



METRO CONNECTION

The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Volume 10 Issue 1 March 2012

STAY CONNECTED IN THIS ISSUE

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- TH 10/75/Center Avenue Study
- MAT Board Update
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CALENDAR EVENTS

The Metro COG Policy Board meets the 3rd Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m. The Transportation Technical Committee meets every 2nd Thursday at 10:00 a.m. Metro COG holds frequent meetings and events. For a current listing of meetings and events go to www.fmmetrocog.org. If you are interested in being directly contacted about meetings and events held by Metro COG, email Metro COG at metrococ@fmmetrocog.org and ask to be added to the interested person's mailing list.

POLICY BOARD

2012 Officers

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METRO COG STAFF

Wade E. Kline — *Executive Director*
Peggy Harter — *Senior Transp Planner*
Joe Nigg — *Principal Planner*
Mikel Kunza — *Planner*
Katie White — *Trans Planning Assist*
Joan Geyer — *Executive Secretary*
Jake Coryell — *Trans Planning Intern*

Preparation of Metro COG's Unified Planning Work Program

Metro COG is beginning the process of creating the 2013-2014 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP includes all Metro COG project activities and reflects the priority planning needs of the metropolitan area. The UPWP serves as the technical and planning tool to refine and define the transportation needs of the metropolitan area.

What is the UPWP?

The UPWP is the list of projects that Metro COG undertakes over a two year period. A listing of 2011 UPWP accomplishments is listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Why is this important?

Metro COG acts as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Fargo-Moorhead area and supports planning and programming to address transportation needs and issues. Metro COG coordinates local, state, and federal activities. In order to ensure the funding is used appropriately, the public is encouraged to provide feedback on the transportation priorities of the metropolitan area.

Who approves the UPWP?

The first step of the UPWP update is to gather input from area interested persons, local units of government, and the public. This edition of Metro Connection serves as Metro COG's notice regarding its intent to update the UPWP. In March and early April Metro COG will meet with local and state technical staff to determine

their priorities and planning needs. The Metro COG Policy Board will eventually approve and adopt the UPWP later in the fall of 2012.

What happens after the UPWP is approved?

Projects listed in the 2013-2014 UPWP will be studied and analyzed, and will result in the development of policy, planning and programming related recommendations. Eventually, funding may be identified and projects may be constructed or policies may be changed to reflect the results from UPWP projects.

How can I get involved?

Enclosed in this newsletter is a survey. Complete and return the survey to assist in identifying metropolitan transportation planning needs. A UPWP survey is also available through Metro COG's website.

Metro COG will be hosting a Community Transportation Forum on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 3:00pm at the Metro COG offices (One 2nd Street North, Case Plaza, Suite 232, Fargo, ND 58102). Members of the public are encouraged to attend the Community Forum to share input regarding the development of the UPWP, and learn more about the projects and activities of Metro COG. Contact Katie White with additional questions (white@fmmetrocog.org).



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METRO COG New Projects

Metropolitan Demographic Forecast

Metro COG has selected the consultant team of Ulteig Engineering and McKibben Demographic Research to complete the Metropolitan Demographic Forecast Study. The Metropolitan Demographic Study will estimate population, households, and jobs in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area through the year 2040. This study is completed every five years in order to maintain accurate and relevant information.

The forecasts are a crucial element to Metro COG's metropolitan planning program and specifically important in respect to efforts to maintain and update the regional travel demand model. The model produces critical information such as traffic forecasts which are based on population, households, and job patterns within the metropolitan area.

The updated Metropolitan Demographic Study will reevaluate demographic projections which consider 2010 Census numbers and assist in the development of the 2010 base year travel demand model. The Study will also be used as the basis for the Long Range Transportation Plan update, which will begin in the fall of 2012 and will cover a planning horizon to the year 2040.

The Demographic Forecast Study will take approximately nine months to complete with an anticipated final report in late 2012. As data and analysis becomes available the technical information will be made available on the Metro COG website. The Metro COG Policy Board will provide input regarding the preferred forecasting methodology and will complete vetting of forecasts under two different growth scenarios, which include a "most likely" and "high growth" demographic scenarios. For more information contact Joe Nigg, nigg@fmmetrocog.org.

Intelligent Transportation Systems Plan

In April Metro COG will start the update of Metropolitan Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan. The ITS Plan outlines the deployment principles and strategies regarding ITS for the FM Metropolitan Area. The current ITS Plan was last approved in 2008. ITS involves the deployment of traffic detection, data collection, surveillance, and notification systems aimed at improving mobility within the FM Metropolitan area.

The ITS Plan update will focus specifically on consolidating and updating recommended actions and strategies from recently completed studies. ITS and traffic operations issues have received substantial focus by Metro COG since the 2008 ITS Plan was adopted. Based on the work of Metro COG and its partners there is now substantial consensus among local traffic operators regarding strategies to improve traffic operations within the FM Metropolitan Area through ITS deployment and signal system integration.

The update of the 2008 ITS Plan will expand upon past ITS plans and include three important additional elements: (1) a Metropolitan-wide signal system assessment; (2) a Regional Concept for Traffic Operations (RCTO); and (3) Transit ITS utilization and deployment strategy. The ITS Plan update will propose ambitious improvements which will aim to improve the operations of the regions most significant surface transportation assets. Metro COG anticipates the ITS Plan update will take about a year to complete, ending in April 2013. Technical reports and other information will be periodically posted to Metro COG's website. For more information regarding the ITS Plan update, contact Wade E. Kline, kline@fmmetrocog.org.



**Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (Metro COG)
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
Issue/Project Identification Questionnaire**

Thank you for completing this survey to help identify projects for the UPWP (see page 1 of this newsletter for more information). Please list specific information regarding an issue you feel requires analysis or study. Metro COG's plans and studies typically focus on a mode of transportation as well as a location to focus on. Providing detailed information here will help Metro COG develop a work plan to adequately address these concerns. You can also submit this survey online by going to our website: www.fmmetrocog.org.

This information will be used by the Metro COG Policy Board to establish planning priorities and activities to be carried out within the FM Metropolitan Area in 2013 and 2014. We have also included examples of similar work Metro COG completed in 2011-2012.

Transportation Planning & Technical Assistance

Please specify a road, intersection, or area that needs to be addressed, and what it specifically needs to be improved. E.G. transportation studies, corridor plans/studies, intelligent transportation system (ITS) implementation activities or analysis.

Examples: 19th Avenue North Corridor Study in Fargo; 9th Street/Veterans Boulevard Corridor Study in Fargo and West Fargo.

Transit Planning & Technical Assistance

Please specify a route, road, or intersection that needs to be addressed, and what it specifically needs to be improved.

E.G. Route analysis, MAT Paratransit analysis/evaluation, Metro Senior Ride analysis/evaluation

Examples: Moorhead Evening Service Study; Metropolitan Designated Stop Study

Bicycle & Pedestrian Planning & Technical Assistance

Please specify a road, intersection, or area that needs to be addressed, and what it specifically needs in order to be improved.

Examples: Safe Routes to School planning and technical assistance.

Community Planning & Community Development (including non-transportation related/special projects)

Please specify an area or region that needs non-transportation issues to be addressed.

E.G. Land use or zoning related work, comprehensive planning and or neighborhood plans or planning; housing studies; special issues forums or task force/work group formation to investigate or address issues of regional/metropolitan significance

From:

Place
Stamp
Here

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METRO COG Public Input Opportunities

Highway 10/75, Main Avenue and Center Avenue Corridor Study

Moorhead: Center Avenue/TH 10/TH 75

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Metro COG will hold a public meeting on **Tuesday March 27, 2012 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** The meeting will be an open house format. The meeting will be held at Courtyard by Marriott (1080 28th Avenue South, Moorhead, MN.) The study corridors include TH 75/8th Street (20th Ave S to Main Ave), Center Avenue (Red River to 8th Street), and TH 10 (Red River to 8th St along Main Ave, Main Ave to Center Ave along 8th St, and 8th St to TH 336 along Center Ave).

Preliminary alternatives have been developed based on issues that were identified from technical analysis and as a result of comments received at the first round of public input meetings. Some of the preliminary alternatives include access closures and modifications, turn lane additions/improvements, changes in intersection control, roadway alignment shifts, roadway jurisdictional changes, railroad grade separation, improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities, etc. The purpose of this public input meeting will be to provide an opportunity for public involvement and comments in the review of preliminary alternatives developed. No decisions have been made at this time. Your input is important to this study.

Information regarding the TH 10, TH 75, and Center Avenue Corridor Studies will be available for review in the Metro COG office (address below), or online at www.fmmetrocog.org. If you are not able to attend the public input meeting, you can join the meeting via webcast by accessing a link from Metro COG's website. The alternative layouts will be available online for viewing during the live webcasting and approximately one week prior to the public input meeting. Written comments will be accepted by Metro COG until Noon, April 3, 2012. Written comments can be submitted in writing to Metro COG at One North Second Street, Suite 232, Fargo, ND 58102; or by email at harter@fmmetrocog.org. All public comments received will be reviewed and considered by the Study Review Committee for the project and will be included within the final corridor study document. Contact Peggy Harter, Senior Transportation Planner, at 701.232.3242 (Ext. 33) if additional information is required.

MAT Board Enters 8th Year Under Guidance of New Joint Powers Agreement

The Metropolitan Area Transit (MAT) Board entered its eighth (8th) year of proceedings in 2012. The MAT Board was originally formed in 2004 through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) by the Cities of Fargo and Moorhead. The MAT Board was tasked with overseeing system coordination, with a key function being the planning and development of the Metro Transit Garage.

The original JPA updated in 2007, and most recently updated in December of 2011. The MAT Board has gradually evolved to oversee an increasing sphere of MATBUS operations, with the objective to ensure the coordinated delivery of public transit within the FM Metropolitan area. Full voting membership on the MAT Board is as follows: City of Moorhead; City of Fargo; West Fargo; Dilworth; NDSU; MSUM; Concordia; M-State; and Valley Senior Services. The MAT Board is chaired by a citizen who is jointly appointed by Fargo and Moorhead. The current Chair of the MAT Board is Kevin Hanson.

Per the updated JPA, The MAT Board is responsible for recommendations to local units of governments regarding budgets, fares, U Pass agreements, Driver Service Contracts, Marketing/Outreach, Capital Planning/Facility Development, and System Operations and Service Planning.

In 2012 the MAT Board will work with Metro COG to review previous alternatives and options regarding the development of a more consolidated metropolitan transit system. MATBUS is currently a separate but highly coordinated transit system. Several studies and analysis have been completed over the past twenty five (25) years to understand options by which a single entity would be created to manage and operate public transit within the metropolitan area. In 2012 the MAT Board has asked Metro COG review past coordination concepts and develop a new framework to ensure continued coordination of transit services. For information about the MAT Board, or to be directly notified regarding MAT Board meetings please contact Mikel Kunza at Kunza@fmmetrocog.org.



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You receive this newsletter because you are identified as person and/or agency who is considered important to the implementation of Metro COG projects and programs. If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter like or to begin receiving this newsletter electronically, please contact Joan Geyer at: geyer@fmmetrocog.org.

METRO CONNECTION

METRO COG 2011 Accomplishments

Metro COG completed several studies and reports in 2011 responding to the needs of its local units of government and other interested parties. Metro COG's work is guided by the priorities established within its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Major 2011 Accomplishments

- I-94 and 34th Street/SE Main Avenue Interstate Access Change Request;
- 19th Avenue North Corridor Study;
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update;
- 2012-2016 Transit Development Plan;
- West Fargo Sheyenne Street/Main Avenue Framework Study;
- Metropolitan Wide Traffic Counts;
- Metropolitan Aerial Photography Project;
- CSAH 9/40th Avenue Technical Memorandum;

- Harwood Quiet Zone Studies;
- Traffic Operations Incident Management Strategy;
- Lindenwood/Gooseberry Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge MOU/Funding Coordination;
- MOU Regarding Reconstruction of 12th Avenue North (West Fargo, Fargo, Cass County);
- Household Origin-Destination Study;
- Title VI & Non-Discrimination Plan;
- 30 public input meetings involving 375 citizens, interested persons, and other stakeholders, with a total of 3500 individual viewing public comment materials via Metro COG's website.

Metro COG's January 2012 Edition of its Project Summary Update and its 2011 Annual Report are available online.

Metro COG is committed to ensuring all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability/handicap, sexual orientation, or income status have access to Metro COG's programs and services. Meeting facilities will be accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Metro COG will make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for translation services for meeting proceedings and related materials. Please contact Joan Geyer, Metro COG Executive Secretary at 701-232-3242 at least two days in advance of the meeting if any special accommodations are required for any member of the public to be able to participate in the meeting.