

**BISMARCK-MANDAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY BOARD MEETING
MAY 20, 2025**

The Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Board met May 20, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room, City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck, ND. Mike Schmitz presided.

Members present or participating via Zoom were Mike Schmitz, James Froelich, Keli Berglund, Andy Zachmeier, and Steve Schwab.

Others present or attending via Zoom were Kim Riepl, Paulette Jacobsen, and Stephen Larson of the Bismarck-Mandan MPO; Sharijad Hasan, NDSU-ATAC; Matt Schaible, SEH; Dave Mayer, Bismarck Parks & Recreation District; and Will Hutchings, NDDOT.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schmitz called the May 20, 2025 meeting of the Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board to order.

MINUTES

Chair Schmitz called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2025 Meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Berglund made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Froelich seconded the motion and with James Froelich, Keli Berglund, Andy Zachmeier, Steve Schwab, and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was 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.

TAC approved both applications at their meeting yesterday.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to approve the FY 26 RTP Applications as presented. Mr. Zachmeier seconded the motion and with James Froelich, Keli Berglund, Andy Zachmeier, Steve Schwab, and Chair Schmitz 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, and it will be updated again as needed if further guidance is received. TAC recommended approval.

MOTION: Ms. Berglund made a motion to approve the MPO Self-Certification as presented. Mr. Froelich seconded the motion and with James Froelich, Keli Berglund, Andy Zachmeier, Steve Schwab, and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

2025 SAFETY POLICY STUDY

Ms. Riepl presented a study update. SRF and the rest of the study team are nearly a third of the way done with the project. All necessary data has been collected. SRF is working on safety analysis. They have developed an interactive high-injury network map (including a breakout by transportation modes) and will be seeking feedback from the Steering Committee. The next Steering Committee meeting will be June 26. A high-injury network memo and a crash trends memo will be given to committee members before the meeting. The study team collected feedback at the Earth Day Festival in Bismarck on April 29, and the Touch-a-Truck event in Mandan on May 17. They

received a lot of comments and interaction at both events. SRF will be evaluating the public engagement so far, looking for trends and seeing how it aligns with the safety data. SRF's subconsultant Emergent Strategies has been coordinating Focus Group meetings with stakeholder groups such as law enforcement, first responders, and youth drivers. An Active Transportation, Transit, and Disability 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 help coordinate proposed changes to the RA. ATAC is preparing the RA document which will include ITS elements (such as vehicles and data centers) currently being used by stakeholders, roles and responsibilities for the stakeholders, identified ITS services for the MPO area, and ITS challenges stakeholders are facing. One of the primary challenges they have found is related to data sharing (due to IT security concerns). A follow-up meeting will be held with IT personnel closer to the fall about these concerns.

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.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Schmitz adjourned at 1:47 p.m. The next scheduled meeting will take place June 17, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room the City/County Building, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephen Larson
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

MPO Policy Board Chair