miami's, the Jacksonville's, and others, and as he told Stephanie, those folks can tend to be little bit more difficult to work with, also the work they are doing doesn't go to show as much, smaller communities like Grand Forks or Cartersville, Georgia, or Fargo for instance, the work that they

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are doing is much more impactful to the board members to the staff members and to the community itself.

Dickman commented that he worked on the government side of the house for five years, so he worked in public service, and he knows that one thing that we all have in common is that the goal is increase the quality of life of the people in the communities that we serve, and he is very passionate about that.

Dickman said that what the goal is is to be able to use this data to make quicker decisions, to be able to monitor your roadways, to be able to identify where you are having issues before people actually call, to be able to proactively understand that maybe this is an issue that we haven't seen before, maybe we haven't noticed and nobody has complained about it yet but maybe it is something that we need to look into, to spend some tax payer dollars and do further analysis to see if there is something we need to do here to create a better quality of life, or when we do have those complaints to be able to quickly report on that, it is either an issue or it isn't an issue, there is no reason to go spend more tax payer dollars because you have already identified that this is not an issue from the data, so what they have done is they have pulled together a scope of work with these guys over the last eleven months, working with them to really try to find a good fit for what the MPO would need as well as what the city and the county can utilize as well, from engineering to policy making and reporting to the MPO and federally mandated tasks that they have to get done throughout the year.

Dickman explained that the platform itself is comprised of four different modules; inside is where all of your FHWA performance reports are automated, all of your origin destination data is tracking popular trip movements within the community, being able to visualize all of your speed travel times and congestion data throughout the community on a four day legacy, so you can literally go in and see what the congestion was like on Sunday, so you can see what speed was like, what congestion was like, be able to pull that data on a quarterly or month basis, and be able to understand that based on the seasonality of your community, obviously you have a lot different dynamics than they do in Florida.

Grasser asked if that was accurate enough and granular enough that they could actually use that to make a warrant analysis on a signal or stop sign, is it granular enough to do that activity. Dickman responded that if you are going to do an analysis on a corridor, yes; if you are going to be doing signal timing, that uses real time data, it is on a four-day latency, so if you were buying the real time data in 15 second intervals, they don't provide that, they provide it on four day latency. Grasser said, though, if you are doing signal timing let's say, and you can use data from whenever planning forward, but it is detailed enough that he could get the speeds and the delays. Dickman responded that that is correct. He added that you will get the speeds, the delays, the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, the travel timing, and then you will get a.m. and p.m. peaks as well. He said that it is an FHWA recognized source of data, so FHWA has recognized this data is accurate enough and granular enough, the samples are good enough to be able to make decisions off of it.

Grasser said that he is assuming that you get pedestrian and bicycle data. Dickman responded that they do. He said that they can boundary out where pedestrians would be; it would only be

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walking or biking, so they only know that they are picking up pedestrian data. He stated that it is very hard to be able to tell if there is a bicyclist on the road going 15-mph next to a car that is going 20-mph, but yes they can boundary out sidewalks, bike paths, and those sorts of things and be able to tell you the density to volume and how fast people are going on those paths to be able to see if there is something that you guys can do. Grasser said he would guess you need to have a cell phone then. Dickman responded that you would have to have some type of cellular ping coming off it, that is correct. Larson said that that was his question, he assumes the data comes from our phones. Dickman responded that that is correct, adding that GPS is where the data would be coming from.

Dickman commented that when we talk about GPS, our penetration roots are typically between 25% and 30% of the country, so we ping off of about 150 to 200 million different devices a month, and then they aggregate that data on 60-second intervals, so they ping off the cellphones every 60-seconds and bring the data in. He said that they don't have anyone's personal information, they don't know where you are traveling or where you are going, all they know is that there is somebody on that roadway going 55-miles an hour at 4:00 in the afternoon.

