

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Wednesday, August 16, 2023 - 12:00 Noon
East Grand Forks Training Conference Room/Zoom Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

Warren Strandell, Chairperson, called the August 16th, 2023, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:05 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, Tricia Lunski, and Mark Rustad.

Absent: Ken Vein.

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 JULY 19TH, 2023 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE THE JULY 19TH, 2023, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF JULY 15TH, TO AUGUST 11TH, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS

MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY LUNSKI, TO APPROVE THE JULY 15TH, TO AUGUST 11TH, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ACTION ITEMS:

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FINAL DRAFT URBAN AREA BOUNDARY AND MPO STUDY AREA

Kouba reported that we finally got some feedback from the NDDOT and there aren't any changes from what she presented previously.

Kouba referred to the proposed Urban Area Boundary and MPO Study Area Map and stated that these would be our new boundaries. She pointed out that the purple area is what we are saying will be our adjusted urban area, and the orange boundary will be the new MPO boundary.

Kouba stated that the only change to the MPO Boundary from what we are using today is that we pulled out the corner just west of the Interchange, that is not part of the Grand Forks city limits. She added that with the airport included in the census urban area, our adjusted urban area had to come out a little bit beyond the previous road, a new road was built to bypass that area, so we are just kind of inside that new road. She said that those are the only two MPO Boundary changes.

Kouba commented that the changes made to the Urban Boundary include the addition of the airport and the area to the south of 62nd, the Grand Valley Development, where we know construction will start soon, and in East Grand Forks, as she noted last month, we needed to make sure we included the northern part of Minnesota 220 into the urban area.

Kouba said that staff is looking for approval of these new boundaries, the MPO Study Area and the Urban Boundary Area.

Strandell asked where the Merrifield Road is located on the map. Kouba pointed out where the Merrifield Road is located. She stated that it isn't technically part of our Urban Area, but it is part of our MPO Study Area. Strandell asked if that continued on the Minnesota side. Kouba responded that it was included in the MPO Study Area on the Minnesota side as well.

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY RUSTAD, TO APPROVE THE FINAL DRAFT URBAN AREA BOUNDARY AND THE MPO STUDY AREA, AS PRESENTED.

Lunski asked if the soybean processing plant to the north is included in the MPO Study Area. Kouba referred to the map and asked if it is located south of the diversion or north of the diversion. Grasser responded that it is north of the diversion. Kouba said that it is included. She explained that the MPO Study Area includes the far north interchange at I-29, and about a mile north of the sanitary ponds. Lunski asked if part of the area up there is where the landfill is. Kouba responded that that is the newest area. Lunski asked if that area shouldn't be shown in purple too. Kouba responded that it isn't considered urban, but it is within our MPO boundaries. Grasser said, then, that the map doesn't necessarily show city limits. Kouba stated that the map is more focused on the urban area. Grasser said that if it was city limits, he thinks it would be included. Lunski stated that the urban area isn't city limits. Kouba responded it isn't necessarily city limits. She said that they can include city limits, but now you are getting into a lot of area

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that doesn't have any housing or a lot of jobs or things that the census would necessarily consider urbanized.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FY2023-2026 T.I.P. AMENDMENT #6

Kouba reported that after we got our information last month for an amendment, we received more information for another amendment to the 2023-2026 T.I.P.

Kouba explained that we had one project that was programmed in 2024 that was moved to 2023. She said that the project is a railroad project at a crossing at university, near the Red Pepper. She added that would normally just be an administrative modification, but we also added another railroad crossing project at 6th Avenue North, which is also close to the University, that entails some rehabbing to the crossing and are using federal funding.

Kouba stated that this will hopefully be the last time we have to amend the 2023-2024 T.I.P.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE FY2023-2026 T.I.P. AMENDMENT #6, AS PRESENTED.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FY2024-2027 T.I.P.

Kouba reported that this is our new T.I.P. She stated that this will be our full document, so it includes all of the written information as well as all the projects from 2024 to 2027.

