

**BISMARCK-MANDAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 2025**

The Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met May 19, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room, City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck, ND. Kim Riepl presided.

Members present or participating via Zoom were Ben Ehreth, Deidre Hughes, Gabe Schell, Greg Feser, Jarek Wigness, John Saiki, Logan Beise, Mitch Flanagan, Will Hutchings, and Kim Riepl. Members absent were Dan Schriock, Natalie Pierce, and Mandan Planning (formerly Andrew Stromme). The Freight Industry Representative membership is vacant.

Others present or participating via Zoom were Stephen Larson and Paulette Jacobsen, Bismarck-Mandan MPO; Les Noehre, Bolton & Menk; John Forman, Ulteig; Kristen Sperry, FHWA; Chris Holzer, Bismarck Engineering; Sharijad Hasan, NDSU-ATAC; Dave Mayer, Bismarck Parks & Recreation District; Matthew Schaible, SEH; Paul Benning, WSB; and Luke Champa, SRF.

MINUTES

Chair Riepl called for consideration of the minutes from April 14, 2025.

MOTION: Mr. Schell made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Hughes seconded the motion and with Ben Ehreth, Deidre Hughes, Gabe Schell, Greg Feser, Jarek Wigness, John Saiki, Logan Beise, Mitch Flanagan, Will Hutchings, and Chair Riepl voting in favor, the minutes were approved.

FY 2026 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) APPLICATIONS

Mr. Larson presented. The ND Parks and Recreation District recently solicited for the FY 2026 Recreational Trails Program (RTP). They opened their solicitation on April 1 and accepted applications through April 13. Applications for projects within the MPO area require an MPO letter of support, which may be provided after the application window. Assuming TAC and Policy Board approval of the applications, the MPO will provide letters to the applicants for submittal to the ND Park District. For this year's solicitation, the MPO received two applications, one from the Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD, Exhibit B), and one from Lincoln Park District (LPD, Exhibit C). Both projects are consistent with the MPO's current MTP. The MPO does not prioritize RTP projects but is simply asked to review and support. If a project is awarded the MPO then includes it in the TIP.

The BPRD is applying for a rehabilitation of shared-use trail connections within the southern portion of Cottonwood Park. The proposed project includes 5,901 linear feet of 10-foot-wide shared-use trail that is currently aged and cracking, including 176 linear feet of trail that needs to be removed or replaced. The project is located within one of Bismarck's most popular parks and includes trail sections that provide accessible routes to the ADA fishing pier at Cottonwood Pond, connection to Hidden Star Park and neighborhoods west of the park, and links to sports fields, playgrounds, and spectator areas. The total cost is \$306,516, with a requested federal share of \$245,213.

The LPD application is for a 66th Street SE Pathway. The proposed project is to construct a 10-foot-wide gravel pathway starting at Santee Road, going south along the west side of 66th Street, and ending at the south city limits approximately 180 feet south of Humbert Drive. The project will include top-soil stripping, common excavation and earthwork to establish ADA compliance grades, compaction of in-site soils, and placement of a 6-inch gravel base with an alternative to pave if funding allows. This will include ADA compliance at two street crossings with concrete panels and truncated domes to warn users of crossings. The total cost is \$129,807, with a requested federal share of \$103,840.

Mr. Hutchings noted the 66th Street project mentions ADA compliance, but a gravel pathway is difficult to navigate with a wheelchair. He asked if the intent is to pave the pathway later to bring the entire area into ADA compliance. He also mentioned this section has some worn down routes where ATVs are driving for recreational purposes. He asked if there will be signage as part of this project to prevent ATVs from using the pathway.

Mr. Larson did not have the full answers to these questions at the time of the meeting but received answers from the City of Lincoln representative afterwards. The LPD project will meet ADA compliance in the grades of the design, and at the roadway crossings. The design of the grade will allow for paving and full ADA compliance when LPD has funding available. LPD is aware of existing motorized use in the county ditch along the project route and has placed the new pathway outside of the ATV path to minimize interaction between the two user types (and they will install trail signage marking the gravel path as ‘no motorized use’).

Mr. Ehreth asked about the 66th Street project limits. He asked if the project connects to existing bicycle-pedestrian facilities, especially at the south end. Mr. Feser noted at the south end the new pathway would be a dead end (Lincoln hopes to work with Burleigh County to extend the pathway further in future). On the north end there are limited sidewalks currently (many older Lincoln neighborhoods do not have sidewalks, whereas newer subdivisions are required to provide them). Lincoln is working on expanding their pedestrian connectivity.

MOTION: Mr. Schell made a motion to approve the FY 26 RTP Applications as presented. Ms. Hughes seconded the motion and with Ben Ehreth, Deidre Hughes, Gabe Schell, Greg Feser, Jarek Wigness, John Saiki, Logan Beise, Mitch Flanagan, Will Hutchings, and Chair Riepl voting in favor, the motion was approved.

BISMARCK-MANDAN MPO SELF-CERTIFICATION

Mr. Larson presented. The Bismarck Mandan MPO’s self-certification is required by United States code. MPOs must certify their planning processes are being carried out in accordance with federal law, and that the MTP and TIP the MPO develops are also consistent with federal law. The self-certification must be updated at least every four years, but the MPO updates its self-certification each year as part of its annual TIP development. The self-certification declares MPO compliance with current highway bill legislation, specifically in ten different areas including MPO operations and functions, air quality control standards, Title VI and the Civil Rights Act, the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, and five areas of nondiscrimination. The Self-Certification was updated to remove equal employment language in response to the January rescission of Executive Order 11246 regarding equal employment.

Mr. Hutchings asked about the equal employment statute referenced in the Self-Certification, as he noted this was not removed. Mr. Larson said the MPO removed equal employment language from the document but left the current statutory references unchanged

until further guidance comes from the federal level. Mr. Hutchings indicated the Self-Certification may need to be brought back to TAC and Policy Board if regulations are updated.

Mr. Ehreth asked Ms. Sperry from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) about the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE), and if recent Department of Transportation guidance about removing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives would apply to DBE. Ms. Sperry and Mr. Hutchings said updated guidance on DBE is yet to be determined.

MOTION: Mr. Wigness made a motion to approve the MPO Self-Certification as presented. Ms. Hughes seconded the motion and with Ben Ehreth, Deidre Hughes, Gabe Schell, Greg Feser, Jarek Wigness, John Saiki, Logan Beise, Mitch Flanagan, Will Hutchings, and Chair Riepl voting in favor, the motion was approved.

2025 SAFETY POLICY STUDY

Mr. Champa presented an update for SRF. On May 17 they held a Pop-Up Event at the Touch-a-Truck in Mandan. There was good attendance at the event and SRF collected feedback on locations where people feel travel is unsafe. They are still processing the stickers and comment cards they received at the event; public comment will supplement their data analysis. They received over fifty comments at the Earth Day Festival on April 29 and may have received more at Touch-a-Truck. They have been working on data and safety analysis. They will be sending out a high-injury network comment map (including a breakout by transportation modes) to the Steering Committee and the MPO for feedback before the next Steering Committee meeting on June 26. Supporting memos will be provided with the map. SRF's subconsultant Emergent Strategies has been coordinating Focus Group meetings, they have already held the Emergency Services meeting. Ms. Riepl noted an Active Transportation Focus Group will meet at Public Works at 8:15 a.m. before the Bicycle Friendly Community Workshop on May 21.

2025 ITS RA

Mr. Hasan provided an update on the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Regional Architecture (RA) project for the Advanced Traffic Analysis Center (ATAC). They are near the end of the data collection stage of the project, collecting information from project stakeholders. They have held a variety of small group meetings (with personnel from Transit, Emergency Management, Maintenance and Construction Management, Traffic Management, and Data Management offices) and have been coordinating proposed changes with these stakeholders. They have received good feedback from engineering, IT, emergency, and other jurisdictional personnel. They will soon provide a report to the stakeholders about what has been collected from them to make sure everything is correct. The challenges of sharing IT data (primarily because of security issues) between departments is one of the major challenges that has come out of the data collection process. A meeting will be held with IT personnel about this in August.

At this time there will be one additional service package (infrastructure protection) added to the RA under 'planned' services. Morton County Public Works identified this as a probable future service. One planned package from the last RA will be moving into the existing packages (passenger counting) and another (emergency response) will move from future to existing.

2025 MONITORING REPORT UPDATE

Mr. Larson presented. The MPO has been holding bi-weekly meetings with HDR to review the existing Monitoring Report, and the initial review has been completed. May 28 at 1

p.m. has been set as the date for the Monitoring Report Stakeholder Workshop, where the MPO will review the document and collect suggestions for the update from the MPO's jurisdictional staff. The Workshop will meet in the David Blackstead Room at the Community Development Office, with an option to attend on Teams. HDR has also begun working on a document outline and will provide a more substantial project update in June.

ROADWAY PROJECTS

Mr. Flanagan did not have an update for Burleigh County.

Mr. Feser said Lincoln has a significant pavement maintenance project starting in June.

Mr. Wigness said the City of Mandan has started an Old Red Trail shared-use path construction. They will soon be starting a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon project.

Mr. Schell said they are finishing pavement markings and other cleanup for their South Washington Street reconstruction project from last year. They also have a local project, the East Century Avenue reconstruction on the east side of town. They have moved traffic onto temporary roads in the project area for the time being.

Mr. Beise said work on Exit 161 has fallen a little behind because of the rain. They will be building deck and pounding pile. For Memorial Highway, they will be working on the storm sewer, and work is also ongoing on their I-94 project.

Mr. Saiki did not have a Morton County update.

OTHER BUSINESS

Bicycle Friendly Community Workshop

Ms. Riepl said the MPO is hosting a free Bicycle Friendly Community Workshop on May 21-22 (it is a one and one-half day event). It will start the morning of May 21 and there will be a bike audit at 1 p.m. (starting and finishing at 627 West Arbor Avenue). Registration has closed but additional attendees are still welcome. The MPO has coordinated with BPRD to use their bike share program for the audit, and the audit route will be provided to participants.

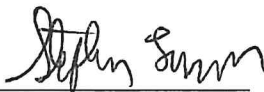
PAVER Training

Ms. Riepl said the MPO recently completed a Pavement Conditions Analysis project, but the consultant (QES) for that project has been performing training in the PAVER management software for jurisdictional engineers.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m., with the next scheduled meeting to take place on June 16, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room of the City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Larson
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:



MPO TAC Chair