

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, October 18, 2023 - 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks Campbell Library/Zoom Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Warren Strandell, Chairperson, called the October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:00 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

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

Absent: Al Grasser, Brian Larson, and Mark Rustad.

Guest(s) Present: Carter Hunter, Grand Forks Engineering.

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

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Vetter declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY LUNSKI, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2023, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY VETTERS, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 BILLS/CHECKS, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 LIST OF ITEMS SIGNED AND APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Halford reported that this is just an item to make sure that we are doing what we need to do to ensure that all financial/business transactions are reviewed and approved.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, TO OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 LIST OF ITEMS SIGNED AND APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2024-2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM**

Halford reported that you have seen this a couple of times, again just highlighting that we are moving towards more of a revolving two-year work program so not only for MPO staff but for our partners, especially city staff that we work with, so there is always two years in front of us so they know what is coming down the pipeline so they can plan for it as well because when we do these partnerships with plans they also take staff time on both sides, so this is just moving forward. She said that even though we currently have a 2023-2024 Work Program approved, this one will be a 2024-2025 Work Program, and there are just a few updates. She stated that now that we have Tyler on board, so there were a couple of projects that we wanted to start this year or to push into next year, so, again, it is nice that we are looking at that two-year horizon so that we can make those changes.

Halford stated that they did receive a few comments from our Technical Advisory Committee members at their meeting last week, as well as she is still working with our DOT partners on funding numbers, so that is why there are some pages highlighted in yellow, they are not filled out until we get those numbers. She said, then, that there will still be a few edits made to the document before we submit it to our DOT partners for approval.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY LUNSKI, TO APPROVE THE 2024-2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM, SUBJECT TO ANY NECESSARY EDITS.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Powers, Vein, Lunski, and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Grasser, Larson, and Rustad.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2024-2027 T.I.P. AMENDMENTS**

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Kouba reported that we did get our 2024-2027 T.I.P. approved by NDDOT, and they are now requesting that some amendments be made to it. She referred to the project list and stated that we didn't have any amendments that were made in the Year 2024 from previous amendments to the 2023 to 2026 T.I.P. have been included into this amendment as well, they aren't being amended, but this T.I.P. has been updated to include those amendments.

Kouba stated that the first amendment is in 2025; basically, they are changing the year from 2024 to 2025 for the I-29 project between 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Interchange and the U.S.#81 or North Washington Interchange, so that is just a change in the year. She said that the other amendment; previously we had it as a construction for the new interchange south of Grand Forks at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, but they have changed it to a right-of-way purchase for a new interchange and they changed the amount that will be spent on this phase of the project, otherwise they are moving forward towards construction of that project.

Kouba commented that we finally have lump sums for basically preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utilities for various projects around the MPO area for the years 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027, before that we showed zero funding in the main T.I.P., so we are updating that as well, and are looking for approval of these amendments, and the Technical Advisory Committee did recommend approval.

Vein said he has a question on the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange project; originally that was like a \$57,000,000 project for 2026 and now it is just a \$3,500,000 project, what is the timing for the interchange, do we wait a year, or what is the projected time frame time. Kouba responded that right now they are currently working on the environmental document, and they can't get that document approved until they show the next phase in the T.I.P., which would be the right-of-way acquisition. She said that once they have that in place, then they will be looking at a more definite timeframe for the actual construction, but we will see various phases getting us to the construction phase before that happens. Vein stated, then, that the original one here was quite large at the \$57,000,000, was that just a placeholder or is that how you would define that versus reality. Kouba responded that she put it in as a placeholder for the simple reason that we were getting different aspects of what that project would be, whether it would be the full construction or the various phases, and now we have a more definitive idea of how the NDDOT is going to put this project forward, and we now have the first phase determined, so hopefully we will be amending or for the 2025-2028 T.I.P. we will be having a lot more inclusions of the various phases of the project. Vein asked, again if we have an idea, and he understands all of that other stuff is going to happen, when we would actually be doing construction. Kouba responded that at this time she has not heard a definitive date for construction. Hunter asked if they were referring to the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange. Kouba responded they were. Hunter stated that the earliest he heard was 2030 for construction of the interchange.

***MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE 2024-2027 T.I.P. AMENDMENTS, AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Powers, Vein, Lunski, and Vetter.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

*Abstain: None.*  
*Absent: Grasser, Larson, and Rustad.*

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF ITS REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE SCOPE OF WORK**

Kouba reported that basically this is for 2024 that this project will happen. She said that this also starts the next cycle of our Metropolitan Transportation Plan update for 2055.

Kouba stated that this starts the process by figuring out the technical aspect of technology interacting with transportation on various levels. She said that this is something we have done for several years, and we do have the scope of work attached to everything, so we are looking for approval of that scope of work.

***MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY LUNSKI, TO APPROVE THE ITS REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE SCOPE OF WORK, AS PRESENTED.***

*Voting Aye: Strandell, Powers, Vein, Lunski, and Vetter.*  
*Voting Nay: None.*  
*Abstain: None.*  
*Absent: Grasser, Larson, and Rustad.*

**NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**MATTER OF STREET AND HIGHWAY UPDATE**

Kouba reported that this is just going over where we are at with this update. She pointed out that the schedule for our adoption process for this plan was included in the packet, but added that there are still a few moving parts, and there are some questions on some of the various projects as well, that we are still working on and making sure that we have a complete draft out to the public before it goes before the Grand Forks Planning and Zoning on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Kouba stated that they just wanted to give you an idea of what the document entails, which is what she will be presenting today.

Kouba commented that basically they are looking at the contents of the Street and Highway Plan, it is going to involve how we make sure we have our goals, objectives, performance measures, and details on how we engaged and make sure we got input from the public as well as from leadership and our partners.

Kouba stated that we also have a community profile, and existing transportation system, and we are looking at future trends and needs, as well as we did go to the public with strategies of how we want to look at projects into the future, and she will go over that briefly, it basically tells how, why, and when we do all of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan update process. She said that we have to follow federal planning factors, we have to make sure that these planning factors are upheld in any of our goals and objectives going forward. She stated that we had our last public

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meeting in September and the final comments were due October 13<sup>th</sup>, so we are quickly pulling all that information together to put it into the final document. Lunski asked how many people attended that meeting. Kouba responded that actually in person there were sixteen people, but she hasn't gotten a final tally of how many people went online to do the online version of that open house. She added that there were a few more people that looked at things, but didn't sign in. Lunski asked how you feel about that; it is kind of depressing when sixteen people show up, is there, are you thinking about better ways to engage people. Kouba responded that they are always trying to re-evaluate and come up with ways to be able to engage more of the public, and we have been seeing more and more activity, and they will continue to work on that as well as we want to see even more people attend our open houses, but we also understand that there isn't just an open house we want to be able to provide additional opportunities like having it on-line, and being able to walk through it as well, that is the reason why when she says we had sixteen people show up she isn't sure how many did it on-line, so we will continue to encourage people to do it on-line as well. Halford stated that she was hoping for a better turnout, us being at the moving theater and being able to grab that traffic, but there wasn't much traffic that night, it was really slow so that was kind of disheartening, and this day and age a lot of people aren't excited about transportation and come out for an event like this, so our kind of piggybacking on events or being at places where we think there will be more people, is one of the ways we have been thinking we could reach more people.

Manske commented that part of his new duties will be working on the Public Participation Plan that the MPO is required to have, and while he is still reading through the general document, he hopes to start doing a little bit more with the on-line engagement portion. He said that the MPO has created new social media platform accounts, including Instagram, that we didn't have before to give us new ways to reach different demographics and people, and just to try to find new creative ways to reach people because, as Stephanie said, it is tough to get people excited about transit planning, but hopefully we can find and identify some champions that will share on our behalf and help motivate people in the future, so that is his plan going forward, to try to make people a little bit more excited about it.

