

# **2010 MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD MINUTES**

**January 20, 2010**

**February 19, 2010**

**March 17, 2010**

**April 21, 2010**

**May 19, 2010**

**June 16, 2010**

**July 21, 2010**

**August 18, 2010**

**September 15, 2010**

**October 20, 2010**

**November 17, 2010**

**December 15, 2010**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Dick Grassel, Warren Strandell, Steve Adams, Greg Leigh, and Mike Powers.

Absent were: Art Bakken and Doug Christensen.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY POWERS TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2009 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF END OF YEAR BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Haugen reported that he is asking for approval of two actions concerning our 2009 Work Program budget. He explained that it is normal to have to do some end of the year budget adjustments, usually requiring that we move funds around within each of the three main categories, and occasionally having to move some funds from one category to another.

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Haugen referred to the staff report and pointed out that the first request involves the three main categories, which are: 1) Program Administration (100); 2) Program Support and Coordination (200); and 3) Planning and Implementation (300). He stated that we need to shift some funds from the 200 category to the 100 and 300 categories, with the specific amounts shown in the staff report. He explained that the principle reason for these adjustments is because of the additional work activity brought on by the ARRA (Stimulus), in terms of both staff time and T.I.P. amendments. He said that we needed to process nine T.I.P. amendments that we did not anticipate at the start of the budget year, and each of those amendments requires public notices, staff hours, documentation, etc., thus the need for approval to shift the funds to cover these additional expenses.

Haugen reported that the second request is due to our having begun the Railroad Crossing Study this year rather than waiting until 2010, which resulted in some additional consulting costs for which we need to bring in \$30,000 from our unallotted 2009 funds that we have sitting in our reserve account in Bismarck.

Leigh asked, with our doing the Railroad Study earlier than anticipated, what happens to the money set aside for next year. Haugen responded that we will be leaving those funds in that category as we are anticipating a request for a traffic impact study, therefore, we will leave it budgeted so that when we reach the point where we need to amend the 2010 Work Program to shift those funds for that study, it will be available.

Malm asked how much money we have in reserve. Haugen responded that for Fiscal Year 2009 we have about \$300,000 to \$325,000 in reserve, however we do not yet know the full amount we are receiving in Fiscal Year 2010 due to continuing resolutions. He added that, although, this is a considerable amount, the other MPOs actually have much more in reserve than we do.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE FY 2009 MPO ANNUAL UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2011-2014 MINNESOTA T.I.P. PROJECTS**

Haugen reported that, as you will recall, last month we dealt with North Dakota T.I.P. project requests, and this month we are doing the same for Minnesota T.I.P. project requests. He stated that two applications were submitted for consideration.

Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that the first application is for the City of East Grand Forks' Sub-Target fund in 2014. He explained that every fourth year the City of East Grand Forks receives City Sub-Target funds from the A.T.P., or the State of Minnesota, in the amount of roughly \$750,000. He stated that the project being submitted for consideration is for

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the construction of a full-intersection at U.S. 2 and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W., which was the result of our Gateway Drive Access Management Study we did for East Grand Forks and MNDOT. He commented that this project was actually programmed in 2010, but the City of East Grand Forks requested that the monies for this project be shifted to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. urban project instead, and this project be done when the City receives its City Sub-Target funds, which is 2014.

Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that he included a copy of the resolution the City of East Grand Forks approved requesting we program their City Sub-Target funds for this project in 2014.

Haugen reported that the only other application we received was a request from MNDOT to reprogram a project that was in our 2009-2012 T.I.P., but which was not carried forward into our 2010-2013 T.I.P.. He explained that the project involves pavement work on Minnesota Highway 220 from Climax to its intersection with U.S. Highway 2 just north of the Mallory Bridge. He stated that originally it was a \$5,000,000 project, however with inflation the cost has been increased to \$5,500,000. He commented that just as we did last time this project was programmed, we are asking MNDOT to look at the possibility of modifying the intersection of Minnesota Highway 220 and Polk County 238 so that southbound #220 traffic does not have to stop.

Haugen stated that no other projects were submitted, and all projects in our current T.I.P. remained the same, so basically we are only looking at forwarding these two projects to the Northwest A.T.P. for consideration of adding them into Fiscal Year 2014 of the A.T.I.P., which would ultimately go into the State T.I.P..

Haugen stated that the projects are consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, and should be given priority ranking. He added that the Technical Advisory Committee considered these projects at their meeting last Wednesday, and forwarded their recommendation to approve the projects as submitted.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE FY 2011-2014 T.I.P. PROJECT APPLICATIONS AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN, AND TO GIVE THEM HIGH PRIORITY RANKING.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2<sup>ND</sup> STIMULUS PACKAGE**

Haugen reported that the House of Representatives has passed a JOBS Bill (“The Wallstreet to Mainstreet” Bill), however the Senate has not yet scheduled a time to meet on this, and, in fact they haven’t indicated whether or not they intend to even pass such a bill.

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Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that he included information he received from both NDDOT and MNDOT requesting that the localities begin thinking of projects that might qualify should such a bill be passed. He added that it is anticipated, on the House side, that the funding level will be the same as the first stimulus, so basically the message is to try to gear up for as much money as you received with the first stimulus. He added, however, that there is also a possibility that it might be as low as 75% of the first stimulus amount, so it might be better if we were to work from a higher number and scale back if necessary rather than to work from a lower number and try to come up with more projects.

Haugen pointed out that one of the key differences in the House bill this time is the issue of the timeline; whether we have 90 days, 120 days, or something else to get our projects programmed once the bill is signed. He explained that in the last bill Congress required that 50% of the funds had to be obligated, which meant that the project needed to be approved by Federal Highway as being eligible before it could go forward for bidding and awarding of the contract, but the House version this time contains the word “award” rather than “obligated”, which means that we have to go beyond obligation of a project, and instead have the projects bid and awarded, which will be a huge struggle for the localities to meet.

Haugen reported that on the North Dakota side the State is aware of all these issues, and at our Technical Advisory Committee meeting this past week, it was discussed that this might not be such a bad thing because it will allow the localities the ability to not have to rush to prepare projects, and have bigger and better projects ready for the next 50% of funding.

Haugen stated that on the Minnesota side, the East Grand Forks 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. project we just discussed was scheduled to be completed in two phases, with the first phase being done this year, and the second phase later. He explained that this means that the second phase of the project is already through all the processes necessary to bid and award the project, therefore it has been mentioned that it might be a viable project for the second stimulus funds. He added that because it is currently programmed to be funded with revolving funds, should it be eligible for stimulus funds, those funds would then be freed up to be used elsewhere.

Haugen commented that on the transit side we have a similar issue of whether a project needs to be awarded or obligated. He said that one difference on the North Dakota side is that it was recently discovered that there is actually a large pot of money sitting out there in the North Dakota Transit Section that has been earmarked, or allocated from prior years for primarily rural operations. He explained that because those rural obligations are most likely not going to be able to use all those funds, discussion will be held tomorrow to determine how much of those funds the urban properties might be able to access, with somewhere in the magnitude of as much as \$5,000,000 to \$7,000,000 being available right now. He stated that this could mean that the City of Grand Forks could have as much as a couple million dollars available to them for capital projects, which would be outside what a second stimulus would award, so we are working with the City’s Public Transportation Superintendent and the Public Works Director on identifying all of the additional capital projects that we could be looking at funding.

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Haugen reported that this is the status of the second stimulus; with the House passing something that has a lot of similarities to the first stimulus, with the big difference being the use of the word “award” rather than “obligated”; and the Senate not having done anything yet, nor do they have anything on their calendar to do anything at this time. He added that he read something yesterday indicating that they might be more strongly looking at doing a reauthorization rather than doing a separate stimulus bill. He explained that we still have authorization of the whole transportation program still facing us.

Grassel asked about the possibility of the 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.E. project being considered for stimulus funds as well. Haugen responded that no one mentioned that project as being a possibility, but, again, it will depend on whether they continue to use the word “award” rather than the word “obligated”. Grassel commented that the contract has been awarded. Haugen stated that he would doubt that they could convert it to stimulus if it has already been awarded monies. Grassel asked how 23<sup>rd</sup> could be considered then, as it has already been awarded as well. Haugen asked if both phases have been awarded. Grassel responded they had. Haugen stated that he will need to look into this further.

Haugen reported that he knows of two projects that are being accelerated in the event a second stimulus is approved, and they are both being pushed by the NDDOT, and are already programmed in our T.I.P. for FY 2011. He explained that these projects are both sign replacement projects on I-29 and US 2, and all the environmental documentation and other work is being done now in the hope that they can be funded with monies from the second stimulus.

Malm asked if transit funds can only be used for transit. Haugen responded that there is actually a way transit funds can be converted. He explained that the Minnesota A.T.P. process can convert highway dollars over to help transit for capital purchases if necessary, so it can flow the other way as well, although it is basically limited to capital purchases not operation.

Information only.

**MATTER OF FY 2010 MNDOT CONTRACT**

Haugen reported that this is an annual contract with MNDOT for planning funds to assist us with our work activities. He explained that all of these funds are used as local match to the federal funds, which ultimately lessens both communities cost participation in the MPO program.

Haugen stated that is a standard contract, with no changes occurring from past contracts, and it allows us about \$11,000 to be used as local match.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATE MPO OFFICIALS EXECUTE THE 2010 STATE FUNDS AGREEMENT WITH MNDOT.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY UPDATE**

Haugen reported that included in the packets are the actions both City Councils have taken on the issue of a quiet zone. He referred to a slide presentation, pointing out that the current slide shows the five different zones, each shown in a different color, of the areas looked at for quieting train horns, and went over it briefly.

Haugen stated that East Grand Forks still wishes to pursue a quiet zone, however they do not want to do any crossing closures, therefore they will need to pursue getting gates and lights at the one crossing that does not currently have them, and then get constant warning times at another, then they, too, could implement a quiet zone.

Haugen said that Grand Forks has approved the submittal of a request for state assistance for funding of three of the four quiet zones. He pointed out that the one crossing Grand Forks is not pursuing be quieted is the one on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. He added that the City did decide to try to get medians constructed at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets, which will allow a little buffer in the event train or vehicle traffic should increase. He added that medians are also being considered at one crossing in the purple area, and at all three crossings in the orange area as well, at a cost of about \$250,000, and the City is seeking up to \$225,000 from North Dakota's special funds for railroad crossing quiet zone improvements.

Haugen reported that the second part of the study is the State Mill Spur, which involves specifically looking at all the crossings from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in Grand Forks up to Gateway Drive. He stated that all of these crossings have just the minimum cross-buck signage, so they are working with the neighborhood and City representatives to determine what improvements should be done and where, and perhaps even whether some closures might be warranted.

Haugen stated that the third study involves the closure of Bacon Road, which essentially connects Mill Road to North Washington. He explained that the State Mill has a lot of cars that they need to stage back and forth and this crossing provides a bit of a pediment, so they requested that the MPO engage SRF to look at the possible closure of Bacon Road, and what its impact might be. He added that this study is to be financed totally outside the MPO, specifically by the State Mill and BNSF.

Leigh asked where things are at, since East Grand Forks does not want to close any of their crossings at this time, with a possible underpass of some kind. Haugen responded that once we complete the Land Use Plan Updates we are doing this year for both cities, we will then begin looking at updating our Long Range Transportation Plan, at which time a possible underpass will again be looked at, but right now it is included in our plan as an illustrative project for an underpass at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue as we do not have the funds available to do it now.

Haugen pointed out that another thing to consider is that whichever crossing the City of East Grand Forks decides will not be improved this year, whether it be the one at Central or the one at 3<sup>rd</sup>, could be a viable project for stimulus funds as well.

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Malm asked about the closing of Bacon Road, who will be responsible for funding it, and will we have any input in it at all. Haugen responded that we will have a little bit of administrative costs, but the study itself will be paid by BNSF and the State Mill, 50/50. He added that the study will run concurrent with the State Mill Spur portion of our study.

Grassel commented that you will need to go all the way to the end of the State Mill Road to get back to Highway 81. He asked if the bridge at 27<sup>th</sup> was still open. Haugen responded it was not. He added that part of the study will be to determine what kinds of impacts the closure of Bacon Road would create.

Malm commented that his only question is will the State Mill push their cars north, otherwise people will continue to get caught when they are in the process of shifting those cars around. He stated that should Mr. Haugen get any voice in the process, he make sure he lets them know that this is an issue and they need to start thinking about what is happening south of them. Haugen responded that they will get a good picture of how it currently operates, and how it would be improved with the possible closure.

Haugen reported that we were scheduled to take this issue to the Service Safety Committee at their meeting this evening, however that meeting has since been cancelled. He added that two weeks from now we should be back on that agenda once again, and based on what kind of feedback we get from the Service Safety Committee, BNSF and the State Mill might pull their request to do the study, so we won't formally engage them until that meeting occurs.

Information only.

**MATTER OF PRESENTATION OF PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Kouba reported that we now have our pavement management system up and running. She stated that we received the last of our pavement survey information for both cities, and have had training on the new system.

Kouba said that one of the biggest things they learned during training is that this is just a tool. She explained that they are trying to find scenarios based on criteria such as budget, location, condition index level, etc.. She stated that it does not tell you what roads to do, what to do to them, how to do it, but do give you choices based on cost, what could be done, etc..

Kouba gave a brief slide presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request).

Kouba commented that most of our roads are in quite good condition, with a condition index level of 60 or better, although there are a few that are not.

Presentation ensued.

Information only.

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**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Election To Fill Vacant Immediate Past-Chairman Position

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE DICK GRASSEL  
FILL THE IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN POSITION VACATED BY PUNKY  
BEAUCHAMP.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

2. Introduction Of New MPO Interns

Haugen introduced the MPOs new interns: Aaron Nelson, who is working on the Bike/Ped update and with transit; and Matt Leal, who is working on the Land Use Plan updates.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY  
20<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:51 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Malm, Strandell, Adams, Leigh, and Powers.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis  
Executive Assistant

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Steve Adams, Greg Leigh, Mike Powers, and Doug Christensen.

Absent were: Dick Grassel and Art Bakken.

Guest(s) present were: Lane Magnuson, Grand Forks County Planner; Al Grasser, Grand Forks City Engineer; and Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2009, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY POWERS TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2010 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Strandell, Leigh, Powers, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE RECLASSIFICATION OF THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO OFFICE MANAGER**

Haugen reported that, as noted in the staff report, over the past year the Executive Assistant has had to assume some additional duties, which, in the past had been handled by the Grand Forks Human Resource Department. He explained that most of these duties relate to the benefit packages the MPO offers its employees.

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Haugen stated that we have acknowledged that these are new duties, and are not included in the existing Executive Assistant job description, and therefore have been working with the Grand Forks Human Resource Department to try to determine the best way to make the necessary adjustments to acknowledge these additional responsibilities. He pointed out that with the assistance of the Grand Forks Human Resource Department, a new job description was developed, that of Office Manager, and a copy was included in the packet. He stated that it was also suggested that the pay grade be increased from 32 to 35, with the actual increase in salary being just over \$2,300.00.

Haugen reported that this information was shared with the Finance Committee at a meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>, and they approved forwarding a recommendation to this body to approve the reclassification, to amend the job description and step increase, and to make it retroactive to January 1, 2010.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE RECLASSIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO OFFICE MANAGER, THE AMENDED JOB DESCRIPTION, AND THE CORRESPONDING STEP INCREASE RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, 2010.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Strandell, Leigh, Powers, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2010-2013 AMENDMENT**

Haugen reported that this is essentially a request from the NDDOT, to make amendments to our T.I.P. document for Fiscal Year 2010. He pointed out that there are three amendment that are being proposed, with two primarily involving changes to the scope of work or modifications to the dollar amounts; and the third requiring more substantial changes. He referred to the packet, Page 17, and pointed out that the proposed changes are shown highlighted in yellow.

Haugen stated that the first two projects involve US Highway 2, with the first being a signage project. He reminded the board that the MPO did a Retro-reflectivity study for sign replacement in the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks areas this past year, and both the NDDOT and MNDOT have to comply with the new MUTCD retro-reflectivity standards as well, so the NDDOT has a project programmed to replace the signage along U.S. Highway 2, originally beginning at the city limits of Grand Forks and continuing to Arvilla, but the new termini has the project beginning at Red River and continuing to Niagra, thus increasing the coverage area, and in-turn the cost of the project slightly.

Christensen reported present.

Leigh asked what prompted the change in boundaries. Haugen responded that it was basically due to their acknowledging that because they were already doing signage here already, they might as well go ahead and do that remaining stretch within city limits.

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Haugen reported that the second project is also on U.S. Highway 2, and is actually a reconciliation of our T.I.P. to the S.T.I.P. He explained that when we adopted our T.I.P. we showed a higher cost estimate for this project, which involves doing some pavement work on U.S. Highway 2 between Arvilia and North 55<sup>th</sup> Street, than what was shown in the S.T.I.P., therefore we have lowered the cost in the T.I.P. so it is in compliance with the amount shown in the S.T.I.P..

Haugen stated that the third amendment is in response to NDDOT's desire to begin the project development process on the Sorlie Bridge Replacement project, so we are including the \$3.125 Million Dollar cost to begin the RFP process, or Phase 1 of the project development process.

Haugen referred to Page 18 of the packet, and pointed out that total Federal amount will be \$2.5 Million. He added that both the State and the City will also come up with matching funds as well. He explained that they are anticipating there will be three phases to this project before a conclusion can be made as to what the project will actually entail, with the first phase being funded entirely by North Dakota, the second phase being funded entirely by Minnesota, and the third phase, if necessary, being funded with a 50/50 cost share between Minnesota and North Dakota.

Haugen referred to the packet, and reported that a public hearing was held at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last Wednesday, and a staff person from the Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission was present, and did comment on the issue (a copy of that discussion was included in the packet and is available upon request). He said that, basically, they just wanted to remind us that the Sorlie is a historic structure, and any work done on it would have to comply with Section 106 rules, as well as with all the other historical criteria placed on that structure.

Haugen stated that the Technical Advisory Committee, and staff are recommending approval of the T.I.P. amendments as submitted.

Leigh asked, for \$3,000,000 per state, what kinds of things will be done. Haugen responded that they will most likely start with a more detailed analysis of the structure itself in order to determine whether or not it should be replaced or rehabbed. He added that one thing that will need to be done is to establish a purpose and need statement that will help identify what alternatives might be considered. Leigh stated, then, that basically for about \$6,000,000 they will tell us whether or not we need to replace the bridge, and this doesn't include doing any actual structure work at all. Haugen responded that that would be correct. Leigh said that that is a lot of money. Haugen responded that it is, but you have to keep in mind that it is navigable waterway, and its hydraulics and the flood protection system complicate things, you have two states involved with their different bureaucracies, and you have two federal regions involved with their bureaucracies as well. He added that while North Dakota is the lead agency on this project, this does not absolve Minnesota of any responsibilities or decisions.

Grasser stated that he has a couple of comments that might fit in with Mr. Leigh's questions. He said that the City of Grand Forks was concerned when the request was first made that they had

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not budgeted for the \$300,000 plus local share involved with this project, but they talked with the NDDOT to get a little more clarification on the project. He commented that the first \$3,000,000 will go towards the costs involved with doing the project concept report. He reported that they asked for a timeline on when these expenditures might occur, as their first thought was that the City would have to come up with \$300,000 in local funding, but in reality the 2010 request will be about \$20,000, which the City can handle with an internal budget amendment. He went on to explain that the study timeline indicates that they are anticipating the project will be completed in 2015. He added that he feels that what complicates it is, as Mr. Haugen stated, the multiple jurisdictions and the historical designation. He stated that he also feels the NDDOT is right to start this process early because they are kind of a long grind. He reported that from the City's standpoint, we are looking at this costing about \$20,000 in 2010, about \$30,000 in 2011, and the \$80,000 in 2014 and 2015.

Strandell asked who would be doing the study, would it be done in-house or by a consultant. Grasser responded that it will be managed by the NDDOT, and will be done by a consultant.

Christensen asked if they could use some of the \$6,000,000 for this project, and he knows this is a rhetorical question, to build out 4<sup>th</sup> so we can keep the crossing at the point in good shape. He said he knows this is funny, but it really isn't funny because you are going to have a bridge go down, and you will have a lot of additional traffic on the remaining bridges. Grasser responded that this is true, and that will be one of the things that will need to be studied, sequencing and alternative routes, and he would think that would be part of the technical analysis of the project concept report.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FY 2010-2013 T.I.P. AMENDMENT, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Strandell, Leigh, Powers, Malm, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF PROPOSED TRANSIT PROJECTS FOR THE 2011-2014 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that these are the projects on the transit side that are seeking federal funds for the next T.I.P. cycle. He stated that, for the most part with transit, the bulk of the projects are just a continuation of their operations as they currently are, and that is what is going on on the East Grand Forks side, with us just adding an additional year of projects for 2014, and increasing the costs 3%.

Haugen commented that on the Grand Forks side there are some programs that they apply for, and participate in on a statewide basis that are a little above and the basic operations, so on page 28, the three projects listed are all projects Grand Forks is applying for.

Haugen referred to Project 3 on Page 28, and explained that each year the North Dakota Statewide Capital Grant Request gets submitted for earmarks, and for the last ten years or so our

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delegation has been successful in earmarking funds for capital purchases. He stated that in 2011 they are looking at doing most of the work in the public transportation building out in the Industrial Park on South 48<sup>th</sup> Street, purchasing a couple of new vehicles, and some bus washing equipment, with the bulk of the funds actually going towards the work involved in upgrading the public transportation building.

Haugen commented that Projects 4 and 5 are continuations of some special grants, with the first being the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC), which is how we fund Routes 12 and 13, which service the Alerus Center connection to Target to South Middle School to South Grand Forks, and back up through the Mall and Hospital. He stated that the last program is the New Freedom program, which is primarily used to purchase some demand response vehicles.

Haugen stated that because they are seeking federal funds for these projects, they need to appear in our T.I.P., therefore we need to have them approved as projects for us to consider when we draft our Transportation Improvement Program for 2011-2014, and then we can forward them on to our cognizant agencies. He said, then, that the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending the board approve these projects as being eligible for the funding consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, and to give them a priority ranking.

***MOVED BY ADAMS, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE FY2011-2014 T.I.P. PROJECT APPLICATIONS AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE THEM A PRIORITY RANKING.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Strandell, Leigh, Powers, Malm, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF SOLICITATION OF PROJECTS FOR POSSIBLE 2<sup>ND</sup> STIMULUS**

Haugen reported that on the Minnesota side, MNDOT, and their Federal Highway and Transit Divisions are being a little more aggressive in getting projects in the cue for T.I.P. and S.T.I.P. amendments. He stated that, as a result of that we put a notice in the paper as part of our project identification public participation requirements so that if anyone has a project, or projects they would like to see considered for the possible second stimulus, they understand that they need to go through the respective governing agencies as soon as possible in order that the projects can be submitted to the MPO by February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Haugen commented that on the North Dakota side, they have identified that there is a possibility of a second stimulus, but they have not formally requested projects be submitted to them for consideration.

Haugen explained that, being a bi-state entity, we are kind of stuck in the middle so we went ahead and did the public notice which will get us set up in the event that MNDOT tells us to move ahead with any potential projects for action at our March meeting. He added that this is all contingent on what Congress does. He stated that, as we all know, the House passed a bill last

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December, but the Senate is struggling with the issue. He added that next week the Senate will be discussing this, however the current draft document does not contain any stimulus dollars for infrastructure, although it does achieve a couple important things for us. He explained that the first thing is that it extends the authorization to have a federal transportation program for another year, and the other is that it reinvests several billions into the Highway Trust Fund that were rescinded last October, so it puts some money back into the trust fund for highway projects.

Haugen reported that yesterday a concerted effort was started with some Democratic Senators to urge Senator Reid to include the mirror image of what the house has for stimulus infrastructure, so we will need to wait and see how this all plays out, but in any event on one side of the river we are being encouraged to start getting our T.I.P. amendment process in full swing, and the other side is telling the local agencies to start preparing a list of projects so they are ready if and when something is passed, but we are not formally seeking amendments.

Haugen commented that some type of JOBS Bill will be considered next week, so right now we are in the midst of soliciting for projects. He stated that he knows that on both sides there are lists of projects going through the committee/council structures for possible submission. He added that at this time our best guess as to the possible funding that may be available is that it could be as high as what was approved in Stimulus 1, however it could be somewhat less than that as well, but at this time we are all processing on the assumption that we will have at least as much as the last stimulus go around.

Information only.

**MATTER OF STATUS OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY**

Haugen reported that he would like to give a brief update on the status of the Railroad Crossing Study. He distributed copies of a handout for the public meeting scheduled for next Tuesday.

Haugen stated that, again, in terms of the study this is a three part study: 1) the first part was to look at quiet zone status for fifteen crossings in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, which has essentially been completed, however we do have a cost issue with the three crossings near the Amtrak facility on DeMers that is still being worked on with Federal Railroad and BNSF to determine what the necessary improvements are to get a quiet zone established there; 2) the second part of the study is to look at the State Mill Spur portion that runs parallel with North Washington up to the State Mill, which is what will be discussed at the meeting next Tuesday in order to come up with some alternatives as to what can be done to increase safety along that location; and 3) the third part of the study is the possible closure of Bacon Road, which was actually requested by BNSF and the State Mill, at their cost. He stated that they are holding their first property owner/neighborhood meeting at the State Mill Tuesday afternoon to get that process started. He commented that, as they work through this issue, they are becoming aware that rail activity along that Mill Spur will most likely increase to service the needs of the State Mill, so we are trying to impress on them that they shouldn't look only at what is going on out there today, but what will be happening in the future.

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Malm reported that he has received more comments on the closing of Bacon Road than he has received for a long long time. He stated that people that live in that area feel that it is a very important point, and he hopes that they have contacted staff with their concerns as well. Haugen responded that he has received many comments as well, and of all the crossings, the Bacon Road crossing has generated considerably more comments than any other crossing discussed. He stated that staff mailed personal invitations out to more than fifty business and property owners in that area to let them know of the meeting next Tuesday at the State Mill, and we have heard from several of them already, many of which will be attending. He added that they also received several written comments from those that cannot attend as well.

Information only.

**MATTER OF MERRIFIELD INTERCHANGE UPDATE**

Malm stated Grand Forks County took the lead on this item, and after some questions and concerns were voiced, decided to send a delegation to Bismarck to talk to the NDDOT about the issues involved with this project. He said that Mr. Magnuson was a member of that delegation and is present today to give a brief update on the result of that meeting.

Magnuson reported that, as Chairman Malm stated, county staff attended a meeting at the State DOT office on January 28<sup>th</sup> regarding the Merrifield Interchange project; with William Murphy, Ed Nierode, Richard Onstad, Francis Ziegler, Grant Levy, Dave Leftwich, Paul Benning, Les Noehre, and himself in attendance.

Magnuson stated that they discussed the funding and planning process for a future interchange project, along with a background of some of the challenges the NDDOT is currently facing in terms of funding levels.

Magnuson commented that it was explained to them that in order for the state to justify state and federal funds for an interchange project one of two conditions have to be met. He stated that the first condition is that the surrounding land and infrastructure has to be fully developed, basically at urban densities, to the point that highway congestion and level of service are an issue on the existing system, at which time they could then justify the project to relieve congestion and provide an acceptable level of service. He said that it was also explained that state and federal funds cannot be used for projects to promote growth, but can be used where existing growth has required the need.

Magnuson reported that the second condition where state and federal funds can be used is if the interchange were part of a by-pass project. He said that this is where the Red River bridge crossing project comes into play. He explained that without the bridge component being planned, and funded, the interchange would not be eligible for funds, although they do recognize that both projects do not have to happen at the same time, but the bridge project would have to be planned and funded or the interchange project would not be eligible.

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Magnuson commented that they did have some concerns with the economy, in terms of their future funding levels, not just for requests such as this, but for their existing projects as well. He said that they sense that future projects such as this one would be subjected to a cost/benefit analysis, while they currently aren't at this point, and they have also seen a lot of public/private partnerships occurring to move projects forward rather than waiting for federal funds to do so.

Magnuson stated that, overall, the advice given to them was to continue involvement in the MPO's planning process, as this project is part of the transportation plan. He added, however, that it was also pointed out to them that the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange is the higher priority in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan than the Merrifield Interchange. He said that if it is still the desire to move this project forward at a faster pace than we might want to look at priority listings in the next Long Range Transportation Plan update, so that if the Merrifield Bridge is the highest priority bridge, then maybe that is grounds to move the Merrifield Interchange up to the highest priority interchange, whereas, if 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue is truly the highest priority interchange, then maybe the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge should be the highest priority bridge, but at this point the County will continue to be the lead agency on the interchange project, although it appears from the discussion that there are no federal funding available anytime soon, and we were encouraged to maybe look at a public/private partnership to get it done more quickly.

Haugen commented that, as mentioned, we will continue with the MPO planning process concerning this subject, however there is a correction that needs to be made. He explained that 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue is not a priority interchange in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. He said that the plan shows that 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a priority only to the means that we want to preserve the corridor so that after 2035 there is a potential that beyond 2035 we could do an interchange at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue, so he isn't sure where the idea that it is a priority came from. Leigh asked where 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue is located. Haugen responded that it is a mile south of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, by the campground and golf course. He added that he will make sure that this is clarified with the NDDOT. He stated that when we did the last Long Range Transportation Plan we did analyze 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a potential interchange location, but it did not rise to the top as a priority, and Merrifield was listed as a priority location for a new interchange. He added that we also included the modification of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue interchange as a priority as well.

Christensen asked, with all the money we have for planning around here, can we find out how much East Grand Forks has grown to the north as opposed to the south. Haugen responded that they are doing that right now. Christensen commented that it seems to him that there has been a lot of growth to the north as opposed to the south. Leigh responded that most of the growth has been to the south. He explained that there have been some homes built near the golf course on the north side of the city, but primarily the majority of the growth has occurred around the new schools on the south side of the city. Christensen asked, then, why do we get all this traffic coming through on DeMers, through the downtowns, as opposed to on the point. Leigh responded that there are just a lot of people from East Grand Forks working in Grand Forks. He stated that as far as the point is concerned, it depends on the time of day as to how many people are crossing from one side to the other. He asked what the traffic counts are on Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup>.

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Christensen said that it is pretty simple, all you have to do is hang around there from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., or from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and you will see the cars, and it's daily, so it seems to him that someone should be doing some studying about the traffic counts. Haugen responded that traffic counts are done on a continuous basis. Leigh commented that on the south end there are two times a day, and you just mentioned them, when school starts and ends, and that is why you see so much traffic at that time. Christensen stated that he is talking about the amount of people going through the downtowns, its tons of people, and he goes down there every day, and it seems to him that you don't need to study this, you just need to sit and watch it because there is just a lot of traffic, and it appears that they are all Minnesota license plates, not North Dakota, so they are coming from some place.

Christensen said that the only reason he wants to know all this is because it is going to come up again some day, ten years from now, that a bridge is needed on 47<sup>th</sup> or 32<sup>nd</sup>, and you will get the same push-back you always get, that the school on 32<sup>nd</sup> isn't going away, and there are all those people backing on 32<sup>nd</sup>, so you have all kinds of traffic, and you don't have that on 47<sup>th</sup>, and that road was designed so people don't have access on it. He stated that this is a planning group, so why don't you start planning a little bit as to where your people really are, and how you are going to develop East Grand Forks, or where it is going to develop.

Christensen stated that this is all just an observation, and he isn't going to be here when you guys build the bridge, but some might be, and you will still have the same issues you had when he first got on the City Council, and it was just a firestorm on 32<sup>nd</sup>, and that isn't going to go away, it isn't going to go away when you start talking about 47<sup>th</sup>, so this is just a word to, he hopes the wise.

Christensen asked, aren't you now planning on replacing the Sorlie Bridge, when is that going to get done. Haugen responded that it is scheduled to be done in 2018. Christensen said, then, that that means you will be done in 2020, so when do you really think you will have money in Minnesota to build their share of the bridge on Merrifield. He stated that right now this is not a time to be thinking of taxing your citizens, or selling bonds for those projects. He added that nobody sitting here will still be here by that time, but if you really think your going to get a bridge done in light of what is going on in Minnesota, it isn't going to happen, so do some real planning and think about where your going to put it in the southend if you really think you need another bridge, or on the northend, but he really doesn't see anything happening and we just keep ducking the issue. Haugen reported that our work program for the next two years is going to do that planning. He added that we are currently updating the Land Use Plans for East Grand Forks and Grand Forks, and that will answer the question as to where East Grand Forks plans to grow for the next twenty-plus years, and where Grand Forks plans to grow for the next twenty-plus years, and once we are done with that update we will then get into updating the Long Range Transportation Plan, where we will once again discuss the issue of bridges.

Christensen stated that you can plan all you want, and you can do all the studies you want, and fund all the consultants you want, but everyone sitting in this room knows that Grand Forks is going to grow to the south, that's a given, its already there, we have all the infrastructure in

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place, we don't have any infrastructure in place to the north and whoever sits on that council will not be funding it, so plan it, but understand that if you can get your two towns to grow together, but right now he doesn't see a lot of people using the Point Bridge. He commented that when he first got on the board you were saying there was a 50/50 split in usage of the Point Bridge, and he doesn't know when you took those tests, but it sure isn't 50/50 now.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. ATP Meeting

Haugen reported that Mr. Strandell and himself recently attended an ATP meeting in Minnesota to discuss the federal T.I.P./S.T.I.P. cycles, and one bit of news they heard, which will most likely apply to North Dakota as well, is that because the authorization has not been finalized they have not formally earmarked authorization projects. He explained that in FY2010, they have money set aside that needs to be spent, but there are no projects earmarked for it, so yesterday Minnesota announced that they are seeking projects, and will go through a kind of mini-stimulus process in order to program those funds. He added that there will be tens of millions of dollars available, and while 50% will remain in the Met-Council, the remaining 50% will be distributed statewide for transportation projects. He said that it appears this will be the same on the North Dakota side, but he has not had the opportunity to discuss it with anyone yet.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>,  
2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:40 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Strandell, Leigh, Powers, Malm, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis  
Executive Assistant

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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:08 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Steve Adams, Art Bakken, Mike Powers, and Doug Christensen.

Absent were: Dick Grassel and Greg Leigh.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

**SUSPEND AGENDA**

Haugen stated that, until Mr. Christensen arrives we do not have a quorum, therefore he would like to request that we suspend the agenda to discuss those agenda items not requiring action.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

a. Merrifield Interchange Update

Haugen reported that some erroneous information was given at the last MPO Executive Policy Board meeting concerning what is in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. He referred to a slide of a graphic from the Long Range Transportation Plan that illustrates all the projects that are in the plan, and pointed out that it does include the status of the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue project discussed at the meeting. He added that he did talk to the NDDOT, and did eliminate their confusion as to the status of 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Haugen referred to the graphic and pointed out that the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue project (illustrative projects are shown in blue), actually consists of right-of-way preservation in the event that sometime after 2035, if desired, we would have the ability to more easily construct an interchange at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He added that it isn't so much a financial issue as to why 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue is not in, but

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rather because of our having decided that some other projects, such as the Merrifield Interchange, modification of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Interchange, and doing an overpass at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue were needed more.

Haugen commented that, as mentioned last month, we are just beginning the process of updating our Long Range Transportation Plan, so during that process we will be revisiting 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue and will see how it shakes out at the end.

Malm asked where Merrifield fits in the timeline. Haugen responded that it fits into the mid-term portion of the timeline. He explained that our short-term projects were basically those projects covering the T.I.P. cycle, and the mid-term projects begin in 2013 and goes to about 2022, and that is the timeframe in which we were looking for the Merrifield Bridge project to be constructed.

Information only.

b. Invitation to NDDOT/UGPTI Public Input Meeting

Haugen referred to a copy of the invitation and letter, included in the packet, and explained that the website shown in the invitation gives us a little more information as to what the NDDOT is doing with these meetings. He said that the thing that caught his eye is the fact that they are suggesting, or they are going to try to push local governments (i.e. the county and the city) to consider a classification system similar to their highway performance classification system. He stated that they have been using this system in the rural area, and it is their hope, through their statewide regional workshops is to see if they can pass this system down to the county and other local entities.

Haugen reported that a meeting will be held in Grand Forks on April 9<sup>th</sup>, and they are requesting that anyone planning on attending please pre-register by March 26<sup>th</sup>. He added that after these regional meetings have concluded, a statewide conference will be held on May 17<sup>th</sup> in Bismarck, at which all the regional findings will be presented, and a consensus reached as to how to move forward with those findings.

Haugen commented that staff will be attending the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, and if anyone is interested in attending as well, please let staff know and we can get you registered, or go on to the website and register yourself by March 26<sup>th</sup>.

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Christensen reported present.

c. 2010 Flood Coordination

Haugen referred to Page 65 of the packet, and reminded everyone that as part of our Traffic Incident Bridge Closure Management Plan the MPO agreed to annually add a Flood

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Coordination Discussion item to the Technical Advisory Committee and MPO Executive Policy Board Agendas.

Haugen reported that discussion was held at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week, with most of that discussion focusing on the information contained on Page 69 of the packet; that being what would happen in the event the Point Bridge, the Sorlie Bridge, and the Louis Murray Bridge all close during a flood event. He explained that what is shown is what was done after last year's flooding event, however, since then MNDOT has changed their District Traffic Engineers and they are currently working with Polk County Engineers to determine what, if any revisions might be made for future such events.

Information only.

**RESUME AGENDA**

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was now present.

**APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2010 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Malm, Adams, Bakken, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2010-2013 T.I.P. AMENDMENT**

Haugen reported that originally we had anticipated doing some T.I.P. amendments at this time, however, because the Senate has not yet formally acted on a second stimulus bill, any action we would have taken on that item will need to be held for at least another month. He added that we did notify our local agencies that the solicitation of projects has been extended for another month. He stated that they had scheduled a public hearing for today, however he would request that this body extend that to our April meeting.

Haugen stated, then, that this means that we do not have any amendments to process for the second stimulus, however, he would like to give a brief update on what is going on in Congress. He said that the Senate did pass a bill this morning, which the House had already approved, so it will now be submitted for the President's signature that extends SAFETEA-LU to the end of the year. He reported that this will give us full access to 2010 funds. He added that they also put funding back into the Highway Trust Fund, so there will be an opportunity for more funding becoming available for construction projects in FY2010 than were previously identified.

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Haugen commented that by extending SAFETEA-LU, rather than approving a reauthorization bill, each state is scheduled to get a certain portion of funds that would have been earmarked, but weren't in FY2010. He stated that we will work with both states to identify which projects would be appropriate to receive those funds.

Haugen reported that we do have a T.I.P. modification that needs to be acted on today. He explained that in our T.I.P. we had anticipated that Grand Forks Transit would receive two years of funding for both the JARC and the New Freedom programs, however, the NDDOT only funded one year of allocation, therefore we need to modify our T.I.P. to reflect that change. He referred to the tables, included in the packet, and pointed out that the projects are a continuation of Routes 12/13 in Grand Forks, which basically covers the area around the Alerus, through the Columbia Mall area, to South Middle School and the Aurora Complex, and back to the Alerus. He stated that the JARC funds would keep it operating for another year, and the New Freedom funds would be used to purchase demand response vehicles for the Dial-A-Ride and Senior Rider services.

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE FY2010-2013 T.I.P. MODIFICATION, AS DISCUSSED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Malm, Adams, Bakken, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2012-2015 T.I.P. PROCESS**

Haugen reported that, for the past year we have been working with the NDDOT on how to best meet the requirements for solicitation of T.I.P. projects. He referred to a memorandum, included in the packets, and pointed out that it outlines the proposed procedures we have developed for implementation of revised project solicitation and prioritization for development of the T.I.P.

Haugen referred to a map of the MPO Study area, included in the packet, and explained that all projects receiving federal funds, are regionally significant, and need federal approval, need to be included in our T.I.P. program, so there are a lot of rural type of funding programs for which we are still working on with the NDDOT to determine how best to solicit and prioritize those projects. He added that most of the information in the packet covers those programs that occur within the shaded area, the Federal Urban Aid Boundary.

Haugen reported that in the past the NDDOT would send a direct letter to the City of Grand Forks soliciting projects, however, beginning with our next T.I.P. cycle it will be the MPO that will send the City, and other local entities, the letter soliciting projects for all the different programs, which include: 1) Local Urban Roads Program – Grand Forks receives about \$3 to \$3.5 million dollars annually towards work on local roadways; 2) State Urban Roads Program – Statewide selection with no allocated amount dedicated; 3) Transportation Enhancement Program; and 4) Safe Routes to School Program.

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Haugen stated that we will also be prioritizing projects as well, so they have been working on a scoring system to help with the prioritization process. He referred to the scoring sheets, included in the packet, and explained that when developing this scoring system they used a national program called “Telus” to help identify the eight planning factors to be used for each project when going through the prioritization process. He pointed out that in addition to those eight factors, they added a ninth factor, which is more locally/regionally based, as well. He added that they have also established, as staff, different weighting criteria for each of the nine factors, using a basic 100-point system.

Haugen reported that this information was introduced to the Technical Advisory Committee last week for their review, and staff will continue working on this to fine-tune the process further. He added that they still have work to do on this on the Minnesota side. He stated that while the requirements are not different in Minnesota than in North Dakota, there is quite a difference in the way they fund their different programs. He explained that Minnesota puts all their monies in to one pot and then distribute it out to the ATPs, and then amongst the ATPs we have different subcategories that we work with, so we haven’t yet sat down as staff yet to work on the Minnesota side of the process, but ultimately we will have a similar ranking system as North Dakota.

Christensen asked if they had to have a computer generated selection process, and what precipitates this methodology as opposed to past processes. Haugen responded that they were federally mandated to develop a ranking system. He explained that in the past we were basically answering if something was consistent with our plan, and if it was then we just identified them as having a priority ranking with showing how we determined that. Christensen asked, then, if all projects are equal, how does a project get where you want it to be. Haugen responded that they will be working with City Staff to help them identify projects that would be consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, with yes and no questions. He added that, ultimately, what they receive from the city is what they will be ranking on these scoring sheets, so it will still go through the City’s processes for nomination. Christensen stated that what he was asking was, how will the MPO know which project the City wants to have ranked first, how does it get to be first when it is run through the model. Haugen responded that it should come out first because the City should already know how the MPO will run it through its model. He added that if there is a problem, such as a project that is outside the Long Range Transportation Plan, but the City wants it first, then we know there are problems, and we would have to do a plan amendment before it can actually become the first project in our T.I.P.. Christensen said, though, that the City will know that. Haugen responded that that is correct. He added that the City will be identifying their projects through the C.I.P. process, and will go through the City Council process well before they are required to submit the projects to the MPO.

Haugen referred to Page 22 of the packet, and pointed out that it is the month-by-month timeline of what will be coming before the board each month for the implementation of the revised T.I.P. development process and procedures.

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**MATTER OF LAND USE PLAN SCOPES OF WORK**

Haugen reported that in our work program we identified that we would be helping both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks update their land use plans. He stated that he did include both Scopes of Work in the packet, and explained that they are quite similar. He commented that prior to us developing Travel Demand Forecasting Models we need to know how each city plans to grow, and updating their Land Use Plans is a very good way to do that. He stated that this information was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee last week, and they, as well as staff, are recommending approval of the Scopes of Work for Grand Forks and East Grand Forks.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY BAKKEN TO APPROVE THE DRAFT SCOPES OF WORK FOR THE GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND FORKS LAND USE PLAN UPDATES.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Malm, Adams, Bakken, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY UPDATE**

Haugen reported that in terms of the quiet zone portion of the study, work was to begin on the two downtown crossings, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, this week to upgrade them to quiet zone status. He stated that the plan was to begin on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street crossing, however, with the impending flood event, and the possibility that the railroad opening within the flood structure could be closed, they are trying to rework the schedule to begin on the 4<sup>th</sup> Street crossing first. He commented that once these two crossings are updated, then all three crossings in Grand Forks should be eligible for quiet zone status.

Christensen asked if they would be taking the parking lot by Widmans. Haugen responded that that would not have to happen for the crossings to be eligible for quiet zone status, but he thinks that, ultimately the City Council wanted more protection from increased traffic, whether it be vehicle or train traffic, by doing some medians on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

Haugen stated that another issue concerning quiet zones is that East Grand Forks took another consideration for their quiet zone stature, earlier than later, and decided not to close any of their crossings. He said that because of this there will be activity on Central, maybe late this year or early next year to make that crossing eligible, but they are still looking for funding for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street crossing in order to be able to put up gates and add contact warning time, so it might be a while before the three East Grand Forks crossings can become quiet zone eligible.

Haugen reported that they ran into an issue with quiet zone eligibility for the crossings out by the Amtrak station. He explained that we were told that in order to make that area eligible, we will need to install a Constant Warning Time System at all three crossings. He added that BNSF has also informed us that in order to be able to put in Constant Warning Time systems out there, we

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basically have to update all the equipment at each of those three crossings as well, so the price jumped considerably. He commented that they are asking the Federal Railroad to assist us in evaluating whether BNSF really needs to upgrade all the equipment there, and are trying to arrange a meeting to get Federal Railroad people in town at the same time BNSF people are in town so they can all visit those three crossings to make a final determination of what really needs to be done.

Haugen stated that in terms of the State Mill Spur portion of the update, they had a meeting yesterday with BNSF and State Mill personnel concerning the possible closure of Bacon Road, and as discussion ensues we have been made aware that it becoming more of a desire, or need for the State Mill to start receiving Unit Trains on the State Mill Spur. He added that the State Mill would like to see a minimum configuration of 8,000 linear feet of track available north of Gateway Drive to accommodate a Unit Train, which will consist of 110 cars, as well as a couple of locomotives.

Haugen referred to a graphic of the State Mill property, and pointed out that there is not currently 8,000 linear feet of track available there, so it will be a challenge for them to be able to accommodate a 110 car Unit Train. He explained that one issue that would need to be addressed is that BNSF would have to have their power, or locomotives on the front of the train, and they would need to detach them in order for the mill to be able to maneuver the cars to unload them, and then they would need to reconnect them to the train, there needs to be a spur, as well as additional track in excess of the required 8,000 linear feet just to land the train.

Haugen commented that in addition to their desire to close Bacon Road for the Unit Train, because the State Mill has three lines that cross their property, and because of a requirement that there be a site distance of 250-feet on each side of the roadway, which cuts their storage area in half, they would like to close it for more storage and maneuverability of railroad cars. He said that with this new information we will be reconvening with property owners up there to try to get their feedback and input as to the possible closure of Bacon Road.

Haugen reported that if a Unit Train is able to be accommodated on site, it would open up possible night operations on the State Mill Spur, and then we would have, essentially, close to a mile and a third train maneuvering up through that neighborhood to get to the mill, which they are identifying would occur once a week.

Christensen asked what this would do to traffic on Highway 2. Haugen responded that as long as the train is moving, however slowly, they can close traffic down. Christensen asked how long they can close it down. Haugen responded that as long as they are moving there is no limit to how long a crossing can be closed. He added that once the train has stopped, they have ten minutes until it has to be opened, but as long as the train is moving there really is no time limit. Christensen asked, approximately how long will it take for a Unit Train to get through a crossing. Haugen responded that they will need to do some calculations to determine the answer to that question, however it would depend on how fast, or slow, the train is moving, and it is likely that all the crossings from Gateway Drive to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue will be closed for a period of time.

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Christensen asked what would happen if the City says it doesn't want Unit Trains in the City. Haugen responded that we would need to work with the Public Service Commission, along with the State Mill, to go through the political process necessary to stop them from using Unit Trains. Christensen stated that it is important that Mr. Haugen get those figures to the City Council as soon as possible so we can be ready to deal with this if needed. He asked that a memorandum, with this information, be completed within two weeks.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO ADJOURN THE MARCH  
17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:54 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Malm, Adams, Bakken, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Wednesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Steve Adams, Warren Strandell, Art Bakken, Dick Grassel, Mike Powers, and Doug Christensen.

Absent were: Greg Leigh.

Guest(s) present were: Janelle Mulroy, Brady Martz; and Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was now present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Bakken, Grassel, Strandell, Powers, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2009 MPO AUDIT**

Haugen reported that a copy of the full audit report and letter from Brady Martz were included in the packets. He explained that the only thing he would add is the fact that we did not spend above the magical threshold of funds, therefore our Audit did not have to comply with certain

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federal regulations, however that also means that we are not able to use our consolidated planning grant to pay for the cost of the audit. He then introduced Janelle Mulroy, who was present to go over the 2009 Audit findings, as presented.

Mulroy referred to the audit report and went over it briefly as follows:

Pages 1 and 2 - Independent Auditor's Report: Mulroy explained that this letter indicates that they conducted the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and government auditing standards. She commented that, as Mr. Haugen alluded to, this year is different in that they did not have to conduct a single audit, which is an audit that is conducted in accordance with Management and Budget A133 regulations, a requirement whenever you spend \$500,000 or more in federal funds during the year, and the MPO did not do that this year. She added that Page 1 also indicates that they have issued an unqualified, or clean opinion, which is the best opinion they can offer, so it was a very clean audit once again.

Pages 3 through 7 – Management's Discussion And Analysis: Mulroy reported that this just gives some financial highlights, and some narrative on various issues that management would like to talk about within the financial statements. She added that in her opinion the most useful portion of this report is found on Pages 4 and 5, the balance sheet and income statement, which are presented in a comparative format so you can compare 2008 numbers with 2009 numbers, which we do not do in the financial statements themselves.

Page 8 – Balance Sheet/Statement Of Net Assets: Mulroy commented that the MPO operates with just one fund, or general ledger, and they are required under Government Auditing Standards, or GASBY, to present the financial statements in two different formats. She pointed out that the first column presents the financial statements in a format that you have seen for years, but it excludes all accrual items such as property and equipment, and in the MPO's case, compensated absences or retirement costs. She stated that those items are adjusted in the middle column, and are used to get to what they call a "full accrual" which is shown in the Statement of Net Assets column.

Page 9 – Statement Of Governmental Fund Revenues, Expenditures, And Changes In Fund Balances/State Of Activities: Mulroy reported that, again we have the three columns for the same reasons as on Page 8. She referred to the Statement of Activities column, and pointed out that of the total revenues of \$626,005, 77%, or \$480,665 of which are from federal monies. She stated that the \$480,665 is just below the threshold of \$500,000, which would have required a single audit be performed.

Pages 10-15 – Notes To Financial Statements: Mulroy stated that a lot of these are standard disclosures, which she is sure everyone has seen in the past. She referred to Page 13, and pointed out that there are a couple of notes, Notes 2 and 3, which detail out capital assets and compensated absences from the beginning of the year to the end.

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Page 16 – Budget And Actual: Mulroy reported that total revenues were in excess of what was budgeted by \$36,028, and expenditures were in excess of what was budgeted by \$12,812, so overall income for the year was \$23,216 higher than what was budgeted.

Pages 17 and 18 – Standard Independent Auditor’s Report On Internal Control: Mulroy referred to Page 17, the last sentence, and explained that it refers to Item 2009-1, which is found on Page 19 of the report. She explained that, as you have seen the last couple of years, this is the result of a new auditing standard that came into effect a few years ago, that says that whenever they, as auditors, help with the financial statements, or proposed journal entries, they are required to disclose that as a significant deficiency within the report. She stated that, again, this is nothing that has changed within the day-to-day operations of the entity, it is simply the result of an auditing standard, and the fact that they helped draft the financial statements, and proposed a couple of journal entries to bring the financial statements up to a full accrual basis.

Christensen reported present.

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE 2009 MPO AUDIT AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Bakken, Grassel, Strandell, Powers, and Malm.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT 2011-2014 T.I.P. – MINNESOTA SIDE**

Haugen reported that traditionally April is when the MPO approves the draft T.I.P. document for both Minnesota and North Dakota, however, we are only doing so for Minnesota at this time as North Dakota was not able to finalize their draft document in time, although we should have it for our May meeting.

Haugen commented that information included in the packets involves projects that are covering only the Minnesota side of the MPO area. He stated that, for the most part, on the Minnesota side our process involves adding a fourth year to the T.I.P. document as there aren’t many other project changes that take place from year to year once they are programmed into the T.I.P./S.T.I.P..

Haugen referred to Pages 22 and 23, and explained that the 2014 projects listed are projects that this body approved earlier as being in compliance with the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan. He stated that in addition to approving that they are in compliance, you also set their priority ranking at that time as well.

Haugen reported that there is an illustrative project on the Minnesota side. He referred to Page 26, and pointed out that the project consists of a request that the City of East Grand Forks submitted to their Congressional Delegation for assistance in constructing an access road from the north to the beet plant, to be appropriated with FY 2011 funds. He said that if and when it is

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earmarked for funds, the MPO will then go back and remove it from the illustrative list, and amend the T.I.P. to show it as being a programmed project for 2011.

Haugen commented that a public hearing was held at last weeks Technical Advisory Committee meeting, and no one attended for discussion, nor did anyone submit any comments prior to noon that day either. He stated that both staff and the Technical Advisory Committee are recommending approval of the Draft 2011-2014 T.I.P. for the Minnesota side.

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY STRANDELL TO APPROVE THE MINNESOTA DRAFT 2011-2014 T.I.P., AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Bakken, Grassel, Strandell, Powers, Malm, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY UPDATE**

Haugen referred to the staff report on Page 33 of the packet, and reminded the board that there are three components to the study; the Bacon Road Closure Study, the State Mill Spur Study, and the Quiet Zone Study.

Haugen reported that as far as the Quiet Zone portion of the study goes, they are trying to set up a meeting with Federal Railroad, BNSF, and staff to do an on-site review of the three crossings near the Amtrak Station in Mid-May to determine what updates are actually necessary to make them eligible for quiet zone status. He explained that BNSF has expressed a desire for more equipment upgrades than we feel is necessary, so we have asked Federal Railroad to help us with a peer analysis to determine what is really necessary. He stated that he hopes that the results of that meeting will be available by the end of May.

Haugen commented that work is occurring on the downtown crossings, and once completed those three crossings will meet the eligibility requirements for quiet zone status.

Haugen reminded the board of the discussion held on the Bacon Road Closure portion of the study at their last meeting, specifically about the possibility of the State Mill using a Unit Train, and if that were to occur, how long each crossing would be closed when the train was running. He referred to Pages 44 and 45 of the packet, and pointed out that it includes the results of an analysis conducted to determine the closure times of each crossing.

Haugen explained that the whole issue of a possible need to close Bacon Road came about due to the State Mill looking at the possibility of having more of their grain shipped in, and one way of doing that would be to use a Unit Train. He stated, however, that when BNSF staff was here to meet with mill staff about this, they found that it would be a challenge to find enough railroad track length to accommodate a Unit Train at the site. He said we have not yet heard if they were able to accomplish squeezing in enough track to allow for a Unit Train, but if they are able to do so, SRF conducted analysis to determine how long each crossing would be closed when a Unit

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Train comes through, and those findings are shown on Pages 44 and 45. He went over the information briefly.

Haugen pointed out that he included copies of summaries of neighborhood meetings, and the public information meeting held on the State Mill Spur in the packet as well. He stated that the only real comment they received concerned the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue crossing, and the alley crossing between University Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup>. He explained that there is a construction firm located there that bridges both sides of the railroad track, and their reaction to our suggestion that we close the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue crossing and keep the alley crossing open was that they would actually prefer both remain open, but if one has to be closed that it be the alley crossing instead. He said that plans are being prepared to show how that scenario would work instead.

Haugen stated that there would still be three of the nine public crossings closed on the spur, and the remaining crossings would receive crossing gates and arms, as well as other necessary updates to make them safer.

Bakken referred to Pages 44 and 45, and asked which crossing would be closed for 27 minutes under the third analysis. Haugen responded that the 27 minutes actually refers to how long the Unit Train would be in the neighborhood, not at any individual crossing. Bakken asked which figure represents how long the Gateway crossing would be closed. Haugen responded that the numbers shown on Page 44 are for each individual crossing, therefore, if the train was moving at 5 mph the Gateway crossing would be closed for 16.57 minutes, and at 10 mph for 8.67 minutes, as would all the other crossings along the spur as well. Christensen asked how many times a day this would occur. Haugen responded that a Unit Train would arrive once a week.

Christensen asked when these findings would be presented to the City Council. Haugen responded that they are just waiting to hear whether or not we can accommodate a Unit Train, once that has been determined the final study report will be submitted to the City Council. Christensen asked if the City would have the ability to say whether or not they will allow a Unit Train to pass through. Haugen responded that the answer to that would be both yes and no. He explained that in order for a Unit Train to be accommodated on the State Mill site, Bacon Road would most likely need to be closed, hence the reason for the request to close it, however, if the City were to deny the State Mill's request to vacate/close Bacon Road, then the chance of a Unit Train being able to arrive on site would be almost non-existent.

Bakken asked about the option of just closing Bacon Road when the train is coming. Haugen responded that that option was discussed, but the State Mill and BNSF both felt that it really wouldn't be a viable option for them. He explained that when the Unit Train is on site, loading and unloading product, Bacon Road becomes important as they shift rail cars, so they feel that Bacon Road needs to be closed totally in order for them to be able to move cars back and forth. He added that there is also a Federal Railroad requirement that states that a public crossing needs to have 250-feet of site clearance on either side of the right-of-way, thus no cars can be stored there, and that is what really hurts the mill operations at Bacon Road, as they lose roughly 500-

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feet of track at that location, and there are four sets of track on the south side, and three sets of track on the north side of Bacon Road, so you add that up and you see that they lose a lot of rail car storage for a maneuvering area.

Bakken asked how many stakeholders are on that road. Haugen responded that there are six property owners that have access onto Bacon Road. Bakken asked where they would access if Bacon Road were closed. Haugen responded that they would only be closing the crossing, so they would still have access on Bacon Road to Washington Street. Grassel asked how far north they would go. Haugen responded that the initial thought was that they would go along Mill Road to the metal recycling facility, but that still would not give them 8,000 linear feet of track area, but once you get past the recycling facility you then have to deal with the English Coulee, and they ruled out building a crossing at that location.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Status On Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor

Grassel asked what the status is on the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor. Christensen responded that it hasn't seem to have gotten the attention of the City of Grand Forks, so not much has been done with it to date. He asked when the Sorlie Bridge was going to be closed for repairs. Grassel responded that the projected time frame is 2018. Haugen added that if everything stays on track with the project, it is scheduled to take place in 2018. Christensen asked if Mr. Haugen hadn't written a letter to Mayor Brown concerning the issue of Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup>. Haugen responded he had. Christensen asked that a copy of that letter be provided to him.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:22 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Adams, Bakken, Grassel, Strandell, Powers, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Steve Adams, Warren Strandell, Marc DeMers (Proxy For Dick Grassel), Mike Powers, and Greg Leigh.

Absent were: Art Bakken and Doug Christensen.

Guest(s) present were: Jane Williams, Grand Forks City Traffic Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***CHAIRMAN MALM ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS TO THE APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD. HEARING NONE, CHAIRMAN MALM DECLARED THE MINUTES APPROVED, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, DeMers, Powers, Malm, Adams, and Leigh.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION FOR NORTH DAKOTA**

Kouba reported that back in April staff gave a presentation concerning discrepancies to the functional classification system for both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. She stated that the

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City of Grand Forks proposed to add some more functionally classified roadway this summer that they wanted added into the functional class map, so staff worked with State, County, and City staff to get the inconsistencies worked out and came up with the map that was included in the packets, Page 11.

Kouba stated that this updated map was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee, although some additional changes were required to the labeling in order to include the roadways that are functionally classified.

Kouba distributed copies of a table showing the mileage percentages. She referred to the table, and pointed out that there are some changes to those percentages, adding that they are fairly consistent with the national averages, although our collectors are a little higher as several frontage roads adjacent to our principle arterials were included on the North Dakota side.

***MOVED BY ADAMS, SECONDED BY LEIGH TO APPROVE CHANGES TO THE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION FOR NORTH DAKOTA, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, DeMers, Powers, Malm, Adams, and Leigh.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE TO FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION FOR MINNESOTA**

Kouba reported that, again, staff looked at the functional classifications, and worked with State, County, and City staff to come to an agreement on what changes were necessary. She said, however, that staff was not able to get the changes to the Functional Classification System for Minnesota approved by the Technical Advisory Committee, so this is just a review of those changes at this time. She added that they do have a couple of things that they need to double check on with the County before June, as well as to get a more formal okay from the DOT, before the changes can be approved.

Leigh referred to the map and asked where the future arterial at the bottom comes out on the Grand Forks side. Kouba responded that it comes out at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South on the Grand Forks side. She commented that they include the future classifications mostly for referencing in future plans.

Information only.

**MATTER OF DRAFT 2011-2014 T.I.P. – NORTH DAKOTA**

Haugen reported that it had been anticipated at the last meeting that a Draft 2011-2014 T.I.P. for the North Dakota side would be available for your consideration today, however, as the staff report notes, we have not received what projects the NDDOT are programming in their Draft S.T.I.P., therefore we cannot really produce a Draft T.I.P..

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Haugen stated that they did receive, either late last month or early this month, a copy of the draft listing that the NDDOT submitted to the City of Grand Forks concerning what Urban projects they plan to include in their S.T.I.P.. He said that they gave Grand Forks a couple of weeks to provide comments back to them on this list of projects.

Haugen commented, again, that although we had hoped to have a Draft North Dakota T.I.P. available for your consideration, we were unable to do so. He added that one of the reasons for this was the fact that Congress was so late in finalizing Federal Fiscal-Year 2010 Appropriations. He stated that the T.I.P. document we are trying to draft and get to you for approval are for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2014, and now that Congress has acted, from what we can tell from their correspondence to the City, the State is now in the process of finalizing their documents, so we hope to have a draft document available at our June meeting.

Haugen reported that one thing we are following up on on both sides of the river, with Congress acting on the finalization of Fiscal-Year 2010, on the Minnesota side we found out that there were indeed additional monies available that were not previously programmed. He explained that in SAFETEA-LU there are earmarks that are in that Authorization Bill, and this lasts throughout the life of the bill, and that ended in 2009, so in Fiscal-Year 2010 they carried on the earmarking program but there were not projects attached to those earmarks, so each State had a program that did not have any projects attached to it, and Minnesota split their monies with 50% staying in the Metro area, and 50% going out to Greater Minnesota. He stated that this was further refined, and we are trying to determine whether or not the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Project was in the mix for possible funding, as that project is ready to go in 2010.

Haugen commented that they asked the same questions on the North Dakota side, but have not yet received a response.

DeMers asked if there would be any issue with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Project already being let, if that would affect the funding sources for that project. Haugen responded that he knows that at one time, when they were actually dealing with possible Stimulus II funding, that letting was a critical component to receiving those funds, but he isn't sure that is the case now as these are not Stimulus dollars, just regular appropriation dollars, but that is what we are following up on. He added that they are being told that all of the projects have been programmed, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Project was not one of those selected, so they are trying to find out what criteria they used in the selection process.

Information only.

**MATTER OF STUDY UPDATES**

1. Quiet Zone

Haugen reported that concerning the work on the Quiet Zone itself, the meeting with Federal Railroad Staff and BNSF Technical Staff at the Amtrak crossings was to take place this week to

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help determine what improvements are actually required for that area to become a quiet zone. He explained, however, that we were politely informed that we were not invited to this meeting to assist them in their site review of those crossings, although we did try to get ourselves invited to the meeting, therefore we are not sure at this time whether or not that meeting already has, or will occur this week.

Haugen commented that work has been done, and will continue to be done, to all three of the downtown crossings to upgrade them to meet the eligibility for quiet zone status.

2. State Mill Spur

Haugen reported that a copy of the Draft State Mill Spur Report was included in the packets. He said that a public meeting will be held June 1<sup>st</sup> to present this draft report to the public, and will be held in the Grand Forks City Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.. He added that a Neighborhood Stakeholder Committee meeting will be held in Grand Forks Conference Room A101 prior to the public meeting at 5:30 p.m..

Haugen commented that when reviewing the report you will notice that because none of the crossings have more than the bare minimum traffic control requirements, there is a huge cost to bring them up to eligibility standards for quiet zone status. He added that there are some other items listed that are fundable in the near term, and three closures are recommended with the funds to do so coming from BNSF and the State of North Dakota, therefore very little local dollars will be necessary to do the closures.

3. Bacon Road Closure

Haugen stated that one thing they did find out was that a Unit Train is not feasible. He said, however, that even though the Unit Train is off the table, in terms of their analysis, we still have an issue that the State Mill needs to address concerning how to receive more grain at their facility using a different mode of transportation than trucks.

Haugen reported that now that they have determined that a Unit Train is not feasible, they are beginning to develop a Plan B, and we have offered our assistance in developing that plan. He said that one thing we know is that the State Mill has been increasing their capacity and output, and they plan on increasing it more, so the current train operations they have hauling their flour out is about the size of half a Unit Train, or about 50 to 52 cars, and is done on a daily basis, and will need to be increased somehow, so both BNSF and the State Mill have continued to ask us to consider the closure of Bacon Road as it still impedes their train operation for getting the flour out.

Haugen stated that they have tentatively scheduled a meeting with the property owners located adjacent to the Bacon Road area on June 1<sup>st</sup> to inform them that, setting aside the Unit Train issue, there is still a current operational issue that BNSF and the State Mill are asking the City to

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consider assisting them with by considering doing something that would make Bacon Road unavailable to the public. He added that the primary issue here is that there is a site distance clearance required by Federal Railroad that a public crossing has to have a 250-foot clear-zone from the crossing to where cars are stacked, and because there are three or four sets of tracks in that area, by adding 250-feet on either side of Bacon Road, it makes for a lot of cars not being able to be serviced.

4. Traffic Signal Coordination Plan

Haugen reported that they had hoped to have South Washington and Gateway Drive corridors done, but we now have a delay in the purchasing of the signal equipment necessary to install the timing plans for these corridors. He added that the consultant has the timing plans prepared for those two corridors, so it is just a matter of getting the necessary equipment installed to get those timing plans in place.

Haugen stated that we will have this project completed this fall with the installation of equipment and timing plans on DeMers and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

5. T.I.P. Selection Process

Haugen commented that we have been working on improving our T.I.P. selection process. He stated that this past month they have been focusing on that area between the City's boundary and the MPO's Study Area, which goes out a couple of miles beyond the City's Boundary.

Haugen referred to the packet, and pointed out that he included information concerning some questions and clarification concerns that we are trying to get answers to from the NDDOT. He stated that he did meet with Richard Onstad, Grand Forks County Engineer, to discuss some of these issues, but some questions/concerns have not yet been answered.

Haugen commented that the primary thing we are trying to address, shown on Page 28 of the packet, is that South Columbia Road is a Grand Forks County Road, but is not shown as a County Major Collector, therefore it is ineligible for the County Roads Program funds. He stated that it is also outside the Federal Urban Aid boundary, so it is not eligible for federal aid either, but it appears that the one way to make it eligible for federal aid, regardless of the program that Federal Aid comes from, would be to approach the Grand Forks County to see if they would add it to their system as a County Major Collector. He said that Mr. Onstad was favorable to this request, and asked that a request be prepared and presented to the Grand Forks County Commissioners Board. He stated that this will be done in the very near future to try to get this section of Columbia Road eligible for federal aid.

Haugen reported that the remainder of the information discusses our attempt at getting everything in order so that we are prepared for the solicitation of projects in July and August, and that we have an understanding of what projects the MPO will be asked to review and comment

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on, and prioritize when we do our 2012-2015 T.I.P.. He stated that, as presented to the board in past months, these programs will have a similar scoring and ranking sheet that will be utilized to help up accomplish the prioritization of the projects.

Haugen added that a similar process will be done on the Minnesota side as well.

Malm commented that he doesn't feel that the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Corridor is timed at all anymore, it isn't functioning very well at all. Williams responded that she would check into this.

Information only.

**MATTER OF MPO PROCESS REVIEW – PRELIMINARY RESULTS**

Haugen reported that every three years, roughly, we have our federal partners come in and try to complete a thorough review of our planning processes. He stated that, included in the packet, is a copy of the agenda for this review, and announced that this year Mr. Malm was able to attend a portion of the review.

Haugen pointed out that he identified four items of interest that were discussed at the review, including:

- 1) Sometime in 2011 our current Long Range Transportation Plan officially expires, and we need to present a schedule showing when the next approval of an update to the plan will be completed prior to that expiration date.
- 2) Our current plan focuses only on those projects that add capacity to our system. An example of a project that is not included in our Long Range Transportation Plan because it does not add capacity would be the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor project, as that project is primarily a maintenance project, and does not add capacity to the system. Our planning document sets aside funds for these types of maintenance projects each year, but as noted in the report there are primarily two reasons why we don't list all these maintenance type projects and they are: a) our listing of projects would be increased beyond imagine; and b) placing maintenance projects into the financial plan would cause concern as to when we would place the project into the time periods (short, mid or long). Federal Highway is now insisting that our next Long Range Transportation Plan clearly spells out the maintenance projects as well as those projects of major significance, so that will be a considerable change to how we do our updated plan.
- 3) In our current T.I.P. documents we don't list projects that really are not financed with federal funds, mainly because they are very rare as most of our local dollars need to go toward matching our federal projects, but there are instances where we have projects that are 100% locally funded and we do not show them in our T.I.P. document. The new interpretation is that we will need to list all regionally significant projects regardless of funding source.
- 4) In the past we had the blessing to share our color copier/printer with others for a nominal fee, however this is now being questioned. We provided Federal Highway

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and State DOT staff the relevant section of federal regulations that we were relying on concerning our ability to do this, and we have not heard back from them as to whether or not they concur with our analysis, which is basically that under the CFR we are allowed to use the equipment, and to allow others to use it for a nominal fee, but are not able to use it to sort of bid against private industry, and we do not feel that we are doing that in any way.

Haugen stated that a formal report will be forthcoming, but ultimately, we did not have any glaring deficiencies with our planning processes.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Minnesota Safe Routes To School

Ellis reported that she was informed that the State of Minnesota is going to do another Safe Routes To School round this year, and it is running through State Aid, so she was told that the applications will be required by September. She stated that she has not received any formal notification on this, but we do have a project that everyone would like to see done, so she will look into this further and get an application in for that project if it does in-fact come to fruition.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY ADAMS, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ADJOURN THE MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2010,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:30 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, DeMers, Powers, Malm, Adams, and Leigh.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Steve Adams, Warren Strandell, Dick Grassel, Mike Powers, and Greg Leigh.

Absent were: Art Bakken and Doug Christensen.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**PRESENTATION OF LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR ART BAKKEN**

Malm said that he has a letter of appreciation he intended to present to Art Bakken, however, since Mr. Bakken is not here today it will be mailed to him.

**APPROVAL OF THE MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***CHAIRMAN MALM ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS TO THE MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD. HEARING NONE, CHAIRMAN MALM DECLARED THE MINUTES APPROVED, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO THE 2010-2013 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that this agenda item is amending the current T.I.P. document to account for some FTA funds that were already awarded to the Cities Area Transit. He stated that they had previously been awarded about \$1,000,000, and had programmed some improvements to their bus barn already, and they have good bids, so they are now requesting the ability to use the remaining dollars, thus the need to amend the 2010-2013 T.I.P. to reflect those additional projects.

Haugen referred to the staff report, included in the packet, and pointed out that the Cities Area Transit is proposing to add the following projects using FTA 5309 funds totaling \$286,000. The projects include:

1. \$230,000 to install some basic Automatic Vehicle Location devices on our buses and paratransit vehicles.
2. \$18,000 to fill-in a pit at the bus barn.
3. \$38,000 to purchase two non-revenue service vehicles.

Haugen stated that a public hearing was held at the Technical Advisory Committee last Wednesday, and no comments were received from the public, so we are recommending approval of this T.I.P. amendment.

Leigh asked they used the pit that is being filled in at the bus barn for. Haugen responded that they used it to service the vehicles. Leigh asked who services the vehicles now. Haugen responded that they still service the vehicles there, but that they had two pits, and only need one, so they want to fill one of them in.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE 2010-2013 T.I.P., AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO DRAFT MINNESOTA 2011-2014 T.I.P.**

Ellis reported that we have been fortunate enough in East Grand Forks to be awarded Transportation Enhancement dollars for 2011, 2012, and 2013, for three different projects. She explained, however, that the 2011 project is a continued bikepath that would run on, or along the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. off-ramp, go along 8<sup>th</sup>, and connect over to where the trailhead is to close the connection, however in order for this project to be done we would need to do the full-intersection at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. project first, and at this time that project has been slated for the 2014 City Sub-Target, and may actually be moved back even further, or not done at all. She stated, then,

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that in order for us to ensure we don't lose the 2011 transportation enhancement dollars, we are requesting we be able to move the 2012 project to 2011, and the 2011 project to 2012. She explained that the 2012 project involves the continuation of sidewalks along DeMers Avenue from where the Merit Care Pracs building is across Gateway Drive in order to make improvements for pedestrians and to finish off the sidewalks on the Burger King side up to 14<sup>th</sup>.

Grassel asked where the sidewalks would be located on the McDonald's side of the street. Ellis responded that they would be located on the berm if MNDOT agrees, or they will need to be extended into the frontage road. Leigh asked if she meant they would be located on the median. Ellis responded that they would be placed where the curb is at this time, which would mean decreasing the size of the frontage road by four or five feet. Grassel asked if they would be striping it. Ellis responded that it would not, that it would be an actual sidewalk, so they would be adding sidewalk, and then putting in a new curb, unless they get permission from the landowners to put the sidewalk on their property.

Ellis reported that on the west side of the street there is already sidewalk there, so the sidewalk could actually lead on the frontage road, heading east/west towards 5<sup>th</sup> rather than heading north/south up to 14<sup>th</sup>, so it would go across to the Top Quality lot, and then head east/west along there. She added that we already have right-of-way there so there wouldn't be any additional costs for that.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO THE DRAFT MINNESOTA 2011-2014 T.I.P., AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Strandell asked if this doesn't have to be approved by the Area Transportation Partnership. Ellis responded it does. She added that now that the T.I.P. has been amended to include it, it will need to be submitted to the ATP for their approval as well. Strandell asked if there would be any issues with the City coming up with the local share for this because they have had a couple of instances where that was the case. Ellis responded that as far as she knows there shouldn't be any problem with their getting the local share from the City, adding that she has talked to Scott Huizanga, the City Administrator, about this project.

Ellis reported that she is also planning on meeting with the MNDOT District Engineer, the Traffic Engineer, and the MNDOT MPO Planner, to discuss the fact that MNDOT has made a pledge to follow an ADA transition plan, and make improvements, and the intersection at Central and Gateway does not meet ADA standards, so if they are looking at project to do for ADA funds, they may look at doing that intersection in 2011, concurrent with our sidewalks, and may pay for that intersection.

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**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF DRAFT NORTH DAKOTA 2011-2014 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that, although we finally have a Draft 2011-2014 T.I.P. for North Dakota, there are still some programs that we have not been notified of any funding being awarded, but it is a draft and we still have a couple of months to produce the final document.

Haugen stated that there were some extensive revisions to the draft, which was put out in the public notice, and at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week, we extended the public comment period until noon today. He said, however, that in both cases no public comments were received. He explained that the reason for their extending the public comment period was due to all the changes that were noted between the draft that we presented for public comment, and the changes that occurred at the Technical Advisory Committee, therefore we decided to extend the public comment period an additional week, but, again, we received no comments.

Haugen reported that, rather than going through all of the projects, he will just highlight a few things of importance:

1. Page 36 – At the bottom right corner, it shows that we have a total of \$45,000,000 in projects, but when you look at the individual years it shows that we have a rough average of about \$12,000,000 per year. Of that \$12,000,000 each year, \$2,500,000 is generally for transit operations and capital projects, with the remaining, almost \$10,000,000, is for street and road improvements.

Grassel asked if the reconstruction of the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor was included. Haugen responded it was not at this time. Malm asked why it wasn't included. Haugen responded that the City of Grand Forks has not forwarded it to the MPO as a priority project. Malm asked where the City is on this issue today. Rau responded that he isn't sure when they are actually looking at maybe doing that corridor, but it most likely won't be until somewhere in the 2014-2015 range.

Grassel commented that that means this project has been waiting for twenty years. He said that he doesn't mean to sound critical, but he knows that conversations regarding that project started back in 1994. Rau stated that they are currently waiting for a final ruling from the National Historical Society on the removal of the granitoid. Grassel said that he knows that there are quonsets full of that stuff, so he doesn't understand what the issue is. Malm added that he thought that an agreement had been reached concerning the granitoid issue. Haugen responded that the State Historical Society came to an agreement, but they then forwarded the issue to the National Historical Society for their approval as well.

Haugen reported that the agreement that we have would require that we keep essentially one block of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue granitoid as part of the designated historic pavement area. Powers asked why they wouldn't want to preserve the granitoid on a side street instead. Haugen responded

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that they are preserving the granitoid on some of the sidestreets as well, but they are decommissioning a significant amount of granitoid. He stated that he would forward the board the map that shows what is going to remain, and what is going to be deregistered.

Leigh asked why the City of Grand Forks can't dictate how they want their own streets. He pointed out that there is granitoid just to the north of Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup>. He asked why they couldn't just designate that neighborhood as a historic site, and then redo the main artery. Haugen responded that the short answer is the red tape of bureaucracy, and the long answer is that the study we produced eighteen months ago still provides a good basis as to how that project could proceed, so it does show that even if one block remains on the register, we do have a study, and we do have the basic agreements in place to allow us to go in and reconstruct that corridor, so by having one block left remaining, it does not prohibit the rest of the corridor being reconstructed.

2. Page 28 – Project #13: With the DeMers Overpass being redone last summer, there has been a desire by both the City and the District Office to clean up either side to the east and west of the overpass. This project has been termed “pending” or “illustrative” waiting for a federal finance resource to be committed to it. In this document, the State is committing dollars to that project, so the good news is it is no longer in limbo, it is now actually being programmed to occur in 2011. This project will be improving DeMers Avenue, both east and west of the overpass structure. Grassel asked how much area would be included in this from the overpass going west, will it go to the fire station. Haugen responded it would. Grassel asked how much area would be included to the north. Haugen responded that it won't go very far north, but will come on the east side of the overpass to where we had the US 2 microsufacing done. He added that another part of this job will be to some work on the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue ramps leading to the overpass structure.

Leigh referred to Project #9, and asked what Dynamic Messaging Signs are. Haugen responded that it is another term for variable message signs. He explained that these are the digital reader boards you see along roadways that give various types of transportation messages such as road closure information, etc.. Leigh asked how we can get one for people coming into East Grand Forks. Haugen responded that we do have an ITS plan that identifies a few locations, so, like everything else, we are working with the District Office to get it prioritized. He added that up until a few weeks ago we didn't know we would be getting any in North Dakota, and now it will happen in 2011, and then in 2012 there is a follow up project that will put one out on US #2, west of town.

3. Page 38 – Because that section of DeMers Avenue now has a committed funding source, there are not illustrative projects listed.

Malm referred to Page 25, and asked what a Demand Response Vehicle is. Haugen responded that they are the Dial-A-Ride or Senior Rider Program vehicles.

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Powers referred to Project #5, the remark section which states “this request is in anticipation of a solicitation for New Freedom urban transit funds”, and asked what New Freedom is. Haugen responded that it is a federal transit program, whose funding is for a specific population group, the disabled or elderly.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS TO APPROVE THE DRAFT NORTH DAKOTA 2011-2014 T.I.P., AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP FOR EAST GRAND FORKS**

Haugen reported that in the past couple of months staff has been communicating that we will be presenting a functional classification map for our Minnesota side, and that is what we are doing today.

Haugen distributed an updated copy of the Draft Functional Classification Map for East Grand Forks, and explained that the area highlighted in blue, 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W., is the one significant change between this map and the map that was included in the packet. He stated that they had been proposing that 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. be made a principle arterial, but MNDOT would not support that at this time, so it is being maintained in it’s current status as a collector roadway.

Haugen said that, with that highlighted change, both the Technical Advisory Committee, and staff would recommend approval of the Draft Functional Classification Map For East Grand Forks.

Grassel asked why MNDOT would not classify 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. as a principle arterial. Haugen responded that they agreed that as traffic increases on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. it would warrant an upgrade to a principle arterial, however at this time they just didn’t see the necessary traffic volumes to warrant that at this time. Leigh asked if there would be a difference in funding if it were a principle arterial versus it being a collector. Haugen responded that it would not. He explained that having it functionally classified is the basic eligibility for federal aid, and that is what we are achieving with this map by getting these roadways functionally classified to become eligible for federal aid, among other reasons as well.

Powers asked if this could change if we did a traffic study. Haugen responded it could. He added that one of the anticipated outcomes of the 2010 Census is that, currently 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W. is the boundary of the Urbanized Area for Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and with the 2010 Census, and since the City has already annexed and incorporated land north of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street N.W., that would be one additional reason to revisit the functional classification of this area.

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Haugen reported that one other thing is that one of the obstacles we were having with functional classification, if you will recall, is that we have been working for quite some time on getting our digital files reconciled with Minnesota's digital files, so we are now able to show roadways where they are supposed to be showing. He added that we were also able to get Bygland Road and part of U.S. Business 2 to maintain a principle arterial status.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY GRASSEL TO APPROVE THE DRAFT  
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP FOR EAST GRAND FORKS, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF CHANGES TO T.I.P. PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS**

Ellis reported that they have been working on the NDDOT side, along with Federal Highway and the three MPOs, to come up with a better process in terms of T.I.P./S.T.I.P. development and how we select and prioritize projects for inclusion in our T.I.P.. She stated that they are now beginning the process on the Minnesota side as well.

Ellis pointed out that, as it states in the staff report, project solicitation will be based on a Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MPO Application developed cooperatively through the metropolitan planning process, or by using an application that would meet the MPO planning process if it were developed by another agency, and that we would be able to take those projects, evaluate them through our Technical Advisory Committee, prioritize them here, at the Executive Board level through scoring worksheets that prove that they do meet our Long Range Transportation Plan, and that they meet the needs of our transportation planning process, and then we would put them in our T.I.P., after which the MPO would forward them to the State or to the ATP for inclusion in their A.T.I.P. or S.T.I.P.

Ellis reported that there are currently some funding programs that do not follow the plan as stated in the federal regulations, or in SAFETEA-LU as we are required to do, and so we are hoping to work with MNDOT, and the ATP to get them to follow the same process we are required to use. She referred to the list of projects, included in the packet and available upon request, and went over each briefly, explaining how each program's current process works, and how it should be.

Ellis commented that, ultimately, we would like to be a part of the process up-front rather than just accepting projects that are picked by other people.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ADJOURN THE JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2010,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:43 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Powers, Malm, Adams, Leigh, and Strandell..***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Dick Grassel, Mike Powers, and Greg Leigh.

Absent were: Steve Adams and Doug Christensen.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer; Steve Jacobson, Norman County Commissioner; Randy Gust, EGF Emergency Management Director; Ed Nierode, Grand Forks County Director.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Planner, Senior; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; Aaron Nelson, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF UPDATE TO THE MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING COVERING METROPOLITAN PLANNING WITHIN THE  
GRAND FORKS-EAST GRAND FORKS METROPOLITAN AREA**

Haugen reported that this is an update to an existing Memorandum of Understanding signed back in 1997. He said that there have been two updates to the ISTEA law the 1997 MOU was based

on, and one change to the Code of Federal Register regarding regulations that were promulgated after the reauthorization bills were enacted.

Haugen stated that since 2006, it has been formally identified by both the Federal Highway and Federal Transit that the MOU needed to be updated, and it was also identified as a necessary action item at both the recent Transit Operator's Tri-Annual review last year, and the MPO's recent annual review this past May. He added that the Federal Highway Administration, this time, set a deadline of August 12<sup>th</sup> of this year for completion of the update.

Haugen referred to the staff report, and pointed out that it indicates that staff has been working with the North Dakota and Minnesota Departments of Transportation staff on getting the MOU updated the past several months. He said, however, that one of the first activities that had to occur was to update the MOU between the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the North Dakota Department of Transportation listing North Dakota as the Lead Agency before we could then formally go through our MOU update, which is one reason for the delay in getting our MOU updated.

Haugen stated that we now have an MOU that all staff has agreed on, and that has been approved by both City Councils, locally acting as the transit operators; and both DOTs have indicated that they are willing to sign this MOU, therefore staff is requesting approval from the MPO Executive Policy Board as presented today.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY LEIGH TO APPROVE THE UPDATE TO THE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING COVERING METROPOLITAN PLANNING  
WITHIN THE GRAND FORKS-EAST GRAND FORKS METROPOLITAN AREA.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF UPDATED NORTH DAKOTA URBAN ROADS MAP**

Haugen reported that a couple of months ago we updated the Functional Classification Map for the North Dakota side, and we now have to update the Urban Roads Map to reflect those changes made to the functional class.

Haugen stated that the functional class serves one purpose, but also identifies roads that may be eligible for different federal programs. He explained that the Urban Roads Map is the North Dakota Department of Transportation's nomenclature for the different sub-categories of roads, and the funding sources available on the North Dakota side for those federal funds.

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Haugen referred to a power point presentation, and went over the changes identified on the map using red circles:

1. South 48<sup>th</sup> Street – This is a project that will begin this year and will be completed next year, therefore our map needs to reflect that this is no longer a proposed roadway, but is a completed Urban Roadway eligible for federal funds.
2. 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue North – This roadway was just functionally classified, and it now becomes eligible for federal funds through the Urban Roads Program.
3. Columbia Road Overpass Ramps and DeMers Avenue/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Ramps – Current map shows these ramps without color, but we are proposing, and the Technical Advisory Committee has approved, reclassifying them as Regional Secondary Roadways.

Haugen reported that the Urban Roadway System is comprised of three sub-categories: 1) Regional Primary; 2) Regional Secondary; and 3) Local Urban Roads. He explained that the Regional Primary system includes U.S. Highway 2, which is a National Highway System route; the Regional Secondary system includes U.S. 81, Business 81, Business U.S. 2, and ND 297 (DeMers Avenue), so the ramps themselves would be attached to this system. He added that the Local Urban Roads include the remaining functionally classified roadways within the Grand Forks area.

4. 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North – This section of roadway was erroneously identified as an Urban Road, however it has not been functionally classified for several years as the bridge was closed in the early 2000s, so it has not been passable between Mill Road and North Washington, so we would like to remove it from federal eligibility.
5. South Belmont Road – This roadway has been functionally classified, and should have been identified as an Urban Roadway, therefore we would like to make that correction at this time.

Haugen stated that these are the changes we are asking this body to consider, and, again, they were reviewed and approved by the Technical Advisory Committee at their meeting last week.

Powers asked if the bridge at 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North would be eliminated altogether. Leigh responded that it has already been removed. Haugen added that there is a dilapidated structure there, but it is not at all usable.

Malm asked, if we approve this will it affect the Bacon Road Closure project at all. Haugen responded that it could, and he will address this issue when we discuss the Railroad Crossing Study agenda item later. He explained that currently this roadway is not functionally classified it cannot be on the Urban Roads Map, and it can't be functionally classified because it is not a passable roadway. He stated that what this action will do will be to make it eligible for a

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different funding program. He referred to the map, and pointed out that the area within the solid gray line is called the Federal Urban Aid Boundary, so for projects such as a bridge replacement project within that boundary, the funds would come from the Urban Aids Program, but now that it is, and has been identified as being outside the Urban Aid Boundary it is eligible for the Off-System Bridge Program, which is a separate source than the Urban Roads Program. He explained that all bridges located within the Urban Aid Boundary get funds from the Urban Roads Program, and all bridges located outside the Urban Aid Boundary get funds from this separate funding program, so we are doing two things, the primary thing is to take a roadway that is currently not eligible for federal aid and correctly showing it on our maps, and then we are also clarifying that the bridge is eligible for Off-System Bridge funds.

Haugen commented, however, that if the result of the Railroad Crossing Study indicates that we need to replace the bridge at 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, we can obviously revisit this issue of functional classification and the urban road mapping at that time. Powers asked what the possibility might be that this could occur. Haugen responded that he doesn't know, as they are not yet done with the study.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL TO APPROVE THE CHANGES TO THE NORTH DAKOTA URBAN ROADS MAP FOR STREETS INSIDE THE FEDERAL URBAN AID BOUNDARY, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON GRANITOID NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION**

Ellis reported that the State has processed an application to the Department of the Interior to de-list some of the granitoid. She referred to maps illustrating where the granitoid is currently located, and pointed out those areas that are being considered for de-listing, and those areas that will remain on the list.

Ellis gave a brief overview of the history of the granitoid process. She explained that a granitoid study was performed in the early 1990s, and at that time all of the granitoid, based on that study, albeit controversial, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Then in 1994 the State came in and did a detailed study of the granitoid pavement itself, and they kept those results on file. In 2008 we were asked to restudy the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor, including the granitoid pavement on that corridor, and as a result of that study the State decided to revisit the survey they had done in 1994 to determine if there was any granitoid that could be de-listed. Because of the survey done in 2009, they submitted an application to keep certain segments on the register, and de-list a number of other segments.

Ellis reported that when the new evaluation was done, those areas where 70% or more of the road surface is composed of granitoid pavement, and that pavement was recognizable as

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extending from curb to curb, were determined should remain on the list, and the remaining segments should be de-listed, thus 62% of the granitoid currently on the list will be de-listed, and 38% will remain on the National Register of Historic Places.

Ellis referred to a slide illustrating those areas where the granitoid will be maintained and those that will be delisted, and went over it briefly, pointing out that those areas that will remain on the list are shown using hatch marks, and those that will be de-listed are shown with solid lines.

Leigh asked what we can do to get them to de-list the granitoid on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue going south, but keep the area from Chestnut to Cottonwood, north of 4<sup>th</sup>. He stated that it is a concern that the City of Grand Forks can't go in and repair a road that is in dire need of repair just to make it passable. Ellis responded that that section on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue South isn't in real good shape, and it affects the corridor, but if you will remember when we did the study we came to an agreement with both the City, the Grand Forks Historical Commission, and the State Historical Society, that allows us to remove that section of granitoid provided we replace it with stamped concrete along that corridor, and we keep the remaining portions that are still on the list in as good a condition as possible. Leigh asked how we can get the requirement that we put in stamped concrete removed as well, as the cost to do that is too high. Ellis responded that she understands that the cost is higher, but that was their condition, and, although you could take that request to the State, she doesn't think they will be willing to agree to it, and you also need to remember that in addition to the granitoid being on the National Register of Historic Places, the neighborhood is as well, and the neighborhood itself addresses the issues of canopy trees, granitoid, the older homes, etc., so we aren't just dealing with the granitoid itself, but with the neighborhood as well.

Ellis commented that this is all based on the information the State has submitted, but the corridor still has the ability to receive federal funding as it is a functionally classified roadway, and there are opportunities to receive transportation enhancement and other dollars as well, and if we keep trying to butt heads with the State or the City, we will be in the same position we have been for the past sixteen years, so, even though we might like to see some additional concessions made, and it might be somewhat costly, we do have a solution that allows us to remove the granitoid from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Discussion ensued.

Haugen reported that currently in the Federal Register there is a notice, and you can comment on this application if you wish. He added that prior to it getting from the State to the National level, it was available for the City to submit comments, and we held meetings with City staff, but it was felt at that time that they would not provide any comments, but that we would look at any additional areas that should be included in the de-listing process, and we did identify some areas that did need to be included. He stated that there was also an opportunity to comment on this block of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue we have been discussing, but the feeling was that we were getting 60% removed, and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue itself would be governed under the current MOU the City has with the Historical Societies, so no comments were submitted.

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**MATTER OF UPDATE ON RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY**

Haugen reported that this is an update on where we are at with the Railroad Crossing Study. He reminded the board that there are three parts to the study:

1. Bacon Road Closure Study.

Haugen commented that the premise of this study was based on a stated requirement, or regulation that there has to be a site distance clearance of 250-feet on either side of the railroad crossing, which caused the Mill to lose their ability to be able to queue 16 rail cars for loading and unloading. He referred to a sheet he distributed, and pointed out that what they have been able to identify concerning this is that there is no FRA requirement, and that FRA has been pointing us to a Federal Highway guideline.

Haugen added that if you read that FHWA guideline two things jump out when discussing site clearance: 1) one is that the words “should” and “where practical” are used when discussing that there should be site clearances for railroad cars being queued up with a certain distance from the railroad crossing, and; 2) on the table on the back of the sheet the information shown is based on train speed, vehicle type, and what the distance should be. He pointed out that for the speeds for the trains that operate in the Bacon Road crossing, 250-feet exceeds the guideline, so they are still trying to pin down whether or not this 250-feet is a requirement that the Mill has to operate under.

Haugen stated that they have identified four alternatives:

- A. Close Bacon Road.
- B. Make it a private crossing.
- C. Construct an alternative crossing at 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North – which would cost about \$2,000,000 to accomplish.
- D. Leave as is.

2. State Mill Spur Study

Haugen reported that the final report is available for review on the MPO website. He commented that since the last public input meetings were held a couple of the figures did require some revisions. He referred to Page 46, Figure 7, and pointed out that the business operating between 7<sup>th</sup> and the railroad track did require that its driveway be relocated due to the safety improvements that would be required to ultimately make this corridor eligible for quieting. He stated that one of the issues involved with relocating is that occasionally this business does get semi-trucks making deliveries to them, so this driveway becomes a little outside the norm for them. He said that the only other option would be to relocate the entire business, or have the deliveries made to a different site and transported to the business in a smaller vehicle.

Haugen referred to Page 48, Figure 9, the Gateway Drive Crossing, and explained that we have a couple of things going on here: 1) the traffic signals that are currently in place, and the railroad

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flashing lights are right on top of each other, so we are trying to get separation between those; and 2) there is a free-right turn here that doesn't have any of the necessary railroad crossing lights and gates, so we are planning on removing the island, relocating the traffic signal to allow us to be able to put in gates in addition to the lights, and put in a median to allow us to be able to install some of this equipment so we are doing some shifting of the drive lanes. He stated that what this figure is trying to do is to show the current turning lanes and how they are figured in with what is being proposed. He said that there is also some curbing that needs to be installed to close off what is currently an alley or driveway access as such an access cannot be located this close to the railroad crossing in order for it to ultimately be eligible for quieting. He added that they are still working with local staff and district staff to identify how this cross-section works with what is being proposed here.

Haugen reported that they are very close to having a final report completed on this. He said that during the course of the study they were able to identify three crossings that are available to be closed, and have had very little public opposition to those closures. He explained that one of the possible closures involves an alley access between University Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, by the Red Pepper; and the other two are located at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He stated that with those three closures we would have an automatic 30% reduction in train horn noise along this corridor, plus there is a program in which both BNSF and the DOT have set aside funds to help with the cost of closures so there would be very little local cost involved.

Haugen commented that they also identified some landscaping opportunities that the neighborhood would like to see done, and there are some funding sources included in the report that can be used to accomplish this as well.

Haugen stated that the main costs would be the installation of flashing lights and gates, which are the minimum equipment necessary to ultimately make crossings eligible for quieting.

### 3. Quiet Zone Study

Haugen reported that in addition to the crossings already discussed, there are ten additional crossings for which we have identified what would be necessary to make them eligible for quieting. He stated that the three crossings out by the Amtrak Station, we originally identified that they needed one piece of equipment added to them to make them meet the minimum for eligibility, however when we asked BNSF when, and how much it would take for them to install those pieces of equipment, they responded that beside that one piece of equipment they would also need to have all the equipment upgraded as well, at a very high cost per crossings. He said that they then asked the Federal Railroad Association to do a peer review of that decision, and a meeting was held in May with FRA, BNSF, and others, but we are still waiting for the outcome of that meeting. He stated that one thing they did learn was that instead of looking at the three crossings as one quiet zone, because they are technically on three different subdivisions of railroad track, they have to be looked at as three different quiet zones, and be applied for as such. He added that this would actually allow us to prioritize which of the three has the most train activity and focus our funds on the one that is creating the most noise. He pointed out that there is also one that by just installing the minimum requirements we would not need to add any

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additional features in order to make it eligible for quiet zone, but until we get the FRA report we are kind of in limbo as to what the costs might be.

Haugen stated that it is his understanding that City Staff will be giving a quiet zone report at the City's Service Safety Committee next Tuesday.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Matter Of Discussion Regarding Support Of Norman County Resolution

Strandell reported that the Polk County Board met earlier this morning, at which time they did pass a resolution opposing the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project as it is currently being proposed. He said that the resolution will also include a request to the Army Corps of Engineers to extend the comment period on that project. He then introduced Commissioner Steve Jacobson from Norman County to explain what prompted the passing of this resolution.

Jacobson explained that the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has determined that impacts are expected north of Halstad, Minnesota as a result of construction of the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project. He added that they were just recently informed that this proposed project could impact Norman County by as much as 17-inches of additional flood water.

Jacobson stated that in order to protect the interest of the citizens of Norman County along the Red River, the Norman County Board has taken a position to oppose the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion. He explained that Norman County did not take a cavalier attitude on their opposition of the diversion, and the did discuss it at length and determined they had four options: 1) to let the diversion happen and absorb the impacts; 2) to support the diversion and just expect compensation for the impacts; 3) to support the diversion and ask if there could be some sort of mitigation brought into the project so there wouldn't be any impacts; and 4) to oppose the diversion.

Jacobson said that in order to protect the interests of Norman County, the Norman County Board decided that they had to oppose the diversion. He explained that they took that action in a resolution about a month ago, but since that time, specifically at the FM Metro flood meeting last week, the Corps of Engineers publicly announced that there would be impacts north of Halstad, and they also took that position that the time period for public comment on this issue will expire on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Jacobson distributed copies of a resolution from the Norman County Board of Commissioners, and explained that because they don't know what the impacts will be north of Halstad, and won't know that until after the public comment period has expired, it is the position of the Norman County Board to introduce the following resolution at tomorrows Norman County Board meeting (a copy of the resolution is included in the file and available upon request).

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Jacobson reported that when you get north of Halstad, you are still in Norman County, and it is his feeling that if the people north of Halstad don't know what the impacts to them will be from the diversion, and they don't have a time period in which they can comment on it, he thinks that democracy is being sacrificed to keep the diversion on schedule in accordance with how the FM group wants to see it happen. He said that he would like to see boards and commissions take a position to ask for an extension of the comment period so that the impacts to the people north of Halstad can at least have some time to express their comments and concerns on those impacts. He added that if the comment time expires on August 9<sup>th</sup>, that won't be possible.

Powers asked if this was the same position Polk County took. Strandell responded that Polk County passed a resolution opposing the diversion project, and also asked for an extended comment period as well. Leigh asked what the diversion would do to East Grand Forks. Malm responded that they haven't even said what the impacts will be north of Halstad yet. Leigh said that he understands that, but he would think they would inform the entire Red River Valley of what the impacts might be. Jacobson responded that he thinks that what is happening is that the Corps of Engineers is being put under a great deal of pressure to keep this project on schedule because of the funding cycle, and because of the amount of engineering that is involved in determining what the impacts will be up and down the Red River Valley. Jacobson reported that at the July 15<sup>th</sup> Metro meeting, the Corps of Engineers determined that there will be impacts north of Halstad, but they don't know the extent of those impacts at this time. Leigh asked what the 17-inches will do at Halstad. Jacobson responded that it will impact roads, bridges, farms, and dikes around the city. He said that this is why the Norman County Board to a position to object to the diversion project as it is now proposed.

Jacobson commented that at the July 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Metro Board, when the Corps of Engineers announced that there would be impacts north of Halstad, the Corps of Engineers representative also stated that there has been a request to extend the public comment period, but the FM Board unanimously voted not to extend that public comment period because it throws the timeline of the diversion project off. He stated that he was at the meeting, and raised his hand in objection, but was not allowed to speak.

Grassel asked Chief Gust what the impacts might be to the City of East Grand Forks. Gust responded that obviously one of the impacts will be that the City of East Grand Forks will have to at least install part of our flood system, even on those years when we might not have a lot of snow as our flood elevations have been increasing due to more water flowing through the area no matter how much precipitation we seem to get, so an additional 17-inches will certainly impact us. He said that, while we can handle the additional water, the problem is that it will extend our flood fight timeframe out considerably. He added that they have also built a small levee south of East Grand Forks near the Thompson Bridge on the Hartsville Coulee, and he would think that the additional water will certainly affect some of those residents along the coulee, and although that coulee is actually diverted south of East Grand Forks, and basically empties into the Red Lake River, we will still have to deal with all that water since it will still raise the Red Lake River, and where the Red Lake River meets the Red River is where we have the majority of our

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flooding issues, and all of this will increase the amount of cost and work involved with the flood fight. Powers asked if the Corps of Engineers ever talked to Chief Gust about this at all. Gust responded that no one has ever talked to him about it. He said that they have never been included in any of the conversations concerning the Fargo-Moorhead project, and, in-fact, when Mr. Strandell told him that Mr. Jacobson was coming to talk about the issue, he went to Crookston to hear what he had to say to the Polk County Commission.

Discussion ensued.

Grassel asked if Mr. Jacobson would be able to attend the East Grand Forks City Council work session on Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.. Jacobson responded that he would. Malm asked if Mr. Jacobson would be able to attend the Grand Forks County Commission meeting on Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 p.m.. Jacobson responded that he would.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS EXTENDS THE TIME FRAME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT IN REGARD TO THE PROPOSED FARGO-MOORHEAD DIVERSION, AND THAT A SIMILAR REQUEST BE MADE OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS CITY COUNCIL AND THE GRAND FORKS CITY COUNCIL TO DO THE SAME. IN ADDITION, THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD DIRECTS MPO STAFF TO FORWARD A SIMILAR REQUEST TO THE PROPER MINNESOTA AND NORTH DAKOTA GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, AS WELL.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

2. Matter Of Approval To Receive Additional CPG Funds

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE MPO RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL \$300,000.00 IN CPG FUNDS.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:12 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Leigh, Malm, and Strandell.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Doug Christensen, Mike Powers, and Greg Leigh.

Absent were: Steve Adams, Dick Grassel, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE JULY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE JULY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE 2010 SELF-CERTIFICATION**

Haugen reported that this is a requirement we do every year, and is primarily done to validate the T.I.P. He explained that we used to include it as part of the T.I.P., but a couple of years ago Federal Highway asked that it be listed as a separate agenda item.

Haugen referred to the staff report, and the attachments, and pointed out that we basically have nine federal requirements that we have to comply with. He stated that for each of those nine requirements we do a write-up as to how we meet each requirement.

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***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN TO APPROVE THE 2010 SELF-CERTIFICATION DOCUMENT.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE FINAL FY2011-2014 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that a copy of the Final FY2011-2014 T.I.P. was included in the packets for review. He explained that it this document programs transportation projects for the next four years, beginning in 2011 and going through 2014.

Haugen stated that a public hearing was held on this and no comments were received.

Haugen noted that the total dollar amounts for the projects we will be programming for the next four years is just under \$55,000,000. He pointed out that of the \$55,000,000, roughly 2/3 is federal funds, or \$35,000,000, this comes out to about 13 ¾ million a year. He added that of that 13 ¾ million, 2 ¾ million is for transit and the other 11 million is for your typical street and highway projects.

Haugen commented that back in April we approved the Minnesota side of the Draft T.I.P., and since that time a couple of changes have been made. He referred to the T.I.P. document, Page 63, and pointed out that East Grand Forks Project #12, which involves work on the Mallory Bridge, has been changed due to MnDOT changing the funding of the project from 100% State Funds to 80% Federal Funds and 20% Local Funds. He added that on Page 65, Project #17, which involves work on Highway U.S. #2 to Trunk Highway 75 by Climax, was originally programmed to occur in 2014, but will now occur in 2013.

Haugen reported that on the North Dakota side we have had a couple of changes as well. He referred to the T.I.P. document, Page 46, Project #6, which involves work on U.S. Highway 2. He explained that originally this was to be two projects, with one occurring in 2011 to rehab that portion of Gateway Drive from I-29 to Columbia Road; and the other occurring in 2014 to rehab that portion from Columbia Road to the Red River; with each project having a cost estimate of just over \$3,000,000. He stated that since the draft document was done they have re-examined their scoping worksheets for those projects and found that they almost doubled the lane miles, so the project totals were double what they should have been, so they worked with Central Office to be able to combine the two projects into one project, to be done as one project, shown as Project #6, with a total cost estimate of \$2,000,000. He added, however, that you will note that the actual intersection of Columbia Road will be covered under other projects, Projects #17 and #18.

Haugen pointed out that the document also has several appendices this year, perhaps more than in previous years. He explained that Appendix I, which is not new, is where we show our Annual Listing of Obligations for the prior fiscal year, which means that we show what each

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project we had programmed was estimated to cost, and then we show what was actually obligated for that project. He stated that the first new appendix we had to include is Appendix II, and that is due to the ARRA Program, or the stimulus projects; and the other new appendix is Appendix IV, which is our Self-Certification document, which is now required it be shown as an appendix due to new federal requirements. He added that Appendix V is a map of our MPO area, and Appendix VI is almost a re-citation of our public involvement process, but also includes the notices that were actually published.

Haugen stated that the Technical Advisory Committee did review the T.I.P. document at its monthly meeting, and both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff recommend you approve the final document as submitted. He added, however, that there may be one slight revision necessary. He referred to Page 37, and explained that we now need to include an Operations and Maintenance report as part of our document, and the NDDOT has not yet given us the final numbers for this document, so whatever action this body takes today will be subject to the inclusion of the NDDOT numbers once received.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY LEIGH TO APPROVE THE FINAL FY2011-2014 T.I.P.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE A.T.A.C. SCHOOL STUDIES SCOPE-OF-WORK**

Haugen reported that in our current work program we identified that we would continue our prior years work of looking at our elementary schools, in and around the school site, to make recommendations on how to improve safety. He stated that we have completed all the schools in Grand Forks with the exception of the two addressed in this scope-of-work, which are Wilder and Winship, and since we are in that area of town, we have also been requested we look at St. Michaels as well.

Haugen stated that this is simply a continuation of studies we have been completing for the last five years, and with this study we will have studied all Grand Forks elementary schools, and one in East Grand Forks. He said that the other elementary school in East Grand Forks has not expressed a desire that we do a study for them.

Leigh asked if the results of the study for New Heights were presented to the School Board. Haugen responded that it was, and some changes have already been made, including the opening up of another door for people to enter and exit the school, which has helped alleviate some of the congestion during drop-off and pick-up of students. He explained that these studies include both short-term and long-term recommendations, so there are still some recommendations that could be implemented if the financing becomes available to do so.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS TO APPROVE THE SCHOOL STUDIES SCOPE-OF-WORK, AND THE HIRING OF A.T.A.C. TO PERFORM THE STUDY FOR***

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***ST. MICHAELS ELEMENTARY, WILDER ELEMENTARY, AND WINSHIP  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.***

*Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE FY2010 UNIFIED  
PLANNING WORK PROGRAM**

Haugen reminded the board that at their July meeting they approved accepting an additional \$300,000 in funds, and this amendment is to show what activities we would do to take use of those funds. He stated that staff did send a memo out to all of our elected officials and agency staff identifying that we had these additional funds available, and requested they submit a list of projects they would like to see funded. He added that they did advertise in the local newspapers for public input as well, and the result of this solicitation are the four studies included in the staff report. He reported that these four studies were presented to the City of Grand Forks' Service Safety Committee and City Council, and were approved.

Haugen referred to the staff report, and went over the four studies:

1. Washington Street between Hammerling and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North including the underpass – Haugen explained that back in December, when we requested candidate projects for T.I.P. consideration, both DeMers Avenue improvements and the Underpass were identified as projects that the State was considering in 2015. He said that what the State had submitted for the underpass project was a complete reconstruction, and due to funding being tight, they are asking us to investigate whether or not there are rehab options available to that structure instead of a complete reconstruction. He added that the other issue is that the DeMers Avenue Washington Street Intersection is currently operating at a Level of Service E or F, and in order to make improvements with federal funds, the NDDOT standard is that it would need to be brought up to a Level of Service C or better, which would mean adding some lanes to it, which, of course, impacts the footprint and ultimately the adjacent property owners, as well as some of the recommendations that might occur on the underpass, so they are asking us to study this whole stretch of Washington Street to help them identify, perhaps, some alternatives that are less costly that will allow them to then develop a phasing plan as to how they can make some of the improvements along that stretch of Washington.
2. Southwest Grand Forks Grid Network – Haugen reported that this project was identified in 2009 as a work activity back when the Wellness Center was proposed to be located behind the Kohls/Target area. He explained that there had been a request to look at how the basic collector street network would work in that area, however, once it was decided that the Wellness Center would not be placed at that location, we moved that project back and did the railroad study in its place. He stated that the City has again requested that we look at this area as there are concerns as to how 34<sup>th</sup>

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- Street would head south, how 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue would head west, together with how 38<sup>th</sup> Street would work. He stated that we have dedicated park land physically located where we would normally have our grid pattern, and then we also have the southend drainway there so we don't want to create too many crossings.
3. South Washington Street near 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue Intersection – Haugen stated that this is where the Wellness Center is now being located, so we have been asked to look at the traffic operations in and around that area to ensure that once that facility opens we have the property traffic operations in place.
  4. 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue between South Washington and Columbia Road – Haugen reported that this section of roadway is currently a rural section, and with the building going on out there, the City is looking at converting that to an urban section, so this study will assist in identify some of the recommendations/alternatives for converting that section from a rural roadway to an urban roadway.

Haugen stated that, with these studies, we are essentially doing a mini-stimulus package for the MPO, and are basically doubling the amount of work that we normally would be doing in our work program, so, as part of that we are seeking to add a contracted position, with the title “Planning Technician”. He explained that we currently have one Planner, one Senior Planner, one Office Manager, and one Executive Director, and the Planning Technician would be placed at a pay grade 30, which is six grades lower than our Planner position. He said that the Planning Technician position would be an entry level position, and would be a contracted position that will continue through December 2011, which is when these four studies would be completed.

Haugen referred to the last page in the packet, and pointed out that it indicates the financial impact this position would have. He stated that the job description was also included as well.

Haugen stated that since this is a staffing issue, the Finance Committee met and reviewed the position, and are recommending that the Executive Policy Board approve it. He added that we do have an identified employee for the position, Matt Leal, who is currently the MPO Intern. He said that Matt has been in that capacity for seven months and has been well received and has shown the skills and ability to justify offering him the position if it is approved.

Haugen reported that both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Finance Committee, as well as staff, are recommending the board approve the amendment to the work program, and the Planning Technician job description.

Christensen asked what the salary range is for a Pay Grade 30. Haugen responded that the range is \$32,554 to \$48,831. He added that we would be offering the beginning salary to Mr. Leal at this time. Christensen asked if any other pay levels were discussed as part of the Finance Committee review. Malm responded that they did not, that considering the job as described, a Pay Grade 30 is what was felt would be the appropriate pay level. Christensen stated that he would like to see us think about starting the young man at that level, and then moving him up. He said that he has heard that he isn't too bad, and \$32,000 might be a little light. He asked if Mr. Leal was going to be with us for 18 months. Malm responded that the contract allows for

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him to be with us for one year. Christensen stated that he would like everyone to think about it, and review the position in three months. Malm asked if we have the money to do that. Christensen responded that we do, just look at the number, it's 70 times 3 plus, so there is more than enough funding available. Malm said, however, that the funding for this position was coming from the additional funding we approved last month. Christensen commented that he is just thinking about young people, getting them attracted to our community, we just don't need wage slaves, so his motion would be to approve it but review him and come back with a report as to any increase in salary in three months.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY LEIGH TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE FY2010 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM, AND THE CREATION OF THE PLANNING TECHNICIAN JOB DESCRIPTION SUBJECT TO A REVIEW OF THE POSITION IN THREE MONTHS FOR A POSSIBLE SALARY INCREASE.***

Christensen stated that he thinks it is important that you do this because, as he understands, this young man has a degree in planning, and he is here because his significant other is here, and he may or may not stay, but obviously if we want to attract people such as him, we need to start paying people, especially if your working among these people, and if he is doing professional work he deserves more than \$30,000 or \$32,000.

Powers asked what the possibility is that this could be a full-time position down the road. Haugen responded that it would be predicated on the next reauthorization of transportation, and what that outcome is for funding of the MPO process.

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Copies Of Letters From The Cities Of Grand Forks And East Grand Forks Concerning The Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project

Haugen reported that copies of what each City submitted regarding the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project, and their comments were distributed to everyone earlier for review.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:36 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Leigh, Christensen, Powers, Strandell, and Malm.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:05 p.m.

**SUSPEND AGENDA**

Haugen suggested that, because a quorum was not yet present, the agenda be suspended in order to discuss those agenda items that do not require action be taken.

**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDY**

Haugen reported that this is just an update on the status of the three Railroad Crossing Studies.

1) Bacon Road Closure Study:

Haugen stated that BNSF and the State Mill requested the City of Grand Forks consider closure of Bacon Road, which is located north of the State Mill property. He explained that one of the primary impetus for the request was due to BNSF instigating a 250-foot site clearance on either side of the crossing. He stated that because of this requirement, the State Mill is unable to stack as many cars, about 16 total, when filling or emptying them.

Haugen reported that the 250-foot site clearance regulation has become a sticking point for the study, as we are unsure whether or not it is an actual regulation under federal law, or something entirely of BNSF's making. He stated that what they have been able to determine at this time is, from the Federal Railroad's perspective, that it is a federal highway guideline that they are utilizing, a copy of which he distributed at the last MPO Executive Policy Board meeting, however when you look at the train and vehicle speeds at this crossing, it would seem more appropriate that a 100-foot site clearance be set instead.

Haugen stated that they are continuing to request that BNSF share a copy of their regulation with us, however, since this has not yet occurred, we will give BNSF a couple more weeks to do so, and identify to them that we will address this in the report by noting that they may have a regulation that requires there be a 250-foot site clearance, but that from what we have been able to decipher, via Federal Railroad, by utilizing the federal guidelines a 100-foot site clearance would be sufficient.

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Haugen reported that they will also schedule another meeting with the property owners, the State Mill, BNSF, and city staff to further discuss this issue. He commented that at the last meeting they were challenged to identify either a variance process or an appeal process to deal with the 250-foot site clearance regulation.

Haugen stated that they were still able to identify four different alternatives for this:

- a) Closure of Bacon Road without any other mitigation;
- b) Convert it to a private crossing, which from the Federal Railroad and Federal Highway guideline perspective, the 250-foot site clearance requirement would be eliminated, although the issue of safety could still be a good argument for keeping it in place;
- c) Do nothing.
- d) Rebuild 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North as an alternative route.

Grassel asked if the issue of allowing a unit train was still being looked at. Haugen responded that although the possibility of allowing a unit train was explored, the experts were unable to determine a way in which such a train would be able to land at the Mill property, thus it has been put on hold until such time as the Mill would be able to purchase additional property, or agreements could be reached that would allow for a unit train to be landed.

Malm asked what the City of Grand Forks says about this as it is all in their jurisdiction, and, although the MPO is doing the study for them, have they come up with any solutions of their own. Haugen responded that they have not, but that that is why they asked us to do the study. Malm said he understands that, but have they looked at the alternatives, have they said anything. Haugen responded that we are still providing them the alternatives for their review, but until we have all the answers we aren't in a position to make a recommendation to them. He added that the most expensive alternative would be to rebuild 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, and although the main structure at 27<sup>th</sup> is outside of city limits it isn't on the county system, so we would have to get into similar discussions as those currently being held on 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, as well as others where infrastructure is outside the city limits. Malm suggested that they could just take on the neighbors and say we are closing Bacon Road. Haugen agreed, but added that they have identified the alternatives to the traffic operations, or the impacts to the traffic operations, so they aren't quite to the point where they can determine what the recommended outcome should be.

Grassel commented that there doesn't appear to be much distance between Bacon Road and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Haugen responded that there is about a quarter to half mile between the two roadways. He reported that, again, there is a huge cost involved in rebuilding 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, particularly the bridge, or whatever structure would be built across the coulee, which is why it was closed in the first place. He added that this is also complicated by the fact that city limits dissects 27<sup>th</sup>, with the east portion being in the city limits and the

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west portion being outside the city limits, and it is the west portion where the bridge would be located, so there are some jurisdictional issues involved. Malm said that it would be in the jurisdiction of Falconer Township, and asked if they would be putting in the bridge. Haugen responded that so far they have identified that the program that could be used to replace that bridge is the same program that had that bridge scheduled for replacement back in 1999 or 2000, called the Off-System Bridge Program.

Haugen explained that in the federal highway program they set aside funds for bridges, and then further separate those funds for on-system bridges and off-system bridges, with off-system bridges consisting of bridges in the townships that need replacement. He added that in North Dakota there is a specific amount of funds available to be used on off-system bridges, and, as he mentioned, that funding source did have that bridge scheduled for replacement, and we did have it included in our T.I.P. in 1998, 1999, and 2000, then it was dropped and the funds used elsewhere, and ultimately the bridge was closed in 2002 or 2003.

2) State Mill Spur Study:

Haugen reported that for the State Mill Spur and the Quiet Zone Assessment reports they did present final drafts to the Grand Forks Service Safety Committee for approval.

Haugen pointed out that in the packet, the only thing identified that has not been presented to this body is Figure 9. He explained that this figure deals with the necessary improvements discussed on Page 13 of the packet. He referred to Figure 9, and went over the changes shown.

Haugen stated that the draft Mill Spur Study report is on the MPO website, and we have received approval from the Neighborhood Committee, allowing us to work out these final details with staff.

Haugen referred to a slide of the funding chart, commenting that, although a copy of this chart was not included in the packets, it is something that this body has seen in the past. He stated that they have tried to identify all the different type of improvements they are recommending, specific to each crossing. He said that the reason for this is because there are different funding sources that the City could apply for to help assist them in the costs involved in implementing these changes.

Haugen pointed out that of the ten vehicle crossings on the spur, only one has flashing lights, and none have the minimum equipment necessary to be eligible for quiet zone stature, so as they have gone through the process, engaging the neighborhood and the committee, they did look at some possible closures at:

- a) Alley between University Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- b) 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- c) 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

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Haugen reported that the traffic impact would not be detrimental to those areas to the west of those crossings, and added that the cost of closure versus installation of the required equipment is considerably less. He stated that there is a funding program available that is specific to closures of crossings, which could result in very little local funds being needed at all. He added that Federal Highway will match up to \$7,500 towards any monies BNSF puts toward the closure costs, and BNSF is very interested in the closure of crossings along the spur line, so we could expect that the closure costs would be almost 100% paid for between BNSF's match and Federal Highway's Closure Incentive Fund.

Haugen pointed out that the big cost, as you see in this table, is that the remaining seven crossings will need to have active warning devices installed. He added that they have identified the various funding sources that could be applied for for these devices, and have decided to pursue closures first as they have the lowest costs, and public support. He stated that they also have an identified a priority order for the installation of the remaining crossings active warning devices.

Haugen reported that we have submitted the State Mill Spur Report to the Safety Service Committee, and will submit it to the City Council on Monday evening for their approval, then will bring it back for approval at your October meeting.

3) Quiet Zone Study:

Haugen stated that since this body last discussed this we received a letter from Federal Railroad as to what their requirements are for the DeMers Avenue crossings, out by the Amtrak Station, in order for them to be eligible for quiet zone status. He said that none of them have constant warning time installed, and when they initially approached BNSF about what it would cost to install constant warning time, we were given an extremely high figure, and, in addition, they also wanted us to pay for an upgrade of all the equipment out there, so we asked Federal Railroad to come and take a look at these three crossings to determine whether or not all these upgrades are really necessary.

Haugen referred to Page 5 of the packet, and pointed out that the letter states that two of the three crossings do not require constant warning time be installed, and because they already have the minimum equipment necessary for quiet zone status, they are eligible as they are. He commented that the City has already processed the notice of intent to get them quieted. He added that the 55<sup>th</sup> Street crossing does need constant warning time installed, but does not need any additional equipment installed, however we are still waiting for a cost estimate from BNSF as to whether or not they feel that additional equipment is still necessary at this location.

Haugen reported that staff is proceeding with the report by identifying that we have given BNSF ample time to comment on this issue, and it appears that only constant warning time needs to be installed at 55<sup>th</sup> Street, at an estimated cost is \$35,000, however BNSF is still reviewing the issue, and we are still waiting for a cost estimate from them as to

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whether or not any additional equipment is necessary to make this crossing quiet zone eligible.

Haugen reported that the downtown crossings, and the ones along 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, were approved to be quieted at your meeting last month, and the City approved the notice of intent to have them quieted as well. He stated he would suspect that we are close to the end of the required 60-day comment period, and hopes that within 30 to 45 days those crossings will be quieted. He added that within an additional 30 to 45 days the two crossings on DeMers will also be quieted, and maybe we will have received BNSF's response concerning 55<sup>th</sup> Street by then so that we know what needs to be done to make it quiet zone eligible as well.

Haugen commented that the last thing this study does, in terms of the remaining crossings, is to identify that a median could be installed at some crossings, which would lower the risk index further as there would be additional safety measures built-in. He added giving us additional safety measures, and would lower the risk index further in the event that either train or traffic volumes should increase, or the national index would change thus putting tting that quiet zone outside the national risk index.

Haugen concluded by summarizing that, of the ten crossings we were aggressively pursuing for quieting on the Grand Forks side, nine of them should be quieted without any further investment needed, and the last one, 55<sup>th</sup> Street, needs a minimum of \$30,000 invested in order to get it to quiet zone status. He added, however, that they have also identified another \$250,000 of improvements that could be done at the rest of the crossings to lower their risk index to ensure they remain quieted for a longer period of time.

Information only.

**MATTER OF TRIENNIAL REVIEW REPORT**

Haugen reported that last May the MPO went through a Triennial Review, and this report is the result of that review. He stated that Federal Highway submitted the final report in August, and there weren't any major concerns. He added, however that he would have liked to have had a little more time to respond to the comments that were made in order for this body to be able to look at them prior to our making a formal response, but they wanted a response prior to this meeting.

Haugen referred to Page 35 of the packet, and pointed out that it lists the nine observations made by FHWA, as well as the responses from staff. He stated that some have already been completed; such as the MOU, the copier printer issue, etc.; and that the others will be taken care of soon; such as inclusion of our self-certification document in our work program as well as the T.I.P..

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Haugen stated that the bigger things identified in May included such issues as including regionally significant projects in our T.I.P.; and identifying specific preservation type projects in our Long Range Transportation Plan.

Haugen commented that in our current Long Range Transportation Plan we basically identify two types of projects; 1) expansion type projects, whereby we identify projects and the dollar amounts assigned to them; and 2) maintenance type projects whereby we don't identify specific projects, but instead have a lump sum of monies available to address them all. He stated that they are now asking us to further refine the maintenance lump sum into projects that are \$1,000,000 or more.

Haugen stated that the Regionally Significant projects, for the most part, are federally funded in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, however there are still a few out there that are funded with local dollars, or other dollars that we don't identify, however they are now asking that we include them as well. He stated that they have worked up definitions of these in the T.I.P. Selection Process Manual.

Information only.

**MATTER OF SOLICITATION OF PROJECTS FOR 2011-2012 UPWP**

Haugen referred to Page 151 of the packet, and explained that we need to prepare a two-year work program for 2011 and 2010. He stated that we have released this to staff, and ask that projects or work studies that you would like us to complete during that two-year period be sponsored by a local governing agency, city, county, or state.

Haugen reported that the four studies we just amended into our current work program will be identified in the next two-year work program as well. He said that he also identified in the staff report that, as discussed during the Triennial Review, the Long Range Transportation Plan Update is due in the middle of 2013, so in 2011 and 2012 we will be doing a lot of work on our Long Range Transportation Plan up-to-date, which is to be done by 2013, thus a considerable amount of our funds will be programmed for that, although we will still have some available for smaller studies and are asking that all possible projects be submitted. He stated that we will then go through the process of prioritizing those projects and providing a recommendation as to which projects we should include in 2011 and 2010.

Haugen reiterated that if anyone has activities or studies you want us to do, start working with the MPO, and your respective staff to make sure it is eligible so that when it does come before this body you know you have the backing of the government agency requesting the study.

Malm asked if the Merrifield Interchange falls under this. Haugen responded that he would defer to our updated Long Range Transportation Plan, and that process. Malm stated that we need to have all the paperwork in place so that we can move forward someday as something needs to be

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done, and we need to get everybody on board. Haugen responded that because of the financial condition that is in place at the National level down to the local level, he would defer the Merrifield Interchange and Merrifield Bridge to our Long Range Transportation Plan outcome to see where it shakes out. Malm asked if this can be done without a formal proposal. Haugen responded that it will just be a natural outcome of our Long Range Transportation Update process, to analyze bridge crossings, future bridge crossings, future interchanges, to prioritize them and come up with a recommended list of projects.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Response To Fargo Diversion Letter

Haugen distributed copies of a response letter from Senator Conrad concerning the Fargo Diversion project.

**RESUME AGENDA**

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Mike Powers, Dick Grassel, and Greg Leigh (Via Conference Call).

Absent were: Doug Christensen, Steve Adams, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Planning Technician; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Strandell, Malm, and Leigh.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF T.I.P. PROCESS MANUAL**

Haugen reported that in order for us to become compliant with federal regulations, staff has prepared a Transportation Improvement Program Policies And Procedures Manual to identify how we process T.I.P. projects.

Haugen referred to the manual and pointed out that it: 1) identifies those roadways that are defined as being regionally significant; 2) explains how we are going to score projects based on how they implement our Long Range Transportation Plan; 3) identifies the different funding programs as they relate to each side of the river as well as what type of projects they fund; and 4) identifies the basic T.I.P. schedule.

Haugen stated that this document was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee at its meeting last week, and staff is now seeking the MPO Executive Policy Board's approval as well.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
MANUAL, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Strandell, Malm, and Leigh.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT RFP FOR SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET CORRIDOR  
STUDY**

Ellis reported that the MPO was asked by the City of Grand Forks to conduct a study for traffic operations, if and when the new Wellness Center were built out on South Washington between 40<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup>. She explained that the study itself needs to address the differences between its current zoning of residential, and its becoming more of a destination area, and how it affects the traffic conditions in and around the center. She stated that some of the things to be looked at include street improvements, turning lanes, the amount of average daily traffic through the area, transit, etc., so they are asking the consultant, should this project be approved, to look at these issues using a three phase process.

Ellis referred to Page 146, pointing out that it illustrates a basic concept plan for the proposed facility, and explained that the first phase would entail looking at how the area would be impacted with only the Wellness Center being built on the property, and extending South 11<sup>th</sup> Street to 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. She stated that the second, or intermediate phase, would require the consultant consider traffic improvements, as well as multi-modal and transit, if the property were to build out to the south or north with additional buildings, and the extension of South 11<sup>th</sup> Street to 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. She said that the third, or long-term phase would entail a full build-out of the property.

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She concluded by explaining that this is simply a transportation study that will show recommendations for future transportation enhancements to the South Washington Street Corridor, and will give recommendations as to how to make the corridor safe for all modes of transportation.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RFP FOR THE SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET CORRIDOR STUDY, AS SUBMITTED.***

*Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Strandell, Malm, and Leigh.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:47 P.M.***

*Voting Aye: Powers, Grassel, Strandell, Malm, and Leigh.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:02 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Mike Powers, Dick Grassel, Greg Leigh, Steve Adams, and Doug Christensen.

Absent were: Tyrone Grandstrand.

Guest(s) present were: Al Grasser, Grand Forks City Engineer; Brad Gengler, Grand Forks City Planner; Sara Aultman, MNDOT; and Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Planning Technician; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF RAILROAD CROSSING STUDIES**

Haugen referred to the staff report, and stated that we hope to be at the final stage for two of the three Railroad Crossing reports we hired SRF to do for us. He said that the two we are seeking approval for today are the Quiet Zone Assessment and the Mill Spur Feasibility Study reports.

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Haugen explained that the third report is specific to Bacon Road, and we are still working on it, but hope to have it completed by the end of the year.

Haugen reported that both the Quiet Zone Assessment and the Mill Spur Feasibility Study reports have been through the City of Grand Forks' approval process, and was reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee at their meeting last Thursday, and all are recommending approval of both reports.

Haugen explained that in terms of the Quiet Zone Assessment, we had ten crossings on the Grand Forks side and four on the East Grand Forks side that we were seeking for quiet zone status. He stated that East Grand Forks' City Council did direct us, back in January, how to proceed with their crossings, with the result being that they are going to upgrade the equipment at all four crossings in order to make them eligible for quieting at a later time.

Haugen stated that on the Grand Forks side, we were waiting for BNSF to give us a final price point on the 10<sup>th</sup> crossings, which is the one at 55<sup>th</sup> Street North, by the Amtrak Depot, and were finally given that information last week, with a cost estimate of \$175,000 to get it upgraded for quieting. He said that all the other crossings are currently in the midst of completing the quieting procedure.

Haugen reported that the City of Grand Forks has already sent out the notice of intent to establish quiet zones at all the other crossings, and will soon be sending out a notice of establishment for the three downtown crossings, which also includes DeMers Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. He explained that there are six different zones, one being the "Glasston" zone, which runs parallel to 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, and includes DeMers Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Gateway Drive. He said that the notice of intent had a 60-day comment period, which expired last week, so the next step is to do the notice of establishment, assuming there were no comments received that would cause the City to need to re-evaluate that zone. He added that once the notice of establishment is sent out, there will be a 21-day comment period before the crossings can be quieted, so if everything goes well those crossings should be quieted before Thanksgiving in the downtown area.

Haugen stated that the two crossings by the Amtrak Depot are a month behind the downtown crossings, so it will be around Christmas when they are quieted, and the last one on North 55<sup>th</sup> Street will need to have the upgrades made to its equipment before it can be processed through the quiet zone process. He added that the upgrade includes installing constant warning time and replacement of the existent equipment.

Haugen reported that the Quiet Zone Assessment report itself, for the most part has already begun to be implemented, so we are now seeking approval of the report.

Haugen commented that the Mill Spur Feasibility Study involved looking at ten crossings along the Mill Spur, between 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North and Gateway Drive. He stated that they worked with the neighborhood committee to help us with the study, and the end result is a recommendation to

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close three of the ten crossings, and to work at upgrading the remaining seven crossings by converting them from passive active warning crossings, meaning instead of just having cross-bucks, we would be putting in flashing lights and gates, and eventually making them eligible for quiet zone status. He added that there are some other improvements that have been suggested along the rail corridor, including some landscaping and trails with rails proposal, all of which have different funding sources identified in the report.

Haugen stated that this is a costly endeavor, but, hopefully as funds become available, we can begin improving the railroad crossing safety along that corridor, and make it fit in better with the neighborhood as well.

Christensen asked Mr. Grasser, if we approve this, and it comes time to implement any of the recommendations, will it impact the Highway User's Fund, will we have to change our T.I.P.. Grasser responded that the question of funding is a good one, but they haven't really gone through that implementation piece, but, for example, the closing of a crossing, typically they would special assess some of those road repairs, however he suspects that for a closing they may not want to, but then again if we want to do it, it may impact our budgets. He added that they have not programmed this in any of their budgets yet at this time, but those would be good budget discussions to have.

Christensen asked how many years out it will be before these closures might take place, as we are programmed at least five years out right now. Grasser responded that he is thinking that the full implementation of this would be quite a ways out yet. He said that their first desire would be to access some of those state monies again, such as those we are using on 55<sup>th</sup>. He added that the first priority is the mainline, and that will take us out several years, but it is a matter of how big a priority the council wants to place on some of those projects.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE THE QUIET ZONE  
ASSESSMENT AND THE MILL SPUR FEASIBILITY STUDY FINAL REPORTS.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE 47<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE SOUTH STUDY RFP**

Ellis reminded the board that the MPO received some additional planning funds, which allowed us to be able to do some additional studies, and this is one of those studies. She explained that the City of Grand Forks' Engineering Department submitted a request for the MPO to do proposal for the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Corridor, between South Washington Street and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South.

Ellis referred to page 53 of the packet, and pointed out that the section being studied is located within the black lines. She reported that they are looking at it primarily for transportation improvements only, and, based on the Long Range Transportation Plan, there are some road

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improvements shown that will increase the lane width. She explained that this is currently a rural section, and this study will be giving us ideas as to how we can urbanize this section of roadway, in terms of what the lanes will look like with access control for right-in/right-out access. She added that that one of the suggestions was to look at different options for the Columbia Road/47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Intersection itself, as the elevations are quite different between the two, and, because there is a school located there, they will also be looking at transit, safety features, and all modes of travel.

Ellis stated that two things that will kind of guide the study, that we must consider, are: 1) the possibility of an interchange at I-29, which may affect traffic patterns and average daily traffic numbers; and 2) the construction of the Wellness Center, which will be located on the corner of South Washington and 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South.

Ellis reported that, basically the RFP will be looking at transportation improvements, conditions, and analysis; current and future impacts of an Interchange at I-29; the impacts of additional construction such as another school, the Wellness Center, etc.; and all modes of travel such as transit, bike/ped, etc..

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO APPROVE THE 47<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE SOUTH STUDY RFP.***

Christensen asked about a bridge. Ellis asked what he meant. Christensen explained that if you are talking about impacting that corridor, that whole road has been designed, if or when it is designed, if you don't have an exit onto 47<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he is just anticipating the debate going back to 32<sup>nd</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup>, so you should probably have that as part of the study. Ellis responded that they will have to use the information that is included in the Long Range Transportation Plan right now, in terms of future bridge locations, specifically the traffic information.

Leigh asked if there wasn't housing located on the east end of that roadway. Christensen responded there was. Leigh asked if they wouldn't have to buy those homes if a bridge were to be located there. Christensen responded that he would imagine they would, and added that there will be all kinds of issues there someday. He added that they will have just as much of a problem purchasing the housing on the east end of 32<sup>nd</sup> as well, maybe even more of a problem, so if this is all about planning, which is what he thinks it is supposed to be, you should probably think about that because he knows that East Grand Forks would like to see a bridge located at 10<sup>th</sup>. Leigh responded that one at 17<sup>th</sup> would be sufficient. Christensen stated that they would have to buy that whole street, but if you aren't going to plan for it then you will just have it coming at you if and when somebody decides it should be there 15 years from now. Ellis reported that they will look at the impact of traffic from the east.

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE WASHINGTON STREET/UNDERPASS STUDY  
RFP**

Haugen reported that, again, this is one of the additional work activities this body approved for the additional funds that became available. He stated that this study will look at the South Washington Street Corridor, and the Washington Street Underpass.

Haugen explained that the study area will begin at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, with the real focus beginning where the road transitions to a divided highway at Hammerling, and will continue north to the divided highway at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

Haugen stated that this section of highway is all State Highway, Business 81, and the DOT is trying to figure out how to program improvements along this stretch of highway. He reported that it has a base of concrete, with some asphalt overlays, and is to the point where they are considering replacement of the roadway. He added that with replacement of the roadway they would be entering into some design issues that would need to be updated, primarily access issues and sidewalks needing ADA upgrades.

Haugen commented that when we get to the DeMers Avenue Intersection and the Underpass, we have some level of service issues that, should reconstruction occur, would increase the cost of the project considerably in order for us to meet the desired level of service at the intersection. He reported that part of the Long Range Transportation Plan recommendation for dealing with the level of service issues is to actually not achieve the preferred level of service for that intersection, but to accept one grade level of service lower at that intersection. He explained that it was a bit of a compromise between the cost of the project to make it an acceptable level of service, and the right of way impact.

Haugen reported that, even with the recommended level of service, it is likely that we would need to purchase additional right-of-way from the adjacent properties, and this creates an issue as to how this would impact the Central Fire Station property.

Haugen stated that the DOT has been interested in trying to determine how best to address the underpass structure for a number of years. He said that last year they did present to us the possibility of a 2015 funding request for urban regional monies to replace the entire structure, but are now asking that we look at other options that might allow us to keep the structure in place, but to rehab it to extend its life.

Haugen commented that, with the decision that takes place on DeMers and Washington, and potential expansion of that intersection impacts, then, the existing underpass structure, so as part of this study we will be asking for assistance in determining how we can deal with the existing structure in place and still accomplish some of the other things the NDDOT would like to accomplish with a project along this corridor. He added that, as we go north, we will be looking at dealing with some access and ADA issues, and not many operational issues.

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Powers asked if there were any plans to widen the corridor. Haugen responded that they don't anticipate it, however the Long Range Transportation Plan does identify a need for widening at the DeMers/Washington Intersection.

Haugen reported that the one big issue is whether or not the roadway needs to be replaced, or can we do something to prolong the life of the roadway and in-turn delay some of the access issues. He stated that, because of the large ticket, if we were just to do the roadway itself for reconstruction, it would be a multi-million dollar project; and then if you throw in the intersection you would be adding several more millions of dollars; and then throw in the potential replacement of the underpass you add even more millions again; so with the financial constraints we are facing, one of the outcomes of this study will be help assist us in identifying not only what we can do, but also how we can phase the cost of the project through the funding cycles so that we can ultimately improve that corridor to bring it up to where we need it to be.

Powers commented that it was also mentioned that the railroad portion of the underpass is also substandard, so he would assume that BNSF will be kicking in some funding to help with the project as well. Haugen responded that there is a little bit that BNSF is required to kick in on when we do a grade separation, but it is less than 5%, somewhere around 3% or 3 ¼ % that they would have to contribute. Powers asked if it wouldn't impact their yard as well. Haugen responded that it may impact their yard, but will depend on what the outcome of the study will be. He added that if a total reconstruction is done, depending on how it is accomplished, it could impact their yard considerably.

Grassel asked if a study wasn't done recently on the DeMers/Washington Intersection. Haugen responded that, as part of our Long Range Transportation Plan we address the intersection concerns all the time. He added that our current recommendation, which we went over with the NDDOT to obtain consideration from them, is to go with a lower level of service than is typically required at such an intersection. He stated that the recommendation is to essentially add some through lanes for all four directions, and to shift most of the right-of-way requirements to the north side property to minimize the impact to the gas station and restaurant to the south, however by doing this you start impacting the driveway to the firestation, which is why the firestation becomes important to the RFP process.

Haugen summarized by reiterating that the DOT requested we do this study; it is included as part of our work program utilizing the additional funds the MPO received; this is the RFP that we will send out to the consultants; this is the draft scope of work that we worked with the DOT and local staff to identify what we are asking the consultant to do; and the end result will be a report at the end of next year that will identify the recommended improvements to be done, the estimated cost, and a phased in budget to implement the recommendations.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE WASHINGTON STREET/UNDERPASS STUDY RFP.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

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**MATTER OF MNDOT VISIONING**

Haugen introduced Sara Aultman, MnDOT, and explained that she is MnDOT's MPO liaison, and is here to give a brief presentation on their upcoming visioning process.

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

Aultman concluded by saying that this visioning process will lead directly into the next statewide transportation plan, which in-turn will feed into all of their modal system and investment plans, so there will be real continuity.

Strandell stated that last night he heard Representative Bernie Lieder say that there are all kinds of programs and projects that are siphoning off transportation monies from our highway systems, and asked if this is another siphon job. Aultman responded that the short answer would be yes, it is taking monies away from constructing highways, but from MnDOT's perspective this is something that their commissioner strongly believes we need to do to be successful in the future. She explained that their District 4, around the Fargo-Morehead area, are getting questions from a lot of local jurisdictions, such as "we hear you have this complete streets bill, so what are you doing, how is it changing things", and we just have no idea as to how it is supposed to feed into everything they are doing, so it is their commissioner's thought that if we really engage with our stakeholders, it will get us on the right pathway, so he believes it is important, and will be one of his projects. Strandell commented that this sounds like a conflict between the representative and the commissioner.

Information only.

**MATTER OF NDDOT ITEMS**

Haugen reported that with Minnesota giving a presentation on the update of their Statewide Transportation Plan; North Dakota held some regional meetings, which you are already aware of, as well as a statewide meeting, which you were also aware of, and they are now in the process of going over the outcome of those meetings, so he offered NDDOT to give an update on their process as well.

Haugen stated that both the Minnesota Planning Process and the North Dakota Planning Process are integrated with our planning process, so we need to be cooperative with those processes, and they with ours.

Haugen commented that there are three items we asked them to update us on:

1. Organizational Restructuring Of The NDDOT – Haugen stated that NDDOT used to have a planning and programming division, and, as you are aware from our processes, the planning is developing the Long Range Transportation Plan and programming is doing the annual four year identification of projects for funding of the plan. He said that

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NDDOT is now splitting those into two separate divisions, and the MPO will be under the planning division, but will continue to have close contact with the programming division as well. He stated that NDDOT also added a safety division, so instead of having one division to deal with we will now be dealing with three or more.

