

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 14th, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Stephanie Halford, Chairman, called the February 14th, 2024, meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:32 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

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

Absent: Ryan Brooks, Ryan Riesinger, David Kuharenko, Ryan Riesinger, Troy Schroeder, Carter Hunter, Michael Johnson, Lane Magnuson, Dale Bergman, Nels Christianson, and Jason Peterson.

Guest(s) present: Kristen Sperry, FHWA-Bismarck; and Blue Webber, Bolton and Menk.

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

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Halford declared a quorum was present.

INTRODUCTIONS

Halford asked that guests attending the meeting please introduce themselves.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 10, 2024, MINUTES OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

***MOVED BY EDWARDSON, SECONDED BY ELLIS, TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10,
2024, MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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ACTION ITEMS:

MATTER OF GRAND VALLEY FP AMENDMENT

Manske reported that this is nothing you haven't seen before; previously when we released this RFP we didn't get any bids on it, so we chatted with the City of Grand Forks folks and they said that they wanted to put it back out again, so all the changes you see were submitted, and you can find the bulk of them on Pages 10 and 11, and they are just changes to the dates to update the new timeline.

Manske referred to Page 11 and commented that they also changed the proposal evaluation criteria and weight, they did change the weights so that they are more focused on the firms dedicated team members knowledge, rather than the firm's knowledge itself because we have a lot of the same firms applying for these things over and over again and, as Dave Kuharenko brought up. we want to make sure that whoever is brought on to these projects has relevant experience; that the team members that are being assigned to these projects from these companies have that relevant experience, so that is the reason for that change, but otherwise it has remained pretty much the same as what you approved before, so staff is seeking approval of the amended RFP for the Grand Valley Study.

Palo asked if they knew of any particular reason why there wasn't any interest in the project when the first RFP went out, have we reached out to anybody to see what the conflict was or why there wasn't any interest. Manske responded that we did hear from a couple of consultants, and it is his understanding that a few of them were putting all their eggs in the Safe Streets For All basket and they didn't feel comfortable splitting their team up in the event they would get both contracts, so it was just a timing and/or staffing issue, so we are hoping that this time around, we give a little bit of a buffer between, we will have a little bit more interest.

Halford commented that when she did hear from several of the consultants, they did say that they would be interested in it in a couple of months, so we should see some interest in it this time.

***MOVED BY PALO, SECONDED BY EMERY, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A
RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY
APPROVE THE AMENDED GRAND VALLEY RFP, AS PRESENTED.***

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

***Absent: Peterson, Riesinger, Schroeder, Brooks, Bergman, Johnson, Hunter,
Magnuson, Kuharenko, and Christianson.***

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**MATTER OF MINNESOTA CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM FUNDING
SOLICITATION**

Kouba reported that this is kind of, it will work into our T.I.P. as well, it is part of the T.I.P. amendment as well, but basically MnDOT has allocated various amounts from 2024 through 2027, and possibly 2028, but we are still waiting to hear if they are going to actually have additional funds, but it sounds like they will be doing additional Carbon Reduction Program funding as well.

Kouba said, though, that given that there is such a small amount for each given year, East Grand Forks would like for all the years to be kind of combined so that they can use it to fund the project that they have on 5th Avenue N.W. and 4th Street N.W., so basically we worked with the ATP and they agreed that they will reduce what carbon reduction funds they have for 2025, since that is the year that they haven't solicited for yet, and then our next several years will then go to the ATP for that funding, so basically we are advance constructing that project.

Kouba stated that, basically we solicit for this funding source, and so if you approve this work process for these funds then we will put it into the T.I.P. amendment.

MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY SANDERS, TO APPROVE FORWARDING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD THAT THEY APPROVE USING THE ATP'S 2025 CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM FUNDING TO DO THE SIDEWALK PROJECT ON 5TH AVENUE N.W. AND 4TH STREET N.W. AND ZERO OUT THE REMAINING YEARS FUNDING.