Lunski suggested that we look at maybe being available at events such as the opening of Taylor Swift's movie where there might be a lot of people, or at the Farmer's Market, or other events like those. Manske responded that that is something they talked about as well.

Vein said that it is kind of interesting because you do get, sometimes just special interest groups that maybe do follow that, but how do we capture the true feelings of the community, and unless you do it through a scientific type of survey, which is probably what he would see how we do it because otherwise, and that would have a lower margin of error versus any other way, so it is kind of interesting that we really want citizens input but the question is how credible is it compared to what the community really wants to see. He stated that you see a little bit of that when you are doing things like when we were looking at a 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South bridge, and what is going to happen on Belmont and then you get a bunch of special groups, and again with special interests involved with just that versus getting the true input from the community.

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Manske commented that another thing to think about too is equitable access to the survey too, when we have in-person meetings in different parts of the city it helps us gain access to people who might not have access to the internet, or other means of taking the survey too, so unfortunately it is going to be a combination of a whole bunch of different kinds of ways to reach people, so moving forward we are going to have to use a bunch of different approaches, but he agrees with Mr. Vein, that if we want good statistics we might have to do different things. He added that we have new social media platforms and social listening tools that we have been using since he started too that help us identify a little bit more of the demographic information, people who look at our stuff online so we can kind of pinpoint where about they are from, so we can make a little bit more informed decisions, and he hopes to bring that to you at some point.

Vein stated that he does have a list of some other questions that probably go with this; in part because of the questions that Tricia and himself got from their City Council members, in many cases challenging the information that is being presented and the credibility of what we can do to try to devise some way to kind of counter that, or to be able to understand that a little bit more. He said that it seems like in some cases they are searching, some are searching for reasons to not give it credibility, and so how can we assure that that credibility exists. He stated that the question that was asked at their last council meeting, for instance, was, how do the actual counts compare to what was projected twenty years ago, and the only thing he can say for sure is they are wrong, because you can't project and have it accurate twenty years ahead of the time, but that to him is kind of a formation of somebody is trying to question the validity of what you are doing with every one of these traffic counts, and that brings him up to one of the other questions and that is what is the actual computer model or software that does these projections and do they have credibility because it seems like, and he will just say some who don't like it aren't going to trust it no matter what the information says, but are the computer models we use, that he would still project to be state of the art computer models, that give us that best proximation of the future that we can get, but people don't want to believe that. Halford said that that is too much of a moving target, that is why we update it every five years, we do the best we can to see where we are projecting, we are going towards, and that is all you can do. She stated that when we compare it to what was done twenty years ago, if you ask them if we knew there would be a pandemic and how that would change transportation, we couldn't have predicted that, and then there is also projects get moved around to different years, things get moved forward, so when we do the modeling to the future, the projects that were put into play then might not be the same as what was done over the years, so it is a little bit of a moving target and we do the best we can with the information we have then to move towards that target and then re-evaluate in five years and kind of reassess what is going on then, but to predict 100% twenty years ago to what is now you would need a crystal ball. Vein agreed but added that he thinks we still have to make it very clear that this is a very valuable tool, and based on what we know today it is accurate, but the issue is is that tomorrow isn't going to be what it is today so it is going to have some change to it but it has legitimacy, it is used across the county, it doesn't make any difference what state it is being used for, he just wishes that people would have more faith in what we have in here. Halford agreed and said that you can't look at this as it is going to be exactly right to what we predicted back before that, you are going to get that answer you are looking for which is, oh this is not right, but that isn't the way to look at it.

