

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Wednesday, March 20, 2024 - 12:00 Noon
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Room**

CALL TO ORDER

Warren Strandell, Chairperson, called the March 20th, 2024, 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, Brian Larson, and Ken Vein.

Absent: Rustad and Grasser.

Guest(s) Present: Wayne Zacher, NDDOT-Planning Division.

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

Strandell declared a quorum was present.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 21ST, 2024 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY LUNSKI, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 21ST, 2024, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 17TH, 2024 TO MARCH 15TH, 2024 BILLS/CHECKS

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY LARSON, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 17TH, 2024, TO MARCH 15TH, 2024 BILLS/CHECKS, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 17TH, 2024, TO MARCH 15TH, 2024 LIST OF ITEMS SIGNED AND APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Halford reported that this is an item that you will continue to see on a normal basis on our monthly agenda, it is just staff letting you know that we are reviewing, approving, and signing checks, journal entries, checking and saving account reconciliations, bills, billings, etc.

MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 17TH, 2024 TO MARCH 15TH, 2024 LIST OF ITEMS SIGNED AND APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ACTION ITEMS:

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION UPDATE

Kouba reported that we discussed this item at your meeting last month, and now we are looking for preliminary approval.

Kouba stated that staff has had discussions with our partners, particularly the City of Grand Forks, and the only changes will be to designate some rural roadways to urban. She said that this only affects the pots of funding that can be used on the roadways.

Kouba referred to the map and commented that the tan area is our newly adopted urbanized area, and because of that, in North Dakota, they differentiate between urban and rural, so that is basically what we will be requesting, is that these roadway sections become urban instead of rural functionally classified areas.

Kouba explained that we will be sending the preliminarily approved amendment to the NDDOT for their review and comments, and then we will bring it back to this body by June so we can get it onto our June agenda for final approval before the July 1, 2024, deadline.

Lunski asked if these were outside city limits. Kouba responded that they are. She explained that the MPO boundary is shown with an orange line, and it is roughly 2 miles outside of the city limits. She added that, as you can see, when it comes to the Airport, we are pretty much right there. She stated that the Airport purchased some property, and our concern was that at some point in time it will be considered Airport property so it will need to be in our MPO area.

MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY LUNSKI, TO GIVE PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO THE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION UPDATE, AS PRESENTED.

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

Voting Nay: None.

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

NON-ACTION ITEMS:

MATTER OF MPO 101 PRESENTATION

Halford reported that she gave this MPO 101 presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee last week. She stated that it is an overview of what an MPO is and what it does.

Halford referred to the slide presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request) and went over it briefly.

Slide 1 – Cover Sheet: What is an MPO?

Slide 2 – Role of the MPO:

Halford said that in 1964 congress started looking at having metropolitan areas follow a 3Cs (comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing) transportation planning process.

Halford stated that in 1973 congress created a home for the 3C process, the Metropolitan Planning Organization or MPO, which entailed basically bringing in the local entities to the whole transportation planning process.

Slide 3 – What do we mean by the 3Cs?:

Halford explained that the 3Cs are:

Continuing – we continue to look at the past and re-evaluate how we can better plan for the future.

Cooperative – bringing everyone together.

Comprehensive – looking at all the modes of travel and studying how they all work together for our communities.

Slide 4 – Why do MPOs Exist?:

Halford stated that basically we want to think of an MPO as just another tool in the toolbox. She said that we are here to help arm you with information and data to help you navigate those tricky decisions.

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Slide 5 – Our MPO History:

Halford stated that back on January 26, 1981, there was a meeting at which Bob Bushfield, Grand Forks City Planner, shared that we had been designated an Urbanized Area, and were now required to establish an MPO. She said that a representative from FHWA then discussed why it is necessary to form an MPO, explaining that if projects are going to be federally funded, they should be consistent with the metropolitan area's needs.

Halford reported that they then started looking at the structure of the MPO Executive Policy Board, and it was determined that there would be two city council members from each city, one city planning commission member from each city, and one county commissioner from Polk County, MN and Grand Forks County, ND.

Halford said that a letter, dated October 5, 1982, from the Governor of North Dakota was received formally designating the MPO area. She added that a letter, dated November 24, 1982, from the Governor of Minnesota, was received formally stating that he was pleased to join in and that he was sure that the Committee will serve the citizens of the area in an efficient and effective manner.

Halford stated that they adopted the Bylaws on June 23, 1982, and there have been a small handful of amendments since:

June 25, 1992 – No records of changes, guessing just grammar and wording clean-up was approved.

March 9, 1993 – Rewording of employee benefit language was approved.

June 26, 1994 – Adding the airport to the Technical Advisory Committee

August 17, 1998 – Language cleanup, term lengths for the Board and clarifying unexcused absences wording were approved.

December 9, 1999 – Responding to a letter from FHWA stating that city council approval of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is not necessary, wording to that effect was added to the Bylaws.

Vein asked, again, when was the makeup of the Board approved. Halford responded that it was approved on June 23, 1982, but was discussed and determined earlier, however she doesn't have that date at this time.

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Slide 6 – Where do Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) exist in North Dakota?

Halford said that we aren't the only MPO in North Dakota, there are four MPOs: Fargo/Moorhead, Bismarck/Mandan, Grand Fork/East Grand Forks, and Minot, which is the most recent one that has been formed.

Halford stated that there are seven MPOs in Minnesota: Rochester, Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks/East Grand Forks, Mankato/North Mankato, St. Cloud, LaCrosse, and Duluth/Superior.

Slide 7 – MPO Required Planning Activities:

Halford said that, as an MPO we are required to do certain activities in order to be able to continue receiving federal funding, they are:

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – which describes what will be done using federal funds and who will do it. It supports the 3C planning effort.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – list of projects in a funding year. This must be updated and approved annually by the MPO Executive Policy Board, and it must include all federal aid and any other significant transportation projects or identified phases of projects for all modes of transportation that affect the planning boundary. It must be consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Projects shown in the TIP must also be shown in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as well.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) – The MPO planning process must include:

- Develop a transportation plan at least 25 years into the future at the time of adoption.

- Both short- and long-range strategies and actions leading to the development of an integrated transportation system.

- Be reviewed and updated at least every five years (January 2029) to confirm it is still valid and is consistent with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends.

- Be approved by the MPO and submitted to the DOTs.

- Have a Public Participation Plan.

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Slide 8 – MPO Structure – Technical Advisory Committee:

Halford commented that the MPO is here to help the community navigate important transportation decisions, to give you data and information, but we cannot come up with this data and information alone and the Technical Advisory committee members each bring a different view and expertise to the table. The Technical Advisory Committee is an advisory body to the MPO Executive Policy Board.

Slide 9 – MPO Structure – MPO Executive Policy Board:

Halford said that the MPO Executive Policy Board is made up of leadership from both sides of the river and, again, everyone brings something to the table.

Slide 10 – Looking at it Differently:

Halford stated that lately we have been looking at maybe doing things a little bit differently than we have in the past. She said that over the past couple of years, we have been asking ourselves the tough question “why this way?”. She stated that just because it has been done this way forever, is it still working for us, and most importantly is it still working for our partners, are our plans giving our partners and community what they need. She said that we will be reviewing our By-Laws, updating our Public Participation Plan, etc, to better refine them; ultimately, we want to be the best versions of ourselves for our partners. So we are asking “What do you need and want from your MPO?”

Slide 11 – Opportunity Ahead:

Halford said that we have been looking at other opportunities. She stated that we recently put in a joint grant application, called SMART, with the Fargo/Moorhead MPO and Upper Great Plains to look at the I-29 Corridor from the Canadian Border south to the South Dakota border, which is something we have not done in the past.

Halford stated that we are working jointly with UND, through their internship, to do a transportation safety study on the south end of Grand Forks.

Halford reported that we also applied for a Safe Street For All grant (SS4A) jointly with the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and got it, which, again, has never been done before. She said that once it is complete it will open up doors to some new implementation funding that our partners can choose to pursue and implement.

Slide 12 – Questions:

None.

Information only.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

- A) 2024/2025 Annual Work Program Project Update – Halford commented that this is just where we are at with projects in our work program.
- 1) Street and Highway Plan/MTP: Halford stated that we did finish the Street and Highway Plan and MTP, that is done.
 - 2) ITS Architecture: Halford said that we have the ITS Architecture on the way. She added that the timeline for this project was shortened up, originally, we were looking at a December completion date but with the current contract that we have in place with ATAC, which ends in September, we pushed the completion date to the August/September time frame. She said that they felt comfortable with that, so we are fine with it as well.
 - 3) Land Use Plan: Halford stated that we are looking at the 2025/2026 timeline for that, so we haven't started anything with that, but it is always kind of nice to have that on the forefront of what is coming up.
 - 4) Micro-Transit Study: Halford said that that will probably begin next year.
 - 5) Grand Valley Study: Halford stated that we already had an update on this project, so hopefully we get proposals this time and we will start to see movement on it.
 - 6) Functional Class: Halford said that we already had an update on this project.
 - 7) One-Way Pairs: Halford stated that we will probably get going on this soon, and it will continue into 2025. She explained that this project is looking at the two one-way streets, North 3rd and North 4th on the Grand Forks Side from DeMers to Gateway, to determine if they should continue being one-way streets or become two-way streets. She added that currently UND students are looking at them as kind of a class project, so the plan is for them to finish their studies and for us to take over from where they leave off on it.
 - 8) Bike Map: Halford said that we just sent the updated bike map to the printers.
- B) Safe Street For All (SS4A) – Halford reported that we did sign a contract with Bolton and Menk so they have now started on the project.

Lunski asked if the bridge stayed in the Street and Highway Plan/MTP documents. Halford responded that an intercity bridge is still referenced in the plan, not a specific location.

Vein said that knows that the Grand Forks City Council talked about School Safety/Pedestrian Safety, and he is wondering if there are currently any studies on this going on now or are there any past studies that were done on this that we could refer to? Halford responded that there have been some past studies, such as the Safe Routes To School Study, and currently Grand Forks has a traffic safety study going on and the Grand Valley study will be looking at pedestrian

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crossings, and where they should be located, in that new development as well, and then in any of our studies we are always looking at all modes of transportation.

Kouba added that there are earlier plans that were made by A.T.A.C. where they looked at the specific school properties themselves, at circulation, and the last one they did was 47th Street.

Vein stated that he just thought that because it is always an issue, school safety, that we should look at making sure that this group is always considering pedestrian safety. Halford agreed and added that we have definitely studied it a lot on our side, in various studies, and that is a big part of the Grand Valley Study, to look at how we are going to get people to and from the development safely.

C) MPO Updates – Halford said that the only agenda items for our April meeting she is aware of at this time are maybe some T.I.P. Amendments, and there will be an ITS Architecture Update, and we will probably have the 2023-2024 UPWP amendment.

D) Agency Updates – None.

Information only.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY LUNSKI, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 20TH, 2024, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:20 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager

GRAND FORKS EAST GRAND FORKS MPO

Transaction List by Vendor

February 17 - March 15, 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	NUM	POSTING	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Business Essentials						
03/01/2024	Bill	Inv. #WO-1284298-1	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	71.61
03/01/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7553	Yes		104 Checking	-71.61
Constant Contact						
03/01/2024	Check	ConstantContact	Yes		104 Checking	-23.00
Forum Communications Company						
03/08/2024	Bill	Inv. #MP1270880224	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	347.49
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7555	Yes		104 Checking	-347.49
Grant and Contract Accounting						
03/08/2024	Bill	Inv. #FAR-0000096274	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	3,301.65
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7556	Yes		104 Checking	-3,301.65
03/08/2024	Bill	Inv. #FAR-0000096270	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	499.29
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7559	Yes		104 Checking	-499.29
HDR Engineering, Inc.						
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7554	Yes		104 Checking	-34,804.78
IRS						
03/06/2024	Tax Payment		Yes	Tax Payment for Period: 02/28/2024-03/01/2024	104 Checking	-4,303.95
Knight Printing						
03/14/2024	Bill	Inv. #20228976	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	944.51
03/14/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7561	Yes		104 Checking	-944.51
Liberty Business Systems, Inc.						
03/08/2024	Bill	Inv. #529443	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	261.62
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7557	Yes		104 Checking	-261.62
Mike's						
02/21/2024	Bill		Yes		206 Accounts Payable	103.00
02/21/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7552	Yes		104 Checking	-103.00
MN Revenue						
02/20/2024	Tax Payment		Yes	Tax Payment for Period: 02/14/2024-02/16/2024	104 Checking	-550.97
03/05/2024	Tax Payment		Yes	Tax Payment for Period: 02/28/2024-03/01/2024	104 Checking	-655.34
Nationwide Retirement Solutions						
03/08/2024	Check	NWRS-DC	Yes		104 Checking	-510.89
NDPERS						
03/08/2024	Expenditure	NDPERS-INSURANCE	Yes	Voided	104 Checking	0.00
03/08/2024	Check	NDPERS-HLTH	Yes		104 Checking	-5,832.64
Peggy McNelis						
02/20/2024	Bill		Yes		206 Accounts Payable	82.38
02/20/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7550	Yes		104 Checking	-69.55
Stephanie Halford						
02/20/2024	Bill		Yes		206 Accounts Payable	76.25
02/20/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7551	Yes		104 Checking	-76.25
Teri Kouba						
03/08/2024	Bill		Yes		206 Accounts Payable	118.00
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7558	Yes		104 Checking	-118.00
Tyler Manske						
03/08/2024	Bill		Yes		206 Accounts Payable	436.75
03/08/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7560	Yes		104 Checking	-436.75

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DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	NUM	POSTING	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
University of North Dakota						
03/14/2024	Bill	Inv. #UND-0000075251	Yes		206 Accounts Payable	1,314.50
03/14/2024	Bill Payment (Check)	7562	Yes		104 Checking	-1,314.50