Dickman stated that included as well is the Origin Destination data, so when you look at this slide, what you are seeing is actually an Origin Destination study they did for Fargo/Moorhead; so they were having, outside of their elementary schools, they were having a fair amount of pedestrian accidents so they wanted to understand and be able to track where people were coming to and from to the school during the timeframe that school was being let out and when they were coming into the school zones. He said that they can now track which routes people were taking to get there and then also they had integrated into the safety data base for them to be able to bring in all of their localized crash data and serious injury data to be able to layer over that so now they can see where people are coming from, where they are going to, how fast people are going down these roadways at that time, and then where you are seeing these accidents happening so they can filter that all through it, so essentially now what they have done is cradle to grave be able to see, for a very granular time period, where these people are coming to and from, how fast they are going, and then what is associated with these accidents to allow them, as decision and policy makers of the community that knows the community better than anybody, to determine what they need to do to alleviate these kinds of things.

Dickman said that you can also give your consultants access to all of this, so your consultants can have access to all of this data, so the goal is to give you access to the data so that you can preemptively be able to use it, not just for planning efforts and the federally mandated tasks, but also to be able to use for scenario based planning and to take a look at, okay these are things we are noticing now because we have this data, and these are different decisions that we can make within the community, we aren't taking it on the back end where somebody is complaining or we have already had fifteen people get hit by a car at this intersection, we've identified that there is a problem at that intersection so we are going to allocate resources to see what that problem is and how we can create a solution for it.

Halford commented that not only would the MPO have access to that data, but we would also give access to the cities and the counties. Dickman added that you can even give a license to law

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enforcement if they want to take a look at the speed data and crash data. He said that that was their goal, they did not want to be in a place where they were just serving the MPO, just serving the city, or just serving the County, and nothing was standardized or speaking to each other, what they wanted to do was to get the entire region involved, and that is what they have done.

Dickman said that they are also going to, just as they did for Fargo/Moorhead, bring in your crash data within the local area so that you can have a much quicker way to analyze accidents, based on what you have to track and report on including serious injuries, fatalities, number of crashes and where they are happening. He stated that you can use that data to be able to enrich the data that they are providing, so once again you will be able to say that now that we have all this crash data, we know where the serious injuries are at, how is that associated with the speeds that we are having in our community and identify issues off of that.

Dickman stated that data consolidation is another goal of theirs, it means not having five different kinds of software, ten different data bases, this person has this data, this person has that data, so now you have one place where all of this data is brought in together to be able to easily access it and save staff time.

Dickman commented that for Fatality Analysis they actually are integrated with the FAR data base, the federal data base that reports all of the fatalities, so they actually go in and pull that every single year so as those fatality reports come out they will automate the FHWA Performance Measures to tell you what time of day they are happening, what months are you seeing the most fatalities, and what were the light conditions during those time periods and actual maps to be able to allow you to share at meetings like this, and you can extract all of the data as well so if a consultant comes in and you are doing a safety study, they can just go in and grab the raw data files for themselves as well.

Dickman stated that all of your bridge recording, so all of the infrastructure assets within a community that are inspected for the previous year, they actually have access to the API for the National Bridge Inventory, so they go in and automate those reports to let you see what the results of your bridge inspections were, where were they located, who actually owns the bridges, whether it is the county, the city or the state, who is the maintenance owner, and where you sit with the bridge conditions.

Grasser asked if they had historical information, how far back in time can you grab this, let's say we start a subscription this month, and he asked if he could get information from two years ago at a certain location, is that a possibility, how far back can you go. Dickman responded that they have access to all of that data; not all of the data do we keep hot because they have to store it, if they did that for every roadway within the United States, and they kept five years' worth of back data, you know the data costs would be astronomical, so all you have to do is put in a request to the representative that is on your account, and they will deliver the data within the platform, so what you will have right now though is access to 2022 and everything moving forward, and then anything else you would just put in a request for and they will go grab the data and deliver it to you.



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Dickman stated that one thing they prioritize for the MPO in particular is their performance measures, the PM-1, PM-2, PM-3 performance measures that they are required to report on be the federal government and the state every year, they will automate them for you so that you don't just have the performance measures automated so as you move into years moving forward you just have to update the data. He said that they can take all of the performance reports and actually put them on your website or through a community outreach initiative, so anything you create within the platform, any reports that filled out, any studies that you or the consultants have done they have personalized links in there that you can 1) share a personalized link within the agency or to your consultants or you can have an embedded link that goes right on your website to be able share the work that you are doing, the performance reporting that you guys are coming up with goes right on your website to be able to share the work that you are doing, the performance reporting that you are coming up with from the state goes right onto the website.