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Powers asked if we should look at updating it sooner than five years, five years is a long time. Halford responded that there are a lot of things that we are updating, and some people might think that might be too often. Powers said that he can see that as a criticism for some that our material and data is old, it is outdated, but could you do it in three. Halford responded that every five years we do an update, and we begin with the item Teri just discussed before, the ITS Regional Architecture Plan, and that is about a year process, then we update the Land Use Plans and they are about a two year process and it helps what our transportation plan looks like, and it kind of feeds that, so there is like this big cycle and you would shorten everything and everything kind of feeds each other, so it would be kind of hard to do the update sooner than five years. She added that there are other plans and studies that we can do on the side to help with things like that, and some of the things with our ever-changing development is the Aerial Imagery, we have been doing that more often than we did in the past to help with that information.

Vein commented that it would seem that in five years if we look at our growth, it really doesn't change a lot in five years, so three years it would probably even be less, but also you get the new census every ten years, and so you do it mid-term and then the next census data would be available, in a way when you try to have that information as a part of the process, so it seems to make sense, if they don't want to believe the figured facts, they aren't going to believe no matter what, probably, and the question, again, that was brought up at the last meeting was about the north end bridge. He said that he does know that we studied a north end bridge before, we studied the south end bridge, and sometimes it feels like they are just trying to make it more confusing as you try to address this, so that was one of the questions that was brought up, and then the third one is, you and I have talked about, is really having to do with the different presentations we make to different bodies of the same information, and then they start questioning if you aren't consistent then who are you not giving all the information to. Halford responded that it is correct that we gave different presentations to the Technical Advisory Committee and the City Council, and she should probably clarify why that was for the rest of the board as well, so we are all on the same page. She explained that they used the Technical Advisory Committee as the Steering Committee for the Street and Highway Plan update because a lot of those members would be sitting on the committee, so instead of giving them two meetings and kind of being respectful of their time, we decided to just lump it all into that one meeting, but in hindsight that probably wasn't a good idea because it looks like we are giving information just to the Technical Advisory Committee and not to any other entity, so in the future we will do separate meetings so there is a separate Steering Committee. Vein said, then that the information will then be pretty much consistent. Halford responded it will, moving forward, but they were just trying to be respectful to those on the committee. Kouba stated that she would make one caveat that we are expecting our Technical Advisory Committee to give a more technical aspect of things, that is the whole point of the Technical Advisory Committee. Vein said, though, that that doesn't mean you won't get challenged.

Kouba continued with the presentation, pointing out that we have done our community profile as far as population growth and commute modes, and we looked at our existing transportation system which includes traffic operations, safety, travel reliability, asset condition, freight system, bicycle and pedestrian system, transit system, existing regional connections, and environmental resources, so they tried



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to put a multi-modal, in this particular one they tried to put a more multi-modal view of the existing conditions as well as into the future, but a metropolitan transportation plan is a multi-modal plan, and moving forward that has always been the debate, our MPO has always divided that into the three elements, the bike/pedestrian, transit system and the street and highway, so that becomes a lot more confusing, if we did all of it at once, would that reduce the time, she doesn't think so, but it would make the process longer, and going into the future that is something we need to be discussing in our review process.

Kouba stated that they also looked at those future trends, households, and jobs, as one of the biggest aspects of putting it into our traffic demand model, is whether the predictions of housing growth and job growth, which we always did based on population, and that aspect is not perfect, but it gets us a pretty good idea. Vein said, when Fuefung, when it was going to come in, they would have changed, and increased jobs, when that does come in, maybe Northern Plains Nitrogen, all of them are going to impact the transportation system in the northwest corner, right, but you said a lot of this is based on household information. Kouba responded it is based on household and job information, so we base it on population and then we use what land uses we have and in the land use plan it shows where the jobs are, where we think the jobs are going to be going as well as where the households are going to be going and spread that population growth throughout, depending upon jobs or households, so when we are looking at how many jobs we are going to get we are looking at how many people and then how many people can be working in an area. Vein said, though, that you have the trucking that is going to be going in and out and all the other things such as that businesses are more efficient, so you have less jobs necessary, but you still have a lot of transportation. Kouba responded that that is true but added that that is another aspect of when we are looking at the type of job, if we are looking at an industrial job, that is one of the reasons why we will break down, instead of just doing a retail and non-retail, in our model we changed it to a little more defined work type environments, that helps them place those jobs more accurately and to predict that type of transportation because you will have a different type of transportation for retail as opposed to industrial.

