

**540th Meeting of the
FM Metro COG Transportation Technical Committee
Thursday, April 13, 2023 – 10:00 am
Metro COG Conference Room**

Members Present:

Jonathan	Atkins	City of Moorhead Traffic Engineering
Jason	Benson	Cass County Highway Engineering
Maegin	Elshaug	City of Fargo (alternate for Nicole Crutchfield)
Jeremy	Gorden	City of Fargo Transportation Engineering
Cindy	Gray	Metro COG
Jace	Hellman	City of Horace – Community Development Director
Robin	Huston	City of Moorhead Planning
Don	Lorsung	City of Dilworth Community Development
Aaron	Nelson	West Fargo City Planning
Grace	Puppe	Cass County Planning
Joe	Raso	GFMEDC
Mary	Safgren	MnDOT – District 4
Jordan	Smith	MATBUS (alternate for Julie Bommelman)
Justin	Sorum	Clay County Engineering
Brit	Stevens	NDSU – Transportation Manager
Lori	Van Beek	City of Moorhead, MATBUS
Andrew	Wrucke	City of West Fargo Engineering
Wayne	Zacher	NDDOT – Local Government Division

Members Absent:

Julie	Bommelman	City of Fargo, MATBUS (alternate present)
Nicole	Crutchfield	City of Fargo Planning (alternate present)
Matthew	Jacobson	Clay County Planning
Kelly	Krapu	Freight Representative - TrueNorth Compliance Service

Others Present:

Adam	Altenburg	Metro COG
Mariah	Anhalt	Stantec
Paul	Bervik	Metro COG
Angie	Bolstad	Stantec
Jaron	Capps	Metro COG
Connor	Cox	WSB
James	Dahlman	Interstate Engineering, City of Horace
Ari	Del Rosario	Metro COG
Brenda	Derrig	City of Fargo
Joe	Devore	KLJ
Dylan	Dunn	Moore Engineering
Dan	Farnsworth	Metro COG
Wade	Frank	Stantec
Ben	Griffith	Metro COG
Matthew	Huettl	HDR

Will	Hutchings	Stantec
Paul	Jensen	Public
Brian	King	HDR
Matt	Kinsella	Apex
Savanna	Leach	Metro COG
Michael	Maddox	Metro COG
Brent	Muscha	Apex
Malachi	Peterson	SRF
Brian	Ray	HDR
Ayden	Schaffler	Metro COG
Erika	Shepard	MnDOT
Kalvin	Strecker	Houston Engineering
Jacob	Weiss	SRF

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am, on April 13, 2023 by Chair Gray. A quorum was present.

2. Approve the 540 TTC Meeting Agenda

Chair Gray asked if there were any questions or changes to the 540 TTC Meeting Agenda.

Motion: Approve the 540 TTC Meeting Agenda.

Mr. Hellman moved, seconded by Ms. Puppe

MOTION, PASSED.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVE March 9, 2023 TTC MEETING MINUTES

Chair Gray asked if there were any questions or changes to the March 9, 2023 TTC Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Approve the March 9, 2023 TTC Minutes.

Mr. Lorsung moved, seconded by Mr. Atkins

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment Opportunity

No public comments were made or received.

5. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) – Request for Proposals

Mr. Altenburg presented the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) request for proposals. Metro COG is seeking review and recommendation of the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP). The plan is intended to provide a framework of innovative strategies and implementation actions intended to reduce transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries and support federal safety initiatives.

The CSAP will identify safety issues and specific actions that can be implemented to improve safety for people traveling by any mode throughout the region. The plan will develop recommendations for both motorized and non-motorized modes in the roadway network as well as other elements including land use, transit, freight, and other community factors to create a comprehensive course of action. The plan will address federal and state regulations, including design guidance as well as performance management goals, measures, and targets, and will promote equitable outcomes.

A budget of \$250,000 has been allocated for this study with 80 percent (\$200,000) coming from an SS4A Action Plan Grant that was awarded to Metro COG on January 31. The selection award requires a 20 percent (\$50,000) local match. It is proposed that the project would begin in early June 2023 and be completed by November 2024.

Mr. Zacher asked if this project will need to be added to the TIP before adding this to the UPWP. Mr. Altenburg said that he has not seen any information stating it would be necessary. Ms. Sperry said she was not certain, but she would look into this.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Comprehensive Safety Action Plan RFP.

Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Mr. Hellman

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) – FHWA Agreement

Mr. Altenburg presented an agreement with FHWA pertaining to the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A). Metro COG is currently working with the FHWA North Dakota Division Office to review the general terms and conditions under the FY22 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Discretionary Grant Program and complete an SS4A Action Plan Grant Agreement. This agreement must be executed before any award funds can be allocated toward contracted planning services for the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) anticipated to begin in June.

Motion: Authorize Metro COG's Policy Board Chair to sign the FY22 SS4A Action Plan Grant Agreement upon final review and approval by the FHWA North Dakota Division Office and the FHWA Office of Acquisition and Grants Management.

Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Mr. Atkins

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Electric Vehicle Readiness Study – Consultant Selection

Mr. Altenburg presented HDR as the highest-ranked consultant that proposed on the RFP. In February, Metro COG's Policy Board approved the RFP to secure a consultant to complete the technical and planning tasks outlined in the scope of work under an approved budget of \$150,000. Metro COG received five

proposals before the March 24 closing date from the following lead consultants: Alliant, HDR, SRF, Stantec, and WSB. The selection committee met with and interviewed consultants on April 6 and April 10 to further understand each consultant's technical qualifications, task deliverables, and past project experience. Selection committee members included Metro COG, City of West Fargo, City of Fargo, City of Dilworth, City of Moorhead, Cass County, Moorhead Public Service, and Clay County.

The initial cost proposal form submitted by HDR is \$149,953.83. Total project costs would be split 80 percent between funding through the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and a 20 percent local match from Metro COG's member jurisdictions. A CRP project agreement is required before a contract with the consultant can be signed. It is anticipated that this agreement will be ready in May.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the selection of HDR to complete the Electric Vehicle Readiness Study pending contract negotiations to finalize the scope and fee, and the development of a final CRP project agreement with NDDOT.

Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Wrucke

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (EPA Grant)

Mr. Altenburg presented the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, an EPA Grant. . This program, through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), will provide grants to states, local governments, tribes, and territories to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides an investment of \$5 billion to support to develop and implement local greenhouse gas reduction strategies. This two-staged grant program provides funding of \$250 million for non-competitive planning grants and \$4.6 billion for competitive implementation grants.

The presumptive allocations for planning grants include \$3 million for states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The 67 most populous Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) would each receive \$1 million provided a lead entity is identified. Planning grants do not require matching funds from recipients.

For states and MSAs to be eligible for planning grants, they must submit a Notice of Intent to Participate (NOIP). The state deadline for NOIPs was March 31 and the metropolitan area deadline is April 28. As of April 2, 46 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and two MSAs have submitted a NOIP.

Since four states declined, an additional 12 MSAs are now eligible for funding bringing the total to 79 metropolitan areas. If additional MSAs decline funding and/or are unable to identify an entity to serve as a lead organization, funds would be available for the next metropolitan area on the national MSA list. The

EPA is encouraging organizations representing metropolitan areas beyond the presumptive list of 79 MSAs to submit a NOIP by April 28.

The Fargo, ND-MN MSA is currently listed at 193 in terms of population. However, many larger MSAs or regions that closely align with MSA boundaries already have climate action plans in place. The EPA expects to issue the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for implementation grants later in 2023.

If Metro COG is initially successful with its NOIP, a workplan and budget will need to be completed by May 31. Planning grants for MSAs likely be awarded through cooperative agreements in July or August of 2023.

9. Interstate Operations Analysis – Project Update

Ms. Gray presented an update to the on-going Interstate Operations Analysis.

10. 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #6

Mr. Bervik presented Amendment #6 to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. A public notice was published in The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, which advertised the public meeting, detailed how to request more information, and provided information on how to make public comment regarding the proposed amendment. The public notice advertised that all public comments will be accepted until 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Thursday, April 20, 2023.

The proposed amendment to the 2023-2026 TIP is as follows:

1. Modification of Project 0235032: Electric Vehicle Readiness Study across all Metro COG jurisdictions (2023). Updated project description.
2. New Project 4236033: Replacing lighting heads with LED lighting heads throughout the City of Fargo. (2023).

Motion: Recommend approval of Amendment 6 of the Metro COG 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the Policy Board.

Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Mr. Hellman

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

11. Carbon Reduction Program Solicitation Reminder

Mr. Bervik reminded the committee that Metro COG recently opened the solicitation for projects for the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The agency will be accepting North Dakota project applications for federal fiscal years 2024 (\$1,120,000) and 2025 (\$1,140,000), and Minnesota project applications for FY2024 (\$122,000) only. FY 2026 will be programmed at future solicitation as well as FY 2025 in Minnesota.

12. Moorhead I-94 & 20th Street Consultant Selection

Mr. Farnsworth presented Stantec as the highest-ranked consulting firm who proposed on the RFP. This project has a budgeted amount of \$150,000 (\$120,000 funded using Federal CPG funds, \$15,000 using MnDOT funds, and \$15,000 using City of Moorhead funds).

The deadline for consulting firms to submit proposals was March 17th. Metro COG received proposals from three firms – KLJ, Stantec, and WSB.

Metro COG and the consultant selection panel met on Tuesday April 11th to interview the firms and select the top ranked firm. Upon interviews with the three consultant teams, Stantec was the highest ranked firm. Stantec's cost proposal came in at \$149,945.56, which is within the budgeted amount.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of Metro COG entering into a contract with Stantec for the Moorhead I-94 & 20th St Interchange Analysis.

Mr. Atkins moved, seconded by Mr. Lorsung

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

13. West Metro Perimeter Highway Study Request for Proposals

Mr. Farnsworth presented the Request for Proposals for the West Metro Perimeter Highway Study. The purpose of this study is to determine the feasibility, alignment, costs, and right-of-way necessary for a perimeter highway just west of the Fargo-Moorhead metro area. This study will build off of the Interstate Operations Analysis which is approaching completion.

A portion of this perimeter highway is anticipated to be adjacent to the FM Area Diversion where land has been acquired for the Diversion project. The timing of this study is critical in that excess right-of-way purchased for the Diversion project is available for use of a potential perimeter highway. In the near future, this property will need to be placed on the market, however the opportunity exists for the County to purchase this property which could be used for a future highway corridor.

The West Metro Perimeter Highway Study will be a consultant-led study and is in Metro COG's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (Amendment 1) for the year 2023. The budget for this study is \$250,000 with 80% (\$200,000) coming from Metro COG's CPG funds and 20% (\$50,000) from Cass County.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the West Metro Perimeter Highway Study RFP

Mr. Benson moved, seconded by Ms. Van Beek

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

***Mr. Sorum left the meeting**

14. 25th Street Corridor Study Contract Amendment #1

Mr. Maddox presented a contract amendment to the 25th Street Corridor Study. This study is in advance of a planned reconstruction project on the northern portion of the roadway between 32nd Ave S and 40th Ave S. The overall focus of the study has been to assess how the roadway is utilized, its function in the overall transportation network, and the desired look and feel of the corridor.

The study included the development of three (3) corridor alternative scenarios, along with intersection configuration sub-alternatives. After the recent conclusion of the alternative development process and analysis phase of the project, City of Fargo staff wanted the consultant to develop additional corridor configuration alternatives, revise existing alternatives, and analyze shifting the alignment of the roadway. At that point in the project, Metro COG asked the consultant to prepare an amendment prior to completing any of the requested work.

The total proposed fee of \$12,594.59 would cover the development of those additional tasks as proposed. The City of Fargo has agreed to fund the full amount of the proposed fee with local funding.

The consultant has agreed that they will complete unfulfilled tasks in the original project scope of work after the tasks in Amendment #1 are completed. This includes the remaining portions of public engagement, document preparation and delivery, and guiding the final plan through the approval process.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the Amendment #1 to the 25th Street Corridor Study contract with KLJ.

Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Mr. Hellman

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

15. Fargo Transportation Plan Contract Amendment #2

Mr. Maddox presented contract amendment #2 to the Fargo Transportation Plan. The Fargo Transportation Plan has been moving forward since the last contract amendment in June 2022. That amendment included tasks that would retool portions of the document. As the Study Review Committee, which consists of department heads from the City of Fargo and Metro COG staff, worked through those elements, new focus areas emerged that City of Fargo staff would like to concentrate on. They feel this plan should span all City of Fargo departments and be linked to not only their comprehensive plan, but also their growth plan effort that just kicked off.

There is approximately \$12,000 remaining in the project budget as changed through Amendment #1. The consultant is proposing an additional not-to-exceed budget of an additional \$50,000. The City of Fargo - Engineering Department agreed that they would be able to fund the additional work solely with local funds in the amount of \$50,000.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of Amendment #2 to the Fargo Transportation Plan contract with Kimley-Horn.

Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Mr. Hellman

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

***Mr. Nelson left the meeting**

16. 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program – Potential Amendments

On March 13 of 2023, Metro COG participated in the ND MPO Directors' Meeting – 1st Quarter 2023. This meeting involves staff from the MPOs, NDDOT, FHWA, FTA, and in this particular case, City of Minot staff, since Minot will be designated as a new MPO starting in FY 2024.

NDDOT explained that FHWA is scrutinizing the lag in spending of Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funds designated for North Dakota MPOs. In an effort to get the funds programmed and authorized for use, NDDOT asked the three MPOs for an updated 2023 budget. Metro COG is already in a position where our UPWP needs to be updated to:

- add the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan and adjust staff hours to accommodate time spent on the plan,
- adjust a few operations and overhead costs, including the need for a new and upgraded server.

Several project-related opportunities have arisen and have been discussed with local partners.

17. 2050 Jobs and Households

Mr. Capps presented the 2050 Jobs and Households data. Over the past few months, Metro COG has been attempting to characterize future growth patterns for the entirety of the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). Breaking down jurisdictional data into Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs), this approach has been taken to ensure information accuracy for future Metro COG projects. With this, Metro COG is synthesizing information at a TAZ level that illustrates full-build and 2050 development scenarios. These analyses will be implemented into our regional travel demand model (TDM) and provide a context to growth dynamics for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

All jurisdictions have been sent their respective 2050 growth maps.

***Mr. Atkins left the meeting**

18. Updated UZA Proposal

Mr. Capps presented the proposed updated Urbanized Area Boundary. Metro COG followed parameters as instructed by FHWA and NDDOT to create the proposed boundary:

- Boundary needs to encompass the entire Census Urban Area Boundary
- The boundary should encompass one contiguous area
- Maintain consistency with highway functional classifications
- The boundary should not split roadways or ramps
- Simple, without irregularities
- Align with existing planning boundaries or other physical features
- The boundary should include areas with urban characteristics, such as airports, industrial areas, transportation terminals, major activity centers, etc.

After internal discussion and consideration of the UZA guidance provided by FHWA and NDDOT, we believe the most proactive approach to updating the UZA is to extend the boundary to ¼ mile west of the diversion footprint.

City boundaries were used in some instances where a significant roadway or the diversion alignment did not make sense. The inclusion of the City of Harwood in the UZA is recommended due to the adjacency to the City of Fargo and the flood protection that will be provided by the diversion.

Motion: Recommend Policy Board approval of the Proposed Urban Boundary Map for NDDOT Preliminary Submittal.

Mr. Lorsung moved, seconded by Ms. Huston

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

19. ND MPO Directors Meeting Update / CPG Funding Formula

Ms. Gray provided a brief recap of the first quarter ND MPO Directors Meeting and the CPG funding formula. The ND MPO Directors had a meeting in mid-March with NDDOT, FHWA and FTA. The City of Minot also participated due to the results of the 2020 Census, which will result in Minot and Surrey (and possibly Burlington) becoming a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

One of the topics discussed at the meeting was the formula used between the three MPOs to split up the CPG funds.

That topic led to an NDDOT discussion regarding the Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funding balances of the three MPOs and for the state overall. NDDOT, as the MPO oversight agency, is under significant pressure from FHWA to improve the spending rate of the CPG funds. The BisMan MPO recently began using their 2021 CPG funds. Metro COG is significantly into our portion of the 2022 grant, and GF-EGF is nearly done with their portion of the CPG grant and needs to open the 2023 grant in order to stay funded.

As a result of the issues described above, each MPO has been asked to provide an updated 2023 budget to NDDOT.

20. Remix Streets Demonstration

This was removed from the agenda due to meeting length. Ms. Gray stated that any committee members can contact Mr. Del Rosario for any demonstrations or questions.

21. Agency Updates

Metro COG staff wanted to acknowledge Ms. Gray's upcoming retirement, as this will be her last TTC meeting. Staff thanked her for her service.

22. Additional Business

No additional business.

23. Adjourn

The 540 Regular Meeting of the TTC was adjourned on April 13, 2023 at 12:12 a.m.

THE NEXT FM METRO COG TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE HELD May 11, 2023, 10:00 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Savanna Leach
Executive Assistant