Dickman commented that Regional Monitoring is where, after data collection and analysis is completed, they provide all of their speed data, origin destination data; they have integrated into the state data base for crash data, and then actually gather all of the historical traffic counts, so now what they are able to do is to provide quarterly reports based on volumes, speeds, crash data so now they can go and filter each quarter and say that this is where all of their crashes are at, this is where all of the speed were at, this is the volume on the roadway, so if we have a high rate of speed, a low volume, and a high crash rate there is probably a problem, there is probably something we need to go do, or if you get a call that there is a speeding problem on a roadway and the neighborhood wants you to do a speed study you can look at the speed data and see that there really isn't a problem without doing a study.

Dickman stated that another thing they offer the MPO, and you as a region, is they have their own team of GIS Analysts, and he is sure you already have them here, but if there is other work that you need to get done that is bogging down the staff or you don't have the time to do it or you just don't want to do it, you can actually send it to them and they have their team of GIS Analysts that will take the data, gather it, and then provide it to you.

Dickman added that one other thing they provide, that he didn't include in the presentation, is all of your Census Socio-economic years, statistics, demographics data, they actually integrate into all of those API's and they compile that for you, so the reason they decided to do that was, it is data that anybody can go get that data, you can go grab that data from a surveying website if you choose to right now, but what they found was that a lot of their earlier clients, they ran a case study, but they were spending anywhere from 80 to 150 hours a year of staff time just gathering open source data, that is free and provided by the government; but they said, let's simplify that a little bit and they created their own data hub, so they are now aggregating all of the data every year as they come out with new data sets so you can go on there, you can click a button and download them in 60-seconds, it is all consolidated into one place.

#### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Grasser asked, process wise, if you are going to hire services such as this, would that have to go through an RFP process and everything, an evaluation, solicitation, or is this as part of a grant.

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Halford responded that this would be like a software kind of thing for the MPO. She said that actually that is what the spreadsheet is showing, it is shown as being part 300.6, Planning Review and Evaluation, and that is under Data Collection, and that is an area we use for ATAC and people like that to get us information. She added that we had room in the budget for something like this and that is where we were able to put it. Grasser said, though, that that in his mind you've got that product that you bid on and then the services that you solicit. Halford responded that this is a little bit of a gray area between the two because it is a product but it also software too. Dickman said that the way that Fargo/Moorhead did this, obviously they had their Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board approval, but they were able to sole source it through the State because what they are getting here is very unique in the sense that they aren't just getting, for instance just an ESRI or GIS license, there is no company out there doing what they are doing, which is why they kind of fall under that category of sole source justification, and that is typically how other MPOs across the country have procured this. He said that if you are looking at this at the DOT level, and you are talking about 200,000 odd contracts, obviously they go through, just because of the threshold amount, they tend to go through an RFQ or RFP process, but he has not seen any MPOs that have procured it at this license cost any other way than to sole source it. Grasser asked if the State has procured your services. Dickman responded that they have. Grasser stated that we can then go through some of the paths they followed. Halford clarified that the State of North Dakota has not procured these services. Dickman agreed that as a State they have not. Grasser said, though, that we could go through that same sole source process. He added that it would actually be nice if the State made that available. Dickman stated that the way Fargo/Moorhead did it was to route it up to the NDDOT/MnDOT and then to FHWA and their local representatives for their approval as well. Vein asked if it was qualification based, when they did that selection versus an RFP. Grasser responded that they sole sourced it so they were able to get around that. He asked if the MPO, did Fargo and Moorhead do that, again we are with the MPO. Halford responded that it was Metro Cog, and going through them then in return, there is an 80/20 split for the cost.

Kouba commented that the other thing is it isn't a small amount of money, but in comparison to ???, it doesn't meet a lot of thresholds, but as Micah said, it is also unique in comparison to something like StreetLight, they do the Origin Destination Data, but they don't do performance measures and things like that that are a lot more important to us on a day to day basis, getting information out to other people, so that is one of the biggest things, that when we were looking at it, and when we compared something like StreetLight, we were looking at it specifically for our model validation, but the expense of it is more and it is very limited for what we need it for so we would get a one-time pull and that is all we would get for around \$50,000 to \$60,000 dollars for our area.

Grasser said that he is wondering, from a standpoint, if we have this kind of data do we need to have ATAC hired on to do the traffic signal monitoring that we currently have them doing, would there be an offset there potentially. Kouba responded that there wouldn't. She explained that what ATAC does is signal monitoring which is actual traffic counting, and that is not what this program would do necessarily. Dickman added that he would say there are other things that they are performing for you guys when they are collecting some of this data, like speeds and things like that, but he would say take a look at the contract to see if there are things in the line

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items that they are charging your for that you now have access to, which is a lot of what; he just got off a Technical Advisory Committee meeting this morning for a current client, they were going over their Long Range Plan update, and they hired a consultant to do the update, but they didn't have to spend a pretty large sum of money on the data collection portion of it just because they had access and they had given the consultant access. Grasser suggested that maybe this should get kicked back to the Technical Advisory Committee again at some time to probe some of these more detailed type of questions. Halford said that the hope is, this is not approving, but the hope is to kind of getting the blessing to move forward to look at this and do a deeper drive, and look at the contract, so we want to find out if we should keep spending time looking at this, is this something valuable. She stated that as staff we feel it is valuable as not only would it streamline some of our day-to-day things that we have to do, but also we are looking at it as we might not need to budget as much for future studies because we could use this data instead of paying the consultants to do it, we could give them access instead, that is the hope and this would be a year-by-year contract, and we do have some cushion this year, but what we are lacking is staff hours, so she highlighted where the funding would be coming from and we can definitely amend it into the budget and nothing else would suffer, and then try it out. She stated that Fargo has had them on board since October, and they had them do their performance measures. She said that Teri did ours and it took many hours to do it, so the hope is that not only will it help get you more information to tell your stories of things you are looking at like a Phoenix Elementary School Study, this would help with that as well as future plans like the Grand Valley Study, it would help with the Safe Streets For All project, as well as our performance measures at the end of the year.

Dickman gave a brief overview of some of the work they have done for FM-Cog. He stated that the DOT has helped build a lot of this, a lot of the MPOs have helped build it, and it is designed because most of the agencies they were in had no consolidation of data, it was all over the place, from xcel spreadsheets to hard-drives, but nobody was consolidated, nobody was using the same sheet of music, which was causing 1) a lot of inefficiencies within the staff and 2) they were losing a lot of money because they already had data but they didn't realize that they were having people go collect it again because they didn't know that they had it, they were just extremely disorganized, so they created one central place to store and consolidate your data. He said that beyond that they also have extra tools to be able to map and run geospatial analysis tool, which is a complimentary tool to be able to tell the story of data for meetings like this, or if you are going after grant funding, whatever that is you can visualize different data sets in here. He stated that they also have access to their full insights tool (he gave a quick lesson on how it works), and said that with this tool they can visualize and understand exactly what is associated with that like the number of months, the number of incidents, where are you seeing the most fatalities at, pedestrian fatalities, etc. He added that what you have here is your Data Hub, so you can go in and select any region within the country, all that census socio-economic demographic data is going to be announced here, so now if you get a request from the public or the consultant you can now come in and instead of spending hours on one of these surveys collecting this data, you can find population data for the most recent years collected as it will be automatically gathered. He said that beyond that, all of the performance measures are also automated here, so now you can come in, these are going to go on their website, but they collected data from the State, they took the State's targets, they visualized all of the data as well to be able to compliment the

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State's targets, so now they can come in and just update this as years move forward rather than having to go and reinvent the wheel every single time that they have to develop these performance measures.

Grasser said that they just signed a contract with a consultant to do a bridge study, and he isn't sure how to question this, it is an East Grand Forks study, but part of that discussion had to do with data and what-not, and he is wondering if this would be, he is wondering about timing, he is assuming that the consultant hasn't jumped in to a whole lot of data collection yet at this point in time, but would this be valuable data, it might be worth a question to find out if that consultant could actually use this data potentially in that study. He added that he knows that they were talking about getting it from ATAC and stuff, so just a thought. Kouba commented that the ATAC data would be more of the future traffic from present into the future. Grasser asked if we would base it on actual data that we are gathering today. Kouba responded we wouldn't, it is based off of 2020 counts. Grasser said that that is right, it is based off of the last Long Range Transportation Plan isn't it. Kouba said that they have said that they are working off the current Long Range Transportation Plan data as well, so they don't have it available just yet, but they are working on it currently, but with this you can see currently where trips are beginning and ending, so like the origin destination data they have for Fargo, that is something they would be able to do here as well.