Kouba said that she brought forward the projects previously, and a public hearing was held at our Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week and there was no one present from the public at the meeting and no verbal comments were submitted. She stated that they did advertise on Facebook and did get a few interesting comments, but nothing that would require any changes be made to the document, so staff is looking for approval of the FY2024-2027 T.I.P. She added that the Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval as well.

MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE THE FY2024-2027 T.I.P., AS PRESENTED.

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

Voting Nay: *None.*

Abstain: *None.*

Absent: *Vein.*

MATTER OF PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF 2024-2025 UPWP

Halford reported that we do currently have an approved work program for 2023-2024, but we have talked in the past about doing our work program more like how we do our T.I.P., so there is always a year in front of us, which helps not only MPO staff but our partners as well to be able to plan as well because a lot of the time we look to our partners for input on these studies, and it takes up staff time, so this would be better for us as well as our partners.

Halford stated that we are looking at a 2024-2025 work program, we've talked with our Technical Advisory Committee and this board before in the past about what they are looking for in the coming years for studies, and also what the MPO has planned as well.

Halford said that she just wants to point out that this is a very draft draft, and we will hopefully have a more complete draft next month or the following month, it isn't completely updated, but she just wanted to bring the draft financials forward for your review and input.

Halford referred to the document, Tables 10 through 13, and stated that she hasn't touched them yet, they haven't been updated because when we start going through the narrative and updating and changing it around it will affect these tables, so there isn't any reason to mess with them until this becomes a little bit more finalized.

Halford referred to Table 14, FY2024, as we are finishing up the Street and Highway Plan, it will be completed in January 2024, we will start the cycle over again, so the five year cycle will start with the ITS Architecture update in 2024, and we are also looking at probably a really quick discussion on the future bridge, whether it is an intracity or Merrifield, wherever that is, we have been invited to those conversations so she wanted to make sure staff time is dedicated to that as well as to Safe Streets For All, Grand Valley on the Grand Forks side, and Highway 2 Access Points Study on the East Grand Forks side, so this is all being planned for, and hopefully we have another planner on board, so this is not only subject to change, but in September we are supposed to be having our MPO Director's meeting on the North Dakota side and we will be talking about our funding formula, and how that will all shake out, so that might play a role with this as well as what we do with another planner on board, so this is a plan hoping for the best, but it might change.

Halford referred to Table 15, FY2025, and said that we will be looking at our Land Use Plans, they both need to be updated, and the Safe Streets For All will be going into its second year, as well as a Micro-Transit Study and One-Way Pairs in the Downtown.

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Halford stated that is kind of in a nutshell what we are looking at for the next two years. She said that she was able to make it all work, as of now, but again it may change a little bit once we know more about funding and whether we have another planner on board or not. Halford said that once the budget is more complete, we will then go into the meat of the document and give more detail on all those projects, and where we are looking at putting funding.

Grasser asked if the September MPO Director's meeting is where they are going to start reflecting more detail on what might happen with Minot becoming an MPO and Fargo becoming a TMA, when are you going to see all the details of what all that means and when does that all become implemented. Halford responded that usually at those director's meetings they give an update of where we are at on our funding, as well as we talk about funding formulas, so she is hoping we should have more answers then. She said that she really wanted to have this turned in, especially on the Minnesota side because they wanted an approved work program in September, which guarantees our funding, but since they aren't are lead agency and we don't get a ton of money from that side, there is a chance you might not see this until we know more on the North Dakota side, so October. Grasser said, then, it is still influx but getting close. Halford agreed that was correct. She added that it sounded like Minot was going to be housed in their Planning Department, but they are still working on that. She said that it is a process determining who will be the Director, what does your board makeup look like, it is a lot of moving local pieces, but it sounds like they are having bi-weekly or weekly meetings, so they are really trying to get it all buttoned up. She added that they are going to be at the meeting, so she is sure we will hear more.

Halford commented that we technically don't need approval on this but she just wanted to get a motion on it so she knows that it is going in the right direction.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO GRANT PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT FY2024-2025 UPWP, SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL CHANGES/UPDATES, AS NEEDED.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Vein.

NON-ACTION ITEMS:

OTHER BUSINESS

A) 2022/2023 Annual Work Program Project Update:

- 1) Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update – Halford stated we did get signed resolutions from both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, so we are just getting all the edible data and

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documents from them and then we can release their final check, so we are almost touching the finish line.

- 2) Street and Highway Plan – Kouba stated that we had discussions at our Technical Advisory Committee meeting about those Universe of Projects, and explaining the approach we are going to be taking when looking at operations maintenance type projects, of them kind of being lumped into the various stratifications so that we can kind of cut down that list, our list has always been obscenely large, and very specific for mills and overlays and things of that nature on specific roads, and she knows that that has been a point of contention for our partners and she completely agrees with them. She stated that the engineers know when you need to do mills and overlays on which roads, and which roads are priorities, and it shouldn't be dictated which roads are going to be done and when in our plans, so setting aside funding and saying here are the pots of money you think you will need for those types of projects on a yearly basis, and combining them all into short-term, mid-term, and long-term time bands for our plan we feel will make it a lot easier to get the projects done that need to get done and make it so it still meets the fiscal constraint requirement, and the Technical Advisory Committee was very receptive to that so they are just working on those definite, bigger projects that need to get done, as well as illustrative projects and mega projects like building a bridge and other types of interchanges or grade separations and things of that nature so that it is in our plan and available should funding become available.

Kouba stated that they brought this forward to the Technical Advisory Committee, and they are looking at working with them and doing some individual sessions with each of the engineering departments to ensure that we get this all figured out and determine what they are looking at for future projects into 2050.

Halford said that one other point on the mills and overlays, and having those called out in the plan, before we would have to do amendments to the plan, but not having them called out in detail like that doesn't hold up the projects when you pull up a project so you won't have to do amendments anymore, so just having it as an mill and overlay pot of money saying you need to do work to it helps everyone.

- 3) Aerial Imagery – Kouba reported that the Aerial Photo Imagery is in and she has been passing it out to everybody, so it is accessible and available on various platforms.
- 4) Safe Streets For All – Halford stated that we are working on the MOU with our partners and getting the RFP drafted and we will be starting that this year.

B) MPO Updates:

- 1) Planner/Senior Planner Position Update – Halford reported that, as she mentioned before, we offered the position to someone who turned it down, and she offered the position to another person this morning, but they haven't responded back yet, so fingers crossed they accept the position.

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- 2) Monthly Approved/Signed List Of Items – Halford reported that this is the monthly list of financial items signed and approved by the Executive Director.

C) Agency Updates:

- 1) Hawk Pedestrian Signal – Larson reported that one transportation thing on the East Grand Forks side south end is that they are putting in a new Hawk Pedestrian Signal so if anyone is interested in seeing how that works at an existing intersection rather than mid-block, kind of a nice case study to see how that works, especially as school is getting started. Halford asked where it is located. Larson responded that it is at the intersection of 13th and Bygland, at the entrance to South Pointe Elementary School. He added that you will see some signals go up there soon and then there will be some communication pushed out on how to properly use that intersection. Strandell asked if the signal is going to be programmed so it will run just during the school day. Larson responded that they are only activated when somebody pushes the button, otherwise they will not stop traffic from its normal pattern, but if a young person wants to cross Bygland they will push the button, wait patiently, and then they will be able to safely cross Bygland. He added that he has a few little kids that cross there every morning on their bikes, so he is excited to see it in place.
- 2) 47th Avenue Interchange – Grasser reported that the Grand Forks Committee of the Whole (COW) approved the new interchange at 47th Avenue. He said that the City Council hasn't approved it yet, but we anticipate they will do so at their meeting next Monday. Strandell asked what that approval means. Grasser responded that they are going through the environmental review and the step they are on now is basically, the City as the local sponsor, needs to select an alternative, so the one that they recommended, and that the COW approved was to have the interchange on 47th Avenue, because the was an optional alternative that shifted south to give a little more space. He said that it appears the DOT has worked out, unofficially it seems like they are going to add a second or third lane onto the interstate, a weaving lane which actually mitigates the concern. He stated that he is being careful on his comments because Federal Highway has been pretty mum on it but reading between the lines it looks like it will be acceptable to them so we will be on alignment. He added that they also had to choose how far away our first connecting intersection would be, basically a full intersection, the preferred alternative of the DOT is a half mile, which would put it all the way over on 34th Street and all the way over on 38th Street, and that doesn't work internally and they proved with traffic simulations that it doesn't work, so they are going with a minimum at a quarter of a mile which means at about 38th Street, and he thinks with the exception of maybe one or two, that will be farthest of any in the State of North Dakota. He shared that it was kind of a frustrating discussion at first with the DOT, with them saying "oh no, we've got to have it here we can't even live with minimum", and then we said "you don't even have anybody in the state with this, the minimum is farther than anybody else", so there was some internal discussion with Bismarck, but in any event they selected the quarter mile spacing and the alignment on 47th, after that it will go back to the DOT and Federal

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Highway for review and then they will do what they call an Interstate Justification Report, and that is really when Federal Highway will then essentially sign off on the project, which means that they will start programming the funding, but it doesn't appear there is money for it for quite a while, so we are talking about 2029ish. He said that they have other interchanges in the queue ahead of us.

Strandell asked if that third lane will be strictly for north bound traffic or south bound traffic. Grasser responded it will be both north and south bound traffic, it is kind of connecting 32nd and 47th so that it will eliminate some of the weaving movements that you otherwise have when you bring everyone into the lane and then take them back out, it kind of allows that traffic that might otherwise jump off at the next interchange to just stay in their lane, so it is an operational improvement.

Information only.

ADJOURNMENT

STRANDELL ADJOURNED THE AUGUST 16 19TH, 2023, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:36 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO
Transaction List by Vendor
 July 15 through August 11, 2023

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
AFLAC.							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-564.40
Alerus Financial							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,290.08
Liability Check	08/04/2023	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,304.36
Grant and Contract Accounting							
Bill	07/26/2023	Inv. #...	Work On Trav...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-8,987.22
Bill Pmt -Check	07/26/2023	7453	Work On Trav...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-8,987.22
Bill	07/26/2023	Inv. #...	Work On Traf...	206 · Accounts Pay...		550 · Corridor ...	-19,809.90
Bill Pmt -Check	07/26/2023	7454	Work On Traf...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-19,809.90
HDR Engineering, Inc.							
Bill	07/26/2023	Inv. #...	Work On ST/...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-8,073.98
Bill Pmt -Check	07/26/2023	7452	Work On ST/...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-8,073.98
Bill	07/26/2023	Inv. #...	Work On St/H...	206 · Accounts Pay...		545 · Transpor...	-23,876.99
Bill Pmt -Check	07/26/2023	7455	Work On St/H...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-23,876.99
JP MORGAN CHASE							
Bill	07/31/2023	04002...	Work On Gra...	206 · Accounts Pay...		575 · GIS Dev...	-28,304.69
Bill Pmt -Check	07/31/2023	7456	Work On Gra...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-28,304.69
LSNB as Trustee for PEHP							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	PEHP		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-123.75
Madison Nat'l Life							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	7448		104 · Checking	X	215 · Disability...	-61.88
MetLife							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	7449	5397942	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-252.42
Mike's							
Bill	07/19/2023		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-122.00
Bill Pmt -Check	07/19/2023	7451	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-122.00
Minnesota Department of Revenue							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-483.00
Liability Check	08/04/2023	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-485.00
Minnesota Life Insurance Company							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	7450		104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-179.96
Nationwide Retirement Solutions							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-538.36
Liability Check	08/04/2023	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-538.36
NDPERS							
Liability Check	07/21/2023	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,194.84
QuickBooks Payroll Service							
Liability Check	07/20/2023		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-6,261.48
Liability Check	08/03/2023		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-6,296.39