

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD  
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Clarence Vetter, Secretary, called the August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:02 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL**

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Gary Malm, Don Diedrich (Proxy for Warren Strandell), Clarence Vetter, Marc DeMers, Jeannie Mock, Mike Powers, and Al Grasser. Ken Vein reported present at 12:15 p.m.

Guest(s): David Kuharneko, Grand Forks Engineering

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

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Vetter declared a quorum was present.

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2018, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY DEMERS TO APPROVE THE JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2018, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL 2019-2022 FINAL DRAFT T.I.P.**

Haugen reported that included in the packet is full T.I.P. document. He stated that a public hearing was held at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last Wednesday and there were no written or oral comments submitted.

Haugen said that this Final T.I.P. combines both sides. He added that in the most recent past we have been adopting separate documents for each side of the river, and this is one of the few times, recently, that we will have one unified T.I.P. document. He commented that the other thing to note is the this will be our first T.I.P. document that includes the section about performance measures and how the T.I.P. is trying to help us make progress towards that, and we did amend that language into our existing T.I.P. on just the Minnesota side, but this will be for both sides.

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Haugen stated that the big item is that the decision is to still go with reconstructing the Washington Street Underpass in 2022, and it is programmed at its full \$17 million plus dollars yet the project development process will still go through, and as with any project development process the do nothing alternative is always one of the candidates, but it is starting out as a full reconstruction.

Haugen commented that there are a couple of illustrative projects that show up in the last section before the appendices. He stated that they are on the North Dakota side and are the traffic signal rehabilitation projects that were submitted for consideration of regional and urban programs funding. He pointed out that the NDDOT has them identified as pending in 2022 and in the North Dakota S.T.I.P. that term “pending” is the equivalent of our T.I.P. illustrative projects, meaning that they don’t have the fiscal constraint to show them as being programmed, but if funding is made available they will likely be programmed after 2022. He added that if funding does show up in latter years, or at some point, these would have to be amended out of the illustrative list and into our programmed list.

Haugen stated that, other than what he just discussed the document is pretty straight-forward. He added that the appendices are our normal appendices; the first is where our current 2018 projects are at and the actual dollars that were obligated to them. He commented that we also have our Self-Certification document included, and that basically says that these are all the federal rules and regulations that we were required to follow, and that we are self-certifying that we are doing so. He pointed out that our geographical area map remains unchanged.

Haugen commented that we just promulgated a Draft Minnesota T.I.P.; this year we did not draft a North Dakota T.I.P. as North Dakota went straight to a Draft S.T.I.P., and that was a little unusual but we are covering both sides of this final document.

Haugen stated that the last appendix is a requirement from Minnesota that their projects be shown in NWATP format.

Haugen said that both the Technical Advisory Committee and staff are recommending you approve the Draft Final 2019-2022 T.I.P.

***MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE FY2019-2022 T.I.P., AS PRESENTED.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, DeMers, Vetter, Diedrich, Mock, Powers, and Grasser.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: Vein.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
CONSULTANT**

Haugen reported that they did release the RFP; proposals were due on August 14<sup>th</sup>; and they received only one proposal so they did seek concurrence from our State and Federal Partners to proceed with

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interviews of that one firm, and did receive that approval. He added that they then interviewed that firm, which was KLJ Engineering.

Vein reported present.

Haugen commented that there were some interesting things with this proposal. He stated that KLJ submitted a proposal that basically followed the original Draft RFP, and they said that one reason why they did so was because when they communicated with the City of Grand Forks they were told to do so and that the City would work out the differences, including cost, later on. He said that most likely what happened was a misunderstanding of communications they had with the City of Grand Forks. He added that, long story short, right now KLJ is looking through the proposal to trim it back to what the actual RFP Scope request was. He stated that they did seek some guidance from NDDOT to see how much over the RFP scope and budget we could go to be able to award a contract; and their basic response was that they aren't comfortable going to the extent that KLJ's proposal originally did, but KLJ has also indicated that they aren't so sure that if they did scope down to just the budget that they could do what is in the RFP scope; so North Dakota is saying that until they see what KLJ's actual number for the scope is, they aren't really able to give us an answer of how much, if it is over budget, they will be comfortable with, so as it stands right now KLJ promised that sometime today they will have their scaled back proposal and budget to us so unless the Board wants to have a special meeting to approve the scaled back proposal, what might be appropriate is, as in the past, you authorize your Finance Committee to go ahead and execute the contract on your behalf.

Haugen reported that we do know that timing is an issue as he thinks the City of Grand Forks was wishing that this may have already been approved and the project underway, so if we wait until our next regular meeting, that might be too long for them; so that is why the option to authorize the Finance Committee to act on the Board's behalf was suggested; but again you can also choose to hold a special meeting as well. He added that both options are assuming that we get a scope from KLJ with a budget that is comfortable, not only for us but also for our State and Federal Partners to sign off on as well.

Mock asked if Mr. Haugen knew what that contract is expected to back at, what numbers. Haugen responded that the budget in our work program was set at \$60,000. He stated that the base bid that KLJ submitted was in the \$120,000 range; and again, if you recall, last month, and the minutes will reflect that we deleted number four from the scope, and that was to do a lot of the transportation operation analysis for the downtown area, so that is a lot of work and that was still included in their base project.

Mock asked if the new scope would be brought back to the City for their approval of the local share. Haugen responded that it would not. He added that there has been some discussions that if there is a difference in cost and the State and Federal Partners are comfortable with us to contract, that a separate contract negotiated between the City and the consultant could be done, that might have to go back through the council.

Vetter asked if the board wants to wait until its next meeting to approve this, or are do we want to authorize the Finance Committee to execute it.

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO EXECUTE THE CONTRACT AFTER NEGOTIATIONS.***

*Voting Aye: Malm, DeMers, Vein, Vetter, Diedrich, Mock, Powers, and Grasser.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

*Abstain: None.*

*Absent: None.*

**MATTER OF PROJECT SOLICITATION FOR THE 2019-2020 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM**

Haugen reported that this is just an information item. He explained that typically at this time of the year we solicit what studies our member jurisdictions would like us to consider programming into our work program.

Haugen commented that there are a couple of things that we already know that we will have to do; we have to update our ITS Regional Architecture Plan; and we also know that the Downtown Plan, the Skewed Intersection Study, and the Mn #220 North Study that we are just now getting underway on will have to be carried over into 2019, but there are still some funds available, about \$150,000 available for 2019 and \$300,000 for 2020.

Haugen stated that this was announced at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week so your staff should be working on identifying projects. He added that we did ask that they work with us to make sure that eligibility is something that we fully understand so that we aren't trying at the last minute to squeeze stuff through, so we have communication about whether things are eligible or not.

Haugen said that we always want to ensure that whatever each member jurisdiction submits to us has gone through their governing body so that they are knowledgeable about the study and also to authorize us to undertake it.

Haugen commented that November is when we would have the next two year work program before you for consideration so there is time between now and then to vet through all of the items. He added that we do have to have a full two-year work program submitted to our State and Federal Partners by the end of November for their consideration.

**MATTER OF 2045 STREET/HIGHWAY ELEMENT UPDATE**

a. Universe Of Projects

Haugen reported that there is information in your packet; some of that is being updated so he will go through a slightly revised presentation. He added that he did just distribute some updated pages with the most significant changes since the packet was mailed out last Friday.

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

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Haugen stated that a lot of the information is just updating you on where we are at on the schedule. He said that when it comes to the performance measures, right now they are looking at the Mobility Measures, or what are known as PM3, and they have to do with Interstate Truck Travel, and that is our freight component of planning.

Haugen commented that within these performance measures we have the ability to, again, adopt wholeheartedly each State and their targets, just do our own targets, or for one target we can adopt both States and for another we can adopt our own, kind of bounce back and forth.

Haugen stated, an overview of the data, both States have had to adopt their Targets, we have until November to adopt ours. He referred to a slide showing the targets that North Dakota and Minnesota have adopted, and commented that you will notice that Minnesota shows that some are not applicable because they don't have interstate in Minnesota, however if we were to adopt wholeheartedly Minnesota State targets we would be adopting their actual target for the Interstate System.

Haugen commented that one of the things you will notice is that in some areas our data is similar, such as for the non-interstate travel; 85 for North Dakota and 75 for Minnesota and we are right around the upper 80's. He said that for the interstate travel our data is showing that we have 100% reliability versus 85% on the North Dakota side and 75% on the Minnesota side.

Haugen pointed out that the one with the most variance is the freight or truck travel. He said that North Dakota set a rather extreme target of 3; while our data is showing closer to 1.1 or 1.2. He added that all of this information comes from Federal Highway and makes this transition for this reliability calculation smooth they contracted with a consortium of university technical centers to develop an easy tool for us to go to and use. He referred to a slide showing the output of that tool; and pointed out where he highlighted where we have, according to the data, our most unreliable

Haugen stated that this is just a summary and added that we still have to identify our pavement management and bridge management targets. He referred to a slide and went over the PM2 and PM3 targets for North Dakota, Minnesota and the MPO. He added that right now staff is leaning towards not adopting each State's wholeheartedly, but where it makes sense to adopt the State's standards we should adopt them but when we have just a North Dakota facility we should adopt as our normal target perhaps what the North Dakota target is, but not adopt it as the State's target but as our local target. He said that in the case of the truck travel reliability, he thinks the three is kind of extreme, so they are still trying to figure out why North Dakota did that; and even the Minnesota target is something that is close to what we would be trying to achieve with our local target.

Haugen said that they aren't asking for action on this today, but are giving you some sense of what staff is recommending. He stated that they will probably have this information for action next month, just because it will fit in with our Long Range Transportation Plan document that we are preparing and not waiting until the very end of November when we are trying to adopt a plan in December.

Mock asked if we set a local target do we have to meet or exceed the States' targets, or do we just set our own local target based on research. Haugen responded that we are trying to achieve our local target. He said that some of the PM2 targets have some penalty clauses, and they only are applied if the State

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does not meet their targets, if the MPO does not meet its target there isn't a penalty, per se. He added that on the PM3 there is no penalty at either the States or the MPO level.

Grasser referred to the PM2/PM3 slide and commented that he is confused about the different 4-year target numbers for the percent of interstate pavement in good condition and asked why we wouldn't adopt the States numbers instead of having our own. Haugen responded that essentially we are adopting the States standards but we can't say that because then we would technically have to adopt the Minnesota standards as well and we don't have interstate on the Minnesota side in our area; so it is either all or nothing.

b. Revenue Forecasts

Haugen stated that one of the major hiccups we have going on is that when we look at our forecasted revenue, based on historical information from the North Dakota side, we continue to talk about interstate, and you see that the adjustment has not flowed strongly into the MPO area, so we can really only identify on that basis that over the 25-year period \$10 million dollars can help us on interstate. He commented that when we look at the projects the District has identified that are necessary to keep the interstate in a state of good repair, it will take over \$45 million dollars of projects over that same period, so we have that disconnect; only \$10 million coming in and \$45 million needed; and again those are projects that are needed to keep the pavement in a state of good repair, that doesn't include any modifications to existing interchanges, or adding new interchanges to the system.

Haugen reported that in trying to work with North Dakota on how to reconcile the difference, their basic advice was that they would push it back onto our shoulders to come up with a reasonable number, somewhere in-between, and document what it is and we essentially will be good to go with it, so we are continuing to work with them on documenting what might be reasonable. He added that under law we are supposed to emphasize preservation of the existing system, and emphasize facilities serving national and regional transportation so it seems like if we have revenue, on the State side instead of it going towards maybe regional highway projects, we should focus on the interstate.

Grasser commented that if you extrapolate that process down the line then we are pulling from regional to do the interstate which means that regional is going to be shorted which means that you will draw from urban, is that the way the things are going to line up. Haugen responded that in the past that is how they would, but this particular year, on the regional side we are currently showing a little more revenue left after the projects they identified; so in this case there might be regional funds left on the table, if you will. He added that there are still a couple of questions that we need to get answers on from the District regarding the regional project list, some clarifications, but the way it looks right now there will be millions of dollars left on the regional revenue so we likely may not touch the urban pot.

Grasser said that he would also assume that you aren't going to do any capacity improvements on the regional system. He added that they have studies that show the need for underpasses and stuff on Highway 2; so are we going to just preserve it, is that what that plan is that has any money left over at all. Haugen responded that that was correct. Grasser stated that he is struggling with the anomalies of the systems where the government gives us performance measures; realistically doesn't have dollars; we are still trying to deal with their world.

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c. Bridge Analysis

Haugen reported that this is where we have new information to share with you. He said that, again, looking at all five of these crossing, all five are trying to focus on the local traffic connectivity, mobility issues and needs, and their analysis has been focused on that local traffic.

Haugen commented that you did see some of these slides already. He added that the data shows that the further north you go the better off you are.

Haugen stated that they did get into the individual intersections levels of service this time. He referred to slides with this information and went them briefly. He commented that if we don't do anything these intersections have issues. He said that if we add a bridge they all have issues, but there is some mitigation that we can do, most of which would be traffic signals; that bring us up to an acceptable level of service; although there are a couple, DeMers and South Washington and South Washington and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue would need a little bit more than just the standard traffic signal.

Haugen said that on the South Washington/DeMers Avenue intersection they previously identified the continuous flow intersection option to solve that issue. He added that it isn't a grade separation so its impact isn't as great, nor is its cost. He stated that on the 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/South Washington intersection there is a concept called "Quadrant Connecting Roadway" where it kind of creates intersections both on 32<sup>nd</sup> and South Washington that we try to have traffic that wants to turn to use a different roadway intersection to get around a congested intersection, so it is kind of a by-pass new roadway connecting to get traffic pulled away from one intersection and split it to two intersections.

Haugen referred to the next few slides and pointed out that they cover cost information and are just the costs that do basically the blue line shown on the slides; it wouldn't cover any additional work. He added that these are the general alignments that they have been working with for each of the crossings.

Haugen said that, just to talk a little bit about the 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Minnesota Jurisdictional meeting; we do know that anything connecting out here has some roadway jurisdictional issues that need to be addressed if we are going to put a bridge at this location.

Haugen reported that the next slides show how they are coming up with the basic cost estimates. He pointed out that he circled the \$300 sq. foot, and explained that that is the number that they were using based on outdated cost estimation formulas that both States were using due to the influence of the oil activity primarily, which jacked prices up; but North Dakota just this morning is suggesting we start using a considerably lower number, somewhere between \$200 and \$250. He added that Minnesota also concurred this morning that \$250 is something they would be willing to support.

Haugen referred to a slide and stated that it gives us a basis of what the cross sections are for these bridge estimates. He said that they are going with what they characterize as an Urban Bridge. He explained that that means because it is in an urban setting we do have the multi-purpose trail attached to it with one through lane in each direction and then there is a shoulder area available in the event there is a breakdown on the bridge so that traffic can continue to flow.

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Haugen stated that they provided some idea of what the costs were back in the 2025 Plan versus what costs are now. He said that these costs are based on that \$300 a square foot, so they are high, and they will be slightly lower next time you see them, but there is still substantially higher than they were 20 years ago.

Haugen commented that they also had a discussion about whether we should show the benefits of truck traffic that would or wouldn't use the bridges. He said that kind of the default mode of this is to include some truck traffic in the benefits. He stated that after discussion with the Technical Advisory Committee we decided that we could easily separate out the "no trucks", and it doesn't impact the benefits too much because there aren't a lot of trucks that are using these more local types bridges. He added that it gets more substantial when you start talking about Merrifield.

Haugen stated that the next few slides give us some sense of where we are at with the benefit cost. He pointed out that he inserted the 2025 numbers so you can see that even though the cost has gone up considerably, the benefits have also gone up considerably. He went over the information briefly, pointing out the they did a high and a low bridge estimate for each crossing.

Haugen referred to the information he distributed earlier and explained that last Friday, with the information they knew then, they highlighted that we had some bridges that were above the .5 benefit/cost. He said that the three locations with asterisks probably could be tweaked to get them up to a value greater and 1. He reported that one thing they did since Friday, shown in blue, was to use the 2025 cost methodology and you can see the results of that; Elks, 32<sup>nd</sup>, and Merrifield all come very close to the 1 value.

Haugen commented that just this morning; using the new \$250 a square foot price he simply deducted roughly 17% of the cost off of the bridge total; a quick calculation with the benefits, and we are getting .8 at Elks, .9 at 32<sup>nd</sup>, .6 at Merrifield, so there are some things that we can do to lower the cost of these structures. He went over some of those options briefly.

Vein asked if on the B/C ratio do we need to have something greater than 1 for either State to put money toward the project. Haugen responded that most of the competitive grant programs, either at the national level, or Minnesota, that is one of their criteria, if it doesn't show a benefit cost of at least 1 it isn't favorably viewed.

DeMers asked of the B/C ratio based on year zero or is it amortized throughout the life of that structure. Haugen responded that his initial response is that it is over a twenty-five year period, but he will double check that to make sure.

Powers asked if we are trying to get to the top three choices. Haugen responded that we have been trying to narrow this down for quite some time. Powers said that the other thing it, for simplicity sake and to expedite the process, are we going to eliminate the high bridge concept just based on the costs. He stated that if we were to agree on just continuing with the low bridge option for all crossings we can eliminate that part of the equation out of the way and then we should, as a group, make a

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recommendation...where are we at at the East Grand Forks City Council on this. Vetter responded that the council is waiting for a recommendation from this board. Powers said that maybe today we can tell them that we agreed that we have to have a low bridge, and that we agreed on three crossings; if we did that today that would be huge. Vetter asked which three crossings Mr. Powers was thinking should continue to be included in the study. Powers responded that that is a good question.

Vein commented that, along that line, it appears that we are trying to manipulate, to some degree, the methods to find a B/C that is greater than 1, is that right. Haugen responded that it could appear that way, and some would argue that it is, but he thinks that where we started out with at \$300 a square foot was based on, perhaps, old cost estimate data, and now that we have more current data, and it is lower, we are just carrying on that same calculation using that new numbers and it is coming out the way it is coming out.

Grasser said that the concern he has is how close we are going to be able to represent an actual project. He added that he is looking at these numbers, unfortunately this pushes the B/C ratio the other way, but earlier on we talked about mitigation that might have to happen, like signalize an intersection, and we should almost put an allowance of some sort into each of these estimates to do whatever traffic mitigation we might have to do that is associated with new bridge impact, whether that is a million, two million or whatever. He added that the low bridge, especially the low bridge is going to require a lot of analysis and approval from technically FEMA, but it will also end up going through the Corps of Engineers, and he thinks that those costs are, if they are going to be reflected on the engineering side of the world, he thinks the engineering costs are going to be quite a bit higher than what we show here. He said that contingency, at 10-percent at this stage, and again this is his opinion, but he thinks that is a pretty low number, so the \$300 a square foot on the bridge may have been high, but it was also tending to be a buffer that might absorb some of these others, Simply skimming that down we ignore some of the other costs that he thinks are going to come in and he doesn't want to be blind-sighted then when we get too far down the pike with a project that comes in substantially higher; or quite frankly do we go with these numbers and then deal with them later; there are a couple of different philosophies in the world, be his would be to try to get that number to represent what things might be a little more accurate. He added that the low bridge, he thinks is going to end up having hydraulic impacts on the river, that is kind of what he remembers they found with the pedestrian bridges, and he doesn't know if everyone remembers those discussions. He commented that they looked at high, medium and low bridges and to summarize it he remembers that the high bride was okay because it was above water so it didn't have a hydraulic impact, but with low bridges by the time you got away from having a hydraulic impact it ended up being so low they weren't really practical for the pedestrians to use, so the middle size, as you get through some of these critical elevation ranges, started having effects on the flood project, but the bottom line is he thinks there is going to end up being a pretty substantial FEMA and Corps analysis on the bridge. Powers added that that is going to affect the low bridge costs substantially, going upward.

Powers asked, in lieu of what we have done since 1997, don't you feel that a catastrophic flood of that nature, that would happen say this spring, would have less impact on a low base bridge because of all the other changes that have occurred both up and down stream. Grasser responded that he isn't sure, all he is saying here is that to answer that question it will take the Corp or FEMA will require additional

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study to answer it. He added that what makes him nervous, and is a sideway answer to Mr. Powers' question, is that since we built it 1997, we were under the impression that we were at a 210 or 250 year event level of protection, right; well based on the discussions that have occurred in Fargo with the diversion, and Mr. Vein can answer those more specifically, but our flood frequency have gone up so in his mind, and this is something he would like to study on the Grand Forks side, but we have gone from a 210 year level of protection to something substantially less, just based on statistics, and it depends on whose statistics you are using, so just guessing he is going to say we are at a 150 year level of protection instead of a 210 level, so, again, do we want to add any more risks to that, that's a bigger policy.

Vein commented that they don't know what the final plan is for Fargo, but he does know that the Minnesota DNR wanted to change upstream impacts to downstream impact; and would authorize up to a 6-inch to a foot rise downstream, that was real concerning. He said that he did speak against that as part of that process, but the DNR was willing to try to do that so there would be less land, potentially, inundated in the future on the upstream side. He added that he doesn't know where that will end up with the final plan that is being done, but he thinks that we, as a community all have to be concerned that we shouldn't have to pay for the cost of having to raise our dikes if that happens, we just can't accept it, and we want to help our neighbors, but there is a mitigation cost that will have to be incorporated into their pocket. Grasser commented that even with or without the project, what caught their attention was early on when they were doing analysis they said that there was no impact to Grand Forks, well that elevation is a foot higher than what our current 100 year flood plain is, but they responded that they used the new analysis and if you use the new analysis, even without the Fargo project they are saying that our base flood went up at least a foot, and if he is interpreting what he heard the FEMA guys say they are saying that most likely when they remap again that base elevation will go up even higher, so if you were to design the flood project today you would either build it up another foot higher than it currently is to get the same 210 year protection, or you are going to accept that the dikes are less than 210 years today.

Discussion on flood protection ensued.

DeMers asked what Grand Forks Engineering usually factors for engineering on major projects. Grasser responded that, again, it depends on whether or not they are expecting to get federal funding or local funding. He said that if they are getting federal funding he has to factor in probably another 10% on the engineering and miscellaneous things that go in it. He added that he doesn't have as big of an issue on the 25% construction; he thinks it might be a bit low; contingencies at this stage he thinks at 10% there is an awful lot of unknowns for the \$3 million dollars to absorb. DeMers stated that they typically look at 15% for engineering on local projects; and then if they are going to do something, or you're looking at additional study or something like that; are you thinking that engineering should be 35% or do you think, to factor in those hydrology studies and impact studies, and those types of things. Grasser responded that contingencies at this stage should be 15% or 20%, engineering should be probably be at least 30% or 35% if we want to capture some of those others, but again it depends on how conservative you want to be, the problem is if you raise these numbers it works the B/C the other way, but he agrees that for local projects 15% is pretty typical, but a bridge structure brings in another level of engineering expertise, which costs more per hour, and there are a lot of other things that go on with a bridge so he thinks the engineering costs will be greater too.

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Powers said that Polk County has gone on record as endorsing Merrifield Road correct. Deidrich responded that he doesn't really want to comment on that because he quite frankly doesn't know, and he isn't sure they can endorse it anyway. Powers stated that he thought Mr. Strandell said that they had. Deidrich said that he isn't going to speak for him. Powers said that that is something that we need to know so next time you get together try to find that out. Deidrich responded that he thinks you are probably correct, but he can't say for sure. Malm stated that Grand Forks County already approved Merrifield Road. Powers commented that that is something that we should be looking at and you should be looking at. Grasser asked if Merrifield wasn't in by default, it's already in our Long Range Plan. Haugen commented that when they set up the scope of work to do this update we assumed that we would be carrying these projects, but the request came to us that we need to revisit all of these crossings and start basically from scratch, and that is how we ultimately got to the point of looking at five different crossings, so it is in our current plan but as we go through the updating process we don't know if it will stay in the current plan or not.

Mock asked, let's say that we decided, based on this analysis, that 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue rose to the top and we all agree on that and it is going to happen, would Merrifield Road, as a bridge be eliminated from the Long Range Transportation Plan or would it be an additional one. Haugen responded that he thinks that if the first part is true then the second part would pivot from it because right now all the analysis is for a bridge to serve local focus, so if you transition Merrifield to serve another purpose, and that would be to the traditional purpose as a bypass, and that is why it is in the current plan, to serve that purpose, as we've gone through this plan update the focus has been on the local traffic, trying to find a location of for local traffic, and the request was to look at all five of these sites for that purpose. Mock said, then, that it is possible that we would transition from regional truck traffic to local traffic as a focus, or is it possible we would select a new one and keep Merrifield for truck traffic. She said that she knows that at one point there was discussion that 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue would require additional infrastructure to even access that bridge, and if Elks Drive were chosen how would it impact 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue to support increased traffic, are those costs captured in the bridge estimate. Haugen responded they are not. He added that that is where they are at, so how much further do you want us to study those options that offer a low B/C ratio, how much further do you want us to further analyze costs associated with a high bridge. He said that it doesn't seem logical for them to spend more money on those things that we will probably never get the B/C ratio up to even a .5.

Haugen commented though that there are some here that are close, with the \$250 a square foot, that some of these other costs would be worth our effort to add in and narrow down our focus to just those that we are going to spend our resources on, and really polish up those numbers that we are more comfortable with. He said that some of these we are taking kind of a little return on investment to begin with, and then to add costs to it there may be some minor benefits added, but it will probably never get where it needs to be, so that is kind of why we assumed in an update that we really weren't going to spend a lot of time revisiting all of these places and we've been trying to narrow the focus ever since and we've been going the opposite way.

Vein stated that for him he thinks that make sense because it is no use to continue to put a lot of money in studying options that just aren't going to get there. He said that when you were looking at just this

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cost of \$250 a square foot, and you looked at that cross section and you narrowed the shoulders by four-foot or something like that, obviously that reduces the square footage, but he doesn't know if that is proportional to what the reduction of cost is going to be. Haugen responded that the reduction in cost that he has done was to take the total cost, say a \$30,000,000 bridge total cost, and just took 17% off of it. He added that he hasn't reduced the square footage for shoulder width or taking a multipurpose path off of Merrifield, he just took the difference between \$300 to \$250 off the total cost.

Grasser commented that, philosophically it pains him to think that we might go through this effort to build a bridge and not have it serve during flood time; but at some point the numbers and the dollars need to be taken into account and maybe we aren't ready to make too many steps, but if even make an incremental step, and he agrees with Mr. Powers, that maybe if we eliminate the high bridge, as much as that pains him, but from a realistic standpoint we could maybe take that step and reduce the analytical effort, so maybe we just take that step today.

Vetter said that we are looking at this on the cost side, in decreasing from \$300 to \$250 a square foot, but maybe we also need to look at the benefit side and how we came up with those numbers, are we using correct figures there or can we adjust the benefit analysis to bring those down to match cost also. Haugen responded that we are asking our two State DOTs to give us feedback on what we are using for B/C. He said that just this morning he got the cost side of it, keep hounding for the benefit side as well because ultimately they need to be comfortable with what those are as well, and give us some concurrence. He stated that they are pushing them as hard and as fast as they can, but it isn't being timely responded to.

Vein asked if they were seeing quite a bit of difference in benefit from a high versus a low; obviously we know there is more cost with a high versus a low, but is there corresponding increases in benefits. Haugen responded that there isn't, adding that they are using the exact same vehicle hours traveled savings and vehicle miles traveled savings, and they aren't showing that a high and dry bridge might give us instead of 365 days a year it will give us 360 days, we aren't messing with that we are just saying low or high. He added that benefits are the same.

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY GRASSER, TO APPROVE THAT WE CONSIDER ONLY THE LOW BRIDGE OPTION FOR EACH CROSSING AS WE CARRY THIS ASSESSMENT FORWARD.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, DeMers, Vein, Vetter, Diedrich, Mock, Powers, and Grasser.***

***Voting Nay: None.***

***Abstain: None.***

***Absent: None.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. 2018 Annual Work Program Project Update

Haugen reported that the 2018 Annual Work Program Project Update is included for review.

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b. Bill Listing For The 7/14/18 to 8/17/18 Period

Haugen reported that the list of bills for the July 14, 2018 to August 17, 2018 period was included in the packet for your review.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY POWERS, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2018,  
MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:02 P.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy McNelis,  
Office Manager