2. Received Additional \$48,000,000 In Federal Funds – Haugen reported that at the end of the Federal Fiscal Year North Dakota received an additional \$48,000,000. He explained that there are states that don't utilize every dime of their allotted funding, so those funds are now being redistributed amongst all those states that did spend all their monies, and North Dakota is being allotted \$48,000,000. He stated that this is being allotted with the typical 80/20 match, so North Dakota will need to come up with a \$12,000,000 match, which is how we arrive at a total of \$60,000,000. He commented that at last weeks Technical Advisory Committee meeting, the state was still trying to identify what pots of funds those monies are coming from, and how they may trickle down to the City and County levels.
3. Statewide Transportation Needs – Haugen referred to page 118 of the packet, and pointed out that it is a summary table that was discussed back in May at the Statewide Meeting, and attempts to identify the funding financial situation, long-term, in the State of North Dakota. He stated that the blue line indicates that, as the cost of inflation goes up, we are not able to maintain our current level of service on the statewide system. He said that in order to accomplish being able to maintain the current system, we would need an additional \$1.7 billion dollars. He pointed out that the red line indicates that if we were actually able to improve our system, not just from the current conditions, but to what the State identified in their HPCS (Highway Performance Classification System), we would need an additional \$.8 billion dollars. He stated that throughout the regional meetings, they received input from the public and others as to what the public would like to see achieved with the state system, and with that is an enhanced level of service, but in order to achieve that we would need an additional \$3.5 billion dollars.

Haugen stated that part of the reason this table was provided is because the Legislative Session is about to begin, and there is a surplus of funds in the State of North Dakota. He added that there have been interim committees meeting to discuss potential bill drafts that would infuse funds into the highway system, but this is just highlighting what the potential need is to improve our transportation system.

Haugen stated that the last thing he would like to focus on, going back to page 99 of the packet, are the five transportation programs listed:

1. County Roadway Planning – Haugen commented that both the County Roadway Planning and Access Management areas are heavily driven by the oil activity out in the western part of the state, so really, when they are talking about county roadway planning they are trying to somehow address getting ahead of the oil development curve with the roadway system out there.

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2. Access Management – Haugen reported that in terms of access management they are trying to make it so that not every development along the highway has direct access onto the state highway, which is getting to be a major problem out in the western part of the state.
3. Statewide Oversize/Overload Permitting – Haugen stated that this area concerns truck sizes and load limits and who actually regulates, permits, and receives funds for those.
4. Regional Transit Services
5. State Agency Transportation Coordination – Haugen reported that both the Regional Transit Services and State Agency Transportation Coordination areas are somewhat less important to the public.

Haugen reported, then, that as we talk about the financial need that is out there, the State DOT, at least, was focusing in on these five areas, and the outcome will probably focus on just those three areas in which we will see a lot of change occur. He added that there is a real struggle with the oil activity out in the western part of the state, increasing some of the demands and needs out there, but there is still, statewide, a lot of needs to maintain what we have and to make some improvements because what we are maintaining isn't the desired level of service that we have identified, and what the public has identified.

Haugen stated that they hope to get a final report, which was due in September, and will forward the web-link once it becomes available. He added that he did include the regional meeting outcome that was held in Grand Forks. He said that there are some things available that address some of the things we do as an MPO.

Information only.

**MATTER OF CITY OF GRAND FORKS ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT  
PRESENTATION**

Al Grasser, Grand Forks City Engineer, was present to give a brief presentation concerning some projects the City of Grand Forks may submit for consideration of funding in the next T.I.P. cycle.

Grasser reported that staff actually brought this issue to the Grand Forks Service Safety Committee back in May, so part of what he has today are just excerpts from that meeting. He stated that, without going through the entire report, NDDOT programs funds for several years in advance due to complexity and advance work needed to access these funds, and we are programmed out to 2015 to 2016, and the projects he would like to discuss today aren't projects that can just be slipped in.

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

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Grasser commented that the problem they have is that their needs greatly exceed their capacity for funding, both at the federal and local levels, and the City Engineering Department has identified three projects they really feel need to be done immediately: 1) the Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor; 2) 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South from Washington to Columbia; and 3) South Columbia from 46<sup>th</sup> to 47<sup>th</sup>. He explained that they continue to get an increasing amount of phone calls from people regarding traffic concerns at all three locations.

Grasser pointed out that compounding the issue, by the end of 2014 our Federal Aid Urban balance is virtually zero; our infrastructure sales tax is running a deficit; and the Highway Users Fund is carrying a balance of about \$1 million dollars; there is some money in there. He added that some of those statements have changed a little bit with decisions the City Council has made, as they reluctantly decided to extend some special assessment processes to help come up with our local match, and that will help extend some of our local infrastructure sales tax a little bit, but it still starts to zero out about 2016 or so.

Presentation continued.

Grasser commented that his expectations are that federal funding will be robust through 2011, and possibly out to 2013, but then there will be an increasing risk of financial shortfalls (either real dollar reduction or lack of inflation adjusted dollars), especially at the local level. He stated that as the resources get tighter, each entity is, and rightly so, putting their own interests first.

Grasser stated that there have been some new developments and considerations as they look at these three projects, and they include the fact that there has been significant amounts of Granitoid de-listed from the National Register, pavement cross-sections have been developed, and traffic growth graphs are available. He referred to a map, and explained that the areas shown in orange are the areas that were included in the original federal register, back in the early 1990s. He reported that about two years ago a re-evaluation of all the granitoid areas was done, and the findings were submitted to our local preservation society, SHPPO, and all the way to the federal level for approval, and as a result, a considerable amount of granitoid was de-listed. He pointed out that the areas they want to maintain on the register are shown in green on the map, and they want the local community to make an extra effort to maintain this reduced inventory of granitoid.

Grasser reported that Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> has, for the most part, been de-listed, although there is one area, from Cottonwood to Walnut, which still remains on the system. He referred to the traffic growth graph, and explained that staff did a couple of quick graphics to illustrate the levels of service and traffic growth patterns on Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> in order to get a sense of where we are at and where we are going in terms of the congestion level on the corridor. He pointed out that it shows that in 2035, and even earlier, we start showing a significant drop in the levels of service. He added, however, that he wants to note that this is just a generic type of analysis, and there aren't any intersection analysis included, although there is some information they developed based on how many lanes of traffic there are, so there isn't a super level of precision, just a sense of where we are at and where we are going.

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Grasser referred to a slide illustrating the existing cross-sections of Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup>. He said that they have an existing 31-foot street, and any reconstruction would maintain that width, and that is really a hard criteria for the historical society because part of what is historical here is not just the pavement, but also the trees, and any kind of widening, and even maintaining what's there now, will be difficult to accomplish without impacting historical elements of the roadway.

Grasser commented that one of the alternatives they looked at is a mill and overlay. He stated that that would maintain the same street width, the same capacities, but would really focus on addressing the rideability issues. He added that in their estimates, when we get to them, they do include some monies for some new curb and gutter and patches because there are some places where the curb and gutter have standing water.

Grasser stated that this is a process that he isn't really terribly enamored with as he prefers to keep concrete concrete, and he fought that issue for a number of years, but, particularly last year, when we received some of the stimulus money, because we have so many streets with rideability issues that aren't really to the point where a full reconstruction is necessary, we ended up having to accept doing a lot of mill and overlay work, and because of the economy, etc., we will probably be seeing a lot more of this in the future.

Grasser reported that the mill and overlay would begin just west of the intersection of Cherry Street, and will continue along the corridor, however, because this is a minimal cost option, we wouldn't address anything we don't absolutely have to, from a rideability standpoint, so the section between Chestnut and Walnut will not be done because it is still on the register; the piece right before the river was reconstructed recently, and is in good shape; and where we make that nasty corner down there the concrete is in good shape as well; so none of those areas will be overlaid.

Grasser commented that they came up with several cost alternatives:

Option "1A" entails just doing the mill and overlay work, at an estimated cost of \$650,000, however, most likely when they do the work they will need to target some additional monies to some historic preservation activities as well. He explained that in the past the MPO got a lot of citizen input, and worked with the historical society, and came up with some context sensitive items and historical items that they were wanting to evaluate. He stated that what they are proposing to do is to, rather than to go with the normal rehab cost split of 50% city funds and 50% assessments, having the City cover 100% of the costs of the rehab in order to ensure the project doesn't get protested out, and finally gets done, but to balance that if the neighborhood wants some of the context sensitive work done, those costs would be special assessed.

Option "1B" shows some of the context sensitive items, and would increase the cost of the project to about \$1.3 million.

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Option “1C” is an estimate they put together to reconstruct the one block that is still maintained, and is a baseline estimate that the committee asked them to add. He pointed out that to do that one block of work, without intersections, would cost about \$137,000; and to reconstruct it with some historical items would cost about \$186,000. He added that, because the cost is so minimal, per committee discussion, rather than special assessing it they may just pick the cost up as well.

Option “2A” entails doing a street reconstruction for the entire corridor, at a cost of \$4.4 million dollars.

Option “2B” entails doing the entire street reconstruction, including the historical issues and context sensitive issues as well, at a cost of over \$7 million dollars.

Grasser summarized by saying that the minimum mill and overlay project would be about \$450,000, and could probably be done in 2012; the mill and overlay project with the historical context could probably be done in 2013, at a cost of \$1,300,000, and would include more public input because of the special assessments; and doing the second between Chestnut and Walnut, at a cost of \$190,000, could be done in 2013; a full reconstruction would cost about \$4,400,000, with about \$2,900,000 in federal funds and \$800,000 in city and assessment funds; and a full reconstruction with all the historical and context sensitive items could cost about \$7,000,000, and, he thinks most everything would qualify for federal dollars, so if they want to maximize the federal dollars on that it would be about \$4,800,000 to \$5,000,000; city costs would be about \$1,000,000 and assessments would be about \$1,200,000.

Grasser commented that they kind of put 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South on the back burner, and didn’t do a full evaluation.

Grasser reported that, for South Columbia Road, they are looking at new construction, basically from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue down to just past 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue where you tie back in, and would include traffic signals at 36<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, and 47<sup>th</sup>, with a ¾ intersection at the Wal-Mart/Super-One driveway connection.

Grasser referred to a slide illustrating traffic growth patterns, and went over it briefly.

Grasser commented that there are a couple of options they are looking at for this corridor. He explained that the existing pavement is 24-feet wide, and one option would be to widen it to a five-lane, 65-foot wide roadway, without medians, like the section from 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue currently is; and the other option would be a five-lane section with a median, 74-feet wide, which is what is shown as being in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Grasser pointed out that the cost of the five-lane section is about \$10,000,000; and when we add the median it increases to about \$11,000,000. He explained that, of the \$10,000,000 for the five-lane section, \$7,000,000 will come from federal funds and the remainder from assessments and city funds; and of the \$11,000,000 for the five-lane with median section, \$7,000,000 will come from federal funds, but the city costs will increase somewhat.

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Grasser summarized by saying that he has really struggled with these issues the last few years because he knows there is a lot of need on Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup>, but the problem is, from a financial standpoint, they tend to be mutually exclusive, and he has been trying to figure out how we can accomplish all three of them within that very short timeframe, but we don't have enough federal money to cover them. He stated that one option they discussed when going through the budgeting process, was to specially assess 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in its entirety, but that wasn't a very popular option. He said that they are trying to determine how best to address all of these issues as best they can.

Grasser stated that in the end, his recommendation is to:

1. Mill and overlay Minnesota/4<sup>th</sup> in 2012.
2. Assess costs above the base mill and overlay, but the city will cover the entire mill and overlay project.
3. Negotiate with the historical society on issues they have concerns with.
4. Test preservation on Granitoid.
5. Add Columbia Road to 2015.
6. 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South – Plan for 2016 or 2017.

Grasser commented, however, that he knows that in order to accomplish any of this an amendment will be necessary to the Long Range Transportation Plan, which will take some time. He stated that Mr. Haugen did provide some input as to how we might structure the process in the mean time as we have to identify our 2015 project in the next month or so, which doesn't give us much time to redo the transportation plan.

Christensen stated that it seems to him that, for some reason, certain things become sacrosanct around here, which apparently is your long range planning process. He added that it seems like there is a disconnect here between the MPO staff and the city trying to get things moved up here for Columbia Road and 47<sup>th</sup>, and he would like to see how we get that handled as he doesn't see what is so magical about 30 or 90 days. He said that, to him, the staff should be able to work something like that out. Grasser commented that these federal processes are just hard to get around. Christensen responded that he understands that, but we just heard Nancy tell us, and you were sitting through the whole thing, about the planning for 47<sup>th</sup>, and everybody knows that is a need, an incredible need because most of the people that actually come down Belmont Road go out to the shopping mall either hit 32<sup>nd</sup> or they take 40<sup>th</sup> out to avoid the stop-lights.

Christensen asked what we can do to expedite the planning process, as a body, so this thing can be moved on down the road because, obviously if it doesn't move down the road, when AI comes to us and we are going to try to move up on 4<sup>th</sup>, and fix it all up, we are going to spend some of our money to do it, which we should, because of East Grand Forks, but then its like, well, the question will be what's the trade off for the City of Grand Forks, so he would ask that this body direct staff to try to expedite the process as best they can, in light of the federal rules, as we probably can't get around those, but maybe we can have parallel paths to move it down the line.

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Haugen referred to page 137 and pointed out that it lays out that path. Christensen stated that he has his document open to that page, but he is trying to shorten that if he can. Haugen responded that that is as short as it can be, that is the expedited process. He added that, as he wrote in the staff report, from the federal perspective, even to change how we engage the public in our public participation plan, we have a 45-day period just to change our plan as to how we are going to reach the public in our processes. He stated that he has laid out some strategy for the city to consider, and he would call it a “placeholder”, a project of equal dollar amount, which is a strategy they have used in the past. He said that, as AI has identified, they are asking for more than our annual allocation of funds from the NDDOT, so we will be borrowing one year ahead, but if we don’t ask for a project that sort of reserves the funds for us, then of course they won’t place those funds in that particular year. Christensen asked what project could we ask for, or defer as the projects in our plan. He stated that the first one that comes to mind, always, is the underpass at 42<sup>nd</sup>. Grasser responded that he thinks that one is already in the Long Range Transportation Plan, and as he understands it we need to pick one that is in the mid-term. He said that he really wasn’t prepared to make a recommendation today, but if he has to the one that comes to mind, at the risk of not everyone being very happy with him, would be the Merrifield Road River Crossing, as he thinks the interchange needs to come in first. Haugen responded that that is really an apple to orange suggestion, as that project would be funded from a different funding source than what would be used for these projects. He explained that the Merrifield Bridge would be funded with county monies, and we need to be looking at a project that would be funded with city urban funds.

Christensen asked, then, if Mr. Grasser was just here to give the report, or is he asking for something. Grasser responded that his intention today was just to get some feedback, as they are floating this out as kind of a roadmap, but if the MPO is supporting this he would certainly like to see that input back as it tells us that we need to start grinding through all the detail stuff to make it happen as best they can. He said that he just wanted to find out where the MPO stands on this. Christensen stated, from that standpoint, if the MPO supports us, the question really is that most of the money that we would be spending would be money out of our share of any federal dollars anyway, so is this something that the Service Safety Committee has approved, and would like, and is it something that you will be asking the City Council to approve of, or have you already done that. Grasser responded that he thinks that what will happen, based on what he is hearing here, is that they are going to, and there are only about three weeks left for them to bring their recommended 2015 project through Service Safety and City Council, and at that time city staff will work with Mr. Haugen to find out if there are other motions and things that we need to include on that to help expedite things, and if that means that we take action to modify another project on the list, they will try to include that in the motion, but the basic concept will be that if we support this as a 2015 project, they will assemble the report and move it forward in that manner.

Christensen said, then, that there are still a lot of steps required to move this forward on our side first before we can move it forward. Grasser agreed.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE ACCEPTING  
THE REPORT AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATION SUBJECT TO MORE DETAIL***

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***BEING BROUGHT BACK TO US FROM BOTH GRAND FORKS CITY STAFF AND MPO STAFF.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:25 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Grassel, Strandell, Malm, Powers, Adams, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 11:56 a.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Mike Powers, Greg Leigh, and Steve Adams.

Absent were: Tyrone Grandstrand, Doug Christensen, and Dick Grassel.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Planning Technician; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF AMENDMENT TO 2011-2014 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that this is the advertised time for a public hearing on a proposed amendment to our 2011-2014 T.I.P., addressing some changes to the transit section. He stated that this is actually old money that is being amended into our new T.I.P..

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Haugen explained that two things are happening with this amendment:

- 1) The Statewide 5309 Grant: Grand Forks received roughly a third, or \$383,277 of the \$1,000,000 requested. They then had to determine which project they actually wanted to put forward, which they finally did, and they then submitted it to their City Council for approval. The project they chose was to purchase two Class 500 fixed-route vehicles, and is being funded with FY2010 monies in 2011.
- 2) New Freedom/JARC: These are actually FY2009 monies that are being awarded. The City of Grand Forks had requested more funds than were awarded, however, they were finally awarded \$40,000 JARC funds to help with the on-going cost of running Route 12/13. They were awarded some New Freedom funds to purchase another demand response vehicle for the Senior Rider/Dial-A-Ride Service.

Haugen commented that all of these projects are programmed to occur in 2011 because that is the first year that our T.I.P. can show any projects, but, again, these are old monies that are finally being awarded. He stated that a public hearing does need to be held on this item in order to ensure that our T.I.P. has followed the proper public participation process.

Haugen reported that the Technical Advisory Committee discussed this at their meeting last Wednesday, and did, along with staff, recommend approval of the amendment as presented.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

There was no one present for discussion.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE THE FY2011-2014 T.I.P. AMENDMENT, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF STATUS OF URBAN ROADS MAP**

Haugen reported that back in August we had submitted to the NDDOT, working through the Technical Advisory Committee, an update to our Urban Roads Map. He explained that the

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Urban Roads map, in North Dakota, identifies which roads are eligible for federal funds in Grand Forks.

Haugen pointed out that there were some functional classification updates that we were processing, and while going through the process we identified that neither our Columbia Road Overpass ramps or our DeMers Overpass ramps are classified by either the State or by us for eligibility of federal funds, so we worked with the Technical Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from the NDDOT, to come up with a map that we submitted to the State for their consideration. He then referred to a copy of a letter the MPO received in October from the NDDOT, included in the packet, rejecting that map. He pointed out that they cite the reason for the rejection as being that we were putting the ramps on the Regional System, or the State Highway System.

Haugen stated that this was discussed at the Technical Advisory Committee at their meeting last Wednesday, and because we do have some projects that we need to get done, and in order for that to occur we need to have some of the changes we made to the map approved, they recommended the MPO Executive Policy Board approve a map showing only the changes that were requested outside of addressing the ramp issues. He explained that by doing that we would be updating 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, South 48<sup>th</sup> Street, and a couple of other changes, so that we can get those things cleaned up and get those projects on track again. He added that the other recommendation was to then submit a map, with the ramps as we previously submitted, and re-request that the ramps be identified as part of the regional system as our current request was, and allow us to continue to discuss with the NDDOT the possibility of classifying those ramps as part of either the Regional System, or as part of the Urban Road System.

Haugen referred to the map, and went over the changes shown.

Haugen reported that they are also working with the NDDOT on identifying how ramps are treated in other North Dakota cities as well.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE STAFF DEVELOP TWO SEPARATE MAPS; ONE ADDRESSING JUST THOSE CHANGES MADE TO THE URBAN ROAD SYSTEM; AND THE OTHER TO INCLUDE THE COLUMBIA ROAD AND DEMERS OVERPASS RAMPS.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF RESULTS OF DAR/SENIOR RIDER RFP**

Kouba reported that they went out for bid, and received one proposal. She stated that Grand Forks Taxi was the only firm that submitted a bid, however, there were some surprise issues with the total cost of their bid. She explained that to continue providing our current service, the cost

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would be about \$17.00 per ride, so they negotiated with Grand Forks Taxi to get the cost down to \$11.45 a ride, with the City of Grand Forks taking on the task of handling reservations, as well as the maintenance of the vehicles they purchase.

Kouba said that both cities approved this; the City of East Grand Forks approved it at their meeting last evening, and the City of Grand Forks approved it at their meeting on Monday evening.

Kouba explained that this is a service that we need to provide as a complimentary para-transit service for our fixed-routes.

Haugen reported that the message to this board is that we are going to have to address this financial imbalance in our Long Range Transportation Plan, so in our work program next year you will see a significant resource committed to addressing the transit service in both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks to try to get this balanced. Malm asked what significant resource this comes from. Haugen responded that we will be recommending we hire a consultant to help us through this process. He added that they won't only be looking at the Senior Rider/Dial-A-Ride services, but also the route structure in both cities as well, so it will be a pretty comprehensive review of the public transportation system.

Leigh asked if there was only indication as to why we only had one firm bid on this, was it because Grand Forks Taxi was the only firm capable, or had the equipment, necessary to provide the service. Haugen responded that in his opinion this wasn't the case as the equipment is being furnished by the City of Grand Forks. Leigh asked, then, if the taxi service uses any of their own equipment. Haugen responded that they do have some of their own equipment that would augment the City's equipment, but basically they will be using just the City's equipment for the most part. Powers asked if this means that they will only be doing the driving. Haugen responded that that was correct, under the new contract. Kouba added that Grand Forks will be paying for their dispatching until they can get their own dispatching software to do it in-house.

Malm asked if once we get the contract, will that person be in charge of the routes. He stated that we hear a lot about route issues, and if we build the Wellness Center and/or the Library are built, are we going to have to get into all that again. Kouba responded that it is something that will need to be looked into, and will have to be part of our transportation plan update. Haugen added that the next agenda item will specifically address the new Wellness Center, and the study of routes to it. He stated that all the routes, and primarily the Grand Forks routes are extended, with our current traffic, to the point where it is impossible for the drivers to make it to their stops in time. He added that we are in the process of implementing signal coordination and a signal priority system, which will help somewhat, but even with that we are being asked to examine how new route structures can be implemented, and we will be doing that in 2011.

**MATTER OF CONTRACT FOR SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET STUDY**

Ellis referred to the staff report, included in the packet, and reminded the board that they approved staff send out an RFP for the South Washington Street Study in September. She

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reported that they received six proposals, and interviewed three; Alliant, KLJ, and MMM Group, and, although all three would have done a great job with the study itself, the Steering Committee is recommending we enter into a contract with Alliant Engineering, at a cost not-to-exceed \$45,000.

Ellis then referred to page 37 of the packet, and pointed out that Alliant states that: “The South Washington Street Corridor Study needs to be comprehensive, considering transportation and land use needs hand-in-hand, and that it should answer the following five issues: 1) Design, 2) Transit, 3) Local Street System, 4) Pedestrian and Bicyclist Movement, and 5) Implementation.

Ellis stated that a contract has been compiled, and Alliant is okay with it, so staff is requesting approval from the Executive Policy Board in order that Alliant can get started on the study as soon as possible.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT WITH ALLIANT ENGINEERING TO PERFORM THE SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET CORRIDOR STUDY FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$45,000.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT REPORT FOR 2010 A.T.A.C. SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY**

Ellis reminded the board that each year we try to complete school safety studies for the elementary and middle schools in the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks areas. She stated that they did look at a parochial school this year, St. Michaels, as well as Winship and Wilder Elementary Schools in Grand Forks.

Ellis reported that these studies don’t just look at safe-route-to-school issues; but also at pedestrian safety, roadway and parking characteristics, traffic control and pavement markings, traffic circulation, etc., as well, so it addresses the whole scope of school safety.

Ellis referred to the staff report, and explained that A.T.A.C. did give both short and long term safety improvements involving educational strategies, enforcement strategies, and engineering enhancements. She pointed out that the recommended improvements for all three schools are listed in the report, and went over them briefly.

Powers stated that while reading through the report, the thing that he was particularly concerned about are the signal lights; and the issues we have been having with some of them malfunctioning, and many being outdated. He asked if this wasn’t something each City should be looking at through regular maintenance. Ellis responded that this is something each City should be taking care of. She added that there are other issues as well, including a stop sign that has graffiti on it, branches covering signs, etc., that should all be taken care of, and were turned over to the public works departments.

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Ellis reported that staff will be reviewing the draft report with the principals from each of the schools. She added that they also submitted copies of the report to both public works departments, engineering departments, and the District Engineer in Grand Forks as St. Michaels is located on a state highway. She stated that once everyone has had a chance to review and comments on the report and it's recommendations, it will be submitted to this body for final approval.

Ellis stated that there are only a few schools left that have not been studied, so we are nearing the end of these studies.

Strandell asked about the drop-off sites, and whether or not there is a problem with certain parents leaving the vehicle and walking the child to the school. Ellis responded there is a problem with that occurring, and this really is an education/enforcement issue that needs to be taken care of. She added that, basically, education and enforcement are the most critical elements of the study.

Ellis reported that they will be seeking final approval at the Executive Policy Board's December meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. December Executive Policy Board Meeting

Haugen reported that the December meeting will be packed with lots of items for action. He added that the meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO ADJOURN THE NOVEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:20 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Malm, Leigh, Powers, and Adams.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 12:00 Noon  
Grand Forks County Commissioners Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gary Malm, Chairman, called the December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 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: Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Mike Powers, Dick Grassel, Steve Adams, Tyrone Grandstrand, and Doug Christensen.

Absent were: Greg Leigh.

Guest(s) present were: Dean Rau, Assistant Grand Forks City Engineer.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Matt Leal, GF/EGF MPO Planning Technician; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chairman Malm declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, and Grandstrand.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF THREE MONTH REVIEW OF PLANNING TECHNICIAN'S SALARY**

Haugen reminded the board that when they approved the creation of the Planning Technician position, there was an addendum to the motion adopted requesting that in three months there would be a review of the salary for the position. He said, however, there wasn't any real guidance provided as to what should be looked at during that review.

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Haugen reported that, as the Executive Director, he struggled with this, and did ask the Finance Committee for their input on the issue. He referred to the staff report, included in the packets, and pointed out that both the Finance Committee, and himself, concluded that there really isn't anything that would cause us to have a different opinion as to what the pay-grade and salary should be for the Planning Technician position, so per the motion approving the creation of this contracted position through December 2011, the three-month review will show that the employee is doing the job as expected, and both the Finance Committee and staff recommend that there be no changes made to either the salary or pay-grade for the position.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THAT NO ADJUSTMENT BE MADE TO THE PLANNING TECHNICIAN'S SALARY OR PAY-GRADE.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, and Grandstrand.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF HOLIDAY BONUS HOURS**

Haugen reported that, as in past years, the City of Grand Forks has granted their employees a four-hour holiday bonus, and because the MPO strives to follow, as best they can, what the City of Grand Forks does for their employees, staff is requesting approval of a four-hour holiday bonus for MPO employees as well.

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE A FOUR-HOUR HOLIDAY BONUS TO MPO STAFF.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, and Grandstrand.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Christensen reported present.

**MATTER OF 2011-2012 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM**

Haugen reported that a requirement of our federal funding is that we lay out how we are going to utilize the funds we receive. He stated that, traditionally, we have broken our activities into three categories: 1) 100 – Program Administration; 2) 200 – Program Support and Coordination; 3) 300 – Planning and Implementation.

Haugen referred to a chart listing the three categories, as well as each of their subtasks, and went over the information briefly. He pointed out that in 2011 our total budget is shown as being just under \$1,000,000. He explained that a quarter or more of that \$1,000,000 is the extra funding we received back in August, which is being carried forward to the end of 2011, thus the reason for the unusually high budget. He pointed out that the projects we are utilizing those extra funds for are highlighted in yellow, and were started in 2010, and will be completed in 2011. He added

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that in 2012, as you will notice, those funds are no longer included, and the budget is back to what we normally have to work with.

Haugen reported that because we have not officially received what our Fiscal Year 2010 funding is, we have completed the plan with the assumption we will be maintaining Fiscal Year 2009 funding levels. He explained that we would expect that when we receive our final Fiscal Year 2010 numbers, there will be a slight increase from the Fiscal Year 2009 numbers. Strandell asked if the MPO always works one year in reverse. Haugen responded that we do not normally do that, but with the non-reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU and the continuing resolutions, etc., we just have not received from our lead agencies what our Fiscal Year 2010 numbers are. He added that typically we receive that information at the end of the Federal Fiscal Year or early into the new Fiscal Year, so this is not the norm.

Haugen commented that, as everyone is probably aware, the Senate and House are debating this week the Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriation Bills, so we aren't sure what our 2011 amounts will be, although from most reports it sounds like they are freezing it to the 2010 numbers, so again, he is just pointing out that the funding levels we are using are actually 2009 funding levels for 2011 and 2012 as we prepare our work program at this time, and once we know what our 2010 numbers are we may need to do an amendment to the work program to identify those funds. He added that we will also, at the end of 2011, re-evaluate where we are at in 2012, and may need to make some adjustments at that time.

Haugen referred to the 2011 project list, and pointed out that, again, the four studies that we already agreed we would be doing with the extra funds awarded us, are shown in yellow. He stated that we did request both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks advance to us activities they would like the MPO to undertake, and were able, in 2011, to fund both cities top two requests. He explained that for Grand Forks that involves: 1) looking at their downtown parking code requirements in terms of the number of stalls by different land use types, and also the assessment for the operation and maintenance for the provision of free parking in the downtown; and 2) looking at a possible amendment to our Transportation Plan to have the Columbia Road Reconstruction Project moved up.

Haugen stated that for East Grand Forks it means looking at a northwest traffic circulation study. He explained that for many years, in our Long Range Transportation Plan; and visited in a couple of previous studies; was the creation of a full-intersection at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W. and U.S. Highway 2. He reported that we actually had the project programmed to be done in 2010, however the East Grand Forks City Council asked that it be delayed, but are now asking us to restudy it to determine whether or not there is still full support of the project, and if not, to identify what the ramifications of not doing the project will be. He added that the second project they requested we do involves a review of their infrastructure code.

Haugen commented that, as mentioned last month, with the results of the Demand Response Service Contract, there is a significant increase in cost, so we will need to revisit the whole transit department, and re-examine their financial plan. He added that as part of that we will be

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looking at their route structure, as well as some of their other cost components so we can show that the financial plan is sustainable in the long term.

Haugen referred to the 2012 table, and reminded the board that there will be less funds to work with. He pointed out that the work program identifies that we will be spending most of our funding resources addressing the update of our Long Range Transportation Plan, which is due for final approval in the first quarter of 2013, so we will need to look at the Street and Highway section of the plan, and will need to engage a consultant, as well as work more closely with our Demand Model Forecasting with ATAC, out of NDSU, so you will see there are funds set aside for this. He reported that the Long Range Transportation Plan is the most important document the MPO produces at least once every five years. He added that most of the resources allocated in 2012 are for that activity, thus there is little funding left for any additional activities in 2012.

Haugen stated that the Work Program was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee at their meeting last week, and there were no issues raised, however, since then we have been informed that our federal partners are instituting a 30-day review period for their review and approval of the document. He said that they did receive a draft copy of the document on November 30<sup>th</sup>, and are not prepared to say that all of these activities are eligible, so if this body is ready to approve this work program it will need to be contingent on any comments or issues our federal partners may have; or you can give approval of the draft and have it brought back for final approval once we have all the comments from our partners.

Haugen commented that most of the comments made by our federal partners have, for the most part, involved the 100 category, or general administration; so, although he doesn't want to make them sound too minor in stature, when we are talking about items that have historically been the same for the last ten or fifteen years, and are now being questioned, and that represent 8% of the budget, he isn't sure they are really much of an obstacle. He added that he did respond to the comments received, and their response to that was to institute the 30-day review period, so you have two options: 1) approve it and allow staff to work out the issues with Federal Highway; or 2) give it preliminary approval and have it come back to you for final approval in January.

Christensen asked if anything would need to be changed to allocate funds to study our bus routes. He stated that the City of Grand Forks received a request from the Park District to add a route for the Wellness Center, and Mr. Gershman asked that a route also be added to the existing Library. Haugen responded that that is already a part of the total revamp of the Transit Development Plan that he identified, the route structure is part of that study.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL TO APPROVE THE 2011-2012 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM.***

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN TO AMEND THE MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVE ANY AMENDMENTS MADE NECESSARY DUE TO COMMENTS FROM FEDERAL HIGHWAY, SECONDED BY STRANDELL.***

***MOTION, WITH THE AMENDMENT, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.***

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*Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, Grandstrand, and Christensen.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

Malm referred to the staff report, and asked what was meant by "...considers UND's Climate Action Plan's temporal closure of University Avenue." Haugen responded that as part of UND's official Climate Action Plan they labeled a project to consider temporarily closing down University Avenue to traffic from about 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and since it is part of UND's official plan we need to evaluate it as part of our Long Range Transportation Plan for two reasons. The first is, obviously, if implemented it will have an impact to our traffic flow, and one of the reasons we have long range transportation plans is so we can assist in identifying, should they go forward with some of these things, what impact they will have and whether we should still go forward or modify their climate action plan. He said that the other reason is that we are expecting that whatever new authorization does come through it will require us to consider climate change, and so this is, again, another identified institution in our communities official climate change, or climate action plan, so we need to address it as well.

Christensen asked what is meant by climate action, why is the word "climate" in there. Haugen responded that it is a response to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. He explained that the University of North Dakota adopted a Climate Action Plan that lays out how they are going to lower their contribution to global warming. Christensen asked if this was what they came up with. Haugen responded that it is one of their solutions. Grandstrand added that one of the reasons they specifically want to close that portion of University Avenue is because students drive from one class to another, thus creating more interaction between people and cars, so it isn't just climate. He stated that he thinks it is a good idea, and was wondering if we could look at what would happen if University Avenue were closed permanently, except for public transportation vehicles. Haugen responded that it would be easy to look into that. He stated that they have looked at the possibility of total closure of University Avenue in the past, and found that it had a pretty significant impact on the surrounding network, so we didn't pursue it, but now we could look at it, but, again, when buses aren't operating on it we would like to consider other vehicles to operate on it so what time of day would we close it down to those types of activities, buses, bike/ped, etc.. Grandstrand stated that the reason he asks is because a lot of the accidents he has heard about happening on this stretch of roadway have primarily occurred around 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., when people are getting off work, but there isn't a lot of student traffic, in terms of pedestrian traffic.

Haugen commented that there is a significant amount of traffic on University Avenue during the 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. time period that doesn't just involve students driving around campus, but also staff going from one end to the other, so we will have to see what the impact is, and that is why we are including it in our Long Range Transportation Plan scope-of-work so that we can make an informed decision on whether or not we want to go forward with the closure. Powers asked what portion of University Avenue would be closed. Haugen responded that it would generally be from Columbia Road to Stanford. Christensen pointed out that if this closure occurs, obviously your going to have people cutting over to 6<sup>th</sup>. Haugen agreed that people

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would probably use either 6<sup>th</sup>, or Campus Road would need to be revamped to allow for better traffic flow. He added that one other option would be DeMers Avenue as a way for people to get from the east end to the west end of campus.

Grassel commented that he sees this as being real confusing. Christensen stated that he doesn't know why this was added to the program, but the long and short of it is that if we were to close University Avenue, think of the outcry we would get from citizens, as the roadway has been used since 1889. He added that this would also have a big impact on 6<sup>th</sup>, and Mr. Malm lives in that area so he could speak on how that would impact that area, but then you would channel them down to Stanford Road to the balance of University Avenue, but he guesses that's why we have the MPO, to study this. Grandstrand commented that it takes like ten to fifteen seconds to get to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from University, and he has lived on campus for six or seven years now. Christensen stated that he has driven through it for thirty-eight years. Grandstrand responded that he doesn't know how much you learn in thirty-years, but maybe it's a lot, but ten or fifteen seconds isn't a big deal, and you can go a lot faster on 6<sup>th</sup>, its so slow on University to he uses 6<sup>th</sup> anyway. Grassel added that it is just the nature of the beast, its hard for people to accept change.

Malm stated that it's in the study, and there are a lot of things to consider, there are two schools on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as well as some other issues. He said that he has lived out there for the last twenty-five years, and he has always ignored University Avenue because the students don't know these streets are not for walking on. Haugen reported that the way it is written up in the plan, as he understands, is after the A.M. peak and before the P.M. peak, that is the time consideration that is up for review.

Discussion only.

**MATTER OF 2012-2015 T.I.P. CANDIDATE PROJECTS (ND SIDE)**

Haugen reported that this is that time of year, for the North Dakota side, when we look at all of the projects that have been considered to us for funding during our next T.I.P. cycle. He pointed out that the next T.I.P. cycle covers the years 2012 to 2015, and we already have a document that covers 2012 to 2014, so a lot of the focus on today's presentation is on the last year, 2015, although there are some slides that give some information as to what the current status is of various projects.

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

Haugen pointed out that the eligible programs include:

- 1) Transportation Enhancements for FY2012
- 2) Safe Routes To School for FY2012 – None were submitted.
- 3) Urban Local for FY2015
- 4) Urban Regional For FY2015 – Plus one non T.I.P. year FY2016
- 5) County Roads – None were submitted.

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Haugen commented that one of the reasons he asked for the phone call he just received was because of how this was submitted to us. He stated that it created some confusion, and staff has been trying to get it cleared up since the Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

Haugen referred to the slide listing the Transportation Enhancements for FY2012, and pointed out that there are three projects listed: 1) DeMers Avenue Multi-Purpose Trail – Phase 1: 42<sup>nd</sup> Street West to 48<sup>th</sup> Street; 2) DeMers Avenue Multi-Purpose Trail – Phase 2: 48<sup>th</sup> Street West to 55<sup>th</sup> Street; and 3) Lincoln Park Connecting Trail. He stated that all the applications were filled out on FY2012 applications, however the summary sheet showed one per year for the next three years, so he needs clarification as to how many projects there really are. Rau responded that there is one project per year for the next three years. Haugen said, then, that there is only one 2012 project being submitted, so there will be only one project submitted for FY2012. Christensen asked what the third project for DeMers Avenue is. Haugen responded that sometime beyond 2014, if we are successful in getting the areas shown in solid and dashed red lines completed, the next area to be done would be 55<sup>th</sup> Street from Gateway Drive to University Avenue.

Haugen summarized that the one project that will be submitted for FY2012 funding would be the area shown with a solid red line on the map.

Haugen then went over the scoring process that the City of Grand Forks provided to them for each of the projects submitted. He explained that they try to include projects that have been awarded a score of 60 points or more, and as you can see, staff scored the DeMers Phase 1 project at 66, so it has a lot of the different components we like to see in an enhancement project, and it is consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, so staff is recommending approval that it is consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, and award it top priority.

Haugen referred to a map showing the Lincoln Drive trail project, and went over it briefly.

Haugen continued with the slide presentation, and explained that the next few slides discuss our current projects, as well as some adjustments that were made to those projects, including some cost increases, cost decreases, etc..

Christensen referred to Figure 6, Alt 2H, and asked about the alternate right-of-way, with the current boulevard. Haugen asked if he was talking about the DeMers/Washington intersection area. Christensen responded that he was referring to the DeMers/Underpass intersection. He said that he is trying to figure out what is shown in the blue. Haugen responded that the blue lines indicate the current right-of-way for the property. Christensen commented that his concern is with the blue shown on the Leever's Parking Lot. Haugen responded that there are some property splits occurring with that property that causes a portion of the property to be a separate legal piece of property. He added that the blue lines are defining individual parcels.

Christensen commented that if the underpass project is done, will there be any taking of that parking lot. Haugen responded that this drawing does not show that. Christensen asked if there

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was a drawing available that does show that. Haugen responded that we are about to proceed with a study that will show that, sometime in the next year, and there will be a more refined concept of what will be happening here, but as of right now we do not show anything.

Christensen commented that, as you know, we just had a conversation concerning this, and we need to know what the intention is sooner rather than later if we are going to have the potential taking of that parking lot, and that is pretty important, so when will we know that. He added that he doesn't want to be siting a library there and then find out your taking part of that parking lot. Haugen responded that we will know that sometime in the second quarter of next year. He added that the impact, as best as he can tell right now, would be additional frontage right-of-way, most likely not more than forty or fifty feet. He stated that the only way it would be more than that would be because one of the concepts the NDDOT wants us to look at, if it is determined that a rehab is not an option, would be to replace the underpass with an overpass, which would have a possible impact on the Leever's parking lot. Christensen asked if this could be put into memo form, sooner than later, way before the 6<sup>th</sup> of January because the City Council needs to have this information. He explained that if we site a library there, there will be no way an overpass will be built. Grandstrand asked that, when you write the memo, keep in mind that it will probably be used to try to block siting the library at the Leever's site. Christensen disagreed, that it doesn't really matter, it's the truth, and Mr. Grandstrand may not be on the council, and neither might he, but it is going to affect future decision points because you will be doing certain things then that we are doing today that will affect tomorrow, its called custody. Grandstrand stated that that's the whole conversation, if the library goes anywhere its going to affect the future.

Malm stated that he understands everyone's concerns, but he has a simple solution to the problem, and that would be to remove the restaurant at the corner, close the adjacent street and use it for parking for the library.

Haugen reported that they will also be looking at all the driveways along this portion of Washington, and the adjoining streets so there may be recommendations to install right-in/right-out onlys or  $\frac{3}{4}$  access points, and he is speaking only to the Leever's parking.

Discussion ensued.

Haugen stated that the actual projects we are reviewing at this time are the 2015 projects:

Local:	47 <sup>th</sup> Avenue South between Washington and Columbia
Regional:	Washington Street Underpass Reconstruction DeMers Rehabilitation from I-29 to the Fire Station

Haugen reported that on the North Dakota side they do ask us, on the Regional Highway System, to give them an extra year lead on what projects might be coming up. He stated that if we do something with the underpass on Washington, in 2016 we will address that segment from Hammerling to the underpass, then from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, either a mill and overlay or a complete concrete replacement project. He added that also in 2016, per an agreement with MNDOT, there is the Kennedy Bridge Repair project.

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Grassel asked about the DeMers/Washington Street Intersection project, and if he is correct that the fire station would need to be moved. Haugen responded that he is correct, that it is part of the project cost to move the fire station. Christensen asked where they would move it. Haugen responded that Chief O'Neill has identified a location in the south end. Christensen stated that there would still need to be one on the north end as well. Haugen responded that Chief O'Neill feels he has that with the one located on Columbia Road.

Haugen referred to the last three slides, and pointed out that they focus in and summarize the projects that, if they are funded through our cooperative T.I.P./S.T.I.P. decision process, these will be the projects showing up in our next T.I.P.. He went over each briefly.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE THE LIST OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE FY2012-2015 T.I.P. AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND GIVE IT PRIORITY RANKING.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, Grandstrand, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF FINAL A.T.A.C. SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY FINAL REPORT**

Ellis reminded the board that she was here last month with the Draft A.T.A.C. Safety Study for Winship, Wilder, and St. Michaels elementary schools. She stated that there were just a few changes made to the draft. She referred to page 158 of the final report, and went over the changes briefly.

Grassel asked if there hasn't been some discussion on possibly closing one of the elementary schools in Grand Forks. Ellis responded that there has been some discussion about possibly closing Wilder, but we can still make recommendations since it hasn't been determined yet, and what we hope to accomplish is to provide consistent safety for walkers, bikers, bus riding, and parent drop-off/pick-up for all the schools in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and as long as Wilder remains open we want to make sure they have a safety plan available.

Malm asked if Ms. Ellis was seeking approval of the Final A.T.A.C. School Safety Study Report. Ellis responded she was, but with one additional item. She referred to Page 44 of the report, and pointed out that they left off a turnout lane for St. Michaels, so she will have it added before the Final Reports are published.

Grandstrand asked about the speed limit signs by Lewis and Clark that flash a vehicles speed, and whether or not they are considered in this as well. Ellis responded that when they look at each individual school, they look at all of the signing and pavement markings including crosswalks, flashing lights, no parking signs, etc., and they are recommended for some of these schools as well. Grandstrand stated that he feels they are pretty effective. Ellis commented, however, that there have been some issues with them not working in cold weather, and with the purchase of some of them. She explained, however, that they do recommend putting either those

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signs, or something similar. She stated that the school districts and Safe Kids have been given some non-infrastructure money through Safe Routes To School for the temporary wheel out signs that any school has the ability to use. Christensen asked why we wouldn't add a recommendation so that they know that we, as a long range planning body feel they should have these kinds of signs, and then it will be the school districts issue of buying it or not. Ellis commented that it is the City's responsibility. Christensen said, just recommend it so we can have something to fall back on.

Powers asked what the status is on the quiet zone downtown. Rau responded that BNSF had some concerns that not all the safety devices were in place, mainly the medians, so it was delayed until the medians can be installed next spring. He stated that had they had that information sooner, the medians could have been installed, but now they have to wait until they can do concrete work, which will be May or June. He added that they plan on having the work done, and the quiet zone implemented by July or August.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FINAL A.T.A.C. SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY FOR WILDER ELEMENTARY, WINSHIP ELEMENTARY AND ST. MICHAEL'S ELEMENTARY IN GRAND FORKS SUBJECT TO THE INCLUSION OF BULLET ON PAGE 44 OF THE REPORT INDICATING THERE SHOULD BE A TURNOUT LANE FOR ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL AS WELL.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, Grandstrand, and Christensen.  
Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF AUTHORIZING FINANCE COMMITTEE TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS FOR: A) 48<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE SOUTH CORRIDOR STUDY TO BONESTROO; AND B) NORTH WASHINGTON STREET AND UNDERPASS STUDY TO KLJ**

Haugen reported that we have two RFPs out, the 47 Avenue Corridor Study and the North Washington Street and Underpass Study. He stated that there were Selection Committees for both studies, that met and interviewed those consultants submitting proposals.

Haugen stated that the 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Corridor Study committee is recommending we engage with the firm Bonestroo; and the North Washington Street and Underpass Study is recommending we engage with the firm KLJ.

Haugen reported that we would normally have contracts, and the final scope of work available for these studies, but we were not at that point for today's meeting, therefore staff is requesting this body authorize the Finance Committee to execute those contracts once they are finalized. He added that all of the scopes of work have come in, and addressed all that we asked them to in the RFP, and both budgets were under the budgeted amount we identified for each study, so there is no indication there should be any hidden surprises.

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Haugen commented that this is something that we have done in the past under similar circumstances, to authorize the Finance Committee to review the contract and approve it prior to the Chairman signing, so if the Finance Committee is willing to meet sometime soon, we can wrap this up soon.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE COMMITTEE EXECUTE THE CONTRACTS FOR: A) 48<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE SOUTH CORRIDOR STUDY TO BONESTROO; AND B) NORTH WASHINGTON STREET AND UNDERPASS STUDY TO KLJ, OR IF NOT ABLE TO PERFORM THOSE DUTIES THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD BE SO AUTHORIZED.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, Grandstrand, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. January Meeting – Election of Officers

Haugen reported that we are at the end of a two-year period of our current chair, and per our by-laws the secretary assumes the chair, and that is Mr. Strandell, so at our January meeting he will be assuming the chair, and he has elected to hold the meetings at the East Grand Forks City Hall, therefore the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held in East Grand Forks.

Haugen commented that our Finance Committee will now consist of our new chair, Mr. Strandell, our past chair, Mr. Malm, and a new secretary from the Grand Forks side, to be determined at the January meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO ADJOURN THE DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2010, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:15 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Strandell, Grassel, Grandstrand, and Christensen.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager