

**BISMARCK-MANDAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 19, 2008**

The Bismarck-Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on February 19, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. in the Bis-Man Transit Building, 3750 East Rosser Avenue. Chairman Saunders presided.

Members present were Sarah BaeHurst, Paul Benning, Mark Berg, Mel Bullinger, Ben Ehreth, Carl Hokenstad, Bob Johnston, Jon Mill, Robin Werre, and Steve Saunders.

Members absent were Kevin Levi, Chuck Morman, Chuck Peterson and Paul Trauger.

Others present were J Mark Nesvig and Bill Troe.

MINUTES

Chairman Saunders called for consideration of the minutes of the January 14, 2008, meeting.

MOTION. Mr. Benning made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2008, meeting. Mr. Bullinger seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved with Sarah BaeHurst, Paul Benning, Mel Bullinger, Carl Hokenstad, Bob Johnston, Jon Mill, Robin Werre, and Steve Saunders voting in favor of the motion.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT (TE) UPDATE

Mr. Benning stated the DOT met with the Director's Task Force a week ago Tuesday and went through all the urban projects and county projects that were sent in for the applications. They have made a determination on which projects will be picked along with the dollar value for each one. The next step now is going to the DOT Director for his approval and after that the letters will be sent out. As usual the Governor gets to sign the yes letters and local government signs the no letters. There should be a final selection of the projects next month.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL UPDATE

Mr. Benning stated the DOT was trying to get the Safe Routes to School projects at the same time with TE but they have two different Director's Task Forces so that did not work out as planned. Where this is at right now is the Task Force will review the projects sometime in March. Just like TE the Task Force picks projects based on scoring results and assigns a dollar value to it. Like TE there are always more applications than funding. Once that is completed it will go to the Director for signature and letters will be sent out. The projects should be available in March, if not the April meeting.

URBAN PROJECTS LIST UPDATE

Mr. Benning stated that the DOT is waiting to get the 2008 obligation limit for how much money will be available from FHWA. There are several programs that funding has been identified, but there are a couple of them out there that have not been identified yet. That should be available in the next two weeks. Once that is received the final dollars will be updated and put towards the program. The Urban program will probably come out some time in April.

Mr. Saunders asked what the time period is on this. Mr. Benning stated it is just for 2008.

REGIONAL NORTH/SOUTH BELTWAY CORRIDOR STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Saunders stated that Ulteig called this morning and apologized, they will be unable to attend this morning's and this afternoon's policy board meeting. Mr. Saunders stated that the Steering Committee for the beltway is scheduled for Friday the 22nd here in this room at 8:30 until 10:00 to talk about the decisions on the beltway, 66th, 80th and 71st. They also asked Mr. Saunders to let this board know that Steve Windish will attend and a good possibility that Steve Grabill will also attend, Mr. Troe's meeting on Wednesday night for 71st Avenue, just in case there is some infiltration of beltway questions, which is very probable. Mr. Saunders stated he would take back any questions or comments to Ulteig. There were none at this time.

71ST AVENUE/CENTENNIAL ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Troe stated the second public meeting is tomorrow night at Century High School. Being presented will be the preliminary recommendations for public comment. There will be an open house starting at 6:00 and a presentation about 6:30 walking through what the recommendations are and how they got there. Comments will be taken after that. On the document that was handed out in January, comments have been received from everybody that he anticipated receiving comments from. Tomorrow there is a management meeting at 10:00 with the Department of Transportation presenting the project findings and process to them.

Mr. Benning added that the cities and counties were also invited.

Mr. Troe stated that as he was addressing all the comments, the only item that came up that has to be waited on is if 71st Avenue is part of the beltway system and that after Friday, it should be known if it is or is not. A comment was made by the reviewers a number of times that it might be based on conversations that are taking place during the beltway. Mr. Troe is guessing that after Friday there should be a pretty good idea.

Mr. Saunders stated that he hopes so.

Mr. Troe stated that will come into play in two different areas, one whether or not 71st is referred to as being an element of the beltway in the document and the second is, if the beltway is located on 84th or somewhere between 71st and 84th then that probably results in the interchange sliding to that location on U.S. 83. If the beltway is not on 71st and is located in

another corridor that is where the interchange ought to be, it should not be on 71st if it is not in the beltway. An assumption would be then made that the vast majority of truck traffic that is through, even if through takes you into town, then likely migrates off of 71st and then onto the beltway and still remains in the Centennial corridor, but it probably would come off of 71st and then a little bit of adjusting would have to be done to the language. Mr. Troe thinks that the big thing is, is he accurate in the assumption on an interchange long-term. Mr. Troe stated that Mr. Saunders had made the comment that the footprints of the interchange should be shown in the graphics. It should migrate to the beltway and if the beltway isn't on 71st then it is fine where it is at but other text would have to be changed that refers to it as the beltway.

Mr. Saunders agreed and believes there is a multitude of things that are implicated by that decision whether 71st will or will not be the beltway, like right-of-way, trails, tree planting, there is just a myriad of things in the report.

Mr. Troe said it is a planning study so the idea if it was not to be, they don't have to go back and do a bunch of redesign, it is pretty easy to go back and update. Until after Friday and what is heard from the DOT and tomorrow night, depending on the results of Friday, the next couple of weeks it should be turned around.

Mr. Mill said there is some uncertainty what the recommendation will be, if it isn't 71st, 71st will still be there whether it is the beltway or not. The County tried to do this before, River Road is a perfect example, where 1804 came from the north and it is such a mess, close to town they ran 1804 out to eliminate the problem, but it is still a problem. Maybe a little different size. What is important is, regardless of how the beltway study turns out, 71st has issues right now, they might not get worse as fast if it's not on the beltway, it is always going to be there.

Mr. Troe agreed the argument is that the improvements that are being looked at are focusing on the perception of the existing problem and the short-term, at least on 71st with the three lanes and if the volume along a beltway along 71st was such that it would go to five lanes, then things are marching down that path. The idea of the overall concept of the three lane corridor doesn't go away, it just on 71st the composition of it or the cross-section of it would change some and then the impacts of it would be where the dramatic difference would be seen because a lot of right-of-way would no longer be needed to be acquired. Everything could be done, pretty much, within the existing right-of-way, whereas up there now all the right-of-way that would need to be acquired for the corridor, the vast majority of it is on the 71st Avenue corridor and a little bit in the Centennial corridor.

Mr. Saunders stated that all this belies what an important meeting Friday is going to be on the beltway. Mr. Saunders asked Ms. BaeHurst if one of the city commissioners still wanted to attend the meeting to see what is said and discussed at that meeting.

Ms. BaeHurst stated that Commissioner Gangl is interested in attending the meeting.

Mr. Saunders stated to Mr. Hokenstad if Kim Lee had sent out a memorandum regarding 71st about Harlow's relocating to some property just north of 71st. I saw comments from Mr. Berg and Mr. Mill. It wasn't embraced with whole hearted support.

Mr. Hokenstad said far from it. He didn't know how serious the proposal was. The department has been asked about their thoughts on the site but there isn't any formal application or anything. Basically they are running the flag up to see what the consensus was.

Mr. Mill asked if Mr. Troe was aware of this issue. Mr. Troe stated he was not.

Mr. Mill stated it was just west of the tracks on the north side. He added that it is a bus operation. Harlow is a contract carrier/dealer. There would be a lot of bus traffic in and out that stops at railroad crossings.

Mr. Hokenstad added that it is a pretty large operation with a lot of buses.

Mr. Troe stated that this raises another question in that, that is a location along Centennial where they have voiced concern over the need for more right-of-way in that location and what had been talking about doing there, everything that had been shown up to this point, all the way down on Centennial reflects a rural section. That can be narrowed up a little bit by going to an urban section, but 10 to 12 feet more right-of-way may be needed along that entire parcel. Most of that expansion would have to be pushed to the west because south of Century to the east are all those houses, you can't push the road that way too much. Trenton and Centennial or Century are quite a ways apart, but in the design world they are really not. Mr. Troe would assume that they have that card to play a little bit.

Mr. Berg stated that Harlow's has expressed an interest from way back to get out of there because they do have access onto Century, but don't have access onto Centennial. So they have been expressing an interest for more than a year to move out of that location. The City's intention is to create an urban section starting at Trenton Drive and going to Jericho. As far as the number of lanes and how those transitions will be handled through there will probably become more when it gets into the final design. It will take less right-of-way, but when you start looking at the lane assignments that were originally prepared on the environmental assessment document for the intersection of Century and Centennial.

Mr. Troe stated that is what is being carried forward is that same cross section.

Mr. Berg stated that it is a large section.

Mr. Troe stated Jim Colebalm, the traffic engineer on this study will be here tomorrow for the public meeting and they are preparing the urban section concept and the footprint for this area from Trenton up to Jericho, so that the role plot that shows what is in the document, but will also have the urban section footprint to show that it is a little bit narrower but it still requires a sliver of right-of-way for the area.

Mr. Berg stated there are still some grade issues and stuff there that will not be addressed in the report that will have to be taken into account between Jericho and Saratoga.

Mr. Troe agreed and said they are only using the two foot contours, so from the final design standpoint, it will be quite a ways off, or the potential for it.

Mr. Berg stated they were trying to look into. He added that they are looking into putting together an RFP to begin preliminary engineering and running it all the way through construction.

Mr. Saunders asked if Mr. Colebalm would be in town in time for the DOT management meeting. Mr. Troe responded that no he would not, he will get in when it is about half over. Mr. Troe added that he can answer all the questions that can come up. Mr. Colebalm is bringing the drawing and he doesn't believe that will be addressed with the DOT in that detail.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Berg stated that four firms have been selected to participate in oral interviews: URS, SRF, Ulteig Engineers and Interstate Engineering. The interviews will be starting Thursday morning at 8:30. Before the committee quits, hopefully a recommendation will be made. It will go to the City Commission first, and then brought forward to the MPO Policy Board for their March meeting. He added that he hopes to have a scope of work and a contract so this has to be only done once. He was hoping to have it done by now, but unfortunately things did not work out that way. He wants to give as much time to do the data collection this spring yet while school is still in session.

Mr. Mill asked what area this study will cover. Mr. Berg stated it would cover the State Street corridor from Divide Avenue through Skyline Boulevard. The eleven traffic signals that way. Then Bismarck Expressway starting at the Missouri River going through the Century and Centennial intersection.

Mr. Saunders asked if Mr. Burke got a hold of Mr. Berg. Mr. Berg stated that he got a call from Mr. Bob Burke and a lot of it has to do with what happened last Wednesday, a gentleman in a wheelchair was stuck by a right turning vehicle. Mr. Burke, from past history, has always requested that when you push the pedestrian button and the walk light comes up that it stays all red in all directions until such a time that you can cross the street on the walk. This is talking about a 40,000 ADT corridor. He says he has seen it in other locations where this is done. In North Dakota, the only intersection that Mr. Berg has seen this happen is 13th Avenue and Washington Street in Grand Forks and that became an ordinance. That is how that got done there. In reviewing that corridor for reconstruction, it was never eliminated, it still does that. It brings up 20-30 seconds of walk and stays there for clearance. It basically shuts the whole intersection down for one pedestrian for almost a minute. Washington Street in Grand Forks is probably comparable to the Expressway in Bismarck. Mr. Berg has kept in contact with Mr. Burke and he wants to be invited to present comments once a consultant is on board, or it probably won't be until such time as this summer and he will be provided a website where he can issue his comments.

Mr. Saunders stated Mr. Burke was very active in talking to the Bismarck City Commissioners in the past about that issue.

Mr. Berg stated he has had these conversations with Mr. Burke numerous times.

Mr. Saunders asked Mr. Berg about the two companies that were weeded out of the final selection. Mr. Berg stated there were two that were not interviewed.

Mr. Troe stated that an alternative to the all red, Sioux Falls, SD, they essentially hold the right turns for, like five seconds, then provide the walk that is associated or complementary that is really conflicting with that right turn, so if you are stepping off the curb here, you are out into the street so you can see better or if you are coming from the other side, you can be seen better also, but it doesn't shut down everything. Mr. Troe stated he could talk to Dallas Hoffer there if it was wanted.

Mr. Berg stated this was discussed in the past and there have been a few pedestrian accidents there, one was a fatality by a left turning vehicle and this recent one, the extenuating circumstances from the details he has received so far is that it was a very elderly gentleman that was the driver of the vehicle.

Mr. Troe stated that theirs was adjacent to the downtown area is probably quality and consistent with Expressway and there was a pedestrian that was killed and it grew out of that.

Mr. Berg stated he appreciated the information and would get a hold of Dallas.

2009 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Mr. Ehreth stated that the proposals for the Long Range Transportation Plan were due last Friday, the 15th. A couple proposals were received. The selection committee met last week to establish some parameters or guidelines associated with the interview. He is in the process of delivering the proposals that were submitted to the various selection committee members. They will receive a week or two to review those. It is anticipated that interviews will take place around March 12, 2008.

Mr. Saunders asked Mr. Ehreth to name the companies. Mr. Ehreth said they were URS in conjunction with Houston Engineering and SRF submitted a proposal in conjunction with Kadrmas, Lee & Jackson. There were about seven or eight firms that requested an RFP.

Mr. Saunders stated that it was a little surprising to him. Mr. Ehreth agreed. Mr. Ehreth added that the last time there were only three submitted. Mr. Saunders stated that this time there is a little higher budget available.

Mr. Benning asked when the current Long Range Transportation Plan expired. Mr. Saunders stated that it was 2010 and this one would be completed by the end of 2009.

Mr. Saunders stated that the incumbent, Ulteig, did not submit this time. Mr. Hokenstad added that they had done the previous two updates.

BISMARCK PARKING STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Berg stated the draft for the Parking Study was handed out the week between Christmas and New Years. Comments have been received. An e-mail was received yesterday from Matt Inman, the project manager with Carl Walker, Inc, and they have incorporated the comments received and would like to come sometime in March before the Board of City Commissioners and make the presentation. The major thing that was gotten out of that report, at least the draft stage so far, it has pulled everything together. Bismarck Parking Authority was managing off-street parking. Mr. Berg was supposedly in charge of on-street parking and didn't have a handle on it, it was a low listed priority. There was a Mayor's Task Force in place that hasn't been real active, they have been more or less keeping the signs up and the P.D. have been doing the enforcement. They came out with some very good recommendations, as far as how to handle parking and stuff from this study. They were talking about setting it up where there would be an authority, he is not saying the current one or one that could be formed to basically handle all the parking, off-street, private lots and on-street parking. So it would all fall into one committee. He believes it is a good idea because now it is very broken apart. To change one thing it impacts something else and Mr. Berg ends up running around trying to get all the factions together to make a decision and this way it would fall under it. If this takes place, Mr. Berg feels his position would be as a member of the committee but more as a technical advisor to let them know what they can and can't do. By ordinance the placement of parking signs falls under his jurisdiction. Mr. Berg is looking for some things to happen out of this, as far as what and who is going to make those decisions, he does not know. It is all going to be how the City Commission receives the report and makes their desires known on how they want to proceed.

Mr. Saunders stated this is a city project and asked if this was going to be on the meeting of the 26th, the next meeting of the City Commission. Mr. Berg stated he would have to visit with the consultant and determine that date. He just received an e-mail from him with the draft of the final report that has to be reviewed and then see where it goes from there. He would like to do it the last meeting in March. Mr. Berg doesn't believe he can get the consultant here by next Tuesday, it would be rushed.

Mr. Saunders understands that there is a recommendation for a multi-level ramp just east of the City-County building where the doctors are currently parking and asked if this is correct. Mr. Berg stated that the Bismarck Parking Authority originally proposed that site, the report indicated it could be placed there when there is sufficient development to effectively utilize it. They also talked about a parking ramp between the two hospitals to resolve those issues between Med Center One – they do have parking issues that they need to resolve – they do have personnel that they do not have adequate parking for and that is kind of what is driving the one on 6th Street behind the City-County building, but the cost and stuff, unless the City Commission decides to fund it in some manner, shape or form, it is probably prohibitive at this time. But that doesn't mean that somebody can't come forward with a design plan to put a parking garage below with housing above the ground level, that will always be around and that is why it was presented the way it was in the report. They also recommended for the medical community that would be a whole study in itself. They took a look at it, but it would take a joint effort between the two hospitals and right now one of them is not really in the mood for it and the other one has the need for it. Therefore when this is all going to come together, when they can play together, something

will probably be seen in that area. It's set up in the short term, mid range and long range plans. Mr. Berg feels they did a good job on the study.

TRANSIT UPDATE

Ms. Robin Werre stated that Mr. Saunders made the graphs in the packets, she provided the numbers and he made the graphs for Transit. She stated that from the transit studies that had been done, one of the goals was to move the people from the para transit door to door system over to the fixed route system. If you look at the graphs, from 2004 to the present, they do show the increase in rides. The rides are going up each year on the fixed route. The para transit numbers are also going down. It is happening, when looking at what has happened already in 2008, during the month of