

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

**Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – 12:00 Noon  
East Grand Forks City Hall Training Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Clarence Vetter, Chairman, called the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 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: Clarence Vetter, Mike Powers, Don Diedrich (Proxy For Warren Strandell), Marc DeMers, Bob Rost, Al Grasser, Ken Vein, and Jeannie Mock.

Guest(s) were: None.

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 JUNE 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ROST, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FY2019 T.I.P. AMENDMENT**

Kouba reported that a while back the NDDOT put out a solicitation for 5339 funds and the Cities Area Transit received some of those funds to purchase buses. She stated that we need to amend our FY2019 T.I.P. to include these funds.

Kouba said that staff and the Technical Advisory Committee are recommending approval of the amendment subject to review and authorization of the purchase from the Grand Forks City Council, it has not been presented to the City Council yet. She added that we won't send the amendment to the State until council approval is given.

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***MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY MOCK, TO APPROVE THE FY2019 T.I.P. AMENDMENT  
SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND APPROVAL FROM THE GRAND FORKS CITY COUNCIL.***

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

***Voting Nay: None***

***Abstain: None***

***Absent: None***

**MATTER OF APPROVAL OF FINAL DRAFT MN 220 NO. STUDY**

Viafara reported that at the Technical Advisory Committee there was a motion to recommend the Executive Policy Board approve the final draft that was submitted for our consideration.

Viafara stated that the study is now finalized and it is important to highlight that this study was supported by strong public involvement; a number of activities took place like we had five steering committee reviews, we had two public open houses, we had two presentations at the East Grand Forks Work Sessions, we have a project dedicated website, and a community public participation survey was administrated, so all of these are the elements that are components of the public involvement and based on this involvement some of the comments received were addressed through the development and advancement of this particular project.

Viafara commented that the idea is that we have a number of recommendations, and those recommendations are located particularly around US 2 and Highway 220, at the intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and 23<sup>rd</sup> and also in the segments of 23<sup>rd</sup> to 140<sup>th</sup> and from 17<sup>th</sup> Street to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, so those are the places where the locations for the improvements are located.

Viafara said that the purpose of these improvements are to:

- 1) Improve Access Control on the main corridor
- 2) Improve Safety for people crossing and having access to the corridor
- 3) Improve mobility/capacity, particularly for heavy vehicles and also for agricultural equipment; and
- 4) Improve pedestrian crossings of Mn 220 No.

Viafara commented that the expectation is that once these improvements are implemented, there will be better access, better traffic control devices, better access management to the different business on the frontage roads, improve traffic signals, and improve transportation accommodations.

Viafara stated that there are three improvements that we are bringing to your consideration. He said that these are important for us because once this document is approved and we gain support, it is important for the MPO to proceed to amend the Long Range Transportation Plan and also to amend the Transportation Improvement Plan in order to place them within the upcoming projects.

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Viafara pointed out that the improvements are:

Near Term (2019-2024)

- a) Improve Pedestrian Crosswalk at Mn 220 No. at 17<sup>th</sup> St. N.W., Estimated Total Cost: \$71,600 – Anticipated Funding Source: 100% MnDOT.

Mid-Term (2025-2034)

- b) Traffic Signal Replacement and Design/Operation Improvements at Mn 220 No. at 14<sup>th</sup> Street N.W., Estimated Total Cost: \$519,088 – Anticipated Funding Sources: 50% State/50% City.
- c) Intersection Control & Geometric Improvements at Mn 220 No. at U.S. 2 – Estimated Total Cost: \$6,021,417 – Anticipated Funding Sources: 90% State/10% City (City is responsible for 25% of Signal and Street Improvements on DeMers Avenue).

Long-Term (2035-2045)

- d) Intersection Control Improvements on Mn 220 No. at 17<sup>th</sup> St. N.W., Estimated Total Costs: \$6,340,700 – Anticipated Funding Sources: 90% State/20% City (City is responsible for improvements on local street approaching the circle).

Viafara stated that staff is requesting that the MPO Executive Policy Board approve the report so that it can be included in the T.I.P. and the Long Range Transportation Plan for the benefit of our communities.

Powers asked why Item B, the traffic signal replacement cost is so high. Haugen responded that it is actually low for a new install, which is closer to \$750,000 now. He said that this is a replacement so they will be utilizing some of the existing signal mast, etc.. He stated that that is the cost of signals these days, but there are also some costs included with geometric improvements for ped crossings and other things as well so the cost estimate is fairly spot on based on MnDOT's cost units. Grasser commented that he unfortunately has to agree that to signalize an intersection and revise it that is not an unusual cost.

Vetter stated that this study was done at the request of MnDOT, correct. Haugen responded that that is correct. Vetter asked, then, is the city share the consultants estimate of what the city share would be or do we need to adjust it for more on the state side and less on the city side. Haugen responded that that is per MnDOT's current policy for when they do an improvement in a city, there is cost share that takes place. He explained that the reason this cost share is 50%/50% at 14<sup>th</sup> Street is because 14<sup>th</sup> is a local street, so four legs to the intersection, MnDOT will cost participate on the two legs and the city will participate on the two lanes that are city streets. He added that the DeMers, Gateway Drive/Central Avenue intersection is state highway on three of the legs so that is why the city share is only 25% for the signal. He said, again, that this is the current MnDOT cost share policy, and if he recalls correctly

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MnDOT did approach the council on the downtown signal replacements and over at the Murray Bridge, and there is a similar cost participation for those signals as well.

***MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY MOCK, TO APPROVE THE FINAL DRAFT REPORT FOR THE MN 220 NO. STUDY, AS SUBMITTED.***

Grasser suggested that it might be a good idea to kind of walk through what the current policies are for the two different States, to the question of how the cost shares come up, just so we have a better awareness. He said that it is complicated, on the North Dakota side there are a half dozen different combinations that can happen so it might not hurt to have that as a reference.

***Voting Aye: Vetter, Powers, Diedrich, Mock, Grasser, DeMers, Rost, and Vein***  
***Voting Nay: None***  
***Abstain: None***  
***Absent: None***

**MATTER OF US2/US81 SKEWED INTERSECTION STUDY UPDATE**

Kouba reported that to date they have held nine public meetings, gathered input from the public and the Steering Committee, and from that input the consultant developed some alternatives for ways to make improvements to the corridor. She stated that they did present these alternatives to the Steering Committee and got their input on them. She said that the next step will be to hold another public meeting on these alternatives to get input from the public as well. She added that they will most likely be suggesting that some of the alternatives be eliminated just because of cost as well as the fact that there is really a lack of true improvement, especially on the safety side with some of them.

Vein asked how influential is public comment on the final recommendation that comes back to us. Kouba responded that the public did get a chance to give their input as to what they think are ways to make improvements, and that input was included in the alternatives; most of the suggestions were one that had already been suggested in the past such as grade separations, etc. She added that they are also planning on setting up a “what alternatives do you like best” ranking system for the public meeting as well. Vein said, and it is more procedural based if they do come up with different rankings, obviously we have an engineering firm, just looking at this you are asking for public feedback, that is still just one piece of the puzzle that says that this is the comment we got, but it isn’t necessarily what is being recommended or will it be recommended because of public comment. Haugen responded that comments will adjust the alternatives, if the comment is something that is bringing new light to an alternative that could make the change then that would result in change; if a comment is such that it would actually degrade the alternative, then the comment would be identified for you and the response would be its considered, but it did negative impact to these aspects of the design so, you will get all that information and the committee will get all that information then the committee will make a recommendation, the Technical Advisory Committee will make a recommendation so you will have all that information to make the final approval of the study. He added that this is not saying that this is the only option that is going to be built at this site it is going to say that these are the feasible remaining alternatives, we discarded some of them, but as you move forward these are the ones you should be

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focusing on for improvements and with the project design and development there is a whole other round of public input that will take place, and refinement, etc.

Vein said, then, that that process would obviously start, it would be kind of at the bottom base of the improvement process, and the Technical Advisory Committee will take a look at all the comments so we will have their recommendations as it comes up, and obviously, like Mr. Haugen just stated, this is kind of the preliminary stage of the design, development, which can be somewhat repetitive, and then that would be the last of the public comment, typically after the design phase, or what. Haugen responded it is pretty much after you have gone to plans and specs and put it out for bid, although there is still opportunity for change orders and so on once you actually move to the physical construction phase.

Vein asked what is the procedure for notifying the public to have public input. Haugen responded that for this study we formed the Steering Committee, and we also have a neighborhood mailing list covering 500-feet around the corridor that we use to inform the public via a mailing, we do a formal notice in the paper, send out press releases, we have our social media engaged and we asked the City of Grand Forks to also push out their social media as well. Vein asked if that process pretty consistent with what you do for almost every project. Haugen responded that the major difference is because it is a specific corridor we can manage a mailing more easily than for a City wide project, so that would be the only difference is that we produce a mailing list and do a specific invite. Vein said then for this type of project you can target the affected parties whereas for a City wide project it is more difficult to reach everyone specifically via a mailing or such. Haugen responded that that is correct as a City wide mailing would be just too massive of an undertaking. He explained that what they do with these corridor studies is more compressed, the mailing list is probably 100 to 150.

DeMers asked, on the access management proposal, how does that get implemented. He said that he would imagine that you couldn't just force private properties to close their access or is that like a phase-out as they do construction you just don't allow them to recreate that access, or how does that work. Haugen responded that it works both ways. He explained that with the base alternative you will notice that there is a median in place on both sides of the corridor, and with that median in place than the individual accesses could be further mitigated or removed, or turned into three quarter access. He stated that the one item that is identified is that 13<sup>th</sup> becomes an important use of the backage road, if you will. He said that most of the properties will still maintain access to a public street, but it is really kind of a case by case thing, and as the project design gets into it that is when the real decisions will be made on a property by property case by case basis.

DeMers asked about safety issues, if there are any, and if so how they might be addressed. Haugen responded that there is an identified safety issue with all of these accesses. He said that our safety performance would push us towards trying to ease the full movements of all of these, remove most of the full movements of these because statistically they are proven to have crash history associated with them. He stated, though, that on a case by case basis, for instance the old tire shop location is being proposed for redevelopment, and the City is reviewing the access that exists on the property and are reviewing how this study recommendations fit with that proposed redevelopment from the developer, so at that time that piece of property might be, because of the redevelopment, or as something that is not

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likely to be redeveloped anytime soon then it might be part of an improvement project to modify the access. He added that the basic alternative is to make all accesses right-in/right-out.

Haugen commented that one of the things that is rising to the top of the recommendations is the removal of the Mill Spur and relocating it. He said that when looking at the summary of rankings that is the top ranked alternative, to have the spur removed and use the Glasston Subdivision as the way to connect to the property to the north of Gateway. Vein asked if there was a map showing this available. Haugen responded that they are working on a map to show where the railroad relocation would be.

Discussion ensued on how this relocation would occur and what the benefits would be if done, and what the negative impacts would be if it isn't done.

**MATTER OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION UPDATE**

Kouba reported that at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting a discussion was held about some of the major issues going on with our Functional Classification.

Kouba stated that we did remove some of the stubs that the NDDOT said we shouldn't include as they aren't connecting to other functionally classified roadways.

Kouba said that the County Engineer was at the meeting and did make several suggestions regarding county roads that are located further out from the urban area, all of which we will be implementing.

Kouba commented that there was also discussion held concerning Adams Drive, specifically whether or not it should be classified a local street, and the consensus was that it should so that will be implemented as well.

Kouba stated that there was some discussion about the downtown area as well, specifically the possibility of lowering the classification of some streets, especially north of University Avenue, to collectors instead of minor arterials. She added that this will be examined further and the information will be brought back to the Technical Advisory Committee for their review and comments.

Grasser commented that the DOT is restricting what we are supposed to show on our classified system map, like stubs and things like that, so what they thought, from a planning standpoint, it is important for us to show that we expect some of these streets to become classified in the future so we may end up carrying two sets of maps; one is the official classified map that meets all of the DOT requirements, and the other might be a map that shows what we are expecting to happen in the future so when somebody wants to know what is being built or what the future going to be in a certain area they can see that we are planning on having arterial roads or collector roads in some of those spots, so some of that discussion is going to be filled yet too, and they can combine the two into one map so we may be carrying one official and one local official map. Haugen stated that they will both be official maps of the MPO, but one will just show current functional classification and the next possible extensions to four years out, and the other would be part of our long range transportation plan.

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Vein asked if the primary act of this, whether we move those, is loss of federal funds for construction, is it more of a financial issue with regard to a classified street. Haugen responded that it is turning out to be a bit of a gamesmanship, for instance these stubs that are highlighted, by not being on the functional class they would not be eligible for federal aid, but if you show you are going to do an improvement there that connects it so it is no longer a stub, etc., you amend your functional class to have it on as a functional class roadway, so it is kind of a gamesmanship, you have to show that you have the funding committed so it can be in the T.I.P., whether it is 100% local money or you're asking for federal funds, you sort of have to do this. He added that, as stated before, this might become an annual amendment of the functional class map because it is now tied to the T.I.P. process, eligibility for federal funds, where in the past we could do a functional class and hold on it for ten years. He said that taking them off does make them ineligible, but it also is not impossible to make them re-eligible for federal funds.

Mock said that with the downtown roads that you were talking about for reclassification, is that based on a certain threshold number that is very descriptive of the DOT or do we have any subjective input into that. Kouba responded that there is some traffic volumes that go into the distinctions between the various classifications, which is one of the reasons why north of University a lot of those roads do not get as much traffic volume and also there is the case of, the one way pairs are so close to Business 2, that is also classified as a minor arterial, so it is an issue of just that closeness to other classified roads is also a factor to consider in the downtown which is one of the reasons we are suggesting reclassifying some of those streets.

Grasser commented that, again, along those lines of thoughts, the original map that went to the Technical Committee had a much larger list of potentially declassifying streets and frontage roads and things, and the discussion that they had, as Mr. Haugen mentioned, and the gamesmanship, it really didn't appear that there was a benefit for locals to declassify because we would remove our eligibility to access funds. He added that the reality is that for the most part there isn't going to be funds to give to them anyway, but one of the examples that was used was with some of the downtown streets, that five years ago there was actually some discussion to declassify some of these things, and then along comes the governor with a new program, and it's a good thing we didn't declassify any of those streets, because that whole area turned into a priority now, on the State side of things. He stated that what came out of the committee was really very limited declassification at this point in time, although we might downgrade some of the classifications, but eliminating them doesn't seem to have much of an upside on the local side.

Haugen said that the thing that hasn't really been discussed yet, particularly on the frontage roads, is that we also have that pavement management performance measure and those frontage roads he believes are anchored and are a big weight on our condition ratings, so that might be the next thing we talk about with the frontage is incorporate the pavement management data to see how that really impacts our pavement performance targets because, again, they probably are federal aid eligible, yet they aren't as high a priority as other roadways so we may not ever receive that federal fund but the fact that they impact our performance targets and federal aid system, that might be something that we discuss with the Technical Advisory Committee and others before making a final recommendation.

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Grasser commented that it isn't too hard to envision down the pike where Federal Highway or whomever will make keeping those classified such an onerous issue that we will effectively be forced to get rid of them just because it won't be worth the effort to do the record keeping and deal with the impacts you said they have on our performance measures, so it won't be too hard to envision that coming down the pike someday, but for today he thinks we should hang on to them.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one present for comment.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

a. Joint County Meeting

Vetter said that he would just like to remind everyone that there is a Joint County Meeting on August 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. at the Grand Forks County Building to discuss Merrifield Bridge.

b. 2019 Annual Work Program Project Update

Haugen reported that this is our monthly project progress report so that you know where we are at with the key projects that are in our work program.

c. Approval Of Bill/Check List For 6/15/19 to 7/12/19 Period

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ROST TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED BILL/CHECK LIST FOR THE 6/15/19 TO 7/12/19 PERIOD, AS SUBMITTED.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

d. Comment On June Meeting/Minutes

Powers stated that when reading through the June meeting minutes, and he thought of this last month when he looked at the audience in the galley that Peggy had her work cut out for her, but if you look at your minutes there are about 8 pages just from the 32<sup>nd</sup> Bridge Feasibility Study item, and he thought she did a real good job with a real difficult subject and he just wanted to publicly thank her.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY VEIN, TO ADJOURN THE JULY 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, MEETING OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 1:35 P.M.***

***MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.***

Respectfully submitted,  
Peggy McNelis, Office Manager



**Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO**  
**Transaction List by Vendor**  
 June 15 through July 12, 2019

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
<b>AFLAC.</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-585.76
<b>Alerus Financial</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,359.90
<b>CitiBusiness Card</b>							
Bill	06/26/2019	Acct. ...	Charges For ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		-SPLIT-	-997.53
Bill Pmt -Check	06/26/2019	6764	Charges For ...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-997.53
<b>Fidelity Security Life.</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	6760	50790-1043	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-16.82
<b>Liberty Business Systems, Inc.</b>							
Bill	06/18/2019	Inv. #...	Contract Bas...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-147.87
Bill Pmt -Check	06/18/2019	6758	Contract Bas...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-147.87
<b>LSNB as Trustee for PEHP</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	PEHP		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-165.00
<b>Madison Nat'l Life</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	6761		104 · Checking		215 · Disability...	-90.30
<b>Mike's</b>							
Bill	06/19/2019		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-115.00
Bill Pmt -Check	06/19/2019	6759	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-115.00
<b>Minnesota Department of Revenue</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-207.00
Liability Check	07/12/2019	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-208.00
<b>Minnesota Life Insurance Company</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	6762		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-117.78
<b>Nationwide Retirement Solutions</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-640.92
Liability Check	07/12/2019	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-640.92
<b>NDPERS</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,853.50
Liability Check	06/28/2019	NDPE...		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,819.16
<b>QuickBooks Payroll Service</b>							
Liability Check	06/26/2019		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-8,299.25
Liability Check	07/09/2019		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-8,273.69
<b>Standard Insurance Company</b>							
Liability Check	06/28/2019	6763		104 · Checking		217 · Dental P...	-158.60
<b>State Tax Commissioner</b>							
Liability Check	07/12/2019	NDST...	45038827301	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-597.00