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Peterson, Riesinger, Schroeder, Brooks, Bergman, Johnson, Hunter, Magnuson, Kuharenko, and Christianson.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2024-2027 T.I.P. AMENDMENT

Kouba reported that we received a rehab project from the NDDOT. She stated that it is a multi-county project and the cost shown is for the whole project, which includes areas outside of the MPO area, so it is for all of eastern North Dakota, and it is maintenance projects. She added that this project was not previously in our T.I.P., so the whole project is new.

Kouba stated that we are changing out, we are adding in the advanced construction, and putting in, so that the project in East Grand Forks can be included.

Zacher referred back to the NDDOT rehab project, 120004, and stated that they added a CPR prefix to that project as well. He said that it doesn't affect the funding, the splits are the same, and he is working to get this into an April bid opening, so he will have a CPM coming up and that type of thing as well. He asked if it has local costs identified on it. Kouba responded that it

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does. Zacher said that the cost estimate they got is in this general area, plus or minus, but they are within 5% so they are okay with what is shown, so he doesn't think we need to necessarily change anything, he just wanted you to be aware that they did add an Alpha prefix to this project.

Zacher said that on that ATR project, yes, it is all eastern North Dakota, but it is only one site in Grand Forks or inside the MPO boundaries, so yes those funds are the entire project costs but there is only one withing the MPO area.

Zacher asked, since the text for previous amendments stay red, can we add a date on there? He said that he evidentially looks at things too quickly to see the difference between a 1, 2, and a 3. He stated that it doesn't need to be red, but as we are moving forward can we through a date on there, because it does say "date modified" in that column. Kouba responded that she will try to make sure to do that, but it is a small box. Zacher said that she is right, but he is just trying to figure out if there is a way to make it clearer even if we change the text for old amendments to black, that would work as well.

Kouba stated that we do need to hold a public hearing on this.

Kouba opened the public hearing. There was no one present for discussion. Kouba closed the public hearing.

Kouba reported that we didn't receive any input on-line or in person from the public either.

Emery referred to the East Grand Forks CRP project and said that it shows project year 2025, the project year will be 2024 but he is assuming with MnDOT's fiscal cycle that starts July 1st that is why it is shown as 2025. Kouba responded that basically it is so that that funding, basically we are shown advance construction funds, that it is coming from 2025, and the bundle years basically, and moving them to 2024, so basically, we are saying it is happening in 2024 but 2025 is the payback year. Emery said, then, that we will be able to use those funds after July 1st then. Mason responded that he would have to work with Brian Kettenring on an AC Agreement and then the reimbursement will flow through that process. Sanders added that you typically won't see the money until close to October 1st, but you get to advance construct it whenever you want to.

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

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

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

***Absent: Peterson, Riesinger, Schroeder, Brooks, Bergman, Johnson, Hunter,
Magnuson, Kuharenko, and Christianson.***

NON-ACTION ITEMS:

MATTER OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION UPDATE

Kouba reported that generally once we have gotten our urbanized area established, and approved by FHWA and FTA we start looking at the roadways to make sure that the functional classification of each roadway matches the urbanized area or rural area. She said that we did do a pretty significant review of all the functionally classified roadways in Grand Forks back in 2019, they weren't approved until 2021 however, so in reviewing, just at a staff level, all of these there hasn't been anything too drastic, but North Dakota did send out a letter advising us that they wanted an update by April 1st for preliminary approval of any changes to the functional classified system.

Kouba stated that she didn't see any need for any revisions, other than what needs to be done for the purpose of whether it is classified as an urban collector or a rural major collector, especially in the south end of town, as well as along U.S. #2, and on North Washington. She said that it would just be changing them from rural to urban.

Kouba added that, just to be thorough, Minnesota doesn't really distinguish between rural and urban so she doesn't see a need for changes on the Minnesota side, but she wanted to get this in front of everybody, and in the end it doesn't really change the percentages as we look at them overall for everything, so she really wants to hear if we need to sit down with everybody individually or get a little group together. She said that she knows that mostly it will be on the North Dakota side since she doesn't see any reason to change anything on the Minnesota side as they aren't really pushing forward on anything right now.

Edwardson commented that she knows that David Kuharenko is going to want to have those small group meetings because it is kind of hard going back and forth. She stated that some of the discussion they had is planning for the 47th Avenue Interchange, and if it is not on here the distinction between rural and urban and trying to figure that out, so they have some follow-up questions that they are trying to kick around on the south end, both on the west side of the interstate here, at 40th Avenue South, and stuff like that, kind of pushing it that way, and how that future planning should go to 47th, is it too early to put it in now, or kind of those different things, so she knows there will be follow-ups.

Kouba asked if they are looking more on the south end of town; things are going to change for functional class as things become built out. She asked if Wayne could maybe answer some of that. She stated that she is trying to remember if there is a wait until it is actually being built; it has always been considered future then. Zacher responded that he believes that it needs to be built. He said that usually it has to be constructed already or construction is eminent is how he believes it has to be, but Kristen could explain more, and then you need to make sure that the functionally classified ties to the new functionally classified.

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Kouba stated that that would have been her question; how to differentiate between when it is built and when it isn't built. She said that she would contact David and set something up. Halford asked who they wanted in that meeting. Edwardson responded it would probably be David, Carter, and herself.

Halford asked if anyone from the Minnesota side would want a meeting to touch base or are you good with no changes. Mason responded that it might be good to touch base with Erika, he isn't sure with where MnDOT is sitting on the functional classification updates. Kouba stated that so far what we've heard from Erika is that they aren't looking at anything right now. Halford added that we are a little ahead of the game is what Erika said. Zacher commented that, just a heads up, there is a federal deadline for those updates, it is out a little way, but that is kind of how they landed on April for their preliminary stuff because with the last census things did drag on a little bit longer than they probably should have, so this time around there is a federal deadline on those classification changes. He said that he believes it is a year or two out, so we do have time.

Kouba asked if Nick West wanted to be part of the conversation as well since we are moving some of those functionally classified from rural to urban. She said that she is setting up a one-on-one with David, Carter, and Andrea to talk about some of these locations and looking at the functional class, especially since these are moving from a rural functional classification to an urban functional classification. West responded that he would like to be involved.

Kouba stated that she will contact everyone and set something up so that we can get something together that is preferred by everyone for our March MPO meeting so we can get at least preliminary approval before we send it to the NDDOT.

Information only.

MATTER OF UND INTERN UPDATE

Halford reported that they were planning on a presentation to get an update on where this project is at and where it is going but we had a couple of key members from the committee that are out today that would like to hear the presentation and be part of the conversation and ask some questions, so they requested it be tabled to the March Technical Advisory Committee meeting, so if there is anything to update with this project she will make sure it is in the packet for next month's meeting but until then it probably wouldn't hurt to kind of review it, it just gives you that little bit more time so when we do bring it back in March you can come with any questions you might have for them because she thinks it is June or July when they are finishing up this project.

Edwardson said that that was her other question when they requested to push the update back was if they were going to impact UND's schedule if they can accommodate us. Halford responded that they were good with that. She said that they did ask for Carter and David's contact information so she thinks they will be reaching out to them with a few questions, but we will just bring this back next month if everyone is okay with that.

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OTHER BUSINESS

a. 2024/2025 Unified Work Program Project Update:

Halford said that we finished up the Street and Highway Plan and we started the ITS Architecture Update, and again just a reminder that the deadline was pushed up to the August/September timeframe because of the ATAC Contract, so we can keep it in the contract we currently have with them.

Halford stated that Tyler already gave an update on Grand Valley, so we are still in the RFP process so we will get that out after the Executive Policy Board meeting next week. She said that she doesn't see why they wouldn't approve it, so we will get that back out on the street again and hopefully we will get nibbles this time.

Halford said that Safe Streets For All did get three proposals and we did interview all three and are moving forward with contract negotiations right now so hopefully we will have a draft contract today and we will bring it forward to the Executive Policy Board for them to review and sign, and then we will get going like gang busters. She added that this project is scheduled to finish up in September of 2025.

Halford stated that, again, we have started talking about functional classification, and we did give an update on that already.

Manske said that the bike maps we do every year, and we had created a new draft and shared it with the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Greenway Technical Committee and got some really good feedback, so we finally have a final draft that has been looked over by members of the public and we are looking at getting the maps printed, about 2,000 copies through Knight Printing. He added that we literally just got a quote back from Knight Printing this morning before this meeting so we will continue moving forward with that and hopefully by the end of the month or early March we will have the bike maps in hand.

b. Agency Updates:

Zacher said that he talked a little bit earlier during the T.I.P. review about getting the Grand Forks Regional Signals Project moving, they did remove a few of the signals that have railroad preemption on them, just due to the timing that the Railroad was going to require for coordination, but again, looking for probably an April bid date on that. He stated that it is a two-year project; the first year will be more the sandblast and paint type rehab projects and then the arc signals, which he believes are all on DeMers Avenue; and then the second year would be more the replacements, and they will need that lead time anyway for poles and that type of thing.

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Zacher stated that, as a reminder, and Stephanie is well aware of it because she gets to create the agenda, but they have their MPO Director's meeting coming up on March 15th, so any topics can be sent to Stephanie, and she can add to the agenda if you wish.

Zacher commented that Central Dakota MPO does have their Executive Director position posted, so that is out there as well if anyone is interested.

Halford said that she does have a question; the Red River Flood Study, from Grand Forks basically to the Canadian border, do you have any kind of update or summary that you can share with the group. Zacher responded that he guesses he could. He said that he received an email the other day that said that the consultant working on it sent an update email as to where things were at, and talked about going through the PEL process and the Scope-of-Work, and then at the end talked about that the study is currently on pause because the cities are submitting a Federal Raise Grant application for the planning side of things. He stated that on the periphery of that he knows that Kristen Sperry, FHWA, has been involved a little bit on it, but the local agencies have decided to pause further development on the PEL study due to the Raise Grant being submitted and MnDOT published an internal memo saying that they would not be starting any new PEL studies until further guidance is developed, so that is what he has at this time, but he doesn't know if you are looking for something different or not. Halford responded that she just heard from the consultant that they are starting interviews, or they are looking at doing interviews next week or something like that. Zacher asked what they were doing interviews for. Halford responded that maybe they are talking about two different projects. Zacher said that he thought she was talking about the inter-city bridges. Halford responded that she was talking about the Red River Valley Flood Study. Zacher said that he is not involved with that study other than probably telling Stephanie about it whether he should have or not, but he saw that the RFP went out, but he hasn't heard how many consultants responded, he has heard when there will be interviews, he hasn't heard much of anything, but he could do some digging if you are interested. Halford stated that she reached out to a couple of the partners to let them know that the RFP is on the street, and if there are people she missed, that would find it interesting, she wanted to bring it up here. Zacher said that he thinks that in talking with their Bridge Division, they are doing a study, along with MnDOT and the Corps of Engineers, along various reaches along the Red River, and they put Grand Forks in there as kind of a known location type thing, a general point of reference, so the exact locations of the flood study haven't necessarily been determined yet, but it sounds like costs are being shared between the Corps of Engineers, the NDDOT, and MnDOT, and from that standpoint, again, it goes into various reaches at various locations, and it is his understanding is it is not a continuous study, it is various spots that either have gapped information, looking at information again to see if anything else needs to be done, and as far as he is aware it sounds like the scope is still kind of up in the air but it also sounded like it would be run by the Corps of Engineers, so he doesn't know if they put the RFP out more as just to say it is coming, but he thinks the Corps of Engineers is kind of taking the lead

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on it, but he may be completely off base. Halford stated that if anyone is interested, she can forward the link to them with that information.

Palo reported that the contracts have been awarded for the first leg of the Washington Street/Railroad Bridge Underpass project, they are just waiting for it to be signed, so the next couple of years if you utilize DeMers and Washington you will want to avoid that intersection.

Information only.

ADJOURNMENT

***MOVED BY ELLIS, SECONDED BY EMERY, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 14TH, 2024
MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT 2:09 P.M.***

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager