

**528th Meeting of the
FM Metro COG Transportation Technical Committee
Thursday, April 14, 2022 – 10:00 am
Metro COG Conference Room**

Members Present:

Jonathan	Atkins	City of Moorhead Traffic Engineering
Julie	Bommelman	City of Fargo, MATBUS
Nicole	Crutchfield	City of Fargo Planning
Jeremy	Gorden	City of Fargo Transportation Engineering
Cindy	Gray	Metro COG
Robin	Huston	City of Moorhead Planning
Don	Lorsung	City of Dilworth Administration
Aaron	Nelson	West Fargo City Planning
Grace	Puppe	Cass County Planning
Mary	Safgren	MnDOT – District 4
Russ	Sahr	City of Horace Planning
Justin	Sorum	Clay County Engineering
Tom	Soucy	Cass County Highway (alternate for Jason Benson)
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:

Jason	Benson	Cass County Highway Engineering (alternate present)
Matthew	Jacobson	Clay County Planning
Joe	Raso	GFMEDC

Others Present:

Adam	Altenburg	Metro COG
Angie	Bolstad	Stantec
Jaron	Capps	Metro COG
Luke	Champa	Metro COG
Jim	Dahlman	City of Horace/Interstate Engineering
Ari	Del Rosario	Metro COG
Brenda	Derrig	City of Fargo
Dan	Farnsworth	Metro COG
Sharijad	Hasan	ATAC/UGPTI
Jace	Hellman	City of Horace
Matt	Kinsella	Apex Engineering
Savanna	Leach	Metro COG
Michael	Maddox	Metro COG
Brent	Muscha	Apex Engineering
Kristen	Sperry	FHWA
Ranae	Tunison	FTA
Mark	Wolter	Midnite Express

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am, on April 14, 2022 by Chair Gray. A quorum was present.

2. Approve the 528th TTC Meeting Agenda

Chair Gray asked if there were any questions or changes to the 528th TTC Meeting Agenda.

Motion: Approve the 528th TTC Meeting Agenda.

Mr. Sahr moved, seconded by Mr. Lorsung

MOTION, PASSED.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVE March 10, 2022 TTC MEETING MINUTES

Chair Gray asked if there were any questions or changes to the March 10, 2022 TTC Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Approve the March 10, 2022 TTC Minutes.

Mr. Sahr moved, seconded by Ms. Bommelman

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment Opportunity

No public comments were made or received.

5. 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #3

Mr. Champa presented amendment #3 to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A revision was made to the original memo sent out with the packet materials to include the addition of projects 4220027, 4220029, and 4223001 to the TIP Amendment presented.

A public notice was published in the Forum of Fargo-Moorhead on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, advertising the public hearing, how to request more information, and detailed public comment information such as where to send written comments regarding the proposed amendment. The public notice advertised that public comments will be accepted until 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Thursday, April 21, 2022. No written comments have been received.

The proposed amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP is as follows:

1. **Addition of Project 4220027:** Fargo Transit capital project for upgrades to the Metro Transit Garage (2022). 'Illustrative' designation was dropped. The total project cost is \$100,000 of which Federal (FTA) Section 5339 funds are \$80,000 (80%), and local funds are \$20,000 (20%). *This is a shared project with Moorhead Transit project #5220030, costs reflect Fargo's share which is 2/3 of the total project cost.
2. **Addition of Project 4220029:** Fargo Transit capital project for shop truck replacement (2022). 'Illustrative' designation was dropped. The total project cost is \$66,667 of which Federal (FTA) Section 5339 funds are \$53,333 (80%), and local funds are \$13,334 (20%). *This is a shared project with Moorhead Transit project #5220001, costs reflect Fargo's share which is 2/3 of the total project cost.

3. **Addition of Project 4223001:** Fargo Transit capital project for replacement of bus shelters (2022). The total project cost is \$50,000 of which Federal (FTA) Section 5339 funds are \$40,000 (80%), and local funds are \$10,000 (20%).
4. **Modification of Project 4190003:** Fargo reconstruction project on 32nd Ave S from 32nd St to 25th St (2022). The total project cost increased 54% from \$10,400,000 to \$16,000,000 of which the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Urban (STBGP-U) funds increased 52% from \$4,700,000 to \$7,130,000, Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) remained \$808,620, and local funds increased 65% from \$4,891,380 to \$8,061,380.
5. **Modification of Project 9220034:** NDDOT rehabilitation project on I-94 from Near W Fargo E (RP 342.414) to Horace Rd (RP 345.607) (2022). The total project cost increased 69% from \$681,000 to \$1,152,000 of which the Federal Interstate Maintenance (IM) funds increased 69% from \$612,900 to \$1,036,800 and state funds increased 69% from \$68,100 to \$115,200.
6. **Modification of Project 9190028:** NDDOT structure rehabilitation project on I-29 3 miles south of Harwood, year changed from 2023 to 2022. The total project cost remained \$281,000 of which the Federal Interstate Maintenance (IM) funding remained \$253,000, and the state funding remained \$28,000.
7. **Modification of Project 9190029:** NDDOT structure rehabilitation project on I-29 7 miles north of US 10 near Argusville City Limits, year changed from 2023 to 2022. The total project cost remained \$281,000 of which the Federal Interstate Maintenance (IM) funding remained \$253,000, and the state funding remained \$28,000.
8. **Modification of Project 9190030:** NDDOT structure rehabilitation project on I-29 2 miles north of Harwood interchange, year changed from 2023 to 2022. The total project cost remained \$281,000 of which the Federal Interstate Maintenance (IM) funding remained \$253,000, and the state funding remained \$28,000.

Chair Gray explained that funding amount for the Fargo reconstruction of 32nd Avenue changed when the cost increased and needed to be rebid, and also changed due to some additional STBG funds added to the project.

Motion: Recommend approval of Amendment #3 of the Metro COG 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the Policy Board.

Ms. Crutchfield moved, seconded by Ms. Van Beek

MOTION, PASSED

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Transportation Management Area (TMA) Transition: Projects and Funding

Chair Gray presented an update to Metro COG's transition from a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to a Transportation Management Area (TMA). The exact funding numbers have not yet been finalized, and are dependent on the

percentage of obligation authority approved by Congress. The estimates provided by NDDOT use an estimated 90% obligation authority.

Over the past few months, Metro COG has asked how the TMA designation would affect NDDOT's use of NHPP funds on the NHS in our urbanized area, Metro COG was told that NDDOT may choose not to use NHPP funds on our non-interstate NHS roadways. This left some ambiguity as far as how reconstruction and rehabilitation of those roadways would be paid for, due to the limitations of the STBG-U sub-allocation. As a result, NDDOT has proposed an approach where approximately 1% of the State's NHPP funding would be designated to the UZA and allowed to be used as if it were STBG-U funds, providing greater flexibility. The 1% is stated to be based on the percentage of the NHS mileage in the UZA.

The 2026 solicitation and prioritization was conducted in the usual manner (as a COG) last fall, and the NDDOT is now asking Metro COG to perform its own prioritization with the TMA transition slated.

NDDOT has requested that Metro COG verify that the identified 2022-2025 projects are still the priority of the MPO. The answer to this question involves reviewing the project costs and comparing them to the dollars available, and determining:

- a) the anticipated ability to complete project development and bidding in time to meet the year designated in the TIP, and
- b) the availability of local funding for costs not covered by federal or other funding sources.

It is possible that the authorization amount is somewhat higher or lower than the estimate using 90 percent authorization. It is important that we are able to absorb whatever variation results from somewhat different authorization levels.

2022 – Not a TMA; no changes

2023 – Based on estimates, and the projects currently programmed, a funding surplus of approximately \$980,000 will be available. Ms. Gray asked if the City of Fargo and NDDOT believe that the cost of the Main Avenue project will increase and absorb this amount? Mr. Gordon stated that the project cost will definitely be higher than what is currently shown and will exceed this excess amount.

2024 – Based on project estimates and the current proposed funding scenario, the amount of funding anticipated would not be sufficient to cover project cost estimates. Higher project costs than estimated could result in one of these projects needing to slide, potentially leaving an opening for a different project. Cost estimates for the Main Avenue Slide Repair and the 32nd Avenue S project are likely to increase.

2025 –based on current estimates a funding surplus of \$2.6 million may occur, potentially opening up an opportunity for funds to be used on a different project. This could open up opportunities for a 2024 project to use advanced construction if costs are higher than expected.

2026 – Metro COG will need to initiate a competitive selection process for 2026. We have already prioritized projects, based on a combination of technical review and a comparison of project groupings with the anticipated amount of Federal funding. However, since we are now taking on the selection of projects, we believe we need to revisit this. Metro COG would need to program another \$3.3 million.

For Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee has already discussed the 2023-2024 projects in the TIP as compared to the TMA funding estimates. A competitive selection process for 2025 and 2026 needs to be carried out before the draft TIP is completed to identify additional projects, since our anticipated funding exceeds the anticipated use of Federal funds for TA projects selected through the NDDOT solicitation process.

Chair Gray touched on the Carbon Reduction Program as a source of funding. Projects such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transportation projects such as HOV lanes, park and ride, EV charging stations, ITS, alternative fuel vehicles, and projects related to carbon-reducing strategies.

Ms. Gray summarized by expressing concern about the approach to the NHPP funding proposal put forward by NDDOT, and asked TTC members for their thoughts regarding the proposal. Mr. Gorden stated that he is uncomfortable with the proposal and stated that Fargo, West Fargo and Horace are still part of the State of North Dakota. Being designated as a TMA doesn't change that, and shouldn't change the approach to funding NHS roadways.

Motion: Recommend to the Policy Board, the approval of the 2023, 2024, and 2025 projects currently in the TIP with the understanding that

- a) Metro COG will follow up by initiating a competitive solicitation for 2026 urban roads projects,**
- b) Metro COG will follow up by initiating a competitive solicitation for unprogrammed TA funds for 2023-2025, and**
- c) Metro COG will follow up by initiating a competitive solicitation for unprogrammed Carbon Reduction funds for 2023-2026.**

**Mr. Gorden moved, seconded by Ms. Crutchfield
MOTION, PASSED
Motion carried unanimously.**

7. 2021 Traffic Count Maps

Mr. Farnsworth presented the 2021 Traffic Count Maps. He did note that the MnDOT counts have not yet been finalized, but should be soon.

8. Future Planning Study Project List

Chair Gray had asked the committee to revisit the project needs list that was discussed last month. This discussion was not brought to the Policy Board as more discussion within local jurisdictions was needed. Ms. Gray said that this project list will serve as a resource during the development of the 2023-2024 UPWP and the 2023 budget estimate process which is underway.

Ms. Gray thanked TTC members for some of the discussions that occurred since the last TTC meeting, and stated that their requests should now be reflected in the future planning study list. She reviewed some of the projects in the list, including the 2050 MTP, Electric Readiness Study, 20th Street S/I-94 Moorhead, CSAH 52 Bike/Ped path over I-94, Clay County Heartland Trail Alignment Analysis, Traffic Calming Toolkit and Applicability, 15th Avenue N Corridor Study in Moorhead and Dilworth, Dilworth Comp Plan, Vehicular Bridge Crossing Feasibility Study, Microsimulation or Sub-Area Model of the Fargo/Moorhead downtown areas, Sunday Transit service feasibility and implementation study, 15th street/I-94 Sheyenne Diversion Overpass Study in Cass County, One-Way Pair Alternatives Study in Moorhead, East Dilworth/Moorhead N/S Arterial Corridor Study, TDM Review Study, Moorhead 1st Ave N Corridor Study, and three Placeholder studies for future reference are Regional Pavement Management Study, Access to Downtown from Interstate Highways, and Expanded Study of Diversion Recreation Plan Features. She stated these projects will take several years to complete, because we won't have the budget to include more than a few in each UPWP, and that we also need to consider the availability of local jurisdictions and their staff to participate in studies, both from a time and budget perspective.

Ms. Huston questioned the inclusion of the 15th Avenue North Study as far east as Moorhead, and Ms. Gray stated the boundaries of the project could, for now, be shown only as far west as 34th Street, since it was Dilworth that asked for the project to be added to the list. She stated the Clay County Heartland Trail Analysis should be Clay County only, and not Moorhead, as Moorhead is not yet ready for that project. Mr. Lorsung agreed on the priority for 15th Avenue for Dilworth as well rather than being included as a local partner in the Heartland Trail Study. Ms. Gray pointed out that the point of a Heartland Trail Study that includes Moorhead and Dilworth would be to study the connection of a future trail into and through Dilworth and Moorhead, and stated that for now, Moorhead and Dilworth would be removed from the list of local partners for that project.

9. Summary of MPO/NDDOT Meeting

Chair Gray presented an update and summary of the MPO Directors and MPO first quarter meeting.

10. Agency Updates

Fargo – 32nd Ave rebidding project, 25th St E construction

Transit – TMA transition will affect transit funding

Moorhead – Comprehensive Plan approved and working on implementation

Dilworth – Highway 10 study kick-off

Cass County – CR15 Bridge (I-94 to Kindred) closed for construction

MnDOT – Planning Assistance Grants currently open, Scenic Byways solicitation open

Metro COG – Minnesota Transportation Conference and Expo May 17-19 St. Paul, Assistant/Associate Transportation Planner job opening, Greater NW Rail Coalition update

11. Additional Business

No additional business

12. Adjourn

The 528 Regular Meeting of the TTC was adjourned on April 14, 2022 at 12:01 p.m.

THE NEXT FM METRO COG TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE HELD May 12, 2022, 10:00 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Savanna Leach
Executive Assistant