Kouba reported that they broke down our types of projects into maintenance and state of good repair. She said that this plan will end up being basically that type of plan where we are just trying to keep our state of good repair throughout the whole system, but we also want to make sure we are looking at safety and operations, so if we are expanding into new areas, will the existing roads be able to withstand or accommodate that traffic. She stated that as you know we have been having a bit of a boom in crossings, especially with the railroad upgrade and the new interchange, and then as other areas grow, whether it is industrial areas or in new housing areas, those gravel roads need to be paved.

Kouba commented that one of the biggest things we looked at, and they talked with locals as well as state and federal partners, mostly state partners, is what we can assume for revenues into the future. She said that in our street and highway plan we always divide it into short, mid, and long-term projects, the short term always start after our most current T.I.P. year, which would be after our current T.I.P. year is 2024 to 2027, so the short term starts in 2028. She stated that we can hopefully estimate as to the amount of funding we can put into it, especially the long-term, but we know that the further out we go the less stable that funding is. She added that they also



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looked into the fiscally constrained plan as we look at the maintenance projects that are out there and are also making sure that we are maintaining our operations and maintenance projects and the costs.

Kouba stated that the state of good repair projects will happen before expansion projects or illustrative projects.

Kouba said that some members of the Technical Advisory Committee brought forward some things that were not quite right or needed to be added or eliminated in these project lists, so we are still working on those. She added that they are divided into various funding programs for each side of the river. She asked that if anyone has any questions on the project lists or know of any changes that should be made to these lists, please let her know as soon as possible. She stated that she hasn't heard back from MnDOT as to whether or not there are any mid-term projects that we don't have listed.

Kouba stated that we have a thorough plan, and they also want to make sure that we are doing out environmental justice and looking at those populations. She said that to meet the federal standard for this we have to have carbon footprint and greenhouse gasses and things of that nature included, and we also need to make sure we are in federal compliance. She pointed out that there is a list of the federal metropolitan planning factors that we have to look through and make sure we are meeting as many of those as possible.

Kouba commented that we are looking into holding a management meeting with MnDOT to give a presentation of the plan. She said that we do have a management meeting scheduled with the NDDOT already.

Information only.

**MATTER OF GRAND VALLEY RFP DISCUSSION**

Halford asked that Tyler Manske, new MPO Planner, give a little introduction of himself for those MPO Executive Policy Board members that weren't at the last meeting.

Manske gave a little background on himself.

Manske stated that today he is going to talk a little bit about the Grand Valley RFP. He said that they put a request for proposals before the Technical Advisory Committee for the Grand Valley, for what we are calling a pedestrian crossing. He said that one of the things that came out of it was that the City initially requested a pedestrian underpass, and MPO staff and the Technical Advisory Committee all felt that opening the study up to any type of crossing would be a good idea, so the study area was originally going to be 62<sup>nd</sup>, furthestmost south on our city border, down to the Merrifield area and then boxed in by Columbia and Belmont.

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Manske said that they are looking to put in a pedestrian underpass, one of the things that came out of the Technical Advisory Committee meeting was that they thought we should extend our border to 47<sup>th</sup> on the north side, so just include a little bit more area on the northern most border of the study area. He said that our budget should be okay with that if we do decide to go with that. He added that there are a few other things that you will find in our packets that have been changed, and he just wanted to let you know that as it is a draft it is kind of working document, but there are a few dates that were put in as placeholder dates and those dates aren't necessarily the dates we will have in the final document, we will most likely change some of those as a lot of them line up pretty closely with the Safe Street For All, so don't be too concerned about that, we aren't going to have all these studies finishing up around the same time, we will change those later.

Manske said that there are some public input meeting dates, and he initially put like six of them in there and that is too many so we narrowed them down to three, and there are some inconsistencies in how he typed that out, but we discussed it and got those changed so in the final document that will be corrected.

Manske stated that he just wanted to get any thoughts that you may have on what type of underpass, or area, or any thoughts you might have about the study as it moves forward and we put the request together.

Lunski asked where exactly will the underpass be located. Manske responded that that is what the study is going to determine. He said that he should have been a little bit more clear; so the study is to find out where the best location for a crossing will be, so we will hopefully hire a consultant that will help us figure that out. Halford added that we opened it up to any kind of crossing; originally it was looking at an underpass, but as we learned from Discovery it is a lot harder to go back and put in a pedestrian underpass or something of that size when things are developed so now we are looking at, as things are moving south, what should we be planning for. Manske stated that especially if we open the study area up to 47<sup>th</sup>, then an underpass might not be as feasible since a lot of that is built out already, as an underpass would be a lot more realistic in a newer area such as somewhere south of 62<sup>nd</sup>.

Vein said that he would add that when they reconstructed South Washington Street, somewhere between 17<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup>, they did put those underpasses in existing areas, and Al Grasser came up with the idea where they basically made the top of the underpass also the surface for driving so that you didn't have such a deep crossing, and he thinks that worked really well for some those types of underpasses. He added that obviously the pedestrian safety getting underneath it and sight distance is all back into play whenever you do something like that. Manske stated that he thinks that is specifically mentioned in our new Bike and Ped plan too, how they have to be constructed, he thinks that is the standard in which if there was to be one constructed, they would have to follow that standard.

Lunski asked why the crosswalks at intersections aren't painted anymore, at least in Grand Forks, is there a reason that we have abandoned that. Halford responded that that would be a street department question. She said, however, that she hasn't ever heard why that is the case.

Powers asked what the question was. Lunski responded that it seems like they don't paint the crosswalks anymore. Halford asked if there was a shortage of paint, or anything that you have heard. Vein commented that they typically do that more towards the fall. Halford said that it is usually the lane striping first, then the crosswalks, and then the other markings that follow after that, but she hasn't heard either way. She added that she knows that in the past years there has been a shortage of paint or being to get those reflective beads for the paint, but she hasn't heard anything on this this year.

Halford stated that, getting back to the RFP, we are just trying to get feedback from the Technical Advisory Committee and the MPO Executive Policy Board as to what we should put into the RFP, and it will be coming back for approval next month.

Information only.

### **MATTER OF SAFE ROUTES FOR ALL RFP DISCUSSION**

Halford reported that this, to give a recap, this is something that we have been talking about for a good year, it is a grant that we applied for jointly with both cities. She said that we did receive the funding, we asked for \$400,000, with a 20% match, and we got what we asked for, so it gives us \$500,000, \$400,000 for the study and \$100,000 for MPO staff time. She stated that it will go over a two-year timeframe.

Halford said that this RFP, just as the Grand Valley RFP we just talked about, is a draft, a work in progress. She said that they are really looking for a lot of input from the Technical Advisory Committee and the MPO Executive Policy Board, it is a new beast, something that we have never done before, not only locally but also on the national level as this is the very first cycle for this kind of study, so there really aren't any plans out there that we can use as a template, just RFPs so we are kind of pioneers at this, but we do have a healthy budget and we have high hopes to be able to get a study out of this so we are hoping for a shopping list that will get us money for implementation for a project.

Halford commented that there was a lot of input from the Technical Advisory Committee, however a few still need to review it, and she gave them until Friday by noon to give her their feedback, and she has yet to get any comments so she will be sending a friendly reminder to them this afternoon, so she would entertain any additions or comments from this board. She added that she knows that the RFP is on the vague side, but that is kind of how other RFPs were written, so she is hoping for local input for help to give it a little more meat.

Lunski asked if Safe Streets encompasses pedestrians, cars, or everyone. Halford responded that it includes everybody.

Vein said that this will overlap a little bit with kind of what we talked about with an inner-city bridge and with traffic patterns and pedestrian safety. He stated that the other area he was thinking of was just 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South and the schools themselves, whether we put a river crossing at 32<sup>nd</sup> or not, the importance of safety near the schools, would also fall under this as

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well, right, would that be a part of that because he thought he saw that school safety is a part of this. Halford responded that school safety would be really looking at the corridors and what we can do to improve them, and once we have those listed in the plan, we would be able to go after that implementation funding that is out there too, but yes that is part of really diving deeper down than we do in our other plans for what we can do on those corridors.

Lunski said, then, today you are looking for suggestions. Halford responded that that is correct, and then like with the Grand Valley RFP we will bring this back in November as more of a polished draft of what will be sent out, but if you need more time you have until Friday at noon.

Information only.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There was no one from the public present for comments.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- A) Draft 20-Year Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan Comment Period – Kouba reported that Minnesota is in the middle of their comment period for the 20-Year Investment Plan. She stated that they do have a website that you can go to to comment on the plan. She added that they do have some public hearings listed however none of the locations are close to us so you can go to the website: [www.MinnesotaGO.org](http://www.MinnesotaGO.org) to review and comment on the plan. She said that this is a statewide plan so it isn't very specific to our region, but you can get a good idea of what Minnesota is planning for the regions and districts altogether.

Kouba commented that Minnesota also released their Highway Safety Improvement Program for non-metro, or areas other than Minneapolis/St. Paul. She said that they released project solicitation in September and applications are due on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, so we need to have any project applications to us by the end of this month so we can get them on our November agenda.

- B) 2023/2024 Annual Work Program Project Update – Halford commented that this is good to see since we are in October, we are seeing a couple of 100% completed projects:
- 1) Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update – Halford stated we have completed the Bike/Ped Plan.
  - 2) Aerial Imagery – Halford stated we have completed the Aerial Imagery and have shared the data with our partners.
  - 3) Street and Highway Plan – Halford stated that we are full-steam ahead with our Street and Highway Plan and will present it for final approval in December and then off to our State and Federal partners in January.
  - 4) ITS Regional Architecture – Halford stated that even though we are talking about that right now we aren't going to start work on that until January. We are talking about it

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- now so we get a head start by starting to get feedback and things like that now instead of waiting until January, so we are doing the leg work now and then we can start the project in January or February instead of eating some of the year up doing the leg work.
- 5) Land Use Plans – Halford stated that she knows some of you feel that we just worked on this but kind of going along with that continuous transportation plan cycle, after ITS Architecture is completed, we go into the Land Use Plan, and that is in 2025 and 2026.
  - 6) Future Bridge Discussion – Halford stated that that has been an ongoing discussion and staff has been sitting in on some of those meetings.
  - 7) Micro Transit – Halford stated that we have it planned for 2025, but depending on how things shake out in the next few months we may be coming back for an amendment to move it to 2024, but for sure we will be looking at at least 2025 for this project.
  - 8) Grand Valley – Halford stated that we have already discussed this project.
  - 9) Safe Streets For All – Halford stated that we have already discussed this project.

Strandell asked if the Aerial Imagery was an aerial flyover. Halford responded that it was. Strandell asked if we have seen any results on that. Kouba responded that we have the imagery right now and we have distributed it to our partners so Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, as well as some other people who have requested it have a copy of it. Strandell asked if it was on the website. Kouba responded that Grand Forks has it on their website, but any time we use the aerial photo that is the one we use.

C) MPO Updates:

- 1) November Agenda Items – Halford stated that just so you have an idea of what our November agenda will look like; Grand Valley and Safe Street For All RFPs will be on the agenda, Street and Highway, the Protect Grant, those are just some things we will be seeing in November. She said that those are the things we know of so far, but things always come up so there may be other items on the agenda as well.
- 2) Printed Agenda/Packets – Halford commented that it has been brought to our attention that the printed packets that we normally send out, the postage has increased on that and it cost \$78.00 to mail this months packets, and not only has the postage increased, but because the packets are now considered packages instead of first class mail, they may or may not get delivered on time as well, so she would like to know if everyone still wants a printed copy, or would some of you like to opt out. Lunski said that she would opt out. McNelis stated that her thought was that she could send out a printed copy of the agenda, via first class, in order for you to know what is on it as well as for a reminder of the meeting, and then as we already do, you would get the full agenda/packet via Constant Contact email to review online. Halford added that you can also stop by the office, and we can print it for you as well, but if you want it mailed to you we can do that but she just wanted you to be aware that the postage has increased. McNelis pointed out that you also see the agenda items on the screen at

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the meeting as well. Strandell suggested that printed copies could be available at the meeting too. Powers said that what he was going to say is that the printed copy doesn't need to include the whole federal register every time we have something that deals with the feds, he doesn't read CFR anymore, and he thinks some of it is redundant, but who is going to say what and where. Vein said that his feeling is that about 95% is not important, because a majority of that we don't need, if there is a transportation plan that you have the details it is nice to have that and usually they are fairly thick, but the majority of it we probably, he personally doesn't need. McNelis asked, then, if we send the agenda, and if there are some big tables that you might want to look over, if we sent that to you, but not all the staff reports and such, would that be okay. Halford said, or you could reach out to us if you see something that you do want us to print out. Vein said that that might be easier. He added that they can pull it up on our computers and look through all the stuff, and utilize that, and then if there is something that he does want a hard copy of, because sometimes he likes to be able to go back and forth, he would guess he could ask or make that request.

Powers stated that another thing he would like to emphasize is that you people do a real good job, in his opinion, of going through this on the screen, and if you can guarantee that you will keep doing that for the next couple of years until he quits, he really doesn't think we need a packet because you do a real good job with what is presented, and as long as that continues he doesn't think we need all of it, but you could send us the agenda.

Vetter commented that the reason he likes a hard copy is because he may not be sitting at his computer reading it, he may be on the couch or at the breakfast table thumbing through it, but he will make do so don't worry about it. Halford stated that she drives by his work multiple times a day so if you prefer a printed copy, she can drop one off there. Strandell asked that a printed copy just be available for him at the meeting.

- 3) December Meeting Date – Halford said that the December meeting is on December 20<sup>th</sup>, and she is just wondering if that was too close to Christmas or are you okay with that date. The consensus was that that date should be fine.

D) Agency Updates:

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***STRANDELL ADJOURNED THE OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2023, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:01 P.M.***

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peggy McNelis, Office Manager



# GF/EGF Metropolitan Planning Organization

## Bills and Applied Payments

September 16 - October 13, 2023

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Elan Financial Services				
09/19/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7479	-2,217.89
09/19/2023	Bill	Charges For 8/8/23 to 9/7/23 Period	Acct. #9621	2,217.89
09/19/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7481	-319.24
09/19/2023	Bill	Charges For 8/8/23 to 9/7/23 Period	Acct. #6396	319.24
Stephanie Halford				
09/19/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7480	-397.95
09/19/2023	Bill	Travel Reimbursement To Attend ND MPO Director's Meeting		397.95
10/03/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7484	-2,546.00
10/03/2023	Bill			2,546.00
10/06/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7487	-489.00
10/06/2023	Bill			489.00
Teri Kouba				
10/03/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7485	-1,205.32
10/03/2023	Bill			1,205.32
Tyler Manske				
10/03/2023	Bill Payment (Check)		7486	-223.00
10/03/2023	Bill			223.00