

# **2013 MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD MINUTES**

**January 16, 2013**

**February 20, 2013**

**March 20, 2013**

**April 17, 2013**

**May – No Meeting**

**June 20, 2013**

**July 17, 2013**

**August 21, 2013**

**September 18, 2013**

**October 16, 2013**

**November 20, 2013**

**December 18, 2013**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE  
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:03 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

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

Absent was: Tyrone Grandstrand

Guests present were: Jane Williams, 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; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2012, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2012, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON KENNEDY/SORLIE BRIDGE PROJECTS**

***Kennedy Bridge Project***

Haugen reported that MNDOT and the consultant have still not reached a signed contract. He stated that he isn't really sure what the problem is, but he was told last week that it would be signed this week, but as of this morning it still has not happened.

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*Sorlie Bridge Project*

Haugen referred to the packets, and commented that he did include a list of the main consultant, and all of the sub-consultants involved with this project, along with the work they will be performing. He pointed out that, as you can see, there are a fair amount of sub-consultants assisting on this project.

Haugen reported that the NDDOT has split this project into two phases; the first phase is what is currently under contract and it entails getting all the prime players having a say in what happens with the Sorlie meet to go over all the issues together; and to assist North Dakota and the consultants get a better feel as to how much of an environmental document they will have to go through in the second phase.

Haugen explained that if the project is going to be just a rehab type project without any major structural changes occurring, it will require a more simple environmental document; but if it is more of a full replacement type project, a much more detailed environmental document will be necessary.

Haugen commented that the meeting being held today will allow us to help flesh out what the real alternatives will be for them to look at to determine what the environmental document will necessitate. He reported that this morning there were introductions, and then getting everyone acquainted with how the bridge is today, actually physically walking and inspecting it; and then this afternoon will be a discussion session.

Haugen stated that they do have a consultant on board, and their first action will be to assist North Dakota and MNDOT in figuring out what type of environmental documentation they will have to pursue for the project that is programmed to occur in 2018.

Strandell asked where the KLJ team is from. Haugen responded that the project manager is out of their Moorhead office, however they do have an office in Grand Forks that will be assisting as well.

Malm asked if the historical society is involved with the project. Haugen responded that they will be involved in the process as the Sorlie Bridge is on the National Register.

**MATTER OF FY2013 T.I.P. AMENDMENT**

Haugen reported that the two projects being amended into the 2013 T.I.P. are both on the North Dakota side. He reminded the board that we have not yet approved a 2013-2016 T.I.P. for the North Dakota side, but there are still some things that need to get programmed so projects can proceed.

Haugen stated that the first project is a Cities Area Transit project. He explained that they received a grant from a program called The Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative. He said that the total amount of the grant is \$1.77 million dollars. He added that it is a

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statewide pot of money, and Grand Forks will be a pilot project. He explained that the primary function of the project is that it gives us a one-call one-click center, and although it is geared for, and titled for veterans, everybody and anybody will have access to one call number to get mobility coordination with all transit providers out in the community.

Haugen reported that the system Grand Forks has started will be augmented with about \$250,000 dollars from this grant to finish the modules they need for their hardware and equipment to get up and running. He added that another portion of this grant is for our Northeast North Dakota rural providers to get the same module communication equipment placed on their vehicles. He explained that this will allow for someone from Grafton to make one call to find out how they can get to Grand Forks and back.

Leigh stated, then, that this is more of an information center. He asked, though, if it is a center, if you call there will they just give you a number of someone else to call. Kouba responded that they will set up the transportation they are requesting, but it will be up to the actual provider to finalize all reservations.

Discussion on the process of making reservations through this system ensued.

Haugen commented that this will also work on the East Grand Forks side as well. He stated that the State of Minnesota got a grant for about a third of what Grand Forks received, but they are still working with MNDOT to see how Northwest Minnesota can patch into our system, in the cities plus with our Northeast North Dakota, and eventually statewide North Dakota.

Haugen stated that the second project is the replacement of the Campus Road Bridge on the UND campus near the Hughes Fine Arts Center. He explained that that bridge is on a UND owned roadway so in the program it is called an "off-system" bridge.

Haugen reported that UND does not have direct access to the federal funds, so they partnered with the City of Grand Forks and worked out an agreement for the City of Grand Forks to act as UND's surrogate, although UND will be paying all the costs for the project. He said that UND hired EAPC to walk them through the potential replacement structures, and they agreed that a typical stand was appropriate, nothing too elaborate, at a cost of \$1.7 Million, with the federal portion being \$1.1 Million.

Haugen stated that this is on a fairly fast track in order that the replacement bridge can be started as soon as possible this year, with completion by the time fall semester starts, or soon thereafter.

Powers asked what is wrong with the bridge, they say it is unsafe. Haugen responded that it basically has two "V" supports on each side of it, and the eastern most "V" is bent quite a ways inward, so it is falling down, although there are some other issues as well.

Haugen reported that the bridge they are building is going to be a slightly beefier bridge because they are going to flip more of their service deliveries on Campus Road, and he believes they are also looking at a bigger coal storage site in that area as well.

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***MOVED B LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO  
THE FY 2012-2015 T.I.P.***

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

Haugen reported that late Friday afternoon North Dakota released a Draft 2013-2016 S.T.I.P., so at our February meeting we will be acting on a new T.I.P. document covering 2013 through 2016.

**MATTER OF JARC/NEW FREEDOM APPLICATIONS**

Haugen explained that these are actually old SAFETEA-LU dollars from the old federal bill. He stated that now that we are operating under MAP-21 the State wants to zero out their SAFETEA-LU funds so they asked us to solicit projects for the JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute) fund, which is a federal transit program; and for the New Freedom fund, which is also a federal transit program.

Haugen reported that they received three applications, one for the New Freedom funds, and two for the JARC funds. He stated that on the New Freedom program Cities Area Transit wants to purchase some mini-vans to keep its fleet replacement schedule on track. He said that it is approximately a \$60,000.00 request.

Haugen stated that the JARC program, the City of Grand Forks is looking for operating dollars to start up a new bus route. He referred to a map of the area they are requesting be serviced by this new route and went over it briefly. He explained that UND is hoping that this route, when school is in session, will tie together Altru, the Garden View and Campus Crest developments, and UND. He then went over the proposed schedule for the route.

Haugen reported that the JARC program would allow this route to be funded for the first year of operation. Leigh asked if this is a kind of pilot program, and then be re-awarded next year. Haugen responded that the JARC program that is funding this was absorbed into Transit's regular funding formula, so when you have those two numbers, what we used to get in JARC and what we got in the regular formula, when combined we are getting less than what we got separately, so this one would be a pilot operation, and if successful then somehow the funds would need to be found to continue it, if it isn't successful the pilot test was completed. Leigh asked, then, if it is successful would the funding come from UND and the City of Grand Forks to continue it. Haugen responded that Campus Crest is going to contribute some funds toward this operation, so the University, in and of itself cannot participate in funding it, but Cities Area Transit is asking the Student Government if they can help fund it. He explained that there is already an agreement with the Student Government for "Free Rides".

Christensen asked what the total cost of running this route would be. Haugen responded that the total cost is \$160,000.00, with the grant covering half of that cost. Christensen asked if this was the operation cost without the cost of a bus included. Haugen responded that the Cities Area

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Transit would use one of its existing buses, so that is just the operation costs of the route for one year.

Christensen asked what would happen if they didn't want to do this. Haugen responded that the City Council did approve this application be submitted to the MPO for our consideration, so if we, as and MPO don't want to do it there are a couple of options available to us. He stated that there is another project that was submitted for these funds; the Red River Valley Community Action Agency is requesting \$2,000.00 to purchase bus passes, taxi vouchers, and gas cards for their clients. He said that there is a coordination committee that meets as a requirement of the use of federal funds, and they prioritized the new route as the number one project, and the Community Action Agency project as the number two project, but you could flip those priorities if you wish, or you can decide that as an MPO we aren't interested in this additional route operating. He stated that he would suggest that we could allow this to move forward as requested, and if it is awarded let the City Council make the decision as to whether or not they want to accept the award. Christensen asked if there is a good chance it will be awarded. Haugen responded that it has a fair chance of being awarded. Christensen commented that he doesn't recall any discussion as to the cost of this project. Haugen responded that it went through Service Safety and Council. Christensen stated that he doesn't really attend those meetings. Leigh said that, in concept, he likes the idea because the campus is getting more and more crowded, with little parking, and it would be safer for the students as well. Christensen responded that that is fine, but he is more concerned with the ongoing cost. He said that he is curious how they fund \$160,000.00 normally. Haugen responded that the operating split for transit is 50/50.

Christensen asked when the council would be notified should the funds be awarded. Haugen responded that it would probably be in February.

Christensen commented that he is curious as to what needs to be done to request the MPO do a traffic study where the new school is being proposed. Haugen responded that that is already being done. Ellis added that they are just waiting for A.T.A.C. to let us know if and when they can do it. She stated that if they can't do it then we will have to revisit the issue to determine how we can get it done.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THAT THE APPLICATION FROM CITIES AREA TRANSIT FOR JARC FUNDS BE RANKED NUMBER ONE, THAT APPLICATION FROM THE RED RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP FOR JARC FUNDS BE RANKED NUMBER TWO, AND THAT THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS' APPLICATION FOR NEW FREEDOM FUNDS BE RANKED NUMBER ONE.***

Malm asked if anyone has taken into consideration that if this new route is approved you will be going over a crossing that is blocked many times a day, and when it is blocked, what is going to happen to any kind of schedule. Haugen referred to a copy of a timetable and pointed out that it shows a swing of ten minutes, so that is where that railroad crossing is allocated for in their

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schedule. Malm commented that he doesn't feel that that is sufficient time for that crossing when it is blocked. Leigh stated that he thought the train went through that crossing at 9:00 a.m. because his son works at Forx Rental and he has complained that he has had to sit through a train at that location for so long on his way to work. Malm said, however, that there are other trains that come through there at other times as well. He just wonders sometimes if people think about what they are going to do, if you live in the north and you have to cross there every now and then, and you get caught there is no way to get around it. Ellis commented that a wait of ten minutes is about right, it just seems so much longer when you are sitting there. Malm stated that he has timed it and it has been longer. Ellis reported that they have done traffic counts there and that was about the average wait time. Haugen stated that they did try to program this wait into their schedule so there is a ten minute leeway to get across the tracks at that location.

Discussion on route times/schedules ensued.

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

*Voting Nay: None.*

**MATTER OF MAP-21 IMPLEMENTATION**

Haugen reported that on the Minnesota side, as reported last month, MNDOT had hoped to have a detailed analysis on how MAP-21 would impact their T.I.P. available, however they have not yet finalized their analyses, so we are still back at this erasable ink that our projects in our current T.I.P. aren't affected by MAP-21 implementation, and we will address 2017 projects at some point in the near future.

Haugen commented that on the North Dakota side, last month he mentioned that there was no paper document available, but the NDDOT is now weighing in on how MAP-21 is impacting their Urban Roads program, which is the bulk of the dollars Grand Forks Receives for its non-state highway streets. He referred to a spreadsheet that North Dakota provided, and pointed out that it shows how the funding process currently works. He then explained what options are being discussed to fix that process.

Powers stated that he was looking at these projects, and he was wondering what the Columbia Road Small Scale Safety project is. Haugen responded that those are ped heads (pedestrian head countdowns) at the traffic signal lights. He said that we will probably be seeing a lot of those around town in the future. Christensen asked how much these ped heads cost. Haugen responded that they have \$30,000.00 to have them put in on Columbia Road and Washington Street. Christensen asked what they cost per head. Haugen responded that he isn't sure, but they aren't much as the total cost of the entire project is \$30,000.00, so individually they aren't too expensive.

Haugen reported that tomorrow NDDOT's Biennium Appropriations is up for its first hearing. He stated that it is on an emergency track as they hope to get it approved and get the money out there to be spent. He said that there has been some discussion amongst the League of Cities in

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North Dakota to have the State replace the lost planning balance, so instead of hoping the feds come back with the \$45,000,000.00 (+/-), the State Legislature would be approached to put in the monies instead. He added that there is a similar issue on the county side as they are being impacted as well. He stated that, depending on which option they go with, it will allow us to program the 2013 through 2016 T.I.P.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. List Of Acronyms

Malm asked that a list of acronyms/abbreviations be included in the packets to make it easier to understand what is being talked about.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ADJOURN THE JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>,  
2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:40 P.M.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager

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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:00 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

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

Absent were: Tyrone Grandstrand and Doug Christensen.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF SELECTION OF SECRETARY**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO NOMINATE MIKE POWERS FOR SECRETARY.***

Adams asked if there were any other nominations.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL TO CEASE NOMINATIONS AND TO CAST A UNANIMOUS BALLOT.***

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

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF RENTAL AGREEMENTS FOR OFFICE SPACE IN  
GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND FORKS CITY HALLS**

Haugen reported that in the past we have entered into a five-year agreement for our office spaces in both City Halls, however when our current agreements expired this past year, and we sought to renew it with Grand Forks we were told that they didn't want to enter into a five-year term at this time, but instead wanted go with a one-year agreement.

Haugen explained that the reason for them wanting to go with a one-year agreement is because they have two departments that are in the process of; the City Planning and the Urban Development Departments. He stated that this merge will involve moving several Urban Development employees, whom are currently located outside City Hall, into City Hall, and in order to do accommodate these additional employees, the City of Grand Forks will be spending a good portion of the next year doing a "usage" study to try to determine how best to redesign the current office space to accommodate these additional employees. He added that because we try to mirror our agreements with the two cities, we approached East Grand Forks with a similar one-year agreement as well, which they did agree to.

Haugen commented that this means that at the end of this year we will have to readdress our office space needs, but for now we will continue on with our current space agreements for a one-year term.

Adams asked what the chances are that the MPO will be relocated from their current office space in Grand Forks to another. Haugen responded that there is a chance that that could happen.

Powers asked about the total rent costs. Haugen responded that there is just a slight adjustment in the rental amounts due to the rate of inflation, otherwise the rest of the terms are the same except for the length from five years to one year. Leigh asked how this compares with market rate. Haugen responded that it is higher. Leigh asked how much higher. Haugen responded that it is only a couple of dollars higher per-square foot. Adams disagreed, explaining that some spaces go for \$16.00/sq. ft, some \$10.00/sq.ft, some \$20.00/sq. ft., so \$11.00/sq.ft. probably isn't significantly higher. Powers said that this is probably actually cheaper then. Adams responded that it probably is, it is very reasonable.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE EXECUTION OF RENTAL  
CONTRACTS WITH GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND FORKS.***

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

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON KENNEDY/SORLIE BRIDGE PROJECTS**

*Kennedy Bridge Project*

Haugen reported that included in the packet is the scope-of-work that MNDOT and CH2M Hill have signed, so there is now an executed contract in place.

Haugen commented that this means we now know exactly what the consultant will be studying on the Kennedy Bridge, and as we already were aware, there is the Rehab Option and the Replacement Option.

Haugen said that one thing he wants to highlight on the Replacement Option is that, should they decide to replace the bridge they are looking at a new alignment, but the existing bridge would remain in service during the construction of the new bridge in that area.

Haugen pointed out that the study area, or the area where the new alignment would fall, has been set within 1,000 feet on either side upstream and downstream of the current structure, so a new roadway alignment would fall within 1,000 feet of either side. He added that it would, however, have to tie back into the flood protection system, and ultimately to Gateway Drive.

Haugen stated that another thing to note is that on both the options, whether it is to just rehab the existing bridge, or to construct a new bridge, they are going to improve the pedestrian/bike experience across the bridge.

Haugen referred to the project schedule, included in the packet, and went over it briefly. He pointed out that one thing they have to do within 50-day of starting the study is to address the issue with the pier on the North Dakota side that is pivoting and shifting with the river bank. He explained that once they determine what can be done with that pier, if they can shore it up, then rehab is the more likely option, but if they have to replace that pier, then a total replacement could likely be the preferred option.

Powers asked when they would be starting this study. Haugen responded that the consultants have been on board for a couple of weeks now, and they have begun gathering data. He added that they will also begin forming the Study Advisory Committee, which discussion has been held as to whether or not this board could serve as that entity. He said that they will also have a project team that will meet throughout the study, and will hold two public meetings with the first public meeting occurring 60-days from the start of the contract, and the second 210-days into the study.

Haugen commented that this allows us, the States of Minnesota and North Dakota, and both cities to know what sort of financial commitment will likely be necessary in 2016 for the bridge. He added that this study will also limit them as to what alternatives they will allow to be examined when they go into the environmental protection project development process.

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Leigh stated that he is confused, because shouldn't the first step be to determine to what extent the bridge either has to be replaced or fixed, because if it is determined it can be fixed then you really don't need a whole lot of public input. Haugen responded that this is part of the process we have to go through when federal funds are involved, it is part of MNDOT's philosophy that we need to hear every voice, and hear it often, thus the two public meetings.

Haugen summarized by saying that for the Kennedy they finally have a consultant under contract, they are just now underway and one of the first things they have to do is to look at the pier on the North Dakota side to determine what can be done with it, and that will help drive the rest of the study alternatives. He added that they have a 12-month timeframe to get the study done, and then, in order for them to meet the 2016 construction timeline they will have to go directly into the project development phase, so this will be a continuous process.

Strandell asked who is talking to who on this because there is supposed to be some work done on Gateway Drive this summer, are we still going to be doing that with the possibility of reconstruction occurring later. Haugen responded that the project scheduled for this summer is purely preventive maintenance, with some panels and other things needing to be replaced, so it will be done no matter what the decision is on the bridge.

Discussion on how the project will be accomplished ensued.

Vetter asked if the Sorlie Bridge study is being done at the same time as the Kennedy Bridge study. Haugen responded it is. He added that a consultant has already begun that process, with North Dakota being the Lead Agency. He said that the slight difference between the two projects is that MNDOT is doing a planning study and is not engaging the full environmental agencies while determine the alternatives so that when they get into the NEPA process they have a more defined scope of work as to what they will look at and what they can comment on; but North Dakota is going directly into the NEPA process right from the start so the range of alternatives are still quite broad, and through the engagement of all the environmental agencies they will start to narrow down the alternatives.

Strandell asked with the MPO's role is in all of this. Haugen responded that ultimately we have to determine whether or not whatever project they want to do is consistent with our planning documents, and then we would need to get it programmed the year they want it be programmed. He said that that is why he has been encouraging them to use this board as their Steering Committee because that is already the role of the MPO.

Powers commented that this all seems kind of cumbersome because your going to spend the whole year before you even figure out what your going to do.

#### Sorlie Bridge

Haugen reported that the only update on the Sorlie Bridge study is that the consultant was actually charged to do a two phase approach. He stated that the first phase was to see how much documentation they have to go through in order to do the project, whether that would be to do an

environmental assessment, which is a less involved environmental document; or if they have to do an environmental impact statement, which is a full bore process that involves everyone attached to the project, and it was determined that they have to engage in a full EIS study. He said that the second phase will entail the consultant prepare a scope of work that will prepare the EIS document, so that is where that study is at at this time.

Information only.

**MATTER OF ADVANCED TRAFFIC ANALYSIS CENTER (ATAC) SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY (VALLEY, SCHROEDER & SOUTH POINT)**

Haugen reported that this is the conclusion of the study that we engaged ATAC to do on the Valley Middle, Schroeder Middle, and South Point Elementary Schools. He explained that Nancy Ellis was spearheading this, it was actually her last official duty as an MPO staff person, and he would like to thank her for all the work she did.

Haugen stated that the Steering Committee that was formed for this did review these documents and, along with the Technical Advisory Committee, and staff, recommend approval.

***MOVED MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FINAL REPORT FOR THE ATAC SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY FOR VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL, SCHROEDER MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND SOUTH POINT ELEMENTARY, AS SUBMITTED AND THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS SUGGESTED BE PURSUED FOR IMPLEMENTATION.***

Leigh commented that the parking recommendation for South Point Elementary doesn't appear necessary unless there are conferences, and even then it isn't a huge problem, so he is wondering why they are making the suggestion at this school when there is a parking problem at New Heights and it wasn't looked at all. He stated that in addition, is this something that you recommend be done, but at the school's expense. Haugen responded that that is correct. He explained, however, that they engaged the principal, and Superintendent Pace on these recommendations, and they also did do a similar study a couple of years ago that included New Heights. He added that the need for parking was actually identified by the school, PTO representatives, and Chief Hedlund; so they are actually the ones that brought up the subject of insufficient parking at times and asked for a solution.

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF NDDOT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SR2S) APPLICATIONS**

Haugen reported that copies of the three applications the City of Grand Forks submitted to the MPO for consideration of Safe Routes to School funding. He stated that all three of the projects come from the type of school studies you just approved.

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Haugen referred to the staff report and pointed out that the highest ranked project is the permanent solar powered speed minder radar signs throughout the City of Grand Forks. He said that there are already a few of them located in the area via prior safe route grants. He stated that studies show that they are very effective in slowing traffic down in school areas, so because they have been successful at the school sites they are already located at, this application would help purchase enough to expand to all school sites in Grand Forks.

Haugen said that the second project is to purchase equipment to update our beacons that would enable us to be able to program them remotely during emergency events citywide. He explained that we aren't currently able to do this during such events as early school dismissal, or late starting time during snow events, etc.

Haugen reported that the third project is a sidewalk infill project for sidewalks around the schools.

Haugen stated that both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending you approve this as being consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan and to give them priority ranking.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE LIST OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE FY2014 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE THEM PRIORITY RANKING, AS REQUESTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

Haugen commented that MnDOT also has a Safe Routes To School solicitation going on as well. He explained that their process is a little different, but the City of East Grand Forks did submit a couple of projects, including the purchase of some of these speed minder signs as well. Strandell added that Polk County started a cost sharing project with the cities whereby they will put up these signs, at a cost of about \$5,000 each, and the community would pay for installation and the power to run them. He stated that East Grand Forks is in the process of purchasing one that would be located out by the Middle School.

**MATTER OF NDDOT TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) APPLICATIONS**

Haugen reported the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a MAP-21 program that was created by combining the old Safe Routes To School, the Transportation Enhancement, and the Recreational Trails programs into one program. He stated that North Dakota put out a solicitation, but because they were also using old SAFETEA-LU monies to do Safe Routes To School projects, for this TAP program solicitation North Dakota excluded Safe Route To School projects from it, so Grand Forks has submitted these three projects to us.

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Haugen stated that the first project involves preserving certain areas of the existing granitoid in Grand Forks. He said that a map illustrating those areas was included in the packet, and shows those areas where the granitoid is in the best condition, and the City thinks that if they are awarded these funds, they have a project that could go in that could preserve the granitoid so it is able to remain where it is for many years to come.

Haugen commented that part of this application is connected to the remaining one block of granitoid that hasn't been covered. He stated that the City hopes that if it gets these federal funds they can do a project that will allow them to touch the granitoid on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and do a project similar to the mill and overlay they did last summer.

Discussion on history of this project ensued.

Malm asked if the historical people were on board with this. Haugen responded they were, adding that the local historical preservation commission has submitted a letter of support for this application, with the caveat that they are involved with the actual project and can oversee what is implemented to ensure it is consistent with the National Preservation Act. Malm asked if this has to go to the State and then to the Federal Government yet. Haugen responded it does.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE LIST OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE FY2014 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE THEM PRIORITY RANKING, AS REQUESTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT RFP FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY DIGITAL PHOTOS**

Kouba reported that, basically about every five years we have updated our photos as a first step to updating our pavement condition analysis for all the roadways in both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. She said, however, that due to some clarifications by the feds and the State the MPO can only do the classified roads, basically your functionally classified collectors up to your principle arterials, so they have written this RFP to state that this is what we will do. She added, however, that they are also allowing for the option of both cities to be able run their local roads as they have done in the past.

Kouba commented that East Grand Forks is very willing to do their local roads at their cost, but Grand Forks is still looking at doing it, they want it done, but they haven't made up their minds yet.

Leigh asked what this will cost. Kouba responded that they have a budget of \$30,000.00 right now. Leigh asked how much East Grand Forks' cost will be. Kouba responded that based on the cost per mile they gave us in 2008, just the local roads alone will cost roughly \$3,500.00. Leigh asked who said East Grand Forks was in favor of doing this. Kouba responded that their City Administrator, Scott Huizenga did.

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Powers asked if this was at 45 miles to centerline. Kouba responded it was.

Leigh commented that with a cost of \$3,500.00, Mr. Huizenga certainly has the authorization to approve it as he has the ability to spend up to \$10,000.00, and since it hasn't been done since 2008, and we do have that transportation package, so..

Kouba reported that this will help us, when we are doing our T.I.P. process, to be able to prioritize roads, and it will also help us figure out what level of condition all the roads are at.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY IMAGING RFP CONTINGENT ON APPROVAL FROM THE NDDOT.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT RFP FOR FREIGHT RAIL ACCESS STUDY**

Haugen reported that this is in the MPO Work Program, and is an activity we are going to undertake this year. He commented that the scope of work, which is in the packet, essentially states that what we are trying to identify is all of the properties that have access to rail services right now, what their potential to actually have freight access into their property instead of just having it alongside it. He added that it also will look at making sure that property we think would be good for freight activity is properly zoned, that it is in the future land use plans, etc..

Haugen stated that as we improve or expand our freight rail interplay we also want to look at our current street network to make sure we aren't identifying something that needs a huge expansion to its street network in order to service it, or if we do that we account for the costs, and we go back to our planning documents and amend them to reflect these new recommendations. He said that we also want to make sure we aren't harming ourselves with our quiet zones as well by attracting additional freight traffic to those crossings and potentially causing them to be unquieted.

Haugen referred to the staff report and explained that at the Technical Advisory Committee NDDOT and Federal Highway requested we add three additional items to the scope of work:

7. Identify street network improvements that will facilitate the potential expansion of freight rail access with cross-referencing the LRTP recommended projects that may hinder or help with the potential expansion of the freight rail access.
8. Identify steps necessary to take the findings of this study back into possible amending the LRTP, including possible amendments to the financial plan.
9. Include review of the performance measures of the LRTP and identify potential changes to incorporate this study into the performance measures and the possible data necessary to measure the performance.

Haugen stated that, with this language added, staff and the Technical Advisory Committee recommend this body approve authorizing release of this RFP. He said that at the April meeting

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you will receive the selection committee recommendation of which consultant to authorize a contract.

Leigh asked, you have Crystal Sugar and North 42<sup>nd</sup> Street where there would be a spur, where else would you put it, outside city limits because everything else is residential. Haugen responded that there aren't too many. Leigh asked then, why we should spend \$45,000.00. Haugen stated that the real cost is what it takes to get the rail into those properties so they can be used to transfer freight between trucks and rail, that is the real cost to the study, what are the limits that the railroad will place on allowing any properties to get future rail access, and what would it cost.

Powers asked if this would also look into addressing issues such as possibly abandoning some railroad crossings. Haugen responded it wouldn't. Powers asked how a person would go about doing that. Haugen responded that the railroad would love to hear there are crossing that need to be abandoned. He stated that they have funds available to do that. Powers sited a couple of crossings that could be removed. Leigh commented that the reason they don't remove some of them is because they are located near a commercial building that could potentially be used for something that requires rail access.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE FREIGHT RAIL ACCESS STUDY RFP CONTINGENT ON APPROVAL FROM THE NDDOT.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY (MAP-21) IMPLEMENTATION**

Haugen reported that the next two agenda items are informational items. He said that this first item highlights where MNDOT is at with their Twenty-Year State Highway Investment Plan process. He stated that a lot of the information that will come from here will connect nicely with the next agenda item as well.

Haugen commented that staff has been trying to keep everyone informed as to the MnSHIP process that MNDOT is going through. He said that, if you will recall, they have had discussions that they tried to engage the public to assist them in understanding what the priorities of investment strategies are.

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

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON STREET AND HIGHWAY PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen distributed copies of maps illustrating the location of a proposed new development in Grand Forks.

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Haugen referred to the maps, and explained that we are in the process of updating our Street and Highway Plan, and have been waiting, primarily, for Grand Forks to make some decisions as to the area of the new school site, which is the area highlighted by the smaller circle.

Haugen stated that Grand Forks has been contemplating some major changes to the land uses in that area. He added that in the staff report you were also informed that they adjusting their rate of growth back up to 1.2%. He explained that this last decade they had an annual growth of .7%, but when we did the lands use plan last year they agreed to use a .9% per year annual growth rate, but now they are amending it to jack it back up to 1.2%.

Haugen commented that what this is essentially doing is, when we started the Street and Highway Plan Update we were identifying there would be 10,000 less people in Grand Forks because the rate of growth wasn't as fast as we anticipated it would be, but now that they are converting to the 1.2% we are recapturing those 10,000 people in our projections. He added that the changes in land use were creating new dynamics out in the transportation network as well.

Haugen referred to graphics illustrating the growth areas, and financial information and went over the information briefly.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Grand Forks New School Safety Study And Related Contract

Haugen stated that, as you will recall, the City of Grand Forks and the School District are very anxious to engage us and our ATAC Team to look at the new school site down in the vicinity of 34<sup>th</sup> Street South and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. He said that because of the timing, and ensuing pressure, we have been working with our local staff and ATAC to come up with a scope of work to do the work expected to be done, and due to the time constraints we are hoping that you will authorize us, once we get the federal and state partners to concur with the scope of work, to go ahead and execute this contract so that this project does not need to be delayed for another month. Leigh asked how much it will cost and who is paying for it. Haugen responded that the cost is just under \$16,000, and it is in our budget to do already, so we would be paying the cost.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH ATAC TO DO A TRAVEL DEMAND, TRAFFIC OPERATIONS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY ANALYSES FOR THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN GRAND FORKS, SUBJECT TO CONCURRENCE FROM FEDERAL HIGHWAY AND THE NDDOT.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:10 P.M.***

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*Voting Aye: Powers, Adams, Leigh, 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, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:03 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

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

Absent was: Doug Christensen.

Guests present were: Janelle Mulroy, Brady Martz.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Haugen introduced Stephanie Erickson, the new MPO Planner, and asked that she tell a little about herself.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE 2012 MPO AUDIT**

Haugen introduced Janelle Mulroy from Brady Martz, and explained that she is present today to go over the results of the 2012 MPO Audit.

Mulroy referred to copies of the 2012 MPO Audit Report, included in the packets (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), and reported that they issued a clean, unqualified or unmodified opinion based on the audit procedures they performed in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and Government Auditing Standards. She pointed out that the one big difference between this year's audit and last year's is that they did not have to do a single audit this year as the MPO spent less than \$500,000 in federal monies this year.

Mulroy then gave a brief overview on the financial statements, pointing out that the total assets between 2011 and 2012 decreased just over \$32,000.00, due largely to the fact that the receivables from federal, state and local sources were down in 2012. She stated that the total liabilities between the two years also decreased just under \$31,000.00 as a result of a decrease in the accounts payable and the retainage payable in 2012 versus 2011. She added that the net position decreased by just over \$1,200.00, and that is the net loss for the year, so the net loss was \$1,258.00.

Mulroy commented that, again, this is comparative information. She said that you can see that total revenues were down pretty significantly, just over \$175,000, with a large majority of that being the result of the federal spending being down and federal revenues being down. She also pointed out that the total expenditures, or expenses were down about \$214,000 in 2012 as compared to 2011, and the net position, or overall net loss for the year was \$1,258.00.

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY GRANDSTRAND, TO APPROVE THE 2012 MPO AUDIT REPORT FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON KENNEDY/SORLIE BRIDGE PROJECTS**

***Sorlie Bridge Project***

Haugen reported that, again, KLJ is the hired consultant on this project and North Dakota is the lead agency. He stated that KLJ has met informally a couple of times with a lot of the local stakeholders, and with the State and National Environmental Agencies.

Haugen commented that the purpose of Phase 1 of this study was to give the North Dakota Department of Transportation and KLJ a sense of what type of environmental document they need to produce for whatever project is decided on for the Sorlie Bridge. He stated that the end result of that discussion is that the fullest environmental document, or and EIS, would be done for this project, and is currently being scoped at this time.

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Haugen stated that once the scope is completed a final contract will be negotiated and signed, and then the full environmental process will begin, which means that right from the start all of the environmental agencies will be engaged for input.

Leigh asked when we will know whether this will be a rehab project or a replacement project. Haugen responded that he hasn't seen the timeline for this study, but the project is scheduled to begin in 2018, so it might be well into 2014, and maybe even 2015 before we know that answer. Leigh asked the same question about the Kennedy Bridge project. Haugen responded that there is a different process being followed for the Kennedy Bridge. He explained that they hope to have a better sense of what they might need to do with the Kennedy by the end of March.

*Kennedy Bridge Project*

Haugen referred to a slide presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), and pointed out that Pier 6 on the North Dakota side has some tilting and slipping issues. He stated that, while the pier is designed to allow for some movement, and annually MnDOT, with its district crews, has been able to come in and make the necessary adjustments to try to keep it in position as best they can, it is now slipping to the point where the local district staff is having a hard time making those adjustments, thus the consultants first task is to look at the pier, do an in-depth analysis on what is happening with it in terms of movement and how much more adjusting can be done, as well as whether or not those adjustments can still be done by local crews. He said that if they find that the pier is beyond their being able to do anything with it, it could lead to replacement of the pier, which in turn would also bring the option of replacement of the total structure into the discussion; however, if they find that it is salvageable, with little extra work required, than that would lead, minus any other analysis, to just a rehabilitation project.

Leigh commented that the reason he brought this up was because of an article in the Grand Forks Herald that is pushing a bridge at Merrifield again, and he is wondering if that is actually something we aren't even considering, or is it something to consider way off in the future, or is it something we should be continually looking at. Haugen responded that it is something that we need to continually look at. He said that at the end of today's agenda we will be discussing some of our transportation planning activities in regard to future bridges, and this will be included in that discussion

Powers asked, and this may be way off the subject, but we keep getting all this white stuff, so if we have another flood could it impact the Kennedy to the point where it might be more critical than it is. Haugen responded that it definitely could, that a flood would change conditions out there on the pier. He explained that when they started this study our flood potential was quite low, but with all the additional snow that has changed, and we will actually know more tomorrow. He stated that they may delay the analysis of the pier until after the flood.

Haugen reported that, again, when you start seeing work done on the Sorlie Bridge it will entail a full environmental protection process; but on the Kennedy there is a hybrid thing going on, and as part of the kick-off meeting there was a lot of confusion between the State and the Federal Environmental agencies as to how the Kennedy process differs from the Sorlie process, and he isn't sure that this has been reconciled.

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Haugen commented that the intent of the Kennedy study, as MnDOT Bridge staff stated, was similar to how we look at a corridor study. He explained that for a corridor study we go in and do a lot of planning analysis, then we look at a lot of different alternatives, and then we whittle those down to just a few that are put into a project development document. He said that this is what MnDOT feels they are doing for the Kennedy Bridge Study, however there is some discourse between what the Bridge Staff is saying and what the District Staff is saying; the District Staff is identifying that they have already started the NEPA process, and that got all the environmental review agencies in a tizzy because they haven't been consulted yet, but they can't start the environmental process until they have contacted all the environmental agencies, so it is still to be determined as to how the Kennedy Bridge study is going to progress into the environmental process, or if it will revert back to a similar study like the Sorlie Bridge is currently undertaking. He said that this is the reason the two studies are being included on the agenda each month, to keep everyone informed and try to eliminate this confusion.

Malm asked who will actually make the call on either fixing or replacing the Kennedy Bridge. Haugen responded that it is a cooperative process between the MPO and its partners, which include both State DOTs, and both cities.

Haugen went over the project timeline.

Information only.

**MATTER OF DRAFT FINAL NORTH DAKOTA 2013-2016 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that this is an unusual year in that we are approving our Final T.I.P. in March, however because of MAP-21 being approved last July, it took the NDDOT extra time to be able to finalize their side of the river for federal projects. He commented that this is something we started back in September 2011, so, as you can tell it has been a long monthly process to go through and identify all of the projects.

Haugen reiterated that the MPO's responsibilities are to ensure the projects are consistent with our planning documents, and then to prioritize those projects chosen.

Haugen stated that there was a significant shift on the North Dakota side concerning some projects. He explained that originally they added in a project on South Washington Street to be done in 2013, but when they looked at everything going on in North Grand Forks in 2013 they saw that there were already some other projects going on at that same time; 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, and Columbia Road, so they decided that the South Washington Street project should be moved out another year, so that is now being delayed until 2014. He pointed out that the project cost for the Kennedy Bridge project was increased from \$10,000,000 to \$25,000,000. He added that there are a couple of other projects that, when the draft came out in July, were carried over. He said that this is what is occurring on the regional side of the Street and Highway Plan.

Haugen commented that on the city street side of the Street and Highway Plan, there were significant changes. He stated that a lot of the cost estimates, particularly on the Columbia Road

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reconstruction in front of Altru, were increased significantly primarily because of the soil condition, but also because a decision was made to add another lane.

Haugen stated that they originally had to work with the existing cost estimates and highlight for the NDDOT what the new estimates were. He said that the end result is that they were able to get North Dakota to program all the dollar amounts they requested on Phase 1 of Columbia Road. He added that, as you will recall, they also amended the Columbia Road/Gateway Drive project. He said that it was originally going to be a major reconstruction out there by Happy Harry's on Gateway Drive, but an agreement could not be reached with the frontage road properties, so instead they ended up doing a minor rehab project, and with the federal funds that weren't spent on the Columbia/Gateway project they reprogrammed them to be used on the Columbia Road Phase 1, so the end result was, for Phase 1 and Phase 2 they were able to get all the federal funds allocated that the City was requesting with the new cost estimates.

Haugen said that also in 2013 they had some improvements, some traffic signals, roundabouts throughout town that have all been pushed out to 2014. He added that in 2014 the Columbia Road project was delayed out to 2016, and, again that cost estimate increased considerably so, because they have pushed projects out they have now been able to capture the full request of federal funds for Phase 2.

Leigh asked who determines what kind of an intersection goes in, is it approved by the council. Haugen responded that it is ultimately approved by the council. Grandstrand explained what process was used to approve the roundabout at 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South.

Haugen commented that in 2015 there are no federal funds allocated for the city street system in Grand Forks. He added that in 2016 the City was hoping to urbanize Columbia Road south of the Walmart area to 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but with the increased cost of reconstructing Columbia Road in front of Altru, they couldn't do both projects so in 2016 so they are now doing Phase 2 of Columbia Road, and the Columbia Road project south of Walmart has been pushed out to a different year, however the city might pursue 100% local funding for that project.

Haugen reported that they have been working on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Advance Right-of-Way payback. He explained that in the early 1990s the City purchased land out there by the old Amoco/BP gas station so that they would have the property to build a grade separation in the future. He stated that this purchase had a 20-year build life, if nothing were built in 20-years the feds wanted the monies repaid, so in 2011 we spent a lot of time identifying when we had to program that repayment, and it was decided it would occur in 2014. He pointed out that the current T.I.P. we are asking you to adopt still shows this in 2014, however there has been recent communication from Federal Highway that it actually has to be repaid in 2013, so we are going to adopt it in 2014 and let the dialog between the partnering agencies play out, so between now and August there could be changes necessary to the T.I.P. if it is determined that the payment has to be made in 2013. Malm asked how much has to be paid back. Haugen responded that the amount is \$350,000 or \$450,000.

Haugen stated that they did submit for three TE projects, the only one selected was the South 20<sup>th</sup> multi-use trail reconstruction project, which will take place this summer.

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Haugen commented that there are still some Safe Routes to School projects that were submitted: 1) Speed-minder signs; 2) Remote control beacons; and 3) Sidewalks at specific schools. He stated that the State has not yet made a final project selection, so at a later date, if we are awarded one or more of these projects, we will have to amend this document to bring them in and make them eligible for federal funds.

Haugen stated that on the North Dakota side they always want the State to identify the year-plus the T.I.P. program, so in 2017 the district office still wants to rebuild the underpass just north of DeMers Avenue; and in 2018, again, we are back to the Sorlie Bridge project.

Haugen reported that the Technical Advisory Committee did hold a public hearing at their meeting last Wednesday, but no comments were received. He stated that both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending approval the Final Draft of the North Dakota T.I.P. covering the years 2013 through 2016.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY GRANDSTRAND, TO APPROVE THE FINAL  
FY2013-2016 NORTH DAKOTA SIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
(T.I.P.), AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM**

Haugen reported that this is in the MPO Work Program. He explained that this entails that we try to utilize the video detection cameras at all the signalized intersections in the metro area. He said that we are engaging the Advanced Traffic Analysis Center (ATAC) out of NDSU to assist us with this study.

Haugen stated that this is a two phase project. He said that the first phase, which they are asking for authorization for today is to have ATAC come in and do an inventory and assessment of what equipment we have and what its capabilities are so that they can then go into Phase 2 and design a program that will allow us to test how good the equipment is for counting, and if there are any deficiencies what it would take to deal with those deficiencies in order that we can use the equipment. He stated that our ultimate goal is to replace having to have temporary staff sit in vehicles for twelve hours at each intersection and manually enter the count of what is going on. He added that if we can use the video cameras it would allow us to do counts more often, and also to establish a better pattern of what is occurring out on our roadway system so that we can adjust our planning processes, and also we can adjust the signal coordination plan on a more regular basis than our current cycle of every three years.

Haugen reported that the cost of Phase 1 is \$3,200.00, and we are seeking approval from this body to authorize us to get ATAC on board and start doing this.

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Leigh said that he would like to submit a formal request that the traffic light at University and 5<sup>th</sup> be looked at and adjusted because the wait time for traffic going east and west on University is far greater than going north and south on 5<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he personally sat at that intersection, the first car, with for more behind him, waiting for that light to change and there were no vehicles on 5<sup>th</sup>, so something definitely needs to be done with that light. Malm commented that another light is the one on Gateway Drive and South Washington Street, at which he sat through three cycles waiting for the left turn signal, and it never came on.

Vetter asked if there would be any cost savings by going with this traffic analysis. Haugen responded that we would ultimately see a cost savings because we wouldn't be hiring temporary staff for six weeks. He added that the equipment is already out there, and for the most part all of the necessary software has been purchased, and staff time is staff time, but we wouldn't have any temporary staff to manage.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY GRANDSTRAND, TO APPROVE THE SCOPE OF WORK FROM A.T.A.C. TO COMPLETE A TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM STUDY.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF 2013 FLOOD OUTLOOK**

Haugen reported that when we did the Bridge Closure Study one of the outcomes of that study was that in March of each year the MPO, through its Technical Advisory Committee and Executive Policy Board, begin discussion on possible flood closures and, if necessary, implementation of the plan. He commented that in addition to the potential flood outlook discussions, the MPO also ensures that the contact list is updated as well. He stated that this has been accomplished, and an updated contact list will be released later today.

Discussion on bridge closure levels ensued.

Information only.

**MATTER OF MAP-21 IMPLEMENTATION**

Haugen reported that last month we discussed the Minnesota implementation of MAP-21 and how it is affecting our T.I.P. document, this month North Dakota has made a decision on how it is going to impact on the North Dakota side.

Haugen pointed out that they have a "white paper" that he has provided that gives an explanation of what has been occurring on the North Dakota side. He stated that the good news is that they have decided to go with Option 2, which if you read it, shows there is a slight increase in federal funds for the cities in North Dakota.

Haugen referred to a spreadsheet, and explained that they have come back to this spreadsheet, which shows each of the twelve urban areas. He explained that there are now only twelve as

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Grafton recently dropped below the population threshold for being an urban area, which ultimately means a slight increase in funding for each of the remaining twelve urban cities.

Haugen reported that the big decision change done here was that they used to have a planning balance of \$52,000,000, although it was just a paper account; and they were hoping that eventually Congress would fully fund past federal transportation bills, but with MAP-21 they finally came to the realization that this \$52,000,000 will never materialize, so they looked at what would happen if the just distributed everyone's monies based on a formula, without the \$53,000,000 and found that Grand Forks would have a negative balance of \$3,700,000, some communities would have a positive balance of \$3,300,000, so the League of Cities determined that they would reset everyone to have a beginning balance of \$450,000, and then take the appropriations anticipated for 2013 and put it into the formula and use the new 2010 population estimates, which would give Grand Forks a positive balance of \$3,000,000.

Haugen summarized that it looks like we will be getting more federal funding for the Grand Forks area. He stated that the spreadsheet shows a total of \$22,000,000, which is available for the State Highway System in these twelve urban areas, so there is a total of \$44,000,000 in play for the twelve urban areas.

Haugen stated that the message on the Minnesota side is that MAP-21 will create a dramatic decrease in the availability of federal funds, particularly for the City to access; but on the North Dakota side it is the opposite with a slight increase in federal funds being available for the City to tap into.

Information only.

**MATTER OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that they have a series of three presentations today. He said that first, Teri Kouba will walk us through the Bike/Ped portion of the plan. He explained that we are a multi-modal planning agency, and we have to look at not only street and highway issues, but also transit and bike/ped issues as well. He said that they will soon be seeking approval of an updated Bike/Pedestrian Plan element to the Long Range Transportation Plan, and this is information we are utilizing to get there, and it is based on observed traffic count or bike/ped count at locations.

Bike/Ped

Kouba stated that, basically they are just looking at definitely all the areas around the City, as Earl mentioned they take these turning movement counts for our signalization, and while they are doing that they always count the bikes and peds that are going through the area as well.

Kouba reported that there are several locations of those particular on-street counts that they have in their data. She said that bikes and peds in those areas; Gateway, Columbia, Washington, the downtown area, there are different degrees depending on the area of which is there and whether its bikes or whether its peds.

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Kouba explained that when they are getting into the signalized intersections they wanted to see, basically, where most of our bikes are at and you can see there are a lot of places that you would assume there would be bikes, the university area of course as there are a lot of students going around there, you see an increase in the downtown area as well, which they assume is because there are a lot of students coming from Central High School, but there's also the access points as well.

Haugen pointed out that they used twelve hour observed counts to gather this data, typically from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Kouba added that they do see that where they have the most trails is the southern part, south of DeMers Avenue. She said that there are some areas more west of the town there is a lot more bike activity as opposed to along Washington, there's not as much, the most active time, you can look at the most active timelines, and it is pretty much throughout the whole day but, of course we are going to have certain areas that have some spiking and you can see the Central School area you have the largest time frames as being school starting, but we also wanted to see if there was some spike in the evening timeframes which there is a slight spike.

Kouba commented that they did the same thing for the pedestrians, and once again it's the university area, the Central School area that are getting the most pedestrian, and then you will see the same thing happening with the pedestrians as with bicycles, the timeframes during the day when people are using the sidewalks.

Kouba stated that they then compared what on-street they had with what they were looking at with their trail study, and they are seeing that the usages are very similar. She said that trails are being used and the streets are being used by bikes and peds.

Kouba reported that they kind of went through some of the reasoning behind, you know they see there's barriers between the train tracks of course so that doesn't help getting people from the north end of town to the south end of town, so you will see more people staying between DeMers and Gateway where we have our larger numbers. She added that they are also seeing an age difference, a lot more university students are using it, and that is the area where a lot of the university students live.

Haugen commented that he thinks the basic message that others are using this for is that we have a lot of on-street usage taking place where we don't have a separate ten-foot multi-use trail adjacent to the area like we do out in the "growing" area, so you will see a push to try to get either "share the road" signage, bike lanes, sharrows, some type of minimal on-street traffic control assistance to help the bicyclists and the motorists share the space.

### Performance Measures

Haugen reported, a little piece of information on the planning effort is MAP-21 is forcing us to switch from more of a process oriented agency to an outcome oriented agency. He explained that the difference is that by being a process oriented agency we would look at whether a project was consistent with the plan and prioritize it; and now being an outcome oriented agency we still have to continue doing those steps but then also identify how it is allowing us to progress towards these identified targets that we are trying to meet performance wise.

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Haugen stated that MPO staff, working with City staff and the State Agencies, drafted performance targets for all of our goal statements. He explained that the goals are national goals that we are trying to fulfill with the use of federal funds, so under each of the goal statements we have identified what the performance target is that we are trying to achieve with our efforts, and how we are monitoring our progression towards that.

Haugen commented that this is a draft, and we are allowing people to review and look at these, but ultimately we will be shifting from an agency that is looking just at whether the project is in a plan, and how should it be prioritized to an agency that also looks at, if we fund a project, how will it allow us to progress towards our targets.

Haugen reported that with MAP-21 there are penalties that can be placed on us if we aren't progressing towards our targets. He added that they will force the shifting of funds to make sure that we are meeting some of our target goals.

Haugen stated that, as you will recall, a lot of the discussion we had last month on the Minnesota side shows that a lot of the focus their spending their future highway dollars is purely on pavement preservation and bridge preservation, so there will be very little dollars available in the State of Minnesota through the federal process for any expansion type projects.

Haugen said that this is basically introducing you to these performance targets, and what they are stating. He added that they tried to just utilize those things that we have been planning against all along, such as transit where they have always looked at performance measures such as passengers per mile, cost per mile, cost per hour, and to try to make their route adjustment recommendations based on what they are achieving out there, so a lot of these aren't new measurements, it is just how we are actually going to use these measurements that is going to change. He added that in the past they really weren't using these measurements but every five years when they updated the plan, but we will now be looking at many of them annually to see how we are progressing towards the stated target, and we will be picking projects in the T.I.P. to help us make progress towards these performance measures.

2025 and 2040 Loaded Networks

Haugen reported that on the Street and Highway side they were doing both a 2025 forecast on travel and a 2040 forecast on travel, and the information before you is starting to identify projects based on what we are seeing with the performance of the network forecasts.

Haugen commented that, essentially, the regional model was looked at to see how our volume to capacity ratio is, and the areas highlighted on the map are the ones that by 2025 we will start experiencing congestion at, however at many of these areas people would say we are already experiencing congestion. Haugen pointed out that in 2040 we start seeing that we have more areas that will be congested as well. He explained that these networks are not implementing any other projects than what we are currently committed to in our T.I.P.. He added that this means that if we have all the anticipated growth, if no changes are made to our networks, these are the areas that will experience more problems.

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Grandstrand asked if the projections and miles being used are the same as those we have been using for a long time. Haugen responded that they aren't. He explained that we have a lot of changes in land use, but the actual model computations, the major changes we are now separating out our employment into two different types, industrial employment versus service industry, so where the Industrial Park is located there is a lot less traffic than the shopping areas along Columbia Road and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South. He stated that in the past these were all lumped into one aggregate type of trip generation, now we separate them out. He commented that on the household side they used to just separate out single family homes from multiple family homes, but we are now utilizing persons per household so if you have fewer people in your household, or if your neighborhood has fewer people per household, you will generate less traffic than if you were in a more dense neighborhood.

Haugen reported that the actual trip generation, in the past they always used a national set of rates, but Fargo/Moorhead did an extensive household travel survey last year where they had a significant number of people signed up to do daily accounting of all trips they made in their household, and from that they generated generation rates that are based on North Dakota/Red River Valley instances instead of national ones. He said that the net result of this is that we tend to have roughly 10% fewer trips made compared to the national data. He added that with the bridge intercept survey they did last May, we actually now have origin/destination data specific to Grand Forks and East Grand Forks so our model is now based more on specific feedback than our last model did.

Haugen stated that what this information shows is, with the first set of maps and matrix list our current 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan had a list of projects that we were recommending to solve problems and issues. He said that what this analysis is kind of indicating is that we still have those problems and issues, and therefore those projects might still be valid projects to consider in the future. He added that this is also where we get into, if we do nothing we still have capacity issues around our three bridges, so, again, we are trying to get additional river crossings to ease that, and if we don't, then as they look at the Sorlie Bridge project, instead of rebuilding a two lane bridge, they will certainly be looking at a four lane facility.

Haugen said, then, that that is what these matrices show. He stated that some of these projects are also centered on not only capacity issues, but safety issues as well, so even though the model isn't indicating there is a volume need, we still think they are valid because of safety issues.

Haugen pointed out that they included, on the far right, a 2013 cost estimate for those projects. He said that he would like to add that for the realignment project of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street connection with the I-29/32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue ramp, SRF inadvertently used a different alternative solution than what the actual recommended project is, so instead of \$23,000,000 the actual estimate is \$8,200,000. He added that in addition, for the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue project SRF just replicated the Merrifield Interchange costs, and of course there is a big difference between Merrifield and 47<sup>th</sup> as Merrifield has the existing overpass structure in place, while 47<sup>th</sup> doesn't, so the cost estimate for this project will increase considerably once they start determining what a new interchange will cost.

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Haugen stated that the next set of maps before you is a combination of, we have a lot of pavement on the federal aid system that is in poor condition, and if you recall Federal Highway is requiring us to identify projects of pavement maintenance of \$1,000,000 or more, and this also gets back into the performance targets we talked about. He said that some of these roadways are now listed on the National Highway System because they are Principal Arterials, and there is a specific pavement performance that the feds require us to meet as a State and as an MPO area so we need to identify those pavement conditions, and come up with a plan as to how we will ensure they are maintained and preserved.

Haugen pointed out that in some of these areas you will notice that they are identifying where there are no streets. He explained that because of the City's change in loading up development around the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue/I-29 area they now have to make sure they are accommodating all of the streets that will be necessary there.

Haugen commented that the last several projects are included due to the Grand Forks District laying out their pavement maintenance program, so every five to seven years they do a concrete panel project, and then they will go back and do a mill and overlay, and then ultimately by 2040 they identify that they will do a replacement project.

Haugen stated that ultimately they are now in the process of identifying what project alternatives they are going to pursue in the Long Range Transportation Plan. He said that they are still in the process of putting the cost estimates together and identifying what the appropriate project alternative or range of alternatives are.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:19 P.M.***

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

***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 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Mike Powers, Steve Adams, Gary Malm, Doug Christensen, Warren Strandell, and Clarence Vetter.

Absent were: Tyrone Grandstrand and Greg Leigh.

Guests present were: Mike Johnson, NDDOT-Local Government, Bismarck.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Haugen introduced Mike Johnson, explaining that he is our local government representative from NDDOT-Bismarck. He added that Mr. Johnson comes to Grand Forks on a regular basis, however Bismarck has been busy so he hasn't been able to do so the last couple of months, so this meeting allowed him the opportunity to be able to come here.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

*Kennedy Bridge*

Haugen reported that, as we mentioned before, one of the consultant's first projects was to look at Pier 6 on the North Dakota side that has a lot of movement occurring on it. He stated that the main concern was whether or not adjustments could still be made on that pier using local crews. He explained that all the bridges along the Red River typically have built-in to their design the ability to be adjusted because of movement, and the Kennedy is no exception.

Haugen stated that MnDOT's forwarded the consultant's response to the concern of whether or not Pier 6 could remain and still be workable was that it can remain and be workable, and it can still be adjusted using District Staff and their equipment. Strandell asked what kind of life this assessment has. Haugen responded that this is the other part of the study, to look at the rest of the structure to see how much life the rest of the structure has as well, but this was the first question they wanted answered as it was a huge pivotal point as to whether or not this would be a rehab or a reconstruction project, and it now seems to be leaning more toward it being just a rehab project.

*Sorlie Bridge*

Haugen stated that the basic situation with the Sorlie Bridge is that KLJ, as the lead consultant, has, he believes, finalized a proposed scope of work for NDDOT and MnDOT to consider. He said that he doesn't believe that a signed contract for developing an EIS on the Sorlie has been executed, but it is getting closer to the point where the consultant will be on board with a signed contract to do the environmental impact statement on the project scheduled on the Sorlie in 2018.

Information only.

**MATTER OF DRAFT FINAL MINNESOTA SIDE 2014-2017 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that included in the packet is a copy of the draft document that was submitted for public comment and review. He said that the Technical Advisory Committee met last week and held a public hearing, prior to the public hearing they allowed written comments to be submitted, they received neither written comments, nor any public comments on the Draft T.I.P., and the Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Draft T.I.P.

Haugen commented that on Monday he received a couple of comments from MnDOT District staff so there will be some adjustment to the document in the packet. He stated that the first change affects East Grand Forks Project #6, which is repair work on U.S. 2. He explained that we actually amended our T.I.P. earlier this year to move this project from 2014 to 2013, therefore, since this is a 2014-2017 document we no longer need to show this project, so it will be removed from the document. He stated that the second project is East Grand Forks Project #10, which is the railroad crossing on Minnesota 220 just south of its intersection with U.S. 2, S.E. of here. He explained that this change is with the \$250,000 project cost, as it will now be

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100% federally funded, therefore we will remove the \$25,000 state contribution and increase the federal amount to \$250,000. He said that the last change is on the Kennedy Bridge Project, in 2016. He explained that they amended this project earlier this year to reflect that MnDOT is going to have federal participation in this project on their half of the \$25,000,000, but they did not identify, nor did MnDOT have available at that time what the State Project ID is, and that number will be put in now.

Haugen reported that they are, in this document, for the East Grand Forks Transit System, changing some of the projects that were in previous T.I.P.s. He said that in 2013, for the first time, because of the recommendation from our Transit Plan to go to designated stops rather than stopping at any corner deemed safe, there will be some capital costs involved, so they added \$20,000 in capital costs in 2013, and as we program that East Grand Forks will have access to federal funds. Haugen commented that in 2014, and again in 2017, East Grand Forks will now start participating with the Cities Area Transit Capital Replacement Program for the Demand Response Services. He said that up until 2014, where it is proposed, all of the Capital Vehicles running around on the Dial-A-Ride System with the Senior Rider, East Grand Forks or the State of Minnesota has not participated with it, but starting in 2014 they will start rotating the cycle of where East Grand Forks and MnDOT are sharing the costs of replacement vehicles for the Demand Response System.

Haugen said, then, with these noted changes MnDOT asked us to do, we recommend approval of the Draft Minnesota Side 2014-2017 T.I.P.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT 2014-2017 MINNESOTA SIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (T.I.P.), SUBJECT TO INCLUSION OF THE REQUESTED MNDOT CHANGES.***

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

Haugen said that he has some additional T.I.P. related things he would like to highlight. He pointed out that for East Grand Forks there is a project in 2014, work on 17<sup>th</sup> Street N.E., but with MAP-21, and a lot of concerns about what was happening with funding, in the end with the action you just took, and with what MnDOT and you are agreeing to is that that project will not have any adverse effect on cost participation. He said that there were also some Transportation Enhancement projects that were programmed for East Grand Forks, and after the result of the action just taken, those projects will also proceed forward without any adverse impact as well, so those are some of the important things we were able to work on implementing MAP-21 on the Minnesota side.

Haugen stated that on the North Dakota side they will be doing a very short and quick solicitation and scheduling of a Draft T.I.P. in the next couple of months, so by the end of this month we will be soliciting to the North Dakota Jurisdictions a request for projects that are seeking federal assistance. He said that they will have to be turned in to the MPO by the first of June, and then at your June meeting we will hope to approve a Draft North Dakota side T.I.P. for

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these years, and then hopefully in August will have a combined document that covers the metro area T.I.P., instead of having different documents approved at different times as we had this past year, get back to our normal T.I.P. schedule.

**MATTER OF NDDOT FTA #5310 PROJECTS**

Kouba reported that towards the end of February, NDDOT informed us that they would be putting out a solicitation for what is now our 5310 funds, which come through the State.

Kouba stated that the MPO put out a solicitation, and held public meetings to inform anyone interested in applying for these funds. She said that they received one application from Cities Area Transit, a combined application for a paratransit vehicle and funds to continue their Mobility Manager position.

Christensen asked what the Mobility Manager is. Kouba responded that the position is filled by Ali Rood, who handles most of the aspects of the Dial-A-Ride and Senior Rider programs, along with Dale Bergman. Christensen asked if we want to kind of fund it over there. Haugen responded that this is the program that you have been funding Ali's position with for the last couple of years.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FROM GRAND FORKS CITIES AREA TRANSIT FOR FTA #5310 PROGRAM FUNDS AND PRIORITIZE THEM, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF FREIGHT RAIL ACCESS STUDY CONTRACT**

Haugen reported that in the MPO Work Program we had scheduled to conduct this Freight Rail Access Study, and in February this body authorized the release of the RFP. He said that they received three responses to the RFP and the Selection Committee interviewed all three firms.

Haugen stated that Olsson and Associates came out as the top ranked firm, and a copy of the cover letter they submitted with their proposal, along with their cost estimate were included in the packet. He pointed out that they are teaming up with SRF, and the total contract cost is \$74,680.00. He said that the budgeted amount was \$75,000, so the Selection Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee, and staff recommend you authorize execution of the contract to get this study underway.

Christensen asked what they will be studying. Haugen responded that they are studying what sites are candidate sites for improved rail access so that we can assist the Economic Development Corporation and EDHA in letting their clients know where there are appropriate sites where rail can be readily accessed. Christensen asked if you can't figure that out just by driving around

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town. Haugen responded you can't as there are a lot of nuances in the rail switches and other facilities that make a huge difference in whether or not a parcel of land that is contiguous with the rail is accessible or not. Malm commented that there can't be a heck of a lot of them since the railroad runs through the middle of town. Christensen said you have the one that runs outside of town, by Amtrak, and nobody can access that so that is kind of a dead issue, so he is kind of curious as to why we are doing this. Haugen responded that they are doing it because, apparently there has been a lot of interest expressed in trying to develop or locate businesses here in Grand Forks/East Grand Forks that have had trouble finding appropriate sites at which they can access rail, so the Economic Development Corporation asked us to assist them. He added that we are not only looking at how they can access the rail, but we are also looking at if they access the rail with a special type of business how that impacts the street and highway network, the railroad crossings, and quiet zones, so those are all the components they are studying for us to help us identify optimal sites for freight rail access facilities. He added that this will also help with infrastructure costs, as he believes that we will find out that a majority of optimal sites that can fit the rail access are a distance away from existing infrastructure. Christensen asked if he was talking about streets and sewer. Haugen responded it was.

Christensen said that he understands that you want to do this, but he doesn't think Warren Buffett really cares, and he doesn't think Amtrak can afford it, so who else has rails that go through this town. He commented that Buffett owns BNSF and Amtrak is by us, and we know where the rails are, and there aren't going to be any more rails through town, so tell him what you hope to accomplish. Haugen responded they hope to identify where we can access those rails. Christensen said that we know that, we can just drive up and down the railroad track to see where the streets cut across them, so now we know how to go across them so accessing them you can build adjacent there too. He said that you could just call R & R Contracting and they will tell you where you can get the rails in this town because they do it all over the State. Haugen responded that they were part of the interview process. Christensen said that he doesn't understand why they want to spend \$75,000 for something like this.

Haugen commented that it isn't so much the street networks, and where we currently have streets that access land, it is the rail facilities and infrastructure of the rail that has limitations, that is what we are trying to identify to help the EDC and the EDHA so that when they have customers they can give them the information. Christensen said that he just happened to have read the EDC's financial report today, and they have spare change of about \$250,000, so there's no money to be spent to help with railroad infrastructure, at least not in the City of Grand Forks, and he doesn't know if the City of East Grand Forks is going to do the same study. Haugen responded that East Grand Forks is part of the study as well. Christensen said that they probably don't have any more money than Grand Forks does to do this, so aside from having something to do, what's the benefit of this study. Haugen responded that, apparently there are some big business development potentials that need to have this study to assist them in locating in Grand Forks or East Grand Forks. He stated that they have studied some areas already and have come up with these obstacles or hurdles, and so they are asking us to do this study to help eliminate them discovering many of those obstacles or hurdles, to predetermine them, so that as these people come in they can say that they have done a study, and these are the sites that are available

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and optimal for locating facilities that need freight rail access. He added that apparently there have been a lot of huge developments interested in our metro area that this has been an obstacle for them to overcome - freight rail access.

Vetter asked if there was a grant to pay for this study, or where is the money coming from. Haugen responded that it is coming from our Planning Work Program. He said that they identified doing this study in our Work Program, and you authorized the RFP back in February, and we are now at the point where we got proposals back and we have recommended the top ranked firm to contract with to get the study done.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH OLSSON ASSOCIATES TO DO A FREIGHT RAIL ACCESS STUDY FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000.00.***

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

**MATTER OF DIGITAL RIGHT-OF-WAY CONTRACT**

Kouba reported that back in February the RFP for this study was approved and sent out. She said that they received two proposals, one from Goodpointe and one from INS.

Kouba stated that the Selection Committee met and chose Goodpointe, whom we have worked with in the past. She said that the contract is specifically for the roads the MPO can do is under the amount we proposed. She added that they provided amounts for the cities should they desire to have the same imagery for their local streets, which was actually done through the MPO in the past, but we can no longer do. She said that they are still waiting to hear if either of the cities want to get this done, but will be going forward with the classified roads at this point. She commented that this will help us determine which maintenance projects get top priority and help us keep track of what projects are done where.

Powers asked if the cost is \$38,600.00. Kouba responded that that amount is for both options, however the MPO is only paying for option 1, \$20,000.00; and the additional \$18,000.00 is what it would cost if the two cities chose to have their local streets done as well.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO APPROVE THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH GOODPOINTE TECHNOLOGIES TO DO RIGHT-OF-WAY IMAGERY FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000.00.***

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

**MATTER OF MNDOT JURISDICTIONAL REALIGNMENT**

Haugen reported that this is part of a three phase study, and we are currently in Phase 2. He explained that this study entails MnDOT, and the State of Minnesota, looking at all of the

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jurisdictional roadway authorities with their mileage, and determining whether or not there is a misalignment of which jurisdiction controls what type of roadway. He said that for those on the Minnesota side there have been many different attempts to do this in the past, and traditionally this is called a “turnback”.

Haugen commented that this study is trying to take a more holistic approach; looking outside of politics and finances, using an analytical look at what roadways might be under misaligned jurisdictions. He stated that as they identify those roadways, the third phase is where they will start talking about the nitty-gritty things like finance and politics as to whether they should be turned back or not.

Haugen pointed out that they have identified them using a tier approach. He explained that Tier 1 would be those that are highly misaligned roadway segments; Tier 2 would be those with medium misalignment, they are sort of “on-the-fence” and can go either way; and Tier 3 are those that have the look of having some misalignment, but they aren’t as important as those in Tier 1.

Haugen said that statewide there are a few miles of county roads that are suggested to be misaligned, but there are also several more miles of state trunk highway that they are suggesting are misaligned.

Haugen asked, what does this mean for Grand Forks/East Grand Forks, it means that there are two roadway segments that are being identified as Tier 2 category misalignments. He said that US Business 2 is only identified from its intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, so DeMers Avenue is not part of this misalignment study, it is just that part of US Business 2 that is on 4<sup>th</sup> Street out to Main US Highway 2. He stated that the other segment is Minnesota 220 as it heads south from US 2 down towards Climax.

Haugen reported that staff has spoken to MnDOT District about some of their reasoning as to why they identified Business Highway 2, and one of their reasons was that it is mostly local traffic. He said, however, that when you look at the actual ADTs, it is really 50/50 traffic, so they are kind of wondering where they got their interpretation of it being mostly local traffic. He added that the other thing they did identify is that this is the roadway that services the beet plant, and that was one of their criteria, if it were on a trunk highway that was serving a major facility, but they still wanted to maintain this as a Tier 2 misaligned roadway.

Haugen stated that as part of MnDOT’s discussion, or justification, is that if this ever does begin a serious discussion of realignment, what they are considering is just flip-flopping this mileage of Business 2 designation and placing it on DeMers Avenue/Central Avenue, the segment that connects the downtown to US 2/220 North.

Haugen commented that, assuming they do enter Phase 3, Phase 3 would look at all of the Tier 1 realignments, and they would have to get the legislature make a financial commitment to this potential realignment, because if the legislature doesn’t put finances behind it Phase 3 would be a moot point.

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Haugen reported that ten years ago MnDOT and East Grand Forks had discussion on turning back US Business #2. He said that at that time it included everything from the Sorlie Bridge out to the main highway. He stated that there were a lot of questions during that discussion so they created this format of: here is the question that we hear – here is the answer. He said that for the most part the US Business 2 designation is not impacted by the actual jurisdictional turnback in order for it to drop from being a US Business 2 identified route it goes through a whole different body called AASHTO, a national body that designates the US Route System. He added that there was also some concern at that time with the Sorlie Bridge, knowing that it has close to 90 years of life on it, how would the turn back affect ownership and potential work on the bridge, so the proposal now is to not have DeMers Avenue or the Sorlie impacted, but back then it was a contentious issue and MnDOT said they would fund a replacement, get behind East Grand Forks if replacement or major repair costs were there.

Haugen stated that the other question was if MnDOT turns back US Business 2 does that open the door and automatically turn back its segment of business 2, and at that time, ten years ago, there was no interest from NDDOT in pursuing the turn back. He added that as discussed at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last month, that is still the District's opinion, that it wouldn't automatically start a process on the North Dakota side of turning back any portion of U.S. Business 2.

Haugen reported that, ultimately, this means that this is being carried forward into Phase 3 as a Tier 2 priority, and unless the legislature on the Minnesota side comes up with funds, Phase 3 may or may not happen, but if they do come up with funds, after the Tier 1 projects are processed, then they will start looking at the Tier 2 projects, and at that time we will be involved in the process of potentially having some of the roadways being turned back to either the City of East Grand Forks or to Polk County.

Powers asked what happens if this never gets to Phase 3, does it just die a natural death, remain stagnant, or what. Haugen responded that there has been over 30-years of history of trying to properly align jurisdiction authorities, and so if Phase 3 doesn't happen next year, there is still some hope within MnDOT that Phase 3 can happen two years from now, or three years from now, etc.

Information only.

**MATTER OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that he is just going to highlight where they are at in the update process. He said that they have produced and distributed a newsletter that includes our travel demand forecasted traffic in the year 2040.

Haugen commented that if we do nothing but the projects that we currently have programmed, you can see that we really start having some congestion bottleneck areas, so in your packet they provided what would happen if did all of current recommended projects, and forecasted traffic in

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the Year 2040, and these are the results (a copy of this drawing is included in the file and available upon request). He pointed out that we still have some issues that our current recommendations don't address, particularly along 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, our interchanges with the interstate, and South Washington and Columbia Road. He said, then, that the obvious question is, well, there is a desire to put 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange in, so if we kept all the current Long Range Transportation Plan projects and added the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange, how would that impact traffic. He pointed out that it solves some issues, but not all of them, so in addition to the projects we already have identified in our current plan, plus adding the \$30,000,000 interchange project we still have additional improvements that we need to consider to get our system to the level we would like.

Haugen asked what would happen if we take out the Merrifield Interchange and replace it with the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange, and you will notice that without Merrifield, 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue gets more colorful, meaning more congested.

Vetter commented that it would be interesting to know what it would look like putting a 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge in. Haugen responded that all of them do include a bridge at 32<sup>nd</sup> as that is already in our current plan. He said that what isn't included is the big northend bridge and the new access into the beet plan, those are the two projects that aren't on any of the travel demand runs.

Haugen summarized by saying that that is where we are at in the process, we are trying to identify, with our travel demand model, what projects address the most issues, that are necessary to solve capacity or other safety issues. He referred to a graphic that illustrates those roadways that we need to look at that are still identified as having capacity issues despite all the projects we have on board. He stated that the last graphic shows how we are sequencing through the process of getting to a list of projects that are recommended to occur, and the cost, and then we will have to start making a fiscally constrained plan, so we are progressing along.

Christensen asked if this process will enhance the probability of a 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange, I use my words rather carefully, enhance the probability. Haugen responded it will. Christensen said that he is asking the State DOT person if there is a possibility of having a 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange, and what he is curious about is would it help them to eliminate the Merrifield Interchange, and before you answer, sir, there is no chance a bridge is ever going to be built at the Merrifield location until such time as the State of Minnesota comes up with the money, we know that, and we just heard today about turning back, what the Minnesota DOT is doing, so the day may come when the movement shifts for a bridge at 47<sup>th</sup> rather than 32<sup>nd</sup>, because you aren't going to have the resistance on 47<sup>th</sup>, well you will, but not as much because you don't have as many people along there with driveways accessing the street as you do on 32<sup>nd</sup>. He stated that in any event he sees no reason to continue to think you are going to have a bridge at 47<sup>th</sup>, and if he were on the east side, why would I ever want a bridge there. Vetter asked if he meant on 47<sup>th</sup>. Christensen responded no, that he meant Merrifield, aside for the beet traffic, which is rather specious, that's it, but he doesn't know how they are ever going to change the people coming from the east side over the Sorlie. Vetter commented that that is why a bridge at

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32<sup>nd</sup> makes more sense. Christensen said that that is the bridge that someday we'll have when there's money to go there, and you will have all the neighbors coming and we'll have a food fight in Grand Forks, but the issue really becomes is where are you going to get your next bridge built before you start fighting about the location, and its got to come from the DOT because that is the only place Grand Forks will get their money to build their share of the bridge, as are you.

Malm asked what the DOT's philosophy is on putting interchanges in, so they have one. Johnson responded that there isn't anything written down, but... Malm agreed, stating that everytime he has been out there they turn a deaf ear on putting an interchange where there isn't a State Highway involved, and where there isn't a great deal of development involved. Johnson said that development is the big one. He stated that they aren't in the business of putting in interchanges to spur development. He added that a lot of times, and this isn't the only area, they have other areas that want an interchange somewhere because they see the potential for their city to grow to that point, but the problem is if you put an interchange out there, and say Menards builds there, how is that local traffic getting back to town, they are all taking the interstate, and that isn't the intent of interstate to use that local traffic, it creates that leapfrog development issue, so when you have an interchange that is out a little more rural, having that local arterial network in place that the local traffic can take back to town is very key because they don't want the local traffic just hopping on the interstate to go back to town.

Christensen said, then, just so we have a conversation, how did all the interchanges get built in Fargo because they are every mile. Johnson agreed, commented that most of the interchanges on I94 through town are older and the philosophy was probably different back then. Christensen said he knows, but it didn't exist on 52<sup>nd</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup>. Johnson responded that your correct, but he wasn't involved in their division when 52<sup>nd</sup> was built, but he knows that when the consultant and the cities had to look at that interchange, another thing you have to look at beyond the development, beyond the spacing requirements, is to make sure it doesn't degrade the interstate system through the area, so they had to look at that interchange, and then look at all of I-29 and I-94 through Fargo and make sure it still functions, make sure it still works, then you go through your justification, your IJR process as well. He reported that the one mile spacing is available to them, it is a national guideline, but he thinks that as they, as a DOT looks at how these are put in and how it is affecting our cities, they will see that it is causing us some issues, as it is in Fargo now on I-94 as people are using it to leapfrog interchanges, and it is getting us to the point where we will have to start metering traffic. He stated, then, that while they don't have anything written down there are all these things out there that they are trying to keep an eye on to make sure that we don't do that to our interstate, or make it worse.

Christensen stated that he realizes that Mr. Johnson is an invited guest and he wouldn't want to make him uncomfortable, but when you have growth in a community with interchange systems you end up with metered traffic. He said that you can't stop the inevitable, you may want to but you can't because if you're going to do that then you should put them every three miles. Johnson responded that that is the issue with Fargo, they put them in to try to alleviate the traffic issues, but in a sense it broke down the interstate, and they are still seeing traffic issues in Fargo, for example 25<sup>th</sup> Street, the city is now going to be doing a six lane project over the interstate up and down both ends, and it essentially won't help much and it will break down the interstate.

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Christensen commented that we all go to Minneapolis and St. Paul, and we all know about the little lights that go on and off, and when the light turns green it lets every two cars go, and we see this in the Phoenix area, but the interstate system within high density areas is used so that you can have that work and move traffic in higher density areas, but we, as a community need 47<sup>th</sup>, we as a community don't really need, and maybe never will need Merrifield. He added that East Grand Forks needs 47<sup>th</sup> or 32<sup>nd</sup> because that is where the next bridge will be if we get money to build it, he would never want to build a bridge at Merrifield because it does the east side no good, a few cars and trucks, but their city ends at about 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>, so it doesn't go them any good to move it another mile or two miles south, but in any event he hopes that Mr. Johnson will take the message back, and you will hear it more than once, but it will really help us, this group and future group people sitting here to locate a bridge and work together on it. Johnson said that this does go back to the funding issue, it isn't a State route. Christensen responded that he understands, but they have built 47<sup>th</sup> in their City so that they aren't going to have people accessing it with their driveways, it is a much better location if you're going to have a bridge, and they are going to have some resistance, but they already have the three lane traffic built and it can easily be extended to four.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Freight Rail Access Study

Malm said that he has a question now, we are spending all this money to do all these studies, and we have some other unique problems in this town that need more studying, but he would go back to the one that we just approved here about freight rail access, a \$75,000.00 study, and he just can't believe because nobody that he has ever talked to told him about rail access, he has never met anybody in this town, he has never heard from the EDC about rail, rail access that would be ideal to develop along the south end past the Amtrak, right. Christensen responded that the only rail access that exists out there is just adjacent to the Amazon strip, that's all it is.

Malm stated that he is just very concerned about this, and he didn't say anything earlier. Christensen asked if he wanted to move to reconsider the motion, and have someone come and tell us why it is needed rather than just spend the money. Malm asked if he could make that motion. Christensen responded that he could because the meeting has not been adjourned. Malm said that he would like to hear from somebody how big a need is there for a study on that. Haugen commented that it apparently was really all involved in the infrastructure of the railroad, the switches, their communication facilities, a lot of the area around the Amtrak Station, for a mile either direction, is off limits or has real constraints to it, and there is also an issue with the local yard and what the local yard union can do versus the long haul employees, so with Amtrak. Christensen stated that that is a union deal, what do we care about that. Haugen responded that it impacts who can do what and what type of facility you design based upon the type of train that serves what type of railroad service. He explained that if you're doing the switch rail you are utilizing a different geometry so a lot more areas can be serviced, if you not using the local employees, and are using the long rail then they

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have greater geometry to meet their railroad needs so then you pushing out your access points, so there are apparently several industries that are very interested in Grand Forks/East Grand Forks and they are having a very difficult time finding the right spot for rail access, some of the spots might be good for rail access but not so good for other issues. He stated that the rail line that parallels 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, going to the north, North of Gateway Drive is where the rail access issues are good but it has a whole host of other issues, so this study is trying to lay out the map as to, we've looked at all the land uses, looked at all the infrastructures, and these are the sites that we really should pursue to get better freight rail access for potential industries that want to come to Grand Forks or East Grand Forks, and without us doing that study it just pushes it onto someone else and we are the responsible transportation planning agency, this is somewhat our mission to do with our planning dollars to assist in identifying these transportation problems and present solutions to them.

Haugen reported that the other way the whole federal program is established under MAP-21 is that they set aside a great emphasis on improving freight, the transportation of freight. He said that we need to produce the necessary documents to access those programs, and this is one of those types of documents that will allow you to access those programs, and that is where additional money is, and the additional money is at a greater federal participation rate than the normal transportation funds, so this, again, is another way of how Congress has it set up, it is an emphasis area within MAP-21, they have their own freight section, and there is a huge emphasis at the DOT level for improving freight, and hopefully our little study will allow us to access some of those additional funds at a greater funding ratio.

Malm said that he just finds it, he has relatives that work for Fortune 500 companies in Minneapolis, and he asked them why they don't come up into Grand Forks, and they said that we are 80 miles too far north. He added that they said that we can't provide anything that makes up for that 80-miles.

Haugen commented that as part of our interview process, a couple of the firms highlighted that the City of Devils Lake is identifying and constructing, he believes, a rail access industrial park expansion on the west end of town, so apparently there is businesses and interests that are out there within our region that we are trying to capture and keep in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks with this study.

Malm asked if we could have the EDC come here and tell us what they see as necessary in their program, what they would like to see in planning from our level to help them out. Haugen responded that he would ask Klaus or Keith to come.

Haugen reported that the other constraint that working with the railroad provides, and they found this with the State Mill, is that they are really pushing the Unit Train, and you need a huge landing sight facility for a Unit Train. Christensen commented that we already went through that and it can't be done. Haugen responded that it can't be done on the Mill site. Christensen said that is what it is, do you think we're going to move the State Mill, he doesn't think so. Haugen responded that he agrees, but they still have a need to get their grain delivered some other way.

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Christensen commented that when they drive to the lake there is a nice big elevator over there that has a 100 car train, and he bets they didn't have a study to build that, they had a financial study, what it would cost to pay for it; and if you go to Minto, they have an elevator that takes a 100 cars, they didn't have a study, they had a couple of lawsuits because of some guy taking some trees down, but aside from that they sure didn't spend \$75,000. Haugen stated that he would think the Minto example, the State DOT would beg to say they should have done a little more study because it got popped up their without much DOT involvement. Christensen said that that was too bad, but they didn't have jurisdiction over them within the City of Minto. Haugen commented that that is part of what we are trying to do with our study, to make sure that all of those interests are involved.

Malm said the answer is a North Bypass. He explained that the other night he came down Gateway Drive and the traffic from that railroad crossing had traffic backed up past the cemetery. Vetter stated that we need an underpass. Christensen said that they have one in their plans and it costs \$30,000,000. Malm responded that there isn't one planned for Gateway Drive though, but all he is saying is once we start monkeying with these bridges, what is going to happen out there. He commented that 20-years ago we talked about a North-Bypass, and nobody lives out there, and he thinks that should still be considered.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2013,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:05 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Strandell, Vetter, Malm, Christensen, 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**

**Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mike Powers, Secretary, called the June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Doug Christensen, Warren Strandell, Greg Leigh, Clarence Vetter, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Absent was: Steve Adams.

Guests present were: Jane Williams, Grand Forks Engineering.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Powers declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

Haugen distributed copies of the Sorlie Memorial Bridge Dedication document from 1929. He explained that Henry Tweten, East Grand Forks Council Member, asked that he give all the MPO Executive Policy Board members a copy of this document.

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Haugen reported that back in 2007, with the I-35 collapse, the State of Minnesota Legislature took action and agreed to a multi-billion dollar bonding bill to rectify all these fracture critical bridges across the State. Haugen commented that both the Kennedy Bridge and the Sorlie Bridge were identified as needing work, and with the bonding bill expiring in 2018, it was determined that the Kennedy Bridge needed to be addressed in 2016 and the Sorlie Bridge in 2018.

Haugen explained that in May of 2008, MNDOT came to East Grand Forks, and without consulting with NDDOT personnel, announced that they were going to replace the Kennedy Bridge and rehab the Sorlie Bridge. He stated that since then there have been continuing discussions between the two states as to what actions need to be taken on these bridges. He commented that this is even more evident as we get into these project development studies.

Haugen reported that there were several public meetings last week on the Sorlie Bridge, of which he was only able to attend the one on Thursday evening here in East Grand Forks. He said that he has the presentations that were given, and he could highlight a couple of things if this body wished, but for him the important meeting actually took place earlier on Thursday in Bemidji. At that meeting, MNDOT presented its 20-year Highway Investment Program, and MNDOT basically stated that they are programming rehab projects, that their financial ability is only to do rehab projects, however if replacement is the ultimate decision for the two bridges, most likely no large scale improvement would be taken on those structures in 2016 and 2018. He added that with MNDOT's analysis of MAP-21 Performance Measures, plus their general accounting requirements of maintaining assets in good condition, preservation is a strong thing for MNDOT, preserving what they have. He said that they also talked about the bonding bill that ends in 2018, if replacement is the ultimate decision on those bridges, while they would be comfortable with that decision since they will participate in the decision process, MNDOT made it clear that they don't have financing available to replace both structures within that timeline.

Haugen stated, however, that in any case we still need to go through the full environmental protection process, and the EIS on the Sorlie Bridge started last week with the scoping. He stated that they have to go through the hoops and hurdles of showing that we are not excluding any and all reasonable alternatives.

Haugen commented that an important document that the scoping process is going to create is the Purpose and Needs statement. He said that he did send an e-mail to everyone to help highlight that the Purpose and Needs is where it really starts to narrow down what alternatives are meeting the purpose of what they are trying to accomplish, and the need that they have identified.

Haugen referred to a few slides from the presentation that discusses the condition of the Sorlie Bridge. Leigh asked, then, if it isn't structurally deficient, why waste the money to do the study. Christensen asked how much the study will cost. Haugen responded that he has been trying to get that answered. He explained that a couple of years ago, in our T.I.P. document on the Sorlie Bridge, we amended in, because we have to show all federally funded projects, and it needs to show up in our T.I.P. document for the feds to take action on the documents that are being produced, at that time we showed a just over \$3,000,000 start to the EIS process, that was North Dakota's 100% funding to start, with the next year being matched by Minnesota, and the third

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year being a 50/50 split between the two states for the remaining amount for the EIS. He said that since then they have hired a consultant, and the scope-of-work has been completed, but he is still requesting from North Dakota a copy of the scope-of-work and the cost, but have not yet received either.

Leigh commented that he is confused, because if the bridge is structurally not deficient, it is functional, it is downtown, it is a historical bridge, why wouldn't we just sandblast it, clean it up, fix the lights, and worry about the Kennedy Bridge, which is more heavily used and has some issues with its pier, and it could use a pedestrian access, why wouldn't the money be focused on one bridge rather than two of them. Haugen responded that this goes back to the 2008 announcement by MNDOT as to what they were going to do with the two bridges. He said that since then they have been working on trying to reach an agreement as to how to address these two bridges, and the agreement has been to do a full EIS on the Sorlie and let the process play out so that all potential alternatives are examined to the length necessary so that a decision can be documented and supported.

Malm asked what the local share is on this. Haugen responded that the EIS cost has no local participation in the cost.

Haugen reminded the board that it will be asked if whatever project they conclude be done is consistent with our plan, and then to program it to the dollar value they want into the MPO TIP; this board will still have to make a decision to either amend it into our documents or approve it into our documents.

Christensen asked what the estimated date as to when the board will have to make a decision. Haugen responded it they will need to do so in the next three or four years, but on the Kennedy a decision will need to be made within a year, subject to change, because they haven't even started the NEPA process on the Kennedy Bridge, even though it is the first one up for action in 2016. He added that we won't see anything on the Sorlie until 2015.

Haugen reported that the first issue to be addressed on the Kennedy was Pier 6. He referred to a slide illustrating Pier 6; how it was designed and constructed, as well as its existing condition, specifically how it is tilting. He explained that the design has the ability to move 28 inches, and so far it has moved half that in its fifty years, or 14 inches. Leigh said, then that we have another 14 inches before we have to be careful when we drive over it. Haugen responded that that isn't necessarily true. He explained that there are really two different issues; the top area is designed for movement, the Pier itself is intended to remain straight up and down, but you can see that this one did not. So while we have the ability to adjust it further as it has only moved half of what it was designed to be able to move, the question is whether or not we can adjust it with local MNDOT resources, and the answer is yes, but can we still allow movement in the Pier, which is actually moving in two different directions, so there is still a part of their analysis needed to try to decide if this critical pier movement is enough to force total replacement of the bridge, or if the pier itself can be replaced and the rest of the structure be rehabbed, that is the next part of the study to be done.

Powers asked if the rest of the piers are in good physical shape. Haugen responded they were. He added that the only other known deficiencies area the paint flakes, etc., plus they have

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identified that they need to add bike/ped accommodations. Powers asked if Pier 6 is on the North Dakota side. Haugen responded it is. Vetter asked if there has been any movement on the other piers at all, as far as having to adjust the rocker bearings. Haugen responded that they have not reported that yet.

Haugen reported that MNDOT has announced when they will be holding their general public meeting. He pointed out that the document included in the packets indicates it is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, however that has been changed to Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> instead. He added that they are also going to hold the meeting in two locations, on the Sorlie they held the two meetings on two separate days, but on the Kennedy they are going to try to do it as a virtual, one meeting in two locations.

Haugen commented that another bit of news that is of some importance to the communities, is that MNDOT did attempt to get funding to raise the low spot on the East Grand Forks side of Highway 2 and we will encourage them to continue trying in the future.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ACCEPT AND FILE THE REPORT.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF T.I.P. AMENDMENT ON FY2013 ANNUAL ELEMENT**

Haugen reported that this is a requested action of the board to approve, an amendment to our 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program.

Haugen stated that this is related to the Veterans Transportation Community Living Grant, or the One-Click On-Call Center Grant that we received. He explained that when we originally put this into our T.I.P. back in January, on the local side we had missed half of the funding awarded to the City of Grand Forks, so the total project back then was roughly \$330,000, and we are amending that to \$650,000. He stated that the federal amount changed from \$270,000 to \$522,000, so we have to do an amendment to allow Grand Forks Cities Area Transit the ability to access the full funding available for this grant.

Haugen commented that there was a separate grant that was awarded to Cities Area Transit as well. He explained that it is a complete separate project, with a complete separate funding source, and we have to list it separately. He said that it is a \$50,000 award to use for marketing the One-Click One-Call Center, and that \$50,000 does not require any local match, but we have to amend our T.I.P. to show it as a project so that the federal funds can flow.

Haugen reported that they did advertise for a public hearing at today's meeting.

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

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

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

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

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE FY2013-2016 T.I.P. AMENDMENT, AS SUBMITTED.***

Leigh referred to Page 29, Project #12 Project Description: “This grant will purchase communications equipment to allow Veterans and others to have easier access to schedule public transportation”, and asked who “others” encompasses, is it handicapped or disabled people. Haugen responded that it is. He explained that anyone who meets the criteria for demand response, even our senior citizens who aren’t disabled, this one-click one-call will assist them.

Leigh asked what the actual equipment includes. Haugen responded that it is a combination of computer equipment, GPS type equipment for the vehicles, and communication equipment, that will allow veterans and others to have to go to only one place for information and to schedule a pick-up.

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

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INPUT MEETING ON CITIES AREA TRANSIT (CAT) ROUTE CHANGES**

Haugen reported that Tuesday evening they held a public open house on the proposed changes, implementing the Transit Development Plan’s recommendation of going to designated stops, and also making some route changes to allow our routes to have better run time performance.

Haugen referred to the packets, and pointed out that copies of individual maps of each of the routes were included. He explained that the maps identify the suggested locations of the designated stops for each of the routes, as well as any modifications made to the routes.

Haugen commented that the public feedback they have received so far has been generally positive. He stated that people are aware that on-time performance has been a hindrance to the system in the past, so the general response has been positive. He added that they have received a few requests for some additional modifications to the proposed stops, which they will take into consideration, so there may be more changes made before final approval is sought.

Vetter asked why the stops wouldn’t be at the bus shelters. Haugen responded that they generally are, but there are some shelters that because the route was changed will need to be relocated.

Haugen reported that one thing to note, whereas they kept almost all the routes generally as they were, with some minor tweaking, they are eliminating one totally. He explained that Route 5/7,

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the Green Route, used to have a slight alternation with Route 7 servicing an area of South 17<sup>th</sup>, but based on both ridership and the length of time of Route 5 versus Route 7, it has been recommended that they only do Route 5 every half hour.

Leigh asked how the construction on Columbia has affected the routes, he sees it goes behind the hospital. Haugen responded that it hasn't been an issue, and in-fact they are actually to go over the overpass to get back on campus and do their return trip, so their initial plan was to go behind in both directions, but their actual execution has allowed them to use the overpass and get the core campus, so it has worked well.

Powers asked if there have been any issues with the elimination of the "wave" stop and going with designated stops, will it fly. Haugen responded that so far, again their comments have been fairly positive about this change. Powers said, though that you won't make any decisions before the 28<sup>th</sup>. Haugen responded that they are allowing comments ten days after the public open house, which is our norm, so after that it will go through the local processes of the Service Safety Committee on the Grand Forks side and through a working session on the East Grand Forks side, then action, so we hope to implement this by the time schools starts in August or September.

Haugen commented that another bit of good news is that they were able to cut the cost of putting the signs up, implementing the designated stops, by half.

Information only.

**MATTER OF RE-ADJUSTING FEDERAL URBAN AID BOUNDARY**

Haugen referred to a copy of our current Federal Urban Aid Boundary map and explained that we are once again making adjustments to it.

Kouba stated that, as you saw on the map, there are boxes provided for comments and questions, and most of the questions involved adjusting the lines a very tiny amount to be, as opposed to it looking like it is on the center line, including the right of way.

Kouba said that both the State of North Dakota and the State of Minnesota had similar requests for adjustments throughout this process, but when North Dakota got ahold of it they felt that mostly one of the major ones was the Highway 2 whereas we previously had it just to the yellow line on the map, which is the City Limit line, and they suggested moving it out to Highway 2, and after we discussed it with MNDOT we moved it all the way past the right of way so all of Highway 2 is included into the Urban Aid Boundary.

Kouba commented that other than the above changes there really isn't much of a difference between the maps that were previously brought to this body and the one we are bringing forward now.

Kouba stated that staff is looking for approval so we can hopefully finish this process and get this information back to both States.

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Christensen asked about 47<sup>th</sup>, how much is included. Haugen referred to the map and pointed out how much of 47<sup>th</sup> is included in the Federal Urban Aid Boundary. Christensen asked if they should move it out further to include the interchange. Kouba responded that it already includes the whole interstate area, including the right-of-way, so it shouldn't be a problem. Christensen asked when adjustments would be made again in the future. Kouba responded that this process starts after the Census Bureau does its initial population counts, so every ten years.

Haugen explained the process further, adding that at any time during the ten years between adjustments, we do have the ability to make changes based on new development, etc., to these lines. He stated that back in the day these lines meant a whole lot more than they mean today, today these lines don't mean a lot but they are still necessary.

Christensen suggested that they may want to include another half mile or so, from 40<sup>th</sup> down to 62<sup>nd</sup>, but if staff doesn't feel it is necessary, he is okay with that. Haugen said that when the City starts annexing that land, moving the annexation line out, that would be the appropriate time to reconsider including more of that area. Christensen asked if it would be a problem moving it half a mile down if we want to. Haugen responded that it can be done if that is what you want to do. Strandell commented that it seems that it would make sense to follow the dike lines, then you probably wouldn't have to adjust this every few years, it would be in place for some time. Christensen asked for Haugen's opinion. Haugen responded that for those small things it does control having it as constricted as we can is the way staff would recommend we go.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE FEDERAL URBAN AID BOUNDARY, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF FHWA-ND MPO PEER EXCHANGE RESULTS**

Haugen reported that the reason we held our meeting today rather than yesterday was because Federal Highway had this event take place.

Haugen reminded the board that staff has been briefing them on MAP-21 and its performance based planning, and how it is a game changer on how everyone involved with federal transportation has to change their way of awarding projects, of considering projects.

Haugen commented that it was a good session, however the last bit that talked about developing an action plan was constricted to about a five minute conversation. He stated that he had hoped, when he placed this on the agenda last week, that we would actually have a document, and action plan in hand to present to you to as to how we are going to implement the performance based planning management, but that didn't happen.

Haugen said, however, that they have periodically been bringing forward for you our draft performance measures for our Long Range Transportation Plan, and this is the document we received a few months ago, which they will take another look at it, but his base guess is that because of the process they went through this is a fairly good start to identifying what our

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performance measures are, what targets we are trying to achieve with our federal aid and our planning methods and program methods, so we will resend this document to everyone.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO ADJOURN THE JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>,  
2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:45 P.M.***

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

***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 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:03 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

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

Guests present were: Jane Williams, Grand Forks Engineering; Lynn Stauss, East Grand Forks Mayor; Doug Abere, CH2M Hill (MNDOT); Dale Thomas, CH2M Hill (MNDOT); Tim Thoreen, CH2M Hill (MNDOT); Michael Johnson, NDDOT-Local Government; Roger Hille, MNDOT-Bridge Division.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Mikel Smith, GF/EGF Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Haugen introduced Mikel Smith, GF/EGF MPO Intern, and asked that she tell a little about herself for the board.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

- Kennedy Bridge

Haugen reported that with us this afternoon are the lead consultants on the Kennedy Bridge Study; along with Roger Hille, the District Bridge Engineer from MNDOT, and Michael Johnson, from NDDOT. He explained that with the public meetings tonight he asked if these people would be gracious enough to come to this board meeting and give you a status report on their study of the Kennedy Bridge. He stated that Doug Abere, CH2M Hill, will now lead us through a brief presentation on the status of the Kennedy Bridge study.

Hille commented that they hope that if there are comments or questions of any type, that you get them to them as their whole intent during this early part of the process is to make sure that they get all the comments that they can so that they can build a better product at the end. He said that he knows that it gets kind of messy and busy here when we talk about the Sorlie Bridge Study and the Kennedy Bridge Study because there are a lot of things going on with both bridges, but they want the end products for both those bridges to be the best they can be for the two communities. He added that with that they have one of the best consulting teams in the business helping them along.

CH2M Hill Personnel:

Doug Abere – Public Information and Planning  
Dale Thomas – Project Manager  
Tim Thoreen – Planner and Environmental Documentation Specialist

Abere stated that what you are seeing in this presentation is information that they are going to have available tonight at both meeting locations. He said that it is not aimed at this audience precisely, but it does give you a preview of things that will be discussed tonight. He pointed out that he also has an overview map of the study area on the wall, which will also be available for viewing tonight.

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

Abere commented that, just to briefly orient you to the Kennedy Bridge, it is distinguished from the Sorlie a little bit in that it is newer, it has much longer approach spans and it has a number of piers, with three of them being of greater substance.

Abere stated that the existing cross section of the bridge is fairly tight, with a 4-foot median in the middle and a couple of twelve foot lanes going either way. He added that it is also very limited in terms of shoulders, with no sidewalks for pedestrians, who are warned via signage telling them not to use the bridge to cross.

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Abere referred to a slide illustrating two bridge terms: Superstructure and Substructure. He explained that Superstructure consists of the truss, beams, deck slab, and railings; and the Substructure consists of piers, abutments, foundations, and piles. He pointed out that they are highlighting the bearing, which is an element that comes in above the pier and provides the connection between the pier itself and the rest of the superstructure. He stated that they are particularly looking at one pier, and as he moves forward they will touch on that more, as there is one pier that has a special concern.

Abere then referred to a slide illustrating Pier 6, which is the pier of most concern, and explained that it is the main pier on the North Dakota side of the bridge. He suggested that if your ever out there you might want to just step back and take a close look at it sometime, as it shows evidence of some tilting, some twisting, some movement, which happens because soil slump occurs, and it is known to occur all along the Red River. He stated that they are looking at the extent of how much it has moved, and the extent of how much more movement can be accommodated.

Abere reported that the bridge is actually designed to accommodate some movement, you can move the bearing and make adjustments, however, at this point the amount of movement in that pier, just the amount that it has moved, is becoming a concern because it is tilted enough that is is no longer as vertical as they would like it to be, it is not transferring the load down into the ground and into the piles underneath it as true as it should. Thomas commented that there is the ability to move the bearing and adjust it further, but we need to keep track of that tilt. Abere said that was always identified as an early component of this study so it has been looked at pretty closely already as part of the study and it will be one of the first things that they will be giving details on in terms of alternatives for moving forward.

Abere stated that some other things that will be looked at on the truss are the truss spans, which are more complex pieces of engineering, so all of the members and connections need to be considered: things like corrosion repair, strengthening existing members and connections, rehabilitation or replacement of the deck and railings, and providing improved reliability.

Abere said that another thing they will be looking at is an approach span detail. He referred to a slide illustrating a pin connection between a couple of beams along those approach spans so the approach spans are set up around beams that are on a series of pins, and the spans are not as long as those truss spans, they are relatively short spans, but these pin connections are not used as frequently now as they were in the past, and they are just a detail that needs to be looked at closely, and there are a lot of them so they are repeated over and over again so it is important to understand the condition of all those connections in order to determine if there should be any effort made to change or repair them.

Abere commented that another consideration is, again looking at the existing bridge, whether or not we have the opportunity to add a new element, a potential pedestrian/bicycle trail, most likely on the outside of the truss. He stated that they have just begun working on some graphics to depict a cross section of what that might look like. He added that this then brings up some additional issues in terms of whether additional strengthening or modifications to the truss would need to be made.

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Powers asked how wide the proposed bike path going to be. Thomas responded that they don't have a defining number, but MNDOT requires it be a certain width, somewhere between eight-foot and twelve-foot wide. Powers asked if they were going to put it on both sides of the bridge or just one. Thomas responded that that hasn't been determined, but it would be unlikely that it would be on both sides. Abere added that they will be recommending it be only placed on one side, and they have been advised that it would be more consistent with local plans to put it on the south side of the bridge. He explained that, very preliminarily, in looking at right of way issues they found that there are some parcel boundaries shown on the map that could possibly create some advantage to it being placed on the south side as well, in terms of where the existing right-of-way is that is owned by the two States.

Abere reported that the question of whether to rehab or replace the structure, it should be noted that the bridge has been determined eligible for the historical register, so that creates some sense of duty in how you look at it. He said that one of the first things is that we really have to take a close look at the long term feasibility and cost effectiveness of a rehabilitation project; and then do that with some comparison of a bridge replacement so you can begin to gauge the difference between those choices, and they will be doing that in this study. He added that ultimately, if the study shows that rehabilitation of the bridge is not feasible and prudent, or if the repairs to it are too invasive to its historic character, then it could be replaced, so that is essentially the process.

Abere referred to some slides illustrating bridge replacement concepts, and went over them briefly.

Stauss commented that one thing he will say is that the sidewalk is badly, badly needed on that particular bridge. He stated that he likes locating it on the south side because it comes right down to their campground, allowing people to travel all around on both sides of the river.

Hille reported that right now they are just looking at whether or not they should strongly pursue either the rehab or the replacement option, and of course the condition of some of the critical elements of the Kennedy Bridge are going to have an impact on that decision. He said that if it leans toward replacement it is very likely that those structures at 4<sup>th</sup> Street would be replaced or modified to a certain degree, whether it be in conjunction with the job or shortly thereafter, but there are some issues with the cover-plates on those structures that is not going to break MNDOT's heart as something will need to be done with them in the near future in any event.

Stauss stated that as you come down on 4<sup>th</sup> you might look at replacing it with a higher approach because they have some problems down there during flooding, water comes up the sewer, so making it higher would be helpful. Hille responded that if they do replace that there they would look at the whole profile of that grade, clearance issues, and all those kinds of things.

Strandell commented that he is also thinking that the approach, or the up-ramp going west, he would like to see some kind of a merge in that area because currently the lane goes directly into the traffic lane so if it could be designed to allow more of a merge into the traffic lane that would be good.

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Stauss stated that the big thing is that your studying all of this to see how bad that structure really is to determine if we need to build new, or if we can fix it up. Hille responded that he agrees, and added that they have a really good team assembled to look at some of the stuff, some of it we already know, but some of the cost elements they don't, and when you start rehabbing, where to do you stop, and what requirements are there not only from the AASHTO Design Standards, but Federal Highways as well.

Strandell asked if there has been, or will be any consideration for replacing the on-ramps that were removed when the dike was constructed, going east on 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Hille responded that they are not there at all. He added that if it were a rehab structure, they probably wouldn't look at it until they replace the 4<sup>th</sup> Street bridges, if it is a replacement they would look at it, but he doesn't know much about traffic, he only knows about bridges, so he would have to defer that to someone else.

Christensen said that all this planning will probably go on for another year and a half or two years, what is the source of money to pay for this, by that he means Federal and State funds, is there any local match required. Hille responded that he can't answer that at this time because if it is determined that both structures be rehabbed it will make a big difference in terms of local participation than it will if it is determined it should be replaced. Christensen asked if this was code for saying that if it is a rehab project then the cities will have to participate. Hille responded that there would be some elements of local participation on either project, but he doesn't think they are at the point where they can identify that amount at this time, but he also doesn't think it will be a major financial impact on the City unless the City requests some additional things such as widened lanes, or access to bike paths, etc..

Christensen asked what the length is of this studies shelf life, five years, ten years, when will we have to restudy this. Hille responded that there will be action post-study. He added that their intent is to complete this study this year and then at that time we should have an idea of whether we are going to pursue replacement or rehabilitation and will move right into that phase.

Stauss asked if the Sorlie is on the same schedule as the Kennedy. Hille responded that right now the schedules, because of some of the environmental issues and so forth, have put the Kennedy ahead at this time, but that could change.

Christensen asked, then assuming everything goes through as planned, what are the State of North Dakota's plans as far as prioritizing this to get it done with Federal and State fund. Johnson responded that right now this project is included in the North Dakota S.T.I.P. for the Year 2016. He added that dollar amount shown is just so they have a buffer, they assumed replacement, so if it is determined they will do a rehab, those cost estimates will change.

- Sorlie Bridge

Haugen reported that the first thing he would like to highlight is the fact that they are seeking nominations for people to serve on the Citizen's Advisory Group. He said that the consultants

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presented this at their June public meetings, and he knows that they are still recruiting as of last week so if you have names of anyone you think would be appropriate to serve on this group, please contact Glenn Carpenter at 701-250-5960 or by e-mail at [glenn.carpenter@kljeng.com](mailto:glenn.carpenter@kljeng.com).

Haugen explained that the roll of the Citizen's Advisory Group is; and they hope to have it consist of people who are not elected officials, who really don't serve on the appointed boards, but who are true citizens that have an interest particularly in the downtown area; to help the consulting team in both States to define what the purpose and need elements of the project are, to help them refine what alternatives should be detailed further in review, to help them with public outreach, etc.

Leigh said the he read someplace that there really aren't any issues with the Sorlie Bridge other than the fact that it is old, and it probably just needs a new coat of paint and some lightbulbs. He asked if this was true, and if so are we just spending a lot of money studying it for just the sake of studying it. He said that he understands studying the Kennedy Bridge because of the issue with Pier 6, but if there isn't really anything functionally or structurally wrong with the Sorlie why are we spending a bunch of money studying it, other than the fact that that is the thing to do. Hille responded that they know that there are sections, especially in the lower chord that have up to 30% section loss, so there are some serious issues with the Sorlie Bridge, so anyone that says there is nothing wrong is incorrect, however, he would also stress that the bridge is safe as we sit here, but at the same time, over the next thirty years, without some very basic upkeep we will have some issues that would not be fun, and that isn't a structure that anybody would want to see us come in and close it down. He stated that they definitely have some maintenance issues that have to be addressed on both of these structures, and there is no question about it.

Stauss commented that on the Sorlie the possibility of raising it because of flood issues was brought up, but doesn't the Railroad Bridge stop the water first, and if that is true why would we need to raise it. Hille responded that the only issue with raising the Sorlie would not be hydraulic oriented, it would be access oriented, and it would be such that you could access the bridge up to the point in time that the flood walls were closed, as you do now, but there is a lower area after you get through the flood walls, so if they brought that area up to the elevation of the flood walls, or a bit higher than that it might be a bit advantageous for access during flooding events.

Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that the scope of work from KLJ shows that the alternatives do talk about raising that area three-feet in order to allow the bridge remain open as long as the flood wall is opened. Leigh asked if this wouldn't have an effect on getting to the parking lots on the Minnesota side if they raise that area. Haugen responded that it could potentially affect that. Thomas added that it would lengthen the project, they would have to down DeMers Avenue in both directions to make sure that they accommodate that element. Christensen commented that he doesn't think this would be a very good idea. Hille stated that they aren't talking a three-foot higher flood-wall, they are talking three-feet in terms of the approach. Thomas commented that one thing to note is that this is a scope that is identified by the consultant for estimating their hours and time, so they throw three-feet in there as an assumption for estimating their time, it isn't a set in stone elevation for fixing that area, it is just a number that was picked out to estimate their hours and time.

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Hille said that you need to remember, and he is going to combine the Sorlie and Kennedy, that the reason that they are trying to get comments are: 1) to determine what the right thing to do is; but just as importantly 2) to determine what things can be ruled out early on so they don't spend a lot of time and money on them. He stated that if raising the flood walls at all is going to be off the table for both communities, say it now so we don't spend time and money on it. Christensen responded that for Grand Forks he would see no reason to raise anything, so he would be all for taking that off the table, but he is only speaking for Grand Forks. Stauss said that East Grand Forks is very concerned about the closure of DeMers at any time, but considering the number of floods that require closure, and while they say it is happening more and more often, he would agree that this is something they probably don't need to consider. Hille responded that the comments they are getting here are important, but they will certainly take a look at what the cost would be, from a bridge maintenance standpoint a lot of the issues they have on the lower chord is because they have ice chunks hitting it and causing some concerns from a maintenance standpoint, so do they lift it out, do they cover plate it, they will look at those options.

Stauss commented that Mr. Hille is right, some ice chunks hit it once in a while, but most of the ice, when it gets up to that point, the ice is normally gone, but underneath there they haven't really had to make any repairs that he can remember. Hille responded that all the sway bracing has been taken off or is non-functional, but they were able to do that because they have sheer connectors in the deck when they replaced the deck last time, but of course all the lighting is gone that they put up there some years ago.

Stauss stated that he thinks both sides agree that it needs a paint job, so they certainly won't stop them from doing that, it needs it now.

Haugen reported that on the Sorlie itself the open public comment is until the end of July so if you have comments you want to submit for the record, you have until the end of July. Christensen asked if they weren't doing that now, the secretary is taking notes, this is our meeting, these are our comments, put them in the record, please.

Information only.

**MATTER OF CANDIDATE PROJECT LIST FOR NORTH DAKOTA SIDE 2014-2017  
T.I.P.**

Adams reported that he received a request from Mr. Haugen to table this item until next Wednesday. Haugen agreed that if possible he would like to have this item tabled until next Wednesday at the same time. He explained that we do have to have these project submitted to the NDDOT by the end of July, so next Wednesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, would work best.

After some discussion, consensus was that a quorum would be available to meet next Wednesday.

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO APPROVE TABLING THIS  
ITEM TO A SPECIAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, AT 12:00 NOON.***

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

**MATTER OF PROPOSED CITIES AREA TRANSIT (CAT) ROUTE CHANGES AND DESIGNATED STOPS**

Haugen reported that this was included in last month's packet, when we went into more detail; however today's packet includes all of the comments they formally received, as well as their response to those comments for your review.

Haugen stated that 90% of the comments were able to be addressed, and they were able to accommodate their individual, unique circumstance. He said, however, that the 10% that was not able to be satisfactorily addressed has to deal with access to the Library. He explained that people wanted to be dropped off closer to the door, but Cities Area Transit believes they are as close as they can get with their current routes.

Haugen said that each side of the river will have this go through their local city process for consideration and a recommendation of approval. He added that this body will be asked for formal action in August.

Information only.

**MATTER OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported the material included in today's packet are technical in detail, and were primarily meant for the Technical Advisory Committee. He explained that it describes our Travel Demand Model Forecasting Network that we have developed, how it was validated, calibrated, to replicate 2010 base conditions so that as we try to convey to you and the public that in 2025 we forecast an "x" amount of traffic, or some comfort level that our model was at least calibrated to a base year of 2010, and our calibration validation was exceeding the minimums by quite a bit for the most part to it is a fairly good model, probably one of the better ones we have had in the past, so the information is good, but fairly technical.

Haugen pointed out that there has been a lot of comment about the traffic in North Dakota, and the growth trend reports out of NDDOT indicate that we may have reached our peak traffic. He said that the oil patch is experiencing consolidation, different drilling methods, more pipeline and railroad activity, so truck activity there is down, so a lot of the traffic in North Dakota generally has declined over the last four months, which indicates that last year may have been our peak travel. He added that in Minnesota, and throughout the Nation, peak traffic may have occurred a few years ago.

Haugen said that the last thing is, and they will provide more information, but the original deadline was to have this wrapped up in June, and we are beyond that timeframe, so we are going to prepare a schedule of when we believe we will have a complete Long Range

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Transportation Plan for your adoption, in any event it should be completed before the end of the year, but they will have that schedule possibly by next week for the agenda.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Kennedy Bridge

Malm said that he has a question, which he should have asked earlier, but if the Kennedy is eligible to be placed on the Historical Register, how do you prevent it from happening. He stated that if it happens, then you are going to have a big historic area to contend with on the North Dakota side. He asked how that would affect building a new bridge. Haugen responded that he believes there is really little distinction between being on the register and being eligible to be on it, if your eligible to be on it your treated as if you are on it, so he doesn't think there is much differentiation between eligible for or on it.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY CHRISTENSEN, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 17<sup>TH</sup>,  
2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:50 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Vetter, Strandell, Christensen, Powers, Leigh ,Grandstrand, 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, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 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: Steve Adams, Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Clarence Vetter, Greg Leigh, Doug Christensen, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

Guest present were: Michael Johnson, NDDOT Local Gov't Division; Jane Williams, GF City Traffic Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JULY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE JULY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that, as mentioned at last month's meeting, we did not meet our original deadline for completing our Long Range Transportation Plan Update. He explained that this is, for the most part, due to issues with MAP-21 as it has really thrown a monkey wrench into our process, and still continues to do so.

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Christensen reported present.

Haugen stated that because of our missing our deadline, Federal Highways and Federal Transit and our two State DOTs sent us a letter indicating that we now have to have an update completed by January 31, 2014. He said that in the meantime, while we work towards that date, another action they have placed on us is to freeze our current T.I.P. document. He explained that this means that our current 2013-2016 T.I.P. cannot be adjusted or amended to add in new projects, change the scope of work, or to add in additional funds. He said that this also means that our 2013-2016 T.I.P. is our T.I.P. document until we complete the Long Range Transportation Plan Update.

Haugen reported that normally in August of each year we would be approving a new T.I.P. document, however, not only because of the freeze, but also because he doesn't think either State is ready to adopt a new T.I.P. in August, we cannot adopt a 2014-2017 T.I.P. until after our Long Range Transportation Plan is completed, so not until January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Haugen stated that they gave us a deadline of August 12<sup>th</sup> to have a new schedule showing how we will meet completion of our Long Range Transportation Plan by that January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014, deadline. He pointed out that included in the packet were copies of those communications from Federal Highway.

Haugen said that in working with SRF on changing and streamlining the scope of work, we have produced a schedule that shows how we will achieve that deadline. He referred to a slide, illustrating the updated schedule, and went over it briefly (a copy of the schedule is included in the packet and available upon request).

Haugen pointed out that, although the deadline for completion of the Long Range Transportation Plan Update is January 31, 2014, Federal Highway and Federal Transit both require a 30-day review period, therefore the entire month of January is set aside to allow for them to review the document we produce, which means that at our regular December meeting we will be asked to adopt our updated plan, which also means that we will be granting preliminary approval in November, so we need to have a draft plan available by late October.

Haugen referred to copies of an e-mail he included in the packet, and explained that it discusses clarity questions he asked regarding the T.I.P. freeze discussed in the MTP Letter of July 29, 2013. He pointed out that the letter said that they are allowing a one-time amendment process to occur, however it is only available to our State Agencies and our Public Transportation Partners, they are the only agencies that can propose amendments to our 2013-2016 T.I.P., thus counties and cities don't have this same window of opportunity. He added that another thing though, that somewhat eases this a bit is that the frozen current year isn't 2013 but actually 2014 so all the projects we have identified to occur in FY2014 can proceed as normal, they aren't frozen.

Haugen commented that after today the State Agencies and Public Transit Operators will start proposing the amendments they seek to our document so in September we will be asked to amend our current document to bring these projects into our T.I.P. document so that they can proceed.

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Haugen stated that MAP-21 is still being implemented, and we are still discovering some of the implications it is causing, including the fact that we were just informed ten days ago that our rate of growth in revenue has been cut in half. He said that we were previously approved to use a 3% growth rate, but we are now projecting a 1.5% growth rate.

Haugen referred to a slide and pointed out that the baseline is from our current plan, in which we were assuming a 2% rate of growth, and now we are going backwards. He added that the slide also shows that as we go out into our out-years are purchasing power is eroding as well because our cost inflation is at 4% on the North Dakota side and 5% on the Minnesota side, so every year we are losing roughly 2.5% of our purchasing power.

Haugen explained that what this means for our total budget is that we lost roughly \$50,000,000 with the rate of growth change over the life of this plan. He commented that, as he has highlighted, we have budget constraints going into this and those constraints just got bigger. He pointed out that with our current plan we had roughly \$300,000,000 in our budget for projects, and that amount has been decreased to \$200,000,000, while the cost of the projects has actually increased to \$340,000,000. He stated that what this all means is that we now have some real budget constraints coming at us now that weren't as bad ten days ago.

Grandstrand reported present.

Vetter asked if the decrease in the revenue forecast was due to the census data. Haugen responded that it isn't, that it is due to MAP-21. He explained that we were utilizing some interim SAFETEA-LU forecast year budget, and with MAP-21, NDDOT in particular and MNDOT, when they look at our two year bill and see what they are forecasting for 2014 appropriations, they are only at roughly 1.5%, so MAP-21 is now the official adopted bill for Congress that shows how much money they are willing to infuse into the transportation system, and it is 1.5%, so MAP-21 is causing us to have to shrink our rate down to 1.5%. He added that further frustration is that this is only a two year bill and we are going out to FY2040 with federal forecasting, and the Highway Trust Fund is having to be infused regularly with general funds, so it is very difficult for us to forecast funding.

Christensen commented that this is a great report, and your telling us what is going on, but we don't really know what we're going to have three years from now to fund project with. Haugen responded that these are the assumptions that we are going to be using. Christensen said that we are here to make decisions based upon something, but what kind of decisions can we make if we don't have any idea what our revenue is going to be. Haugen responded that this is giving you the information, what kind of revenue your going to have, now \$203,000,000 to maintain and try to predict out to 2040. He said that the next slides give us a direction as to where we will be going. Christensen stated that what he is saying is, how can you possibly try to forecast out to 2040 when you don't know what you can do in say 2016, why would you waste our time trying to do that. Haugen responded that that is the process that we are engaged in with the feds to get their federal funds on an annual basis.

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Haugen stated that he fully expects that we will have plan that we will have to adopt, and have approved by January 31, 2014, and hopefully amended as soon as possible thereafter. He said that, again, that what we are asked to do with these federal funds, and as part of our planning process, is to emphasize the preservation of what we have in place today, and to emphasize the facilities that served national and regional significance. He added that prior to MAP-21, these two were the same preservation or emphasis areas but MAP-21 focused the bulk of the federal funds, 60%, onto the national and regional transportation system, so not only did MAP-21 shrink our rate of growth, but it also determined where monies can come from and what they can be used for.

Haugen commented that they did ask all of their agencies to submit a list of what type of preservation projects, or state of good repair projects before we start talking about what funds we had left over to build new things. He stated that the NDDOT identified four major reconstruction projects they felt needed to be done prior to 2023:

- 1) Washington Street Underpass
- 2) 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- 3) North Washington
- 4) South Washington

Haugen stated that the financial issue we have is that under the old SAFETEA-LU system we still haven't morphed over to MAP-21 as to how the NDDOT separates out its funds, so on the North Dakota column, if you take out the Kennedy and Sorlie Bridge projects, there is only \$15,000,000 during this period of 2016-2022 to do projects on the State Highway System, and the underpass project itself would cost more than that.

Haugen commented that the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue reconstruction roughly matches the amount of monies we have forecasted for the State Highway System during the 2023 to 2030 period, so we can accomplish one project on the State Highway system for that timeframe. He said that Washington Street is a little more bit more than what revenue we have coming in, and we are skipping the whole DeMers/Washington Intersection.

Haugen stated that we are needing to produce a plan that is focused on how we can preserve our existing system and how it focuses on our National/Regional priorities, so what we will end up doing to accomplish that is to transfer some of the funds from one column into another so that we are meeting those emphasis areas. He added that a good part of our plan will be identifying the need for additional revenue to not only maintain, as we won't be able to maintain everything even if we do this, but to also find revenue sources to grow our system.

Haugen reported that to help try to ease this process and make it go quicker, Federal Highway had asked us, at the start of this process to identify projects in value of \$1,000,000 or more that are typically a state of good repair projects, but that value has been raised to only those projects in value of \$5,000,000 or more, which is a value that Congress actually uses. He added that, while we are trying to only identify and list those projects that are \$5,000,000 or more, we still have to set aside an on-going annual amount even though we aren't listing specific projects so that we know we have the ability to maintain what we currently have.

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Haugen summarized that this is where we are at right now with our local agencies, trying to identify what are those real high value projects that we have to individually list, and how can we look at some of these projects that are currently scoped as reconstruction, with a high cost, to see if we can do a pavement technique that will allow us to stretch the roadway surface longer, and delay the reconstruction.

Haugen stated that we are still looking at a few expansion type projects to see how, and if we can get them as recommended projects. He added that it is very likely that we will have a lot of illustrative projects in our plan, projects that we would like to do, but we just can't show that we have the financial resources available now, but if that individual project can get funding awarded it, we will amend our plan to bring them in as a recommended project, then follow through with a T.I.P. amendment.

Haugen reiterated that we have a deadline of January 31, 2014; and we know we have constraints and the unknowns of what MAP-21 is bringing to us, and we discover new issues weekly, yet we are still required to have this Long Range Transportation Plan in place.

Haugen commented that he did have a slide that shows all of our recommended projects in our current 2035 Plan, but the vast majority of them are no longer going to be viable alternatives for us to try to pursue or debate, such as whether or not we should or shouldn't have a bridge located here, or there, there just won't be funds available to do them.

Information only.

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

Sorlie Bridge

Haugen distributed copies of the list of members selected for the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Sorlie Bridge Project, as well as a description of what the committee is and does.

Kennedy Bridge

Haugen referred to the packet, and pointed out that he included a summary of the public information meetings held on July 17<sup>th</sup>. He stated that nine people attended on both sides of the river, and there was a variety of interest expressed.

Haugen commented that also included in the packet are slides of the presentation that was given at the public meetings. He explained that the bulk of the slides discuss the findings from an inspection done on the bridge, which was one of the consultants full-checklist type inspections. He said that they discovered that there aren't any new surprises, what they already know is pretty much all there is to know about the structure. He said that it shows there is just a couple more years of deterioration, but that it is in fair condition other than the issue with Pier 6, which does need to be addressed in the near term. He added that they are noticing that the deck is starting to

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show a lot of wear, but they were aware of this already. He said that the main point of the inspection was that they didn't find any real new information, or surprising information that caused them any concern.

Haugen commented that the remaining slides focus on whether or not the Kennedy Bridge should be considered historical or not. He said that the conclusion is, based on a couple of criteria that the federal government has laid out to allow things be considered historical, the Kennedy Bridge does meet those criteria so it will be treated as a historical structure.

Haugen said that there was some time spent on discussing that if they should decide to pursue replacement of the structure, some of the replacement type structures do have some limitation, one being that a center pier has to be part of any replacement structure.

Haugen reported that one question that was raised was when do we have to start addressing these bridge projects. He said that the Draft North Dakota S.T.I.P. for 2014 to 2017 shows the Kennedy Bridge project with a line through it. He explained that the reason for this is because North Dakota had sent a previous document that showed the Kennedy Bridge in the Urban program, so to try not to be confusing they drew a line through here and only highlighted on those things he needs to focus on, so it is still in 2016.

Haugen commented that on the Sorlie Bridge, North Dakota is suggesting that they will show it in the 2017 year of the S.T.I.P. as a pending project, and if North Dakota does get enough either State or Federal Funds they will start utilizing 2017 year funds towards that project. He said that in communicating with North Dakota, our T.I.P. document may need to show in 2017 North Dakota's funding of the bridge with a note saying it is pending. He stated that on the Minnesota side we will have to show it as zero funds with a notation saying that North Dakota may fund some of this out of 2017 funds, and then in 2018 we will possibly show the reverse, so we will have to make a decision in September how we will show the Sorlie Bridge and how it is programmed into our T.I.P. He said that for the City of Grand Forks that may mean they will need, although unlikely, there is a small chance that your City share may have to be available a year earlier than anticipated.

Haugen reported that every year now, you will be asked to approve programming of projects into the T.I.P., and you will be asked is this the project your wanting to program, so you will have to decide whether it is consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan, and is it the project you want to program. Christensen asked if this is for each city. Haugen responded that each city will have that participation, but it is really the MPO Executive Policy Board that will be addressing those questions.

Leigh asked how we know how much East Grand Forks is going to come up with for these bridge projects. Haugen responded that on the Minnesota side, typically it is zero dollar participation. He said that there may be some work you want to do concurrent with the bridge projects, but that would be your decision to do work that isn't bridge related, but in the vicinity of the bridge. He said that an example might be, MNDOT is going to be doing some road work downtown, and you took the opportunity to some utility work at that same time.

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Christensen asked, from a strategy standpoint, assuming Grand Forks adopts this policy, we can put it in our T.I.P. when we know Minnesota's got the money to do it, but to put it in our T.I.P. prior to that time would be disadvantageous for the City of Grand Forks. Haugen responded, however, that we need to have it in the T.I.P. document, and we have it in the T.I.P. document just like we do for the Kennedy Bridge, and a lot of other projects, as a placeholder as we don't know exactly what the project is, but we do have a project and a year we want to do it, as well as a guess as to what the cost will be. He said that we have to have this in the document as there is still a need for approval from Federal Highway in order for it to proceed to the year of construction, and one of the first steps in that approval process is to make sure it is in the T.I.P. and S.T.I.P.

Haugen commented that we are engaged in the EIS process, we are engaged annually in the T.I.P./S.T.I.P. cycle to make sure that we always have the ability to say, negotiate, and cooperatively agree to what that project will be in end.

Christensen said that this is what he heard, he heard that we have to identify State projects for priority, money is going to be preserved to fund State projects, and that is on our side, but he supposes they have to do the same thing on the Minnesota side. Haugen responded that Minnesota did their MNSHIP document in which they basically said that because of MAP-21 there will be zero investment in the State Highway System in our MPO area for the first ten years, out past 2023, and from 2023 to 2040 there is a small investment they will make, each fourth year the City of East Grand Forks gets roughly \$500,000 to pick a preservation project to maintain their system, so on the Minnesota side the State already has gone through their MAP-21 analysis, absorbed all the funds for their State project, looked at statewide needs and felt that East Grand Forks' State Highway System doesn't need any projects until the second half of the MNSHIP document, although Minnesota is also saying that they need more revenue, and the Governor has passed through the Commissioner, to propose to the legislature a plan of how they will get more revenue into the State of Minnesota for their transportation system.

Christensen asked, then, how does this work, doing this as a cooperative body when there is no money for ten years on the Minnesota side, and there is this gentleman sitting here from the North Dakota Department of Transportation, and we're asked to take and address preservation of North Dakota highways, whatever they are, probably two or three in our City, and we're asked to take and set aside monies to fund projects, obviously there will be projects on our side of the river, they won't be something that is cooperative. He stated that he just doesn't see it, he isn't trying to be difficult, he is just trying to tell you what he is hearing and what he is seeing, so you're working for both of us, you should give us some direction on this placeholder for a project when and if funding is available, because they don't have any over here for ten years, so he doesn't know what you all want to do. Haugen responded that there are funds for the Sorlie Bridge, they do have a commitment for funds for the Kennedy Bridge on both sides of the river. Christensen said that they don't have any money so it is going to be from the State of Minnesota, and Minnesota said no, not for ten years. Haugen responded they said no except for those two bridge projects, as long as they are within the ballpark of these cost figures, there is money available. Christensen stated, then, that your asking us to pick a bridge at this point, and

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eventually you will be asking us to focus the City's involvement on which bridge they want to do. Haugen responded that both bridges are on schedule to be done, one in 2016 and one in 2018, with the 2016 project, because it is on U.S. Highway 2, has virtually zero City participation for both cities; the Sorlie Bridge, North Dakota's current policy is that the City of Grand Forks needs to participate 10% in the cost, and that is what the \$1,465,000 is. With North Dakota surplus of funds, the City should consider requesting the State fully fund the North Dakota share of the Sorlie Project. Christensen stated he understood. Haugen said that Minnesota's current policy is zero percent participation for the City of East Grand Forks.

Haugen summarized that, again, the Citizen's Advisory Committee on the Sorlie has been determined and you have the list of members. He said that when he is aware of meeting times and dates he will forward that information to the board.

Haugen stated that one of the first important things on the Sorlie Bridge project is the Purpose and Needs Statement. He explained that if they have too broad of a Purpose and Needs Statement we are looking at all sorts of replacements, replacements with alignments, replacements with capacity issues; but if they have a more focused Purpose and Need Statement then we can eliminate a lot of that loud guessing or loud speculation of what is going on, so the Purpose and Needs Statement is critical, and the Citizen's Advisory Committee is one of those groups that has been asked to assist in writing that Purpose and Need, and you now know the names of people to contact if you want to give your opinion on this issue.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

a. Matter of Local Road Safety Plan

Haugen reported that the NDDOT has allocated federal funds to each County to do a Local Road Safety Plan. He explained that within those counties that have the twelve large cities in North Dakota, they will also do a City focused Safety Plan, or an analysis of the crash data. He stated that Grand Forks County was on the hook, was requested to commit 10% of the cost, which is roughly a \$30,000 total cost, so \$3,000, and they have said that they are committing to participate in that so there will be a Local Road Safety Plan done for Grand Forks County and the City of Grand Forks.

Haugen commented that how the system works again is our Long Range Transportation Plan has to reflect what these Safety Plans are coming up with so as soon as these Local Road Safety Plans are adopted, we will have to probably amend our Long Range Transportation Plan to bring in some of the information. He said that it will identify some types of projects, which will be good. He explained that the reason we have to do this is, under MAP-21 they maintain a program called "The Highway Safety Improvement Program", and all of the projects that are funded out of the Highway Safety Improvement Program have to be derived from these safety plans, and the Long Range Transportation Plan then needs to concur with what these safety plans

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are saying, so even though he just told you that we will have to adopt a plan by January 31, 2014, as soon as these Local Road Safety Plans are done, we will have to do an amendment so that those projects identified are eligible for that Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Haugen reported that Minnesota is about a year behind on this. He said that in the near future we would expect Polk County to do this, and Minnesota has also informed us that in the MPO areas they will do a similar analysis of the local MPO study area.

Information only.

b. Matter of NDDOT Traffic Counting

Haugen reported that originally North Dakota was going to be doing their 48-hour tube counts in the spring, however with the lateness of our spring, and the early construction season that was delayed until this fall. He said that by the last couple weeks of September you should see North Dakota DOT crews out there laying down their tube counters. He added that this will go until the first part of October.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2013,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:41 P.M.***

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

***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 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Steve Adams, Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Clarence Vetter, Greg Leigh, Doug Christensen, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Staff: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

Guest(s): Jane Williams, GF City Traffic Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

Sorlie Bridge

Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that it includes the Citizen's Advisory Group. He explained that they met last Thursday, however less than half of those on the roster attended this initial kick-off meeting.

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Haugen explained that the purpose of the meeting was to familiarize everyone with what the EIS is trying to accomplish. He said that the information shared and distributed wasn't all that much different than the information shared at scoping meetings held back in June.

Haugen reported that the next step is to prepare a purpose and needs statement, which can be written in very general terms to allow any and all alternatives be considered; or it can be more focused so that some of the more out there alternatives can be eliminated from consideration.

Haugen commented that another thing is, we talk about the timing of these two bridge projects, the Kennedy in 2016 and the Sorlie in 2018, but next month this body will be considering a Draft T.I.P. He explained that North Dakota released their Draft S.T.I.P., and in their 2017 year you will see that they are introducing the Sorlie Bridge project, and in the past we have always talked about it showing up in 2018, so next month we will need to determine whether or not this is consistent with our plan.

Haugen stated that the reason North Dakota has done this is because they think that they may have their federal funds available for this project in 2017, so while the project itself will be done mainly in 2018 if everything goes well, but the funding will come out of the 2017 fiscal year, so that is why we will need to show it in 2017 as well.

Haugen commented that on the Minnesota Side of the T.I.P., in 2017 we will show zero Minnesota dollars, and then in 2018 when we do this we will flip-flop it to show zero dollars for North Dakota.

Strandell asked if the people listed on this roster were recruited or did they volunteer. Haugen responded that about half were recruited and half are volunteers. He explained that the "at-large" or general public members would be the ones that more or less volunteered.

**MATTER OF CONTRACT AMENDMENT FOR SRF**

Haugen reported that with our Long Range Transportation Plan deadline being changed, and our new financial forecast being drastically reduced, SRF is seeking to be compensated for some of the re-work they had to do. He said that they negotiated doing this at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.00, and staff is recommending execution of this contract amendment.

***MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE CONTRACT WITH SRF CONSULTING, NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.00.***

Christensen reported present.

Malm asked what SRF has done that they need to be reimbursed for. Haugen responded that our financial forecast had indicated we had \$100,000,000.00 more in revenue, and when they started identifying projects they had to redo the entire financial section based on the recent decision by the North Dakota Department of Transportation to cut our rate growth in half, so they had to go back and redo a lot of that work. He added that the other thing was that the new deadline was

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kind of a surprise to the MPO; so the compressed timeline now has caused them to shift some of their staffing.

Vetter asked if there was \$10,000 available in the budget. Haugen responded there was.

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

**MATTER OF 2014 T.I.P.AMENDMENT**

Haugen reported that, as you are aware, our T.I.P. has been frozen, however all the projects in our current T.I.P. in 2014 are good to go. He added that we were also given a one-time opportunity for our State DOT and our Transit Operators to propose amendments to that 2014 year, and this is the list of projects that have come out of that process:

Haugen stated that the first two projects are brand new projects, they weren't in any T.I.P. or S.T.I.P. document before. He said that they are mostly "state of good repair" projects, however they do introduce some ITS dynamic message signage, more than what we currently see.

Haugen said that the next two projects are NDDOT projects; the first is a signage project that was originally going to be done this year, but is being pushed back to 2014; and the other is for Eastern District signage. He explained that North Dakota Department of Transportation sort of has the State divided into six districts, but then they also have it divided into an Eastern District and a Western District, but the Eastern District signage is a separate signage project from the District-Wide signage, so we need to show it because there may be some projects for the MPO area included in it.

Haugen commented that the last project on the NDDOT is an increase in cost for the South Washington Street project that is scheduled to be done next year, and we need to amend the T.I.P. to reflect that new cost.

Haugen reported that on the Minnesota side they have a railroad crossing improvement project out on Highway 220, by the Mallory Bridge, which is moving from 2015 into 2014.

Haugen stated that in terms of Transit projects, Grand Forks was awarded several New Freedom grants, which we now have to amend into the T.I.P. so that they can proceed to purchase and pay for salaries. He said that East Grand Forks is using some of their 5307 funds for their designated stop implementation.

Haugen commented that these are the projects that, through the process of working with our partners, have been selected for inclusion in the T.I.P. He stated that a public hearing has been scheduled to take place at this meeting, and they did advertise that comments could be submitted until 11:00 a.m. this morning, however none were received. He added that both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending approval of the T.I.P. Amendment contingent on public input.

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Leigh asked what the northbound/southbound grinding is, is it like what is being done on Highway 220. Haugen responded that it is similar, but maybe more similar to what was done on Gateway Drive last summer in Grand Forks, and what was done on 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South this summer, but, of course the asphalt overlay covered it on 32<sup>nd</sup> and this one won't have the overlay done to it. Leigh stated that he has not seen this method done before, and he is wondering if it is something new. Haugen responded that he would look into this further and get back to Mr. Leigh with an answer.

Powers asked what the Mobility Manager position is. Haugen responded that it is a position that, for the past three years, has been funded through this New Freedom grant. He explained that it is a position within the Cities Area Transit that helps make sure that our more expensive demand response service is as efficient and effective as possible, and to accomplish that the staff person does a lot of education to try to get people over to the less expensive fixed route system if they can service their needs as well as the demand response service. He added that this staff person is also involved, as you will recall, quite a bit with the Veterans "one click-one call" grant.

Adams opened the public hearing.

There was no one present for discussion.

Adams closed the public hearing.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE FY2013-2016  
T.I.P. AMENDMENTS AS SUBMITTED.***

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

**MATTER OF DRAFT UPDTE ON TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Kouba reported that a year ago we performed an update to our Transit Development Plan, however this was done prior to MAP-21 being implemented and approved through Congress, and so now with those changes, now that we have somewhat of a handle on the changes that MAP-21 is requiring, we are bringing them forward to the public as well. She stated that most of the changes focused in on performance measures, making sure that those are more front and center as opposed to buried in our objectives and things.

Kouba commented that there is also an update in our financial tables for the simple reason that there isn't as much funding as we first thought, so we have rearranged some our priorities in our finances, mostly focusing in on some of the capital projects that we had in the previous plan.

Haugen stated that this is just for information purposes. He said that they will be starting the public approval process for both cities, and will bring it back to this body for final approval in November.

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Haugen commented that the big thing is the financial aspect as MAP-21 has severely limited the capital revenue that is available, but we have to show that we are able to maintain a state of good repair, so two things we want to point out are, previously East Grand Forks was not contributing on the capital side of the demand response service program, but we have worked with them and you can now see that they are programming quite a bit of their federal funds toward the replacement of some of the demand response vehicles, which has helped tremendously. He said that the other thing they have had to show on this is that the existing Grand Forks fleet of fixed route buses need to be replaced during the life of this plan, and our past adopted document we showed a lot of federal discretionary grants funding those, but those programs are gone so we are showing that we are able to use local resources to prove that we are able to keep up our state of good repair, but the game that we have to play is we have to prove that we are able to do that, and that also then allows us to go after what little grant monies are left to replace where we show \$600,000 of fixed route bus replacement of Grand Forks local funds, to try to replace those with what FTA dollars might be available to do that. He said that they still have a huge amount way on the right of the table that we can't fiscally show that we have a way to pay for them, a major thing being our bus barn out in the Industrial Park area.

Haugen reiterated that this is just, again, letting you know what we will be going out to the public with, as to what changes we have to do to our plan based on MAP-21, to start getting into compliance with MAP-21.

**MATTER OF DRAFT BIKE/PED PLAN UPDATE**

Erickson reported that this update recommends a future connected bike and pedestrian system consisting of bike and pedestrian facilities such as shared path, bike lanes, bike routes, and sharrows. She stated that the recommended updates will fill in gaps in the already in place system.

Erickson referred to the existing and proposed bikeway network map, and explained that the solid lines indicate the existing system that is in place right now, and the dashed lines indicate the proposed changes. She stated that the proposed changes will fill in the gaps in the existing system, which will help promote more of a commuting use in addition to recreational activities already in place, by increasing accessibility and mobility.

Erickson stated that she has been working with Safe Kids Grand Forks and the Greenway Trail Users Group, who both support this plan, as well as gathering a lot of feedback from the public. She said that a lot of the comments received indicate that, although they love the recreational system already in place, the public wants a better commuter system to be able to get to school and work. She added that for some people, walking and/or biking is their first mode of transportation, and we have to accommodate for all modes of transportation.

Leigh said that the question he has is, you have \$27,000,000 for East Grand Forks, where does that money come from, and what is the timeline for implementing the proposed changes. Erickson responded that this is part of the Long Range Transportation Plan, and the numbers

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shown are just to give everyone an idea of how much things cost, but they are really just rough estimates, and there will be a lot of things coming into play that can change where things are located, and whether or not they can be done at all, it is not a fixed financial plan at all.

Powers asked if \$200 for a sign isn't kind of expensive. Erickson responded that that is just an estimate she was given, how much the sign would cost and how much it would cost to put in.

Vetter asked what the difference between a bike route and a bike lane is. Erickson responded that a bike route is just a sign on the side of the road making people aware that bikes will most likely be using this street; and a bike lane is a designated lane, marked with striping along a street, that alerts motorists that this is where bikes will be traveling, it is more visible.

Grandstrand asked if the sharrows are signed. Erickson responded that sharrows is something new to the plan. She explained that a sharrow is a lane that is marked with a bike and two arrows painted into a driving lane, and it shows where bikes are supposed to be and what direction they are supposed to be traveling, which gives both bikers and motorists an idea of where bikes will be traveling. She said that this is really a step up from a bike route.

Malm asked why in the world did somebody decide to go up North Columbia Road, across Washington Street, and they way up to the North end of Grand Forks, there is nothing up there. Erickson responded that there will be in the future. She added that you have to remember that this is part of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, so it is just looking into where growth is happening. Haugen commented that part of this area has been identified as a future park area, and so this is a continuation of the English Coulee trail system, and, again he believes the Future Land Use Plan still identifies that area as a future park area. Malm said that there have been attempts to develop this property for the last fifty years, and nothing has ever happened, so he just thinks there would be a more appropriate place to put it. Grandstrand said, however, that until the area is developed, nothing will be done.

Christensen asked if this plan is supposed to be approved today. Erickson responded that it is just for informational purposes at this time.

**MATTER OF IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK FROM LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN UPDATE OPEN HOUSE**

Haugen reported that last Tuesday they hit both the East Grand Forks City Council Working Session, and the Service Safety Committee in Grand Forks, and then also held a Public Open House.

Haugen referred to a power point presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), and stated that it is the basic information that was shared explaining where we are in our planning process. He then highlighted what was discussed at each of the meetings.

Haugen commented that for East Grand Forks they focused on a table that highlights MNDOTs recent decision on financing their highway system. He pointed out that it shows that there are

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zero dollars for the first ten years, except for the Kennedy and Sorlie Bridges, for the MNDOT system in East Grand Forks. He stated, then, that after that ten year period they start accumulating revenue for the MNDOT Trunk Highway System.

Haugen pointed out that on the local side, every fourth year East Grand Forks, through the ATP process, receives roughly \$500,000, and so that is where we need to work with East Grand Forks to identify; first what type of preservation projects would be ideal for these, and they are being covered by other funds or just starting up to accumulate, and then to start looking at what other type of projects you want to try to program, but with these dollar amounts you aren't talking real large projects to begin with for East Grand Forks.

Haugen reported that on the North Dakota side they provided this information to you, but just with the reduction in funding this is the revenue they show going to the Regional Highway System, or NDDOT Highways in our MPO area. He said that the first column is, if the District would do their normal process of reconstruction of roadways after a certain lifespan, included in this would be some mill and overlay and rehab type work for the District Highways in the MPO area, this is the cost estimate out to 2040, and you can see there is a huge gap. He stated that they then asked them, based on this gap, what if you did the complete opposite and didn't reconstruct anything, but just rehabbed the pavement surfaces, what would that cost expectation be, and that is what the lighter green is representing, and that, again, represents that we aren't reconstructing, we are just doing mill and overlays, chip seals, some panel replacements, and those types of treatments to extend the pavement that we have out there today, however, as you can see, based on the revenue there isn't enough funding to even do that.

Haugen stated that, as they looked at the data they saw that they have some reconstruction of, like say South Washington, 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, where we find the cost is not all that much greater than just rehabbing those areas, so we get a better product for similar dollars. He said, then, that the first year, in the short-term, that cost is not that much greater than rehab, and in the mid-term both reconstruction and rehab are less, but it gets back out into the long-term, but all these are short of the revenue projection we have for the State Highway System, and so, in order to show where we might have the revenue to do that, and again we have to preserve first our NHS Routes, which mainly are the State Highway Systems, most of the revenue would then be coming from the Urban Road Program, and then you can start funding some of these strategies, and that is where they are at with the financial planning, they are still working with the staff in East Grand Forks to identify every fourth year the project, and on the North Dakota side to make sure that they have a good understanding of the minimum, and have also asked the District to maybe consider lengthening out their cycles, instead of every ten years doing a mill and overlay, consider going fifteen years.

Haugen reported that they have updated these tables a little, but unless we go into the Urban Road Program for funding, we can't even maintain our State Highways with the revenue streams we currently have on the North Dakota side. He added that the costs they are showing here are just treating the pavement surface, they aren't talking about doing any capacity expansions, any safety fixes, they are essentially just talking the curb section you see out there today, maintaining that pavement surface with these costs, so you see we have a huge imbalance of revenue coming

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in for even maintaining the system, and that is the struggle we are currently having, but, again, they are working with staff to try to come up with some other way to make improvements and not just maintain what we have out there.

Christensen said, then, that the problem you're having here is probably the same problem they are having in Bismarck, and Minot, and all those towns. Haugen responded that probably to a lesser extent with the oil producing towns because the State just infused \$2.6 billion dollars out there. Christensen said, though, that it probably didn't get to Bismarck because Bismarck and Grand Forks are farther out. Haugen added that the one exception will be Fargo as they have a one-cent sales tax that is dedicated just to streets, so they generate \$10 million dollars a year of revenue just for that, so that is a significant revenue source that neither we or Bismarck-Mandan have.

Grandstrand asked when they would have this discussion, because he asked this question at the Service Safety Committee meeting, when are they going to talk about revenue sources and how much is going to be needed, how much would we have to increase the sales tax, because right now this wasn't in the budget, and we just said that we are keeping mills the same, everything is great, and no one knows about this so how do we deal with this. Haugen responded that that is going to be happening in the next four weeks. He explained that the first thing we have to do is agree to what the bare minimum we can get by with is, and can we finance that under our current revenue, and then identify what the next bare minimum is that we might want to solve, and what those costs are, and how much that difference is and how can we raise those funds. He said that, obviously, the main use of this information is to be able to, at the next Legislative Session, show that there is a huge need for infrastructure, and the State has a huge surplus of monies sitting in the bank that they could spread statewide to help alleviate these needs.

Haugen commented, sort of piggy-backing off this information, the State DOT has commissioned a state-wide city needs assessment, so for Bismarck-Mandan, Fargo, West Fargo, Grand Forks, this type of information will be used to funnel that, but they are looking at the local road system, and he believes City staff has shared some of the short falls for even maintaining the local road system, this is just to focus in on the federal aid.

Christensen stated that basically, the long and short of this is you feel we should identify a need and then get the politicians to get the people to vote for a sales tax, but what he is wondering is how much of the state aid, does the state aid try to maintain the state roads first. Haugen responded it does. Christensen said, then, that is not that germane to the conversation because you are just always going to continue to do 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Washington, and Highway 2, and we don't have any other state roads in Grand Forks do we. Haugen responded that there is also DeMers. Christensen said, then that we can continue to do that, but his guess is that Washington is pretty good for the next twenty years, other than from 32<sup>nd</sup> on, so it doesn't really get us anyplace, getting funding for the rest of our streets within our city, which is what he thinks Mr. Grandstrand is talking about. Grandstrand commented that he is talking about policy decisions like expanding Columbia Road, because it seems like this information hasn't sunk in yet, that we are dealing with future costs that we are putting on our future residents by making present

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decisions that solve a problem that doesn't currently exist. Haugen agreed, adding that we are only going out to 2040, and if we do this rehab. Christensen interrupted and suggested that we only go out to 2020, citing that he doesn't care about 2040, its more about we need to get done sooner but it is your interior roads that we have to deal with, so if we are going to do a sales tax in Grand Forks, it's not to fund roads that the State will pay for, it is to fund roads within the City of Grand Forks, and he would guess you would try to do the same thing on the east side.

Haugen commented that, so far what you have been presented is the CIP document that city staff has presented to you, that has talked about where your currently funding, and your optimum funding would be \$7 million dollars, and that is the local road system with a few collectors, which are the federal aid roads, but we haven't met that gap here yet, of that discussion to what this information is saying on the State Highway System, we still have those Columbia Roads, South Washingtons, University Avenues, 17<sup>th</sup> Avenues, which still haven't been identified as part of the \$7 million dollar gap, nor yet really plugged in yet to the gap here. Christensen said that it doesn't sound to him like the type of information your developing is going to address that because you just talked about funding the State Highway System, and the issue of getting money back to the Cities, at local levels, so that they can take and do something other than raise their general fund taxes, but that is neither here nor there for the MPO.

Leigh asked how Grand Forks pays for their residential streets if you fix them. Christensen responded they do it with special assessments. Leigh said that they do that as well.

Haugen stated that, part of this plan, what the DOT is encouraging the City to use it for is to go to the Legislature to say that, previously this was federal funds going to solve City transportation issues, and now those federal funds have to go to solve State transportation issues, why wouldn't the State, with as much money as it has, take money from the Cities to pay for their system, so that is the legislative discussion they are encouraging this plan to document. Christensen commented that all it is doing is funding State highways. Haugen said, however, that if you can get more of the State funding into this equation that frees up more for you to do your 17<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Christensen stated that the issue is, how much is the State share, if they use federal money, or State money, can they use it for 17<sup>th</sup>. Haugen responded that it depends on how they distribute the monies out. He explained that the last two biennium's they gave the City roughly \$2.5 million dollars each biennium to use on the transportation system, they didn't given you any limits as to whether it had to be used on State Highways or the street in front of your house, they just said here is \$2.5 million during the two years to use on your transportation system, that is how they have done it in the past. Christensen said, then, that now the change is going to be because the federal funds aren't there, we want money now to fund what normally would have been federal funds. Haugen responded to the State system, yes, to invest. Christensen said that he is trying to figure out what you are trying to get done. Haugen responded that, instead of saying that they need to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in the oil producing areas, that they need to invest a few hundred million dollars in the non-oil producing areas because the federal funds just aren't there to maintain the systems in those non-oil producing areas. He said that the big investment they have made the last two biennium's, out west, they need to set aside an equivalent amount now for the rest of the State so they can maintain their State system, which would free up the federal funds to trickle down to the City level.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Minnesota Funding Shortage

Haugen reported that just today he received information as to how Minnesota is treating these shortages. He said that the legislature there has bonded different programs, and now there is a program called “Corridors of Commerce”, whereby there is \$300,000,000 available for statewide competition. He said that he did e-mail this information to the East Grand Forks side.

Haugen explained that this is how Minnesota is funding all of their expansion, all of their other projects besides just pavement preservation projects. He stated that the Legislature has created these bonds to make these capacity improvements, using a statewide competition for the funds, and should East Grand Forks apply for these funds, it will have to go through this body in November for approval of its consistency with our planning documents.

Haugen said that this is an example of how Minnesota is sort of handling their funding shortfall, by bonding for more money that they then put it into these competitive statewide programs instead of using a formula distribution throughout the State.

Leigh asked how much money is being talked about. Haugen responded that this is the \$300Million. Leigh asked if there was a possibility that this could be used for the street at Crystal Sugar. Haugen responded it could. Leigh asked who actually would make this request. Haugen responded that the City would make that request. Leigh said, then, that the City Council should get together and come up with a project or two. Haugen responded that the one thing that you probably haven’t seen, and he just got this information this morning, but when he looked into these individual programs, they all contain the same criteria – “turnback agreement”. Leigh asked what exactly that means. Haugen responded that if you’re doing work on U.S. Business 2, a good example would be that MNDOT has stated U.S. Business 2 in the past as a turnback candidate, so that would mean that if you were awarded funds you would agree to take over maintenance responsibility of that highway, that is what the turnback agreement is implying to him right now. Leigh stated, though, that the entrance to Crystal Sugar would not be on the highway, it would be on 10<sup>th</sup>. Haugen agreed. Leigh said, then, that he would think that would be a goal to get the traffic off 5<sup>th</sup>. Haugen added that it would also possibly get traffic off 220 North as well.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:43 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Vetter, Malm, Strandell, Powers, Adams, Leigh, Christensen, and Grandstrand.***  
***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 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Steve Adams, Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Clarence Vetter, Greg Leigh, Doug Christensen, and Tyrone Grandstrand.

Staff: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

Guest(s): Jane Williams, GF City Traffic Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

Sorlie Bridge

Haugen reported that there really isn't any new information since our last meeting on the Sorlie Bridge project.

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Kennedy Bridge

Haugen said that there are three things he hopes to cover: 1) What the alternatives are that we are looking at as well as their cost estimates; 2) How each alternative accommodates all traffic modes; and 3) What this study is leading the project to be in the end, although no decision has been made.

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 they are really looking at two projects, and the first would be to do a minimal rehabilitation by addressing only what is absolutely necessary, at a cost of \$3,500,000. He explained that this solution might give us, perhaps, up to ten years of life but after that then we would likely have to go to the moderate rehabilitation project. He stated that the main difference between the two is what you do with the deck, under the minimal alternative they would just do some repair work to the existing deck, while with the moderate alternative they would remove the existing deck and replacing it.

Haugen commented that under the moderate alternative there are two ways of how they could handle the bike/ped accommodations. He said that this would increase the cost of the project from \$3,500,000 for the minimal rehab to \$13,500,000 because of the deck replacement, and then depending on what is done with the bike/ped accommodations it would either increase by an additional \$500,000 or \$2,000,000.

Haugen pointed out that the replacement range is from \$20,000,000 to \$33,000,000.

Leigh asked what the difference is between putting the bike/ped facility inside the truss or outside the truss. Haugen responded that he will cover this shortly. Malm asked what the lifetime expectancy is on the moderate alternative. Haugen responded that it would offer approximately a twenty-year life span. Vetter asked what will decide whether or not they go with Alternative 1 or Alternative 2. Haugen responded that that decision will be made in the next phase of the study. He added that what will actually decide it will be public input and what recommendations will come from all the boards involved. Vetter asked, if they go with Alternative 1 can they still do the bike/ped stuff. Haugen responded they can.

Presentation continued.

Haugen reported that inside the truss gets a little more tricky under Alternative 1, and he can go into more detail on that if this body wishes, but because they aren't completely rearranging how the concrete is, they have medians and curbs that are existing and will be left in place, so they will have to work around that, so inside the truss gets more tricky for the bike/ped facility but it can be done.

Haugen stated that outside the truss really means that they are building, for part of it, a separate bridge structure, and then with the truss itself they are cantilevering off the truss, exactly the same method that was done on the Sorlie Bridge. He said that because the approaches are

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different than the truss, there really isn't enough strength, as well as some other issues, they can't cantilever off them so they would just build separate spans nearby, but not attached.

Strandell referred to Option 11, and commented that he has some concerns with this option as they are talking about a shared bike lane, shared with vehicle traffic, and he can't imagine that being safe. Haugen responded that within the trusses there is only so much width that can be worked with, so while they have other options, the options included in the packet are the ones that make the most sense, however, within these options there are some that make more sense than Option 11.

Haugen referred to the options and went over them briefly.

Haugen pointed out that Option 13, where instead of having the separate path outside of the truss, this option shows a standard shared use path construction width inside the truss, as it is elsewhere in the City, except the greenway. He stated that this would give us a 10-foot wide shared use path inside the truss, as well as a five-foot bike lane on the other side of the bridge.

Haugen commented that what happens with all these options is that the driving lanes are narrowed down. Leigh asked what a normal driving lane is. Haugen responded that twelve-feet is the normal width for rural highway design. Leigh asked if the bike lane would have a fence between it and the driving lanes. Haugen responded it would not. He added that you could not have the five-foot bike lane, or you could make it a five-foot sidewalk, or you since you have a path on one side you could not have anything on the other side, but one of the things that they want to make sure everyone is aware of is that the joint in their approach span, which is located right on the center, is an area they are really trying to not have traffic on.

Vetter asked what there is currently, twelve foot lanes and four foot buffers. Haugen responded that there are twelve-foot lanes and three foot buffer, as well as a small ledge for a sidewalk, about two and a half feet.

Strandell asked what is meant by shared use. Haugen responded that it means that the driving lane has a wider width so bicyclists can share it. Consensus is that this option is not very safe. Haugen commented that all of the options given in the packet meet design standards, so they have been termed "safe", but there is a difference between statistical safety and perceived safety.

Haugen reported that there are a couple of options that show replacement, and you can go with a truss design, which is more expensive, in the \$33,000,000 range; or you can go with a more deck-type superstructure, girder underneath, which is somewhat less expensive, in the \$20,000,000 range. He added that all replacement options assume two things for sure, that there will have to be a center pier and that they will have shared use paths.

Malm asked, if they replace the bridge, what is the life span of that. Haugen responded that you would hope it would be over fifty years. Malm asked how long the existing bridge has lasted. Haugen responded it was built in 1965 so it is 48 years old.

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Haugen referred to a slide illustrating the girder style replacement and explained that this would be the cheapest replacement option, at an estimated cost of around \$20,000,000. He commented that almost all replacement options are to the north because of some utilities, and other restrictions to the south.

Haugen stated that to get to the \$33,000,000 range you would be using a truss, plus they would try to attempt the issue of adding a couple of feet so that the dip at 4<sup>th</sup> would be removed, which would mean they would have to rebuild that bridge as well.

Leigh asked where we are at in the process of determining what we are going to build, and then the funding part of it. Haugen responded that because of its historic nature, because they have gone through this exercise and have discovered that there are feasible alternatives that leave the historic structure in place, the project priority would be to rehab the bridge, so then we can go back to the slide that shows the costs and ask the question, do they want to do the minimal amount of work or the moderate amount of work. Leigh asked who “they” is. Haugen responded that there would need to be a joint decision made amongst the MPO, each City individually, and both State DOTs. Leigh asked how we can all arrive at a decision, how do we narrow it down to make that decision. Haugen responded that the next phase will be going into the project development and NEPA document where they fully engage all the environmental agencies, the public, and through the whole process they come up with what the recommended project is and then everyone has to agree to that recommendation. Powers said, then, that at some point in time we are going to be asked what we would recommend be done. Christensen asked how far down the line before this occurs. Haugen responded that if they maintain the 2016 schedule, they will finish this study and then go into the project development phase, and whether that lasts twelve months or sixteen month, that is the timeline in which they will come back and say they need a decision on whether or not we concur with what we are recommending the project be.

Christensen asked, before they can recommend the project, though, they have to our input right. Haugen responded that during the project development stage they will get the MPO Board’s input, as well as the public’s input, they will go through that formal process. Leigh said that he is trying to figure out who they is, is it MNDOT and NDDOT Engineers. Haugen responded that that is correct. He added that if we can go back to the Sorlie Bridge, they are engaged in that formal process right now, they are doing a full-boar environmental impact statement. Leigh said, but you said “they “ again, is it MNDOT and NDDOT. Haugen responded that on the EIS North Dakota is the lead agency, but MNDOT, of course is a co-owner of the Sorlie Bridge, so that is the “they” on that project; and on the Kennedy MNDOT is the lead agency, and because NDDOT is the co-owner on that bridge, they are the “they” he is referring to.

Haugen reported that, again, MNDOT went through a process in which they wanted to do this study beforehand to help them narrow down what the actual likely project will be, and that is what is has been showing you, that they are saying that the likely priority is going to be rehab.

Christensen asked, as for the rehab though, is that when we will be getting into the bike path thing because with the rehab everything stays the same except maybe hanging the bike path.

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Haugen responded that there are a couple of things specifically about the bike path. He explained that because they are using federal funds we have to make sure we accommodate all modes of transportation, and we can't worsen the bike/ped experience, so because there is a two and a half foot sidewalk on each side of the bridge we can't make it so there is no accommodation for bike/peds at all, plus Minnesota has a state law that says if they are using state monies they must make the bridge accommodate bike/peds, so if they do a rehab project they will likely involved federal funds, so then they are on the hook to make sure they are accommodating bike/peds, and on the Minnesota side their state law requires them to accommodate bike/peds if they are using that pot of money that they will most likely use.

Christensen said that he just wants to narrow it down to bike/ped, what do you include in that, people walking and bikes. He asked what the minimum width of an area they need to accommodate them. Haugen responded that they need a minimum of eight-feet if you put in a shared use path, however because this is a historical structure there is an outside chance that they will allow five-feet on either side. Christensen asked if they need to have eight-feet on both sides. Haugen responded that you only need to put the eight-foot path on one side, but five-foot paths would have to be on both sides and signed one-way.

Discussion on bike/ped options ensued.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE ENDORSING  
ALTERNATIVE 2B.***

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

**MATTER OF DRAFT 2014-2017 NORTH DAKOTA SIDE T.I.P.**

Haugen reminded the board that last month they approved an amendment to the 2013-2016 T.I.P., and we are now finalizing the 2014-2017 draft, so really, because of the action we took last month there are a few things that we are adding to this document, and most of them are occurring in 2017.

Haugen stated that he would like to highlight a couple of things. He referred to the document, page 22, and pointed out that, we just took action recommending a \$15,000,000 project on the Kennedy Bridge, and this Draft T.I.P. sets aside \$25,000,000 for that structure. He said that the other thing is, 2017 is the new year we are adding to the document. Leigh asked when we will know that the money is going to be here. Haugen responded that what is shown in this document is about as sure as we can get at this point.

Strandell asked if this option will include rebuilding the bridge over 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Haugen responded it would not.

Haugen commented that the new projects that we are adding into the document, and these are just the North Dakota side ones, as we discussed last month North Dakota is showing the Sorlie

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Bridge in Federal Fiscal Year 2017. He said that we had previously always been told that it would be a 2018 project, but now because North Dakota wants to try to finance it with 2017 federal funds, we have to show it in 2017 with the North Dakota amount showing, and as we noted in here the Minnesota side will be programming it in 2018. Strandell asked if both these projects will be done at the same time. Haugen responded that they will avoid that, adding that if they were to choose to replace the Kennedy it would likely mean postponing the Sorlie.

Vetter asked, just piggybacking on Warren's comment about the dip at 4<sup>th</sup> Street, they were looking at repairing it if they replaced the bridge, but have they looked at doing it with a rehab as well, or isn't there anything we can do with it with a rehab. Haugen responded that they have looked at it in the past and have submitted grant requests. He explained that the Minnesota Legislature sets aside some dollars to mitigate flood conditions, and MNDOT has submitted an application to raise that section independent of any bridge work, so they have pursued this in the past, and they can do so again in the future.

Haugen reiterated that he is just showing what projects were added in 2017, and we are discussing the Sorlie Bridge, and why it is showing up in 2017. He stated that it is just showing up in 2017 simply for fiscal reasons, and he doesn't anticipate any construction occurring in 2017, but the federal fiscal year starts October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018, so if they have any money left at the end of 2017, August or September, they will try to fund it in 2017 funds.

Haugen commented that the next projects are City of Grand Forks projects. He said that the first one is on Columbia Road, south of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. He explained that it will take that roadway from its current form, a rural two lane to a five lane urban cross section. He added that the City is using local dollars to urbanize that stretch from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, so Columbia Road, from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be five lanes by the end of 2017 if everything falls into place.

Leigh asked what road the middle school is located on. Haugen responded it is on 47<sup>th</sup>.

Haugen reported that the other project they received federal funds for are traffic signal at the intersection of Gardenview Drive and South 42<sup>nd</sup> Street; on the east side of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street is where AE2s and ICON are located, as well as the apartment complexes on the east side, and more going in on the west side, so the City requested this project.

Haugen stated then, that other than a couple other minor project changes, the only other project he will highlight is next year South Washington, from 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Hammerling will be worked in in the same manner 32<sup>nd</sup> just had done. He said that they will also be correcting the off-set problem at 28<sup>th</sup> and Washington, after which the signal will be updated to an all green left turn rather than just a protected left green, and they will address some of our other hot-spot issues along Washington as well.

Haugen said that the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending approval of the Draft 2014-2017 North Dakota Side T.I.P., subject to any comments received from the public input hearing that we advertised would occur at this meeting, as well as any comments received prior to noon today, of which we received none.

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Adams opened the public hearing.

There was no one present for discussion or comments.

Adams closed the public hearing.

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT FY2014-2017  
NORTH DAKOTA SIDE T.I.P., AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

Haugen reported that there is a project on the Illustrative list that he should explain, particularly for the North Dakota side. He explained that Phase 2 of Columbia Road will take us down past 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He stated that originally Phase 1 was to happen this year, and Phase 2 next year, but last year when we went through the T.I.P./S.T.I.P. process Phase 2 was delayed to 2016. He said that when they delayed it at the state level to 2016 they didn't adjust for cost inflation, so after pointing that out to them that there will be roughly \$500,000 in additional costs due to their delay of the project, and it is a burden to the local entity, so we asked them to absorb that additional cost. He said that they are going to try to do that, but the way that we have to show it, as an illustrative project with the increased dollar amounts. He stated that he just wanted to point out that there is still an opportunity for Phase 2 of Columbia Road to get that difference between delaying it 2014 to 2016 and what that cost difference is, there is an opportunity to reimburse that amount, so we have to show it as an illustrative project.

Information only.

**MATTER OF SOLICITATION OF PROJECTS FOR 2015-2018 T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that essentially we are just drafting the current T.I.P., and now we are starting the next T.I.P. cycle, so before we even finish one T.I.P. cycle, we start another. He said that soon your staff, and others will be going through your local processes with a list of projects for funding consideration.

Haugen commented that you will primarily be looking at FY2018 projects. He added every fourth year the City of East Grand Forks receives their money, and 2018 is the year they receive those funds.

Leigh asked if one project be the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Highway 2, would that be a possible project for consideration. Haugen responded that you have roughly \$600,000 of federal monies available in 2017, so whatever the cost above and beyond the \$600,000 you would have to match, so anything above that is 100% locally funded.

Haugen referred to the packet and pointed out that it includes information on the different projects that are coming through, primarily street and highway projects. He said that they will

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come here to the MPO on the North Dakota side in December and on the Minnesota side in February.

Information only.

***MOVED BY STRANDELL, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE THE FY2013-2016 T.I.P. AMENDMENTS AS SUBMITTED.***

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

**MATTER OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that there was a lot of information included in the packet, some of which was presented to this body at the last meeting, so unless you want, he will just be discussing the Street and Highway portion today.

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 explained that the revenue available on the North Dakota side is a combination of State Highway funds, and the match required for State Highway funds; and what has been termed the Local Road Program, and the match for that program, so we have roughly \$65,000,000 of revenue.

Haugen stated that the first line was just the district highway needs if they were to do their normal standard operating procedure of replacing pavement on a cycle, rehabbing pavement on a cycle, rehabbing pavements after it is replaced, and seal coats after it is rehabbed. He said that this meant the cost was way above the revenue we had, so we asked them to give us the opposite of what they had given us, what is the bare minimum they can get by with, and that is what the rehab only showed. He added that under the hybrid there were a couple of projects that the sooner you do the reconstruction, the better off you are, with South Washington and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue being the two main projects, so we showed those costs.

Haugen reported that, at the time, because the district itself was taking almost all the revenue, we asked them, if they would go back to their minimum, would they be able to extend out their cycles so instead of doing a mill and overlay every ten years, could they go every thirteen years, so we are trying to make it so that the district wasn't needing 100% of the revenue.

Haugen commented that at the Service Safety Committee they explained that because they are trying to leave some revenue on the table to do other things, when we are going to do a reconstruction project on the state highway system, it is expected, then, because there is revenue that we address all the needs for that segment of highway, so we can't just do pavement to pavement, or curb to curb work, we have to go in and address the safety and capacity needs as well. He stated that this affects how we will do South Washington and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

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Haugen referred to a slide illustrating the project list and commented that the only projects for reconstruction are: 1) Washington Street Underpass; 2) Washington Street from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to Hammerling; and 3) 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from west of Columbia to I-29 to 6-lanes.

Haugen reported that the next series of slides will walk us through the financial portion of the presentation. He went over the information briefly, explaining that they have addressed what, minimally, it would take to keep the State Highway System operational. He stated that only a few areas are really addressing capacity or safety, or any type of issues, but by doing that it allowed us to maintain some urban monies so local roads can receive some improvements.

Discussion on the financial portion ensued.

Haugen commented that what they are trying to identify now is what are the projects the City would like to identify that would use up the \$6,800,000 dollars, that would use up the \$5,300,000, and that would use the \$46,000,000. He added that a good chunk of the funds have to be used on maintain the Federal Aid System. He said that Columbia Road, north of the over pass to Gateway Drive, they don't know how that should be maintained yet, they are trying to figure that out; and South Washington south of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, which is on the NHS system, a City owned facility that we need to figure out what is needed there as well.

Haugen reiterated that in the end, the bottom line is that there isn't a lot of money left to do a lot of expansion or new projects, address some of our connectivity issues, etc. He said that they met with City staff this morning, and hopefully by this time next week they will have a better idea of how much of this money goes toward maintaining the federal aid system, what is left after we do that that we can then assign to a project, but it won't be a lot of dollars.

Information only.

**MATTER OF 2014 UPWP**

Haugen reported that the MPO does a two-year work program that shows what specific activities we are going to be doing in 2014. He added that towards the end of 2013 we ask people to revisit this list of project to make sure they are still the projects they want to see the MPO do in 2014. He said that most of them are things that we are mandated to do, but he highlighted the ones that are a little more discretionary.

Haugen commented that on the transportation plan, what we are really doing with the \$70,000 is updating our Regional Architecture for our Intelligent Transportation System, which is one of the mandated elements of our Long Range Transportation Plan, otherwise these are two discretionary type projects.

Haugen pointed out that the first one that is listed is west of the interstate, with all of the things going on with Walmart, etc. He explained that there was a request by the State that we do an access study to help lay out where access needs to be located on U.S. Highway 2 as it converts from a rural to an urbanized area.

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Haugen stated that the second one is Traffic Incident Management. He explained that this will help lay out a plan to help us deal more efficiently when something like a beet truck tips over on a critical roadway, that we can re-route the traffic, coordinate the response, etc., more quickly.

Information only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 16<sup>TH</sup>,  
2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:58 P.M.***

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

***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 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Steve Adams, Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Clarence Vetter, and Greg Leigh.

Staff: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

Guest(s): Jane Williams, GF City Traffic Engineer and David Kuharenko, GF City Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

**Kennedy Bridge**

Haugen reported that since the packet was mailed out the consultant has been working on scheduling a public presentation of their study. He explained that what they are working on arranging is for the consultant and the project team to appear before both City Councils; December 16<sup>th</sup> in Grand Forks, and December 17<sup>th</sup> in East Grand Forks, to give the presentation, then, most likely using a combination of time both before and after each of the council meetings,

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they will hold a public open house as well. He stated that in addition they are also trying to schedule a Study Committee meeting in the afternoon on Tuesday as well.

Haugen commented that this is what is going on with the Kennedy study, they are about to wrap up the study, and will do those presentation, but, just a reminder the study is not really concluding that this is the project, but it is sort of leading in the direction of what the likely project should be and then will proceed to the next stage in the process.

Powers asked what time the council meets. Haugen responded that Grand Forks meets at 5:30 p.m. and East Grand Forks meets at 5:00 p.m.

Strandell asked if the preferred project discussed in the plan is the same one this board recommended at its last meeting. Haugen responded that he has not seen the draft report so cannot say whether it is or not at this time.

Malm asked if the presentations would be televised. Haugen responded that the reason they picked these dates was because of the opportunity to use Television broadcasting in Grand Forks and audio internet broadcasting in East Grand Forks.

Sorlie Bridge

Haugen reported that there really isn't much to report on the Sorlie project. He said that they are continuing to work on the Purpose and Needs Statement; and are doing some data gathering and collection, but there really isn't anything to share at this point.

Information only.

**MATTER OF STATUS OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that Transit and Bike sections, on the North Dakota side, have been adopted by both the Planning Commission and City Council. He stated that on the East Grand Forks side there was a problem with public notification for the November Planning Commission meeting, therefore it will be approved at the December Planning Commission meeting instead, then will go to their City Council.

Haugen stated that to-date there has been little to no negative discussion on these two documents, and they are proceeding through the approval process well.

Haugen commented that the Street and Highway plan has received preliminary approval from both Planning Commissions and City Councils. He said that there are two things he would like to bring to everyone's attention; the first is that the only hiccup they received at the commission and council levels were Mr. Bjerke's objection to some of the federal requirements we have to have in the plan, that aren't related to the projects or other things as related to the environmental analysis we are required to do, so he has been the lone dissenting vote.

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Haugen stated that the other thing is that at last week's Technical Advisory Committee meeting the NDDOT brought up a new idea for the Merrifield By-pass Concept. He referred to a slide and explained that since the 1960s it has been desire for a way to get around the urban area of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. He said that for many years the plan was to put in a by-pass on the northern end of the area, but then in the mid-1990s the decision was to locate one on the southern end of the area instead, and the Merrifield corridor became the preferred route.

Haugen explained that after the 1997 flood, with the redevelopment of the area, we have consistently agreed on the concept of the Merrifield location as the additional bridge location. He stated that they fought for a lot of other locations, but Merrifield has been the one constant.

Haugen stated that a meeting was held to see if there was a possibility, or desire to make this by-pass part of the State Highway system, and at that time it was concluded that to make it a four-lane U.S. Highway 2 facility was out of reach, therefore we focused more on how MNDOT does their by-passes where they agreed with the County to have a county highway designated as a by-pass, such as the one in Crookston where the Polk County Highway system is designated as the by-pass for Crookston, so we have been settling on Merrifield as being provided to us by the existing county highway system with a couple of key improvements, one improvement being the interchange and the other the bridge, which are significant projects.

Haugen reported that at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week North Dakota introduced the idea of raising the design back to a U.S. Highway design. He explained that what has happened since we last adopted our Long Range plan is the western oil explosion, and they are constructing numerous by-passes around communities in the western part of the State. He stated that they are all being built by the NDDOT and will be U.S. Highways, part of the North Dakota State Highway System, so their concern is that is if we ever do establish something that it ultimately will be dumped back onto their laps as a State Highway System, so they suggested that if this by-pass remains as part of our plan, and it isn't elevated to that level, that they may not support the adoption of the plan, so we are trying to work with them to identify what the proper language should be in the plan that allows not this major change sort of towards the end but to get the plan adopted and then what we are suggesting is to do a study of just this corridor and identify really what is required, and what it would entail. He stated that there is a difference of opinion between the County Engineers and the State Engineers as to the design, and there is also a difference of State philosophy, up until the western oil boom, NDDOT didn't have much concern with the establishment of a designated route based on a county system, but since then things have changed, however on the Minnesota side it is still a tried and true partnership with their Counties to have these by-passes based on the County system.

Haugen commented that the elevation of this would, of course, raise the cost estimate, which would also raise the issue of it being feasible at any time. He stated that it is hoped that before our December meeting staff will have developed language that will allow NDDOT to let it go for now and do a study in the near future to really figure out this concept.

Vetter asked if the Merrifield by-pass and bridge is on the docket before a bridge at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Haugen responded that that our current plan does have the Merrifield by-pass and bridge before a

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bridge at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and they didn't see any reason to change that. Vetter asked what it would take to change it. He said that he thinks that there is more of a need for a bridge at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue than at Merrifield, just looking at the direction of growth in Grand Forks, and the traffic pattern in East Grand Forks, it would help relieve some of the congestion on both sides. Haugen responded that to make that change we would need to reopen the whole discussion analysis of future river crossings. He explained that when we stated this plan update this board gave direction that that wasn't a thing we wanted to do, and we felt that we decided that those two locations were the proper locations and that sequence was still the proper sequence. He added that to open that up would require that we really go back and engage the public and re-educate everyone on the choices. He said that we could do that if we include it as part of the Merrifield concept, but it will take more time and money to do it.

Haugen reported that the recommended plan that we are presenting, of course, has absolutely no funding and no recommendations as to which project should proceed forward, it is one project in a list of many projects that have some level of desire and need to happen, there just isn't any financial wherewithal to include them, so it is kind of a wish list from which people can pick and choose which project they want to go after funding for, and secure it with our blessing.

Leigh commented that he agrees with Mr. Vetter on 32<sup>nd</sup> being a better location, but the probability of funding a bridge at 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue would be secondary to funding the by-pass, if there were ever any funds available for either project. Vetter stated, however, that the easier one should be 32<sup>nd</sup> since there is already an interchange at I-29, whereas you have to build one at Merrifield.

Haugen stated that what we are trying to do is; we have a deadline to adopt this update and that is our main focus. He said that by having the Illustrative Project list we feel that it keeps these projects somewhat alive, even if there is no foreseeable funding for them, and that is what we will try to do with the issue the NDDOT has raised on Merrifield by trying to come up with suitable language that allows us to adopt the plan by saying that we will do a study to come to an agreement as to what the concept is for Merrifield. He stated that if the board wants to include some other river crossings as part of that analysis, we can do so. He reiterated that this will only get us to the point where we can get this plan adopted so that we meet all our requirements and get our T.I.P. unfrozen, which will allow us to get projects that both Grand Forks and East Grand Forks need to get included in the T.I.P. into it and federal funds can then flow back into the community, and then if we decide we want to have the argument at a later date we can do so.

Haugen commented that there are other alternatives, we could, instead of just looking at the Merrifield Concept, look at every one of the projects on the Illustrative Project list and remove them all, or we weed some out, or keep it as it is, but that would require an analysis of what is good and what is bad, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, but they all were at one time, and there is always someone that has a strong interest in the projects that are on the list.

Discussion on possible right-of-way costs, etc., ensued.

Haugen stated that he will keep the board posted on negotiations, but there may need to be an interim Executive Policy Board meeting before our regular December meeting.

Information only.

**MATTER OF LOCAL ROAD SAFETY PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that this is information for you so that when you hear him talk about local road safety, what that all entails, and to give you an idea of the analysis that they will do, but in the end what the intent of this plan is to create a list of projects that can be taken from the plan and submitted through our programming process to see if they are awarded funds from the Federal Safety Program.

Haugen said that we have identified at all times that when this Local Roads Safety Plan is done, we will bring it to the MPO and have you amend our Long Range Transportation Plan to make it a part of that document so that when those entities take those specific projects out of the plan and submit them for funding, we can easily say that it is consistent with our Long Range Transportation Plan.

Haugen stated that this does bring additional revenue, but is geared just towards these safety projects, and he doesn't believe that something like an interchange would raise up to a safety funded project, but there are a lot of other projects in our Illustrative Project list that might raise. He pointed out that we have some turn lanes at intersections, those type of things might be potential projects.

Haugen pointed out that December 6 is when the Grand Forks specific workshop will be held at the Grand Forks Public Works Building from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and everyone is welcome to participate.

Haugen commented that on the Minnesota side they have similar documents, but just to the county level, and they will be updated a year from now, and they are pushing hard that they extend it, as North Dakota did, to the urban city itself.

Information only.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2014 MINNESOTA STATE CONTRACT**

Haugen reported that this is the annual contract we enter into with MNDOT in order to receive State funds. He stated that the contract language is the same as it has been the past several years, no major differences. He said that the dollar amount is roughly \$12,000 that we are allowed to use as match to our federal funds, so we do need to have specific board approval to execute the contract.

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE THE 2014 MINNESOTA STATE CONTRACT.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Annual Unified Work Program 2014

Haugen reminded the board that at our regular December meeting we will be finalizing our work program for 2014. He stated that this is an opportunity to include studies that have come up, such as the Merrifield By-Pass study, or other such studies that could be done in place of what we identified a year ago. He said that last month he showed the board that we are scheduled to do a traffic incident management plan, and also an access management plan for Gateway Drive, west of I-29 in North Dakota. He added that we are also required to do our required ITS plan update next year as well, so we have two optional studies that we could swap out if there is another study you would be interested in us doing instead, just work with your staff to see if it something they want to submit to us through your governing bodies to study.

2. Solicitation For Next T.I.P.

Haugen reported that we are working on the next cycle of T.I.P. programs. He said that he is pretty sure that the North Dakota side has finalized their projects, as they are due in December; on the Minnesota side they are due the end of January, so there is still a little time to work on it. He stated that the big one is, East Grand Forks, every fourth year, 2018 is the year ???, and together with the federal match we are looking at a project right around \$750,000. He said that if there are more local funds you want to contribute, that would be great, but that would be about the minimum you have to work with.

Haugen said that if you have any ideas for projects work with your staff, and go through the approval process, to get them submitted to us.

Information only.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY LEIGH, TO ADJOURN THE NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:42 P.M.***

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

***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 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Adams, Chairman, called the December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: Steve Adams, Mike Powers, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Clarence Vetter, Greg Leigh, Tyrone Grandstrand, and Doug Christensen.

Staff: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Planner; Stephanie Erickson, GF/EGF MPO Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

Guest(s): Jane Williams, GF City Traffic Engineer and David Kuharenko, GF City Engineer.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Adams declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF 2013 HOLIDAY BONUS**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY GRANDSTRAND, TO APPROVE THE 2013 HOLIDAY BONUS HOURS.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF OFFICE RENTAL AGREEMENTS WITH THE CITIES  
OF GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND FORKS**

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY GRANDSTRAND, TO APPROVE THE OFFICE  
RENTAL AGREEMENTS WITH THE CITIES OF GRAND FORKS AND EAST GRAND  
FORKS AS SUBMITTED.***

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

***Voting Nay: None.***

**MATTER OF UPDATE ON SORLIE/KENNEDY BRIDGE PROJECTS**

Kennedy Bridge

Haugen reported that the last two nights there were presentations given at both City Councils, as well as public open houses at both City Halls.

Haugen distributed copies of updated information; one being a summary of the process and the two basic options for the Kennedy Bridge, and the other is a kind of white paper on the two bridges to give you some idea of the timing of the projects.

Christensen reported present.

Haugen commented that the white paper is primarily written from a North Dakota perspective, so if you want to write in the funding shares on the Minnesota side it would be the same for both the Kennedy and the Sorlie; 0% for both the City of East Grand Forks and for Polk County on the construction, but there would be a cost share for East Grand Forks on incidentals or enhancements. He added that on the North Dakota side 0% is the same on the Kennedy for the City of Grand Forks, however on the Sorlie Bridge there is a 5% cost share for the City of Grand Forks.

Haugen reported that the public participation at both open houses was very minimal, as is typically the case with these types of structures and meetings. He said that he believes that everyone, for the most part, has seen all this information, therefore he isn't intending to go into any real detail.

Grandstrand referred to Options A, B, C, and D, in the document, and commented that it doesn't look like any of them show a separate pedestrian and bike facilities on either side, why. Haugen responded that the typical method in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks is to mix those two modes into one facility. He stated that virtually all of the bike paths are actually multi-use trails.

Haugen commented that the only option that comes close to separating them is Option "B", where the bike and peds are completely separate, but the bikes are sharing the driving lane. He stated that the fact that they have to maintain four lanes of traffic in each direction doesn't leave much room left inside the truss system, so that is sort of their best representation of how they can allocate that left over space best.

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Haugen reported that there were several other iterations on how to allocate the space inside the truss, but these are the four options they are presenting to the public as the better choices.

Strandell asked at what point will they make a decision as to which design they will be doing. Haugen responded that they should make a decision early next year, they will decide as to how they want to change what is programmed in the T.I.P. He stated that currently we have \$25,000,000 so if they are going to go to a lesser project, some sort of rehab, they will want to amend that dollar amount out of the T.I.P. so that if they now have a \$15,000,000 project they can free up the remaining \$10,000,000 to go to other projects and get them underway, so early next year they will be making those decisions. Strandell asked who “they” is. Haugen responded that it is the State DOTs, who will be coming through this body for approval of the project to reprogram our T.I.P. to reflect the new dollar amount, so they will make the preliminary decision as to which project they want to do, but then they will have to work with this body to get you to agree that that is the project you are willing to program in your T.I.P. Strandell asked about the input from the two cities. Haugen responded that they will have representation on this board, and he supposes that in working with both State DOTs we can request that they also go to both City Councils so that the City Councils are informing you of their desires. Christensen asked why that wouldn’t be done. Haugen responded that he isn’t arguing that it shouldn’t be done, he is just stating that it is a State led process.

Christensen stated that he asked that question on Monday night, he said he asked what decisions are you looking for and they said they aren’t looking for a decision yet, and he asked when they would be looking for a decision, and they said “later”. He said that it occurred to him that they should know how we feel before they come back with something without knowing how we feel because it is still going to be a bridge in “our” communities, and it is better to state your position rather than argue against theirs, so if this is the time for the MPO to get some consensus from their respective cities, which he thinks they should do, then we should circle back before this horse gets much further out of the barn. He stated that this is an opinion, but remember what we are supposed to be doing, we are supposed to exercise oversight with the advice and consent of East Grand Forks and Grand Forks.

Powers asked if we didn’t make a recommendation on this a couple of months ago. Christensen said he thought we did as well. Haugen responded that the board did make a recommendation and it has been conveyed to the DOTs so they are fully aware of your wishes. Malm asked, then, when they come back with their plan, can we reject it because they didn’t do what we asked. Haugen responded that you can, this is a cooperative working process, and this body has to program the project into it’s T.I.P. so until you are comfortable with what that project is, you can cooperatively work towards agreeing to the programming of it in your T.I.P. Powers said, then, when the DOT comes to see us they will tell us how much we have to work with and we will just fit it into the package. Haugen responded that that is how they will approach us. He added that we will, and have been conveying to them that they need to work with us and through us so we keep conveying that and keep reminding them that both City Councils need to be involved as well. He said that the State DOTs agree to work with the local agencies and he doesn’t believe they will have a big opposition to that.

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Powers stated that, today is the middle of December, so are we talking about a decision maybe being made in, say February at the earliest. Haugen responded it could be in February, but he doesn't foresee it in February because the study isn't finalized yet, the study itself may not be finalized until February, and then they will have to make a decision as to what to do next based on what the study shows. He added, however, that you can hear in their presentations, and in the talk during the open houses that they certainly have some leanings towards a particular project, particular alternatives, but they haven't actually said this is what they are going to recommend the project be in the T.I.P. and S.T.I.P.

Christensen commented that he just wants to point out that the problem will be that they will say that if we don't do what they want, and we don't program their project, they will just take it out of their projects and do something else with the money. Haugen added that there is a uniqueness to the Minnesota Legislature's Bridge Bonding Bill, that these bridges are attached to, so they have a responsibility beyond just the two cities, they have a State Legislative responsibility they have to respond to with these projects, with these two bridges. Christensen asked if there is anything in that bill to fix the Kennedy Bridge. Haugen responded that they have them labeled as priority tiers, these two are tier two so they are to be done by 2018, which is somewhat why they are listed in 2016 and 2018.

Haugen reported that MnDOT has told them, that if the costs get way out of whack, it is likely that, while they have money in 2016, but if a Sorlie project in 2018 gets way off budget, they likely won't have revenue to afford the higher cost, so that project, even if everyone agrees that the highest priced alternative is the one to go after, MnDOT might be saying that it is fine and dandy that you want the more pricey alternative, but until they can gather the funds together they can't do the project, which would delay it.

Powers asked if at any time have these bridges been considered a safety issue, are we getting close to the point where we might have to do something, which would accelerate the process. Haugen responded that Pier 6 on the Kennedy Bridge has to be addressed. He stated that there are two alternatives with that; one is a rehab alternative that they say they have some strong feeling would do a good job for a time, but they aren't real positive it is a long-term solution, so replacement of the pier is probably going to be the project, at a minimum that they will do.

Haugen commented that, if you recall, a couple of years ago we had programmed a project just to replace that pier, so they can make a decision that that is the only project they do on the Kennedy, but they also know, and again going back to the Minnesota Legislature, it is labeled a fracture critical bridge structure, and that whole legislation on the Minnesota side, with their ten-year bonding bill was to address all the fracture critical bridges in the State and address the fact that there is no redundancy in their safety, which was the failing component of the I-35 Bridge that caused the evaluation of bridges throughout the State, so safety is certainly involved.

Haugen reported that, just to finalize the comments on safety, two things that whichever project is chosen, both DOTs feel, and have stated that they are very firm about, is that they want to keep the median in place, and replace and upgrading the guardrails.

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Powers asked if any of the alternatives call for raising the median. Haugen responded that none of them raise the median, however there has been some discussion on putting in some kind of screening so that headlights in opposite directions don't blind each other. Powers stated that there was a concern with keeping traffic on their own side.

Haugen commented that, although they haven't made a final decision on which alternative they want to do, you can get an idea from what they are saying which one they seem to be leaning towards, but if they are absolutely going to insist that the guardrails be updated, the only way to do that is to do a complete replacement of the deck because the existing rails are all one piece of structure of the deck.

Vetter stated that he wonders if we follow Mr. Christensen's lead and we go back to our respective City Councils and County Boards, and we all agree on one plan, the bike/ped path being cantilevered off of the side, and we all pass a resolution saying that this is what we want, and pass it on to them, and go to our respective State Legislatures and start advocating for that, what is the downside. Powers responded that we don't know how much money we will have. Vetter asked, though, if there is a downside to doing this. Powers responded that there isn't, and he feels it is a good idea, but, as Mr. Haugen said, we are going to have to wait until they come and tell us how much we have to play with then we can plug it into one of the alternatives. Vetter asked why we would wait. Powers said he agrees, and he feels this is getting stretched out, because if we are doing all this just to figure out what plan we are going to do what is going to happen once we start building it.

Vetter said that what he is going to do is to go back to their City Council and tell them that the MPO has approved endorsing the cantilevered Bike/Ped attachment to the bridge, and we would like the City Council to approve a resolution in support of that as well. Christensen commented that, before you do that, and he would agree with you, but he was kind of interested at the meeting the other night as to Item D, which isn't a cantilever, but we get the bikepath we want, and the little one on the right side is just a pedestrian one, but is it a three foot wide path. Haugen responded that it is a five foot wide path on the right side of the bridge. Christensen said, then, that we will end up with a bikepath and a place for bikers and people walking, and we could probably end up with a shared use, and not have the \$3,500,000 and achieve what we are looking for. He added that at his City Council meeting he got the impression that the Grand Forks City Council probably would have gone with D. Vetter responded that he is just going with supporting the MPO, and what we decided. He said that his concern with any of the options shown is how it will accommodate farm equipment, when farm equipment comes across that bridge now it is a very tight fit, and now you are going to shorten down the driving lanes narrower than what they are now and still accommodate farm equipment coming across there. Haugen stated that he understand what is being said about having City Councils taking action, but he would like to add that as this goes through your working sessions and Service Safety Committee on the Grand Forks side, that because it will be an agenda item he is sure that both MnDOT and NDDOT would like to have the opportunity to sort of discuss in more depth the pros and cons of the cantilevered option versus these options. He said that they aren't thrilled with the cantilevered option. He explained that their concern is with the inspection of the bridge,

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as adding that cantilevered structure would complicate that process. Another concern is the Historical Preservation regulations and how a cantilevered structure would affect the historic nature of the bridge. He added that they are also concerned that, particularly on the North Dakota side, depending on which side of the bridge you cantilever it off, if it is on the north side there is already a path that connects you back to the Greenway on the North Dakota side, but if it is on the south side you have the old hospital building which creates complications in getting it connected to the Greenway Trail system.

Strandell stated that he can back up MnDOT's concerns. He explained that Roger Hille, the MnDOT Engineer, said at their meeting last evening that they have basically thrown out the cantilever option. He said that he doesn't know the exact mechanics of that decision, but he said that it wasn't working, and they are favoring Option "D". He said that they haven't made decisions, but as Mr. Strandell said, from the conversations we have a pretty good idea as to which project they are leaning towards, and that is Option "D".

Christensen commented that none of them thought about the issue with farm equipment, which Mr. Vetter discussed, so he would like to know what they should do about that concern. Haugen responded that that would be part of the information we would share with MnDOT and NDDOT, and have them come. He said that if January is too early for them, have them come in February to each City's vetting process, and that will help us when it comes to the MPO Board to amend the T.I.P. to show what program, project and cost they are asking us to do.

Christensen suggested that what we could do would be to get two people from the City of Grand Forks, two people from the City of East Grand Forks, and one or two from the MPO, and those people should go to those meetings with these people so we get the lay of the land first hand. He suggests Mr. Vetter be one of them, along with whomever he wants to go with him, and Grand Forks will do the same so that we can just kind of move this thing forward, so that it is circulated to the MPO, the City Councils, because if the guy from Minnesota is speaking for them, the cantilever is probably gone, let's see if we can do the best we can if we all want it, but we have to be friendly at this time. He stated that he feels this is a better way for us to go rather than bouncing it back and forth between the groups, let's get ourselves at the table. He also added that there is no sense in us doing anything now, but if Mr. Vetter moves to continue pursuing the cantilever option, then he will second it.

Christensen asked how everyone feels about the MPO being involved with two City Council representatives from both cities, how do we feel about that. Haugen responded that that is the makeup of the MPO Board, two City Council reps already.

Leigh asked if we didn't let MnDOT and NDDOT know already that we want it to be pedestrian friendly, so they are going to come up with a plan, and we can either reject it or not, but he has to agree with Mr. Vetter. He explained that he watched a combine go across the bridge today, and it takes up two lanes the way it is now, you can't really shorten those lanes up. Powers asked if it had a header on it. Leigh responded it didn't.

Leigh commented that they don't have to have a bike lane and a pedestrian on one side and a shared use on the other side, you can have one or the other. He stated that the issue is you can

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actually have a bike lane, but you don't have to have a ten-foot wide shared use path, because he thinks people see each other coming, so five-feet would probably be sufficient. He said he doesn't know if it is required to have that or not, but a shared use path doesn't have to be ten-feet wide. Haugen responded that there is a minimum required width of eight-feet for a shared use path.

Vetter reiterated that the board needs to reinforce its position on the cantilevered option, plus get the Cities on board to say that that is what they want, and get a resolution passed supporting it.

Haugen referred to a photo illustrating a cantilevered deck and gave a brief explanation of what it is. He said that it is a structure that is attached to, and supported outside the truss. He added that it isn't necessarily tied back into the deck at all, it is tied into the truss structure.

Haugen referred to a picture of a vehicle used to inspect the bridge, and commented that the DOTs main issue is the fact that this vehicle would now have another 14-16-feet or more before it could get around and underneath the bridge during inspections. He added that they have vehicles that can do it, so, again, it's not a matter of them now being able to do it, it just makes for extra time and effort to do it.

Haugen stated that their second issue is that if they put the cantilever on the south side, they would have to determine how they would tie into the greenway trail system, or if they would tie into the system. He added that they are also concerned about maintenance as they don't have any crews or equipment that would maintain this separate structure. He said that he told them that that isn't a real issue as Grand Forks and East Grand Forks are already maintaining the Greenway Trail System, and both cities are maintaining Gateway Drive, and they already have the agreements and the institutional processes in place to add on the separate structure.

Haugen commented that a benefit that they don't state loudly is, because it is a fracture critical, and there is only so much redundancy you can add to a historic structure, before you start pinning on historic structures, an historic preservationist allowing you to make changes, that this cantilever structure does add support and strength to that fracture critical, but on the other hand adding this structure to the outside may or may not adversely impact the historic impact of the bridge, so that would be another reason why they shy away from this is because they look at what the least risk path, and if you can avoid working through the historic mitigation process that leads you to accommodations inside the truss structure.

Strandell stated that, as he said before, maybe the answer would be to create a walk bridge over the railroad pier, and leave the bridge as it is. Vetter responded that that would be quite a distance from the Kennedy Bridge though. Strandell said, though, that if they are walking or riding a bike it is either for exercise or enjoyment, whichever, so a little extra distance wouldn't be that big a deal. Haugen commented that Minnesota 152 Bridge legislation, the language specifically states that they have to accommodate on the structure if there isn't something within a quarter-mile either direction from the structure. He said that the Sorlie Bridge, or the existing railroad pier is closer to a half-mile away, the north bridge on the Greenway is close to a half-

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mile away, so, again, back to the Minnesota Legislature requirements, their having to address bike/peds on the structure, so if they do a completely separate structure, which they have discussed, instead of cantilevering it off the bridge, they put this separate structure whatever distance north or south of the Kennedy, but the concern that we expressed to them is that if they do this they would be adding a whole new impediment to the flow of water during flood events, and it doesn't seem like it is an easy thing to accomplish.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE A RECOMMENDATION BE SENT TO BOTH MnDOT AND NDDOT, AND TO OUR RESPECTIVE CITY COUNCILS, THAT THE MPO STILL SUPPORTS THE OPTION OF CONSTRUCTING A SEPARATE CANTILEVER FACILITY ON THE KENNEDY BRIDGE.***

Christensen commented that the reason he made this motion is, you can just as well express what you want rather than let things continue and then three months from now they come back and it's a done deal and you have to take what you get, so that is why he voted in favor of doing this.

Strandell stated that he doesn't disagree with Mr. Christensen at all, but in talking with Mr. Hille last night, he did agree to come to an MPO meeting. He couldn't be here today, but he was willing to come in January, so do you want to hear from him before you take action, if not that is fine too. Powers responded that he would like to hear from him. Christensen agreed, adding that we want to be part of the conversation rather than try to change things later. Grandstrand asked, then, if we want to wait to take action until after we hear from Mr. Hille. Vetter responded that he doesn't think we need to wait, we just go forward and invite him to our January meeting, hear him out and he hears us out too. Strandell agreed, adding that we can always change our position if needed.

Grandstrand asked if we could get some information on the concerns with farm equipment for January too. He said that it would be nice to know how wide the lanes would need to be to accommodate some of the farm equipment that needs to cross the bridge, etc.

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

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Haugen reported that the Street and Highway Element has gone to both City Planning Commissions and City Councils for approval. He stated that all entities have approved the documents, and now this body is being asked for approval as well.

Haugen referred to the staff report and pointed out that it lists the changes that were made either by the Technical Advisory Committee, or by the NDDOT. He said that unless someone wants to discuss any of these changes, both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending approval.

Malm asked if the MPO staff had received a letter from the Grand Forks County. Haugen responded they had not received any letter as of today. Malm stated that it is in the mail.

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Malm explained that there was a discussion at the County regarding the Southend Bypass, and Les Noehre, NDDOT-Grand Forks, and Lane Magnuson, Grand Forks County Planner, were in attendance, and they are not satisfied with the Southend Bypass idea until it has been thoroughly investigated. Christensen asked what the Southend Bypass is. Malm said, see, there you go, this is someone that sits on this committee. He explained that the bypass would run down Airport Road to Merrifield Road, east over the river. Christensen said that he is only concerned about how you are getting to the river, is it on 47<sup>th</sup> or by the Country Club. Vetter responded it is by the Country Club.

Malm stated that there are all kinds of problems, the County road that goes into that area, none of those roads are up to the condition that is necessary for the bypass. Christensen commented that the County just doesn't want to spend money, that is what you are saying. Malm responded that that isn't the case. He said that the City didn't want to spend any money. Christensen pointed out that that that road isn't in the City's jurisdiction, it is the County's problem.

Haugen asked if the County wasn't satisfied with the wording in the document concerning the Southend Bypass. Malm responded that they weren't, that the County wants that entire section removed from the plan until the study is completed about the effects on the design and residential areas. He said that you have this wonderful thing that you passed over in Grand Forks, and that is that corridor overlay and what you can do around it.

Adams asked if the terminology in the plan doesn't state, though, that we aren't taking any action on the bypass until the study has been completed. Haugen responded that it does. Malm disagreed, saying it doesn't necessarily state that. Adams reiterated that it does say that no action would be taken until a study can be completed. Malm stated that the County Board is not happy with what was stated in the plan, they want all parties to sit down and discuss that because they knew nothing about it until it was put out. He explained that Mr. Noehre was there and he said that he is thoroughly against the way it sits now, so we have a problem and maybe we just leave the bypass corridor out.

Christensen commented that, first of all, this is not a corridor overlay, it is a Long Range Transportation Plan, and when it gets implemented, he doesn't think there will be any chance cause there isn't any money, so it isn't that we have to leave it out, it's there, but if you want to go back then you have to go back to the council with changes because we have already approved it. Malm responded, though, that they never saw it. Christensen said that he doesn't know what he is, whatever, they've approved it. Malm stated, why because you saw it, all that he can say is it has more effect on the City, but you are saying it is outside the City. Vetter commented that by the time it gets built it will probably be in the City. Malm responded that they aren't going to worry about that until they have the problem. Vetter said that by the time the Southend Bridge is built, it will all be in the City limits. Malm stated, though, that this could go in before the Southend Bridge. Christensen responded that there is no chance. He said that there is absolutely zero chance that that bridge will be built before. Malm commented that he isn't worried, but just the fact that if you make the bypass. Christensen asked what bypass. He said that he is going to vote in favor of approving it, it has been approved by the City Council, the Long Range Plan has

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been approved, their only concern about having to build a road. Malm stated that it is also the fact that it is going to affect your development around it too, as you are almost out there.

Christensen stated that Mr. Vetter is right, when that happens, when we get to 62<sup>nd</sup>, they will annex it and then it will be the City's problem, they will have taken the cross from the County's shoulders and will carry it. Malm responded that they won't, because you will come and tell them, like you did on that stretch of road, that it is the County's road, and you were building a dike.

Heated discussion ensued.

Leigh asked why are we now approving this after the fact that the City Council already approved it, he thought this board makes recommendations to the council. Haugen responded that this board gave this preliminary approval two months ago, and our by-laws state that we give them sixty-days to amend it into their comprehensive plan, and they have done that, so everybody is agreeing to the document as it was written with these changes that have been added through the process, and these changes have been identified to each of those bodies at their meetings when they gave approval, so that is more closely the arrangement of how we do these documents; we prepare the document as we would like it adopted, then we send it back to both councils and planning commissions, they do their actions on it and it comes back to us for the finale.

Haugen reported that the language in the plan is the same language that was worked out specifically with North Dakota and Minnesota DOTs, and it was presented to the Grand Forks County Board early in December. He asked if the meeting the County had with Mr. Noehre and Mr. Magnuson before or after the December meeting he attended. Malm responded that it was held yesterday. He added that when you came to the meeting earlier in December they discussed this, and then Lane went and discussed it with Mr. Noehre and he came in and told them that he wasn't in favor of putting this thing together like this at this time, and so they said either leave it out, or table it for another time.

Haugen stated that the only difference is, the language that they worked out with both States, states that we are going to get all the partners together, they are going to study this concept because there have been new parameters built in, and the last sentence is the one that sealed the deal for everyone by stating that no funding requests will be approved until the study is completed, so if anyone tries to get it under the radar, and go to so and so for funding the MPO is basically stating that we won't amend our T.I.P. to bring the money in for the project until the study is done, and everyone was satisfied with that. He said that this was the language they specifically worked on with Mr. Noehre, so he's disappointed. Malm commented that that isn't what they heard yesterday. Haugen responded that last Wednesday, at the Technical Advisory Committee, he said Mr. Noehre was happy with the language, so he isn't sure what happened.

Malm asked if the whole section could be taken out of the plan and put back in later.

***MOVED BY CHRISTENSEN, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AS STATED IN THE RESOLUTIONS.***

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Haugen responded that to take the entire section out of the plan would be viewed as a significant change to the plan and it would require that we go back through the entire approval process, through the Planning Commissions, the City Councils, and we have a deadline to approve a document today. With approval today, the MPO will submit the documents to our State and Federal Partners for their 30 day review and depending on their review, this may be final or we may need to address some changes in January that our State/Federal Partners suggest.

Christensen called the question.

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

*Voting Nay: Malm.*

**MATTER OF NORTH DAKOTA SIDE CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE 2015-2018  
T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that we are back in our typical T.I.P. preparation cycle, where in December we review the candidate list of projects on the ND side for the next four year T.I.P. document. He stated that he has a brief power point presentation he would like to give today.

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

Haugen gave a brief overview of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), explaining that it combines and replaces the old separate Transportation Enhancement, Safe Routes To School, and Scenic Highways programs. He explained that under this program projects are competing against each other now for a smaller pot of money, whereas before we would have these separate funding silos that we would process as projects through. He added also that now only the City can submit to the MPO, while in the past for some of these programs the School District could apply for funds, but now everything has to come through the City to the MPO.

Haugen stated that for the TAP program there are four projects that the City Council is forwarding to us. He went over the project priority order:

1. Shared use path along South Columbia Road between 36<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue South
2. Share use path along DeMers Avenue Between South 48<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Streets
3. Citywide remote control school beacons
4. Solar powered speed minder radar signs

Haugen said that this is the priority order that the City forwarded to the MPO, and the Technical Advisory Committee recommends the same priority order.

Haugen added that this is also the time of year that we look at our current projects that are still yet to be built in the next couple of years. He pointed out that the only real change that is occurring on the Urban side is last year North Dakota delayed Phase 2 of Columbia Road from 11<sup>th</sup> past 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He stated that originally it was in 2014, but they pushed it out to 2016, but when they did that with their document they didn't adjust the cost of inflation, so last year we asked them to consider, under an Illustrative project an updated year of expenditure, which

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would have received more federal assistance for the City, but this year a better cost estimate has been developed, so this cost estimate has increased, therefore, just like last year, we are asking the State to give consideration to funding it at this higher federal participation, and again, it was due to their action and their inaction of adjusting for inflation, so we're hoping they will finally address it, but the only way to do so is through the illustrative process.

Haugen reported that on the regional side, a couple of months ago you amended the T.I.P. to show some project on I-29 for 2014, those are now being delayed out to 2015, so of all the project in our current T.I.P. these are the ones that are having some movement on them. Christensen asked which projects are being moved. Haugen responded that they are basically some preventive maintenance projects to concrete. Christensen asked if any were on the 47<sup>th</sup> Interchange. Haugen responded they weren't, that they are on 32<sup>nd</sup> heading north in both directions.

Haugen stated that new projects for 2018 are:

Grand Forks – Urban

1. Reconstruction of North 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Gateway and University Avenue.

Grand Forks – Regional

1. State is requesting a surface treatment project on North Washington Street between Gateway Drive and I-29. Haugen explained that in 2016 they are doing a more robust pavement project, and then in 2018 they will come back and do this surface treatment to help extend the life of the 2016 project.

Haugen reported that in North Dakota they also require going one year beyond for the Regional system, so the NDDOT is currently identifying a mill and overlay on U.S. Business 2, or North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, between Gateway Drive and DeMers Avenue in 2019.

Haugen stated that both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending that the MPO Board agree that these projects are consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan and prioritize them in the order shown.

Powers asked about a controlled school beacon. Jane Williams, Grand Forks Engineer, explained that those are the speed minders that were programmed for a specific speed and if someone is exceeding that speed they flash the speed you are going. Leigh asked if they were solar powered. Williams responded that they are solar powered. She added that the beacon project is a city-wide project. She explained that they currently have no control over the beacons, they are on timer, and they only have 15 or 17 events that can be programmed into them, so there are days that students aren't at school but the beacons flash anyway because they can't go around and turn them all off and then back on. She said that another issue is during inclement weather events, if school is dismissed early there aren't any beacons flashing because they can't change the time, but when 3:00 p.m. comes, and everybody is already at home they flash, so the City is looking at purchasing a radio controlled system so that we can go in there and make those changes when needed.

Haugen commented that the school beacon project has been applied for before under the Safe Routes to School program, but was not funded; and the speed minder radar signs, last year was a city-wide project at all schools, and it was not funded either.

***MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO APPROVE THE LIST OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS FOR THE FY2015-2018 T.I.P. AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE IT PRIORITY RANKING AS SUBMITTED.***

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

### **MATTER OF FREIGHT RAIL ACCESS STUDY**

Haugen reported that this is the study we added into our work program at the request of the Economic Development Corporation. He stated that the consultant has worked with a committee, and we have given an initial review of what properties have the highest viability, based on the methodology included in the packet. He said that these are the properties that rose to the top, and they did hold an individual invite to those property owners the first week of December to meet with them and go over the study findings, and to engage their interest in having their land go to the next stage of the study. He added that they then held a general public open house that Thursday.

Haugen referred to a map illustrating the properties, and went over it briefly.

Haugen stated that all of the property owners that attended the individual meeting expressed interest in having their land go to the next stage of the study, which will entail our starting to conceptualize how rail access would fit on their land, and what issues would need to be overcome in order to get that land available for any type of freight/rail terminal activities.

Information only.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Solicit For North Dakota FTA 5339 Program**

Haugen reported that this is the FTA, or transit systems capital program. He said that he knows that transit has gone through the City Council with their project list, and will be here in January.

2. **Solicit For North Dakota Recreation Trail Program**

Haugen reported that this is the Recreational Trails Program. He explained that this is similar to the Bike/Ped Program, and, in-fact a lot of the trail system out and around Kings Walk Golf Course in Grand Forks was funded through this program, so if there are any projects that you would like to see done, they need to be submitted through the MPO and forwarded to the State.

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Haugen added that since the agenda went out, Minnesota still has funding left in their separate Safe Routes to School program, so they just released an announcement on Monday that there is \$4,000,000 statewide available for Safe Routes to School projects. He said that for East Grand Forks a lot of the sidewalks that were done on the south end of town were funded through this program. He added that the only change this year is, in the past these projects were funded 100% with federal funds, but this year they have tailored it down to just 80% federal funds, so there will be a 20% match this time around.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY STRANDELL, TO ADJOURN THE DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2013, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:05 P.M.***

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager