

**BISMARCK-MANDAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY BOARD MEETING
JULY 15, 2025**

The Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Board met July 15, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Ed “Bosh” Froehlich Meeting Room, City Hall, 205 2nd Ave NW, Mandan, ND. Mike Schmitz presided.

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

Others present or attending via Zoom were Kim Riepl, Paulette Jacobsen, Stephen Larson, and Tracy Walters of the Bismarck-Mandan MPO; Luke Champa, SRF; Deidre Hughes, Bis-Man Transit; and Will Hutchings, NDDOT.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schmitz called the July 15, 2025, meeting of the Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board to order.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Riepl took over the chair position to hold the election of officers. The terms for Chair and Vice Chair are both two-year terms with the next election anticipated to be held in July 2027. Chair Riepl called for a motion to elect the Policy Board Chair.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to elect Mike Schmitz as Chair of the Policy Board. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion, with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Schwab and Mr. Schmitz unanimously in favor, Mr. Schmitz will serve as Chair for the Policy Board.

Chair Riepl called for a motion to elect the Policy Board Vice Chair.

MOTION: Mr. Schwab made a motion to elect Mr. Froelich as Vice Chair of the Policy Board. Mr. Schmitz seconded the motion with Mr. Schwab, Mr. Schmitz and Mr. Froelich unanimously in favor, Mr. Froelich will serve as Vice Chair for the Policy Board.

Mr. Schmitz presided as Chair of the Policy Board for the remainder of the meeting.

MINUTES

Chair Schmitz called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2025, Meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion and with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Schwab, and Chair Schmitz voting in favor, the motion was approved.

2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Ms. Riepl presented. Ms. Riepl stated that she is presenting the draft document for the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Ms. Riepl gave an overview of the draft UPWP document beginning with the title page which presents our jurisdictional and funding partners. She explained the Resolution of Adoption and that this would be the formalized adoption of the UPWP document once it is approved.

The draft 2026-2027 UPWP details the anticipated activities and projects that MPO intends to undertake within the next two years along with the budget for each project. Also included in the document are the names of the TAC and Policy Board members, and the anticipated meeting dates for each board in 2026 and 2027. She further explained that the document contained a section for the MPO's previous accomplishments, our current goals through December 2025, and our future planned work activities for 2026-2027. The UPWP is divided into four task areas, 101, Administration, 102, Professional Services, 103, Vendors, and Consultants, Capital Operational and Travel Expenses and 104, Complete Streets tracking. Ms. Riepl also explained the Source of UPWP Funds section for 2026 and 2027 and stated that we have added new tables to the document explaining the funding source, amounts, percentage totals and the local match contributions.

Ms. Riepl explained that there are ten Planning Factors that are set forth, through the 23 CFR 450.306(b). She stated that the MPO is committed to upholding these factors in our planning process and explained how these ten factors apply to our existing projects. The Planning Factors are identified along with additional goals and objectives in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The table in the UPWP indicates how MPO studies meet each of them. Additionally, the UPWP includes a timeline for the development of the next update to our MTP.

Ms. Riepl said the eligible expenses portion of the document covers eligible costs that meet the requirements as provided in the 23 CFR 420.113. These expenses include the associated costs and expenses of the MPO activities and that they will be verified for compliance with Federal eligibility requirements prior to payment approval. Ms. Riepl also covered the Self Certification statement and informed the Board that we are currently seeking approval of an updated statement that, once approved, will be inserted into the UPWP.

Ms. Riepl gave an overview of Task 101: Administration section of our draft UPWP. She noted that the MPO is now fully staffed and explained that Staff will participate in activities throughout the work program cycle to engage the public, jurisdictional partners, MPO Boards, and oversight agencies in the transportation planning process. Staff projects such as MTP, TIP, UPWP, various studies, Transit coordination, office documents, and Staff actions will follow the Task 101 guidelines.

Ms. Riepl gave an overview of Task 102: Professional Services / Vendors/ Consultants. She stated that Task 102 primarily is used for studies, data purchases or professional services that address specific transportation concerns and may impact the MPO's MTP, TIP or MPO planning process. The proposed work for the years 2026 and 2027, are shown in tables on the draft UPWP that are designed to show projects, descriptions, total project cost, budget allocations, start dates and completion dates for the MPO's projects. Ms. Riepl provided a summary of the projects, costs, start and end dates within the 2026 and

2027 years for the Board. She also stated that funding for Task 102 is exclusive to contractual obligations, and final products for Task 102 are determined by each project's contract.

Ms. Riepl gave an overview of Task 103: Capital, Operational and Travel Expenses. She noted that the purpose of Task 103 is to provide for the operational expenses and capital investments necessary to carry out the transportation planning process. Expenses will ensure MPO staff secure a worksite, adequate resources to perform the work, and opportunity to increase or maintain proficiency within their positions. This section refers to the space that MPO occupies, training opportunities, and other day-to-day items. The City of Bismarck, as our hosting agency, does not have an indirect cost allocation plan and they do not charge the MPO for indirect costs. Task 103 is divided into four categories which align with the City of Bismarck's accounting system. Expected capital, operational, and travel expenses fall within rental space, lodging and associated travel expenses, office operations, and office supplies and subscriptions. All capital purchases will be conducted in accordance with the procurement policies set forth by the City of Bismarck and NDDOT.

Ms. Riepl gave an overview of Task 104: Complete Streets. She stated that Task 104 is for Complete Streets tracking purposes only. She stated that any pre-identified Staff time conducted for the Bismarck Mandan MPO, MPO Bike-Ped Subcommittee, and any study components that are relatable to the Safe and Accessible Transportation Option set aside, will be tracked as Complete Streets allocations during the calendar years of 2026 and 2027. Complete Streets funds will be expended under Task 101 and Task 102, and the budgets for those tasks include Complete Streets funds. Task 104 is intended to describe the use of the Complete Streets funds and provide a way to track the spending. The MPO is to dedicate a minimum of 2.5% of their Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds to activities that improve transportation options for people of all ages and abilities. These policies ensure the safe and adequate accommodation of all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists and freight vehicles. She noted that the BIL includes requirements which serve to promote complete streets planning. She explained that the BIL will expire on September 30, 2026, however, our UPWP assumes the funding of Complete Streets in the year 2027. All funds estimated for each year of the budget and work program are expected to be completely exhausted by the end of each respective calendar year.

Ms. Riepl also gave an overview of the 2026 and 2027 UPWP Budget worksheets. She pointed out that there was a change in the Fringe Area Road Master Plan Update, under Task 102, a total budget of \$140,000 for 2026 has been refined to \$132,705, however, the local match within this budget does remain the same because the additional monies of \$7,295.00 was put into our ATAC modeling study associated modeling task. Ms. Riepl also presented the Bismarck-Mandan MPO Jurisdictional Boundaries map to the Board. She noted that TAC approved the draft UPWP and that Staff would be seeking approval from the Policy Board.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to accept the draft UPWP as presented. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Schwab and Chair Schmitz all in favor, the motion was approved.

2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT

Ms. Riepl presented. She stated that this item is Amendment #1 to the UPWP for the Bismarck-Mandan MPO. This is an amendment to Task 102, the Fringe Area Road Master Plan (FARMP) Study. The FARMP is a study with a budget of \$88,500 and it was originally scoped to be a light review of the Fringe Area and roadway alignments identified in the 2014 FARMP. The MPO jurisdictional partners expressed a desire to conduct a comprehensive update to the FARMP roadway alignments and to examine a beltway concept that was included in the 2014 FARMP for potential modification in future planning documents. There will be an increase to the budget of \$92,500.00 for the additional scope items which comes to a total of \$181,000.00. The timeframe for this project also increased from eight months to twelve months, including additional public engagement opportunities. The impact to the budget will occur in 2026, and this is addressed in the 2026 and 2027 draft UPWP. The amendment will include a total study cost to increase to \$181,000.00 along with an increase to the scope and completion time for the study. She noted that the TAC approved the 2025 UPWP Amendment and Staff would also be seeking approval from the Policy Board.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to accept the draft UPWP as presented. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion with Mr. Froelich, Mr. Schwab and Chair Schmitz all in favor, the motion was approved.

FARMP (FRINGE AREA ROAD MASTER PLAN) UPDATE

Mr. Larson presented. He stated the last Fringe Area Road Master Plan (FARMP) took place in 2014 and the MPO is now coming to the Board with a Request for Proposals for Transportation Planning Services. The FARMP assists the MPO's jurisdictions in planning the arterial and collector road network necessary to support known anticipated residential and commercial development on the fringes of the communities. We are requesting to identify six hot spots, examine the functionality of the north and south roads that are labeled as a beltway in the existing FARMP. We will provide a comprehensive look at the overall Fringe Area Road Network. The final living document will assist the jurisdictions in planning for future development and roadway expansions by showing potential new road connections. The MPO is looking to hold interviews with potential study groups. We will also be conducting two public involvement meetings in Burleigh County and Morton County. The budget for this project has increased and is not to exceed \$181,000. He also said the current estimated proposal deadline, which is subject to adjustment, is August 22, 2025 and work is anticipated to begin in October 2025 with a conclusion date in December 2026. He noted that the TAC has recommended approval of the FARMP and Staff is seeking approval from the Policy Board.

Mr. Schwab asked what the definition of the fringe area is and if it included the ETA areas.

Mr. Larson replied that this includes areas outside or on the edges of city limits within the MPO Area and that it does include the ETA area.

Mr. Schwab shared an example regarding a citizen he had worked with that proposed to build a house in the fringe area; however, his client was not able to obtain a driveway for his property. The location of the proposed driveway was close to an intersection and the

Highway Department determined the garage placement was in a low-lying spot and denied the permit for a driveway. He stated he would not be able to support the FARMP until these types of issues are resolved for the citizens.

Chair Schmitz replied that the FARMP is referring to the road network and this is not related to building codes, ordinances or zoning.

Mr. Larson noted that the goal of the plan is to look at future roadway development and they would take into consideration challenges with existing property lines and subdivisions to place future roadways in a responsible way.

Mr. Schwab explained that he cannot support the FARMP until more of the building codes, ordinances and zoning are addressed. He also stated he would like to see his concerns addressed before the FARMP is approved.

Mr. Froelich asked Ms. Riepl to delineate the difference.

Ms. Riepl responded that these are proposed alignments and do not become a reality until the development takes place. There is an amendment process within the FARMP that is laid out in the document to address changes to the roadways. The FARMP is a map to assist in guiding the process. The MPO will consider land uses, small parcel ownership, large parcel agricultural ownership, and other circumstances that will impact a future roadway.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to accept the 2025 UPWP Amendment as presented. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion. Mr. Froelich and Chair Schmitz approved the motion and Mr. Schwab opposed the motion. The motion was approved.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP) & TARGETS

Ms. Jacobsen presented. Ms. Jacobsen stated in the Board's packet is a Resolution of Support for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and its associated Safety Targets. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires public transportation operators to develop the PTASP and accompanying safety targets to ensure the operators and public remain safe during Transit operations. The Transit Board adopts and updates these targets and the PTASP on an annual basis. The targets may be set by the State Department of Transportation and adopted by local Transit providers, or the provider may set their own safety targets separately. For the 2025-2026 period, Bismarck-Mandan Transit set its own safety targets and adopted them in May. FTA asks that the MPO support Bismarck-Mandan Transit's Targets and PTASP. MPO Staff recommends the Policy Board adopt the Resolution of Support. She added that the TAC also recommended approval of the Resolution of Support.

MOTION: Chair Schmitz made a motion to approve the Resolution of Support. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion with, Mr. Froelich, Mr. Schwab and Chair Schmitz all in favor, the motion was approved.

BISMARCK-MANDAN MPO SELF-CERTIFICATION

Mr. Larson presented. The Bismarck-Mandan Self-Certification is required by United States Code. We must certify that our planning documents and processes are being carried out in accordance with Federal Law. TAC & Policy Board approved our most recent Self-Certification in May 2025, however, the MPO has received guidance from the NDDOT requiring the complete removal of references to equal employment statutes in the document rescinded by a recent executive order. Staff has made the appropriate changes to the document and recommends that the Board review and approve the Self-Certification.

MOTION: Mr. Froelich made a motion to approve the Bismarck-Mandan MPO Self Certification. Mr. Schwab seconded the motion. Mr. Froelich and Chair Schmitz approved the motion and Mr. Schwab opposed the motion. The motion was approved.

2025 SAFETY POLICY STUDY

Mr. Champa presented an update for SRF. He stated that they had a Steering Committee meeting on June 26, 2025, including summaries of the focus groups held with Law Enforcement, active transportation users, and young drivers. He noted they also covered key themes from the Bismarck Earth Day Festival and Mandan Touch a Truck event, as well as preliminary results of the Safety Analysis, Crash Trend Summary, and the High Injury Network. Mr. Champa shared a screen and presented a map with public feedback on specific locations that people identified as concerning areas. He demonstrated examples of public feedback comments, certain areas of fatal crash concerns, and areas that had a high concentration of severe crashes and the type of crash involved. He also said there was an uptick of severe crashes in the summer months which is proportionate to how much traffic has increased in the summer. He stated they are working on checking statistics as far as seasonality, that they covered OHV regulations and citations and motorcycle crashes that are severe or fatal in our area.

2025 TITLE VI UPDATE

Mr. Larson presented. He stated that the MPO, as a recipient of federal funding, is required to have a Title VI and Nondiscrimination ADA Plan. The Title VI program is in place to ensure the MPO takes all the necessary steps to prevent unlawful discrimination in its programs, services and activities. The MPO does an annual self-audit of the Title VI and makes any appropriate changes as needed. This year, minor changes were made including updating dates, complaint forms, goals and accomplishments, Limited English Proficiency plan, Title VI Maps, demographic profile and analysis section and demographics of the MPO's Boards and Staff members. Because the changes were minor to the Title VI plan, no action is required from the Board.

2025 MONITORING REPORT UPDATE

Mr. Larson presented an update for HDR. He stated the MPO and HDR have finished reviewing the information collected at the Performance Measure Workshop held with jurisdictional Staff in May. MPO has begun to outline the new Monitoring Report and the next several months will be spent drafting the document and collecting data needed to support the document. We are on track to complete this project by the end of the year.

2025 HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM & TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES FUNDING PROGRAMS UPDATE

Mr. Larson presented. He stated that this also included the Urban Grants program. The Highway Safety Improvement program has been solicited for the 2029 Fiscal Year. He noted that one application has been received for a roundabout to be located at Yegen Road and Lincoln Road. NDDOT has approved this project for funding and this project will be included in our upcoming TIP. He also said that the Transportation Alternatives Program for FY27 received five applications. TAC and Policy Board sent these projects prioritized to NDDOT for consideration. The top priority project was the Highway 1806 Pedestrian Trail Project in Mandan, the second was Sunrise Trail Connection in Bismarck, the third priority was 3rd Street Southeast Sidewalk Installation project in Mandan, the fourth priority was the Memorial Highway Pedestrian Ramp Realignment Project in Mandan, followed by the State Street Multi-use Trail project in Bismarck. NDDOT has approved the second project, Sunrise Trail Connection in Bismarck and third project, 3rd Street Southeast Sidewalk Installation project in Mandan for funding. This will reflect the FY27 funds for TA. He also stated that for FY2028, the Urban Grants program received two applications last year, and neither of the projects, the Main Avenue reconstruction Project in Bismarck, or the Downtown Phase 2 Reconstruction project in Mandan, were selected for funding at this time.

2025-2028 TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Larson Presented. Two administrative modifications to the current 2025-2028 TIP were processed. These modifications move two projects, a Memorial Bridge Project and a Downtown Mandan Reconstruction Project from FY2025 to FY2026.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Riepl stated that in the 2025 State Legislature, Senate Bill 2180 was passed and it requires cities, counties, townships, school districts, park districts, and water resource districts to include a public comment opportunity during their regular meetings. The requirements by the North Dakota Century Code require that TAC and Policy Board begin each meeting with a public comment period for persons online or in person to comment on agenda items from the previous or current meeting. The public comment section will be limited to 30 minutes, with approximately 5 minutes per individual; however, the Chair may use their discretion regarding the time limit. Ms. Riepl also mentioned that this provides the Board with an opportunity to amend their By-Laws for the Public Comment request.

Chair Schmitz suggested that the Board adopt a formal policy. He stated the City of Bismarck has adopted a formal policy, not to exceed 30 minutes; however, they have opted to provide all participating individuals time for their comments and not to cut someone's time off who is sharing vital information with the Board. He added any extended time limits are at the discretion of the Chair.

Mr. Schwab shared concern for the extended length of the meetings if the Board were to adopt this policy.

Chair Schmitz reiterated that the public comment period would have a goal to remain at the 30 minutes, allowing 5 minutes per individual.

Mr. Froehlich stated that the City of Mandan has also adopted a formal policy and agreed that the Policy Board should adopt a formal policy as well.

Chair Schmitz stated he did not recommend that the By-Laws be changed at this time and that the Board would offer the public comment section at the beginning of the Policy Board meetings beginning in August.

Ms. Riepl also stated that the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority is holding their annual conference on September 8 -10th, in Livingston, Montana. She stated that we are invited and encouraged to attend the conference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Schmitz adjourned at 2:44 p.m. The next scheduled meeting will take place on August 19, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Ed "Bosh" Froelich Meeting Room of Mandan City Hall, 205 2nd Ave NW, Mandan.

Respectfully submitted,


Tracy Walters
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

MPO Policy Board Chair