Grasser asked what the cost would be to go with Urban SDK. Halford responded that the cost is \$24,500.00, is what she got Micah to go down to. Grasser asked if that was for a year. Halford responded it was for a year. She explained that originally the cost was \$41,000.00, then he said he would honor what they charged FM-Cog, which was \$32,500.00, and then after more negotiating he agreed to \$24,500.00. She stated that this would be a year-by-year contract, so of all years to try something like this out, this is the year as we are obviously in a position to be able to afford it. She added that we can't afford to go with StreetLight, maybe this year we could but going forward the cost would be unaffordable for us, and this seems like a good option for us, so she thinks we should try it and if we like it we can work it into the budget going forward, if we don't we don't have to renew the contract. She said that just looking at how it can streamline things, and we are all kind of working together, it would help us alleviate staff time because that is where we are hurting the most right now.

Powers asked when MPO staff would want to start this. Halford responded that we aren't asking for approval of this today, we can bring it back to the next meeting or the following meeting to look at contracts and what they are proposing and then get your blessing, they just want to see if you are okay with staff moving forward with this and bring back something for you to approve.

Strandell asked if this cost covers both cities and counties. Halford responded it would cover the whole MPO area, so the counties and both cities would have access to it. Grasser commented that it seems like you have done a good job of whitling down the price and fitting it into the budget and he thinks it is intriguing and worth a test run, that would be his thought. Halford agreed she has the same thought, worth a shot. Powers said, then, if we implement this next month, will we get an even bigger deduction because one-third of the year has gone by. Dickman responded that that is the good thing, the contract date starts next month so you get a

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full year. Grasser said it would be twelve months, not a calendar year. Dickman stated that their goal is obviously not to be with you for just a year, we want this to be a three to five year or ten-year partnership. He said that they haven't lost any of their other clients over the last five years, they don't plan on it, they really try to pride themselves in doing good work, they are very adamant about local communities and local politics, everybody that started the company have worked their tails off to get it where it is, and have come from either a public service background or local politics and that is where it all started. Grasser asked if was hearing that they were willing to do a five-year price freeze. Dickman responded that he did say that they would honor the same price for next year, so two years, and then it would go up to \$32,500.00.

Strandell asked if this work is stuff that you are requested to do or do you go about collecting data on everything that moves. Dickman responded that they do it based on what they are requested to do. He said he wouldn't want to be sitting in front of a Senate Hearing asking why they are collecting a bunch of people's personal data.

Halford reported that she did reach out to FM-Cog, and they are in a position to have StreetLight and Urban SDK, so that was kind of interesting because not only are they are our neighbors, with kind of a similar situation as us, although a bit larger community, so they were in a position to be able to compare both of them, and they told her that of course everyone likes StreetLight, and everyone knows that name, but they also saw a lot of pros with Urban SDK as it helped them with their performance measures and it things like that so they were able to get more out of it then they could with StreetLight, so going forward they aren't sure they are going to keep both of them or drop one of them, but they have been happy with Urban SDK since they hired them in October.

Information only.

## **DISCUSSION**

Vein asked, in the packet there is information on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Underpass and the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange, what are those part of. Halford responded that they are part of those Regional and Urban Road Applications. Vein said that these are the study documents or engineering documents for those projects. Halford responded that they are the detailed documents that we get from the City of Grand Forks. Vein said, though, that we don't necessarily take any action to approve them. Halford responded that you would approve the City of Grand Forks' request to submit those applications to the DOT. Vein stated that he is asking because Mr. Grasser and he were talking about 42<sup>nd</sup> Street having multiple options being studied, so we aren't recommending one, we are just basically forwarding the study. Grasser commented that they are making some final requests. Kouba said that she believes that one of those applications was for preliminary engineering, so you wouldn't need to have a definitive design yet. Grasser added that they have a window in which they can put in kind of a bookmark request for funding.

Halford commented that she probably should have gone over those projects a bit more. Vein said that that is fine, he has no issue with what they did, he was just wondering because if we were going to have to get into detail, he wanted to know a whole lot more.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one present for discussion.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### A) 2022/2023 Annual Work Program Project Update:

- 1) Bicycle/Pedestrian Element - Halford reported that, again, we are holding public input meetings, so now we are looking at June or July for approval of the plan, so the completion date will be updated. She said, though, that we have the final draft pretty close to being done, but it will kind of depend on how these public meetings go as to how much tweaking they will need to do.
- 2) Street/Highway Element Update – Halford reported that they are waiting for ATAC to finish up their modeling, so this is kind of moving at a very slow pace. She said that there was a discussion with East Grand Forks concerning their Industrial Park area; we really wanted to highlight it in this plan so want to make sure there is some discussion on that area.
- 3) Aerial Imagery – This was discussed previously.
- 4) Safe Streets For All (SS4A) – Halford reported that we did receive the grant, and so far it has been an interesting process because this is a joint venture with both cities and the MPO and it is a big program as well as the fact that they are kind of figuring things out as they go so as of right now she has sat in on two webinars, and that is all they are doing right now, webinars, and they made it very clear that we shouldn't move forward with any kind of work until we have signed the contract because you won't be able to go back and bill for any hours or work done prior to that, so they are saying just wait and learn with us and watch these webinars and then we will start working on the contract.
- 5) Smart Grant – Halford stated that we still have not heard the status of our application for the Smart Grant. She said that that is the one that we teamed up with Fargo/Moorhead and Upper Great Plains Institute, and it is for the I-29 Corridor.
- 6) Bridge Study Update – Halford said that she has been told that the study has been approved by both Cities and Counties to move forward and they are each putting in some money to do the study. Vein commented that we now have the funding to move forward, but nothing has been done to date. Strandell asked if they are implementing anything at this point. Halford responded that she hadn't heard. Vetter said that as far as he knows Mr. Murphy will be reaching out to all entities to open that up and get it going.

- 7) Flood Update – Powers asked if we need to have a discussion on the possibility of a flood. Vetter commented that they had an update at their council meeting last night, and they opened up the Emergency Operation Center, and everyone is starting to do their preliminary things like looking at supplies and what they might need. He said that right now the outlook is fairly favorable, and they don't think that we will need road closures at this point. Grasser added that Grand Forks is kind of at that same point. He said that they will probably issue a Declaration of Emergency with the Mayor this week or next week, primarily because that opens up the ability to access funds and things and get reimbursements potentially, so as soon as they start thinking we are going to accrue overtime we want to make that declaration. Powers stated that his concern is that sooner or later this weather is going to take a turn and he worries about it turning and turning, and in one day we are screwed. He added that there is a lot more to the south of us than here. Vein asked what the projection is right now. Grasser responded that it is all probability, they, between the second one and the third one they bumped us about 4-feet, if you look at like a 50 percentile, the higher percentile has gone up about a foot and a half to two feet; he expects something sort of similar to happen up to 4-feet, the rate of statistics works, these things tend to start out like this and as time goes in they start to flatten and some rising, so just think it about in terms that statistically the good things that could have happened didn't happen so what you've got left to work with is your pot, your taking this string now and spreading it out and so it ends up kind of flattening out, and that is all he knows about statistics, but just observing how it has been working over the years that seems to be a probability thing. Vein asked what the 50 percentile is. Grasser responded that right now he thinks it is about mid to low forty. Vetter commented it is 42. Halford said that that is what she heard as well.

Halford commented that she is glad that this was brought up. She stated that it is her understanding that in the past this has been an agenda item, is that something that you would like to have put out on the agenda. Powers responded that it wouldn't hurt because, frankly it will be over by the end of next month, it might be over by the middle of the month, let's hope anyway.

Powers said that we have all seen what can happen when it melts in two days, it comes in a hurry. He stated that people have asked some of the craziest questions like "what is going to happen to Ryan Potato? When are they going to tear it down before it burns?" He told them it isn't going to burn because it is all metal, and then they asked "what about the flood, are we going to have a flood?" He said yes, maybe. Grasser said that a flood is 28-feet, pretty sure we are going to have that. Vetter added that East Grand Forks says they won't declare an emergency until the water hits 28-feet, because that is flood stage, and then they will declare an emergency. He said that he heard that the snowpack has only three or four inches of water in it. Strandell stated that he heard four inches, he was just at that Watershed meeting before this meeting, and that was one of the things they discussed. Grasser commented that we've had some snow since that last report, so he isn't sure. He said that the snow is about average, but the moisture level is below average. He added

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that they are starting to release water from the reservoirs, so it is normal stuff that is going on, but we are going to have a fair amount of water to deal with. Powers said that on the news they were showing water being released from the reservoir for the first time in 40-years.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***STRANDELL ADJOURNED THE MARCH 15TH, 2023, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:09 P.M.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager



## Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO Transaction List by Vendor February 11 through March 10, 2023

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
<b>AFLAC.</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-564.40
<b>Alerus Financial</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,318.66
Liability Check	02/24/2023	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-447.32
Liability Check	03/03/2023	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,310.18
<b>Business Essentials</b>							
Bill	02/14/2023	Inv. #...	HDMI Cables ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-57.58
Bill Pmt -Check	02/14/2023	7370	HDMI Cables ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-57.58
Bill	03/03/2023	Inv. #...	Office Supplie...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-62.45
Bill Pmt -Check	03/03/2023	7378	Office Supplie...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-62.45
<b>Cardmember Service</b>							
Bill	02/15/2023	Acct. ...	Charges For ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-47.15
Bill Pmt -Check	02/15/2023	7373	Charges For ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-47.15
<b>City of East Grand Forks</b>							
Bill	03/09/2023	Inv. #...	2023 2nd Qu...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-2,684.30
Bill Pmt -Check	03/09/2023	7380	2023 2nd Qu...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-2,684.30
<b>East Grand Forks Water and Light</b>							
Bill Pmt -Check	02/17/2023		QuickBooks g...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	0.00
<b>HDR Engineering, Inc.</b>							
Bill	02/15/2023	Inv. #...	Work On St/H...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-8,017.98
Bill Pmt -Check	02/15/2023	7371	Work On St/H...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-8,017.98
Bill	03/09/2023	Inv. #...	Work On 205...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-3,502.40
Bill Pmt -Check	03/09/2023	7381	Work On 205...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-3,502.40
<b>Knight Printing</b>							
Bill	03/09/2023		Postage Cost...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-324.69
Bill Pmt -Check	03/09/2023	7379	Postage Cost...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-324.69
<b>Liberty Business Systems, Inc.</b>							
Bill	03/09/2023	Inv. #...	Contract Bas...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-230.72
Bill Pmt -Check	03/09/2023	7382	Contract Bas...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-230.72
<b>LSNB as Trustee for PEHP</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	PEHP		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-123.75
<b>Madison Nat'l Life</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	7374		104 · Checking	X	215 · Disability...	-61.87
<b>MetLife</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	7369	5397942	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-252.39
<b>Mike's</b>							
Bill	02/15/2023		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-110.00
Bill Pmt -Check	02/15/2023	7372	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-110.00
<b>Minnesota Department of Revenue</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-488.00
Liability Check	02/24/2023	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-102.00
Liability Check	03/03/2023	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-486.00
<b>Minnesota Life Insurance Company</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	7376		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-105.95
<b>Nationwide Retirement Solutions</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-538.36
Liability Check	03/03/2023	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-538.36
<b>NDPERS</b>							
Liability Check	02/17/2023	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,194.84
Liability Check	03/08/2023	NDPE...		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-4,329.78
<b>QuickBooks Payroll Service</b>							
Liability Check	02/16/2023		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-6,435.05
Liability Check	02/22/2023		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-1,357.39
Liability Check	03/02/2023		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-6,424.24
<b>Workforce Safety and Insurance</b>							
Bill	02/17/2023	Inv. #...	Premium Cha...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-250.00
Bill Pmt -Check	02/17/2023	7375	Premium Cha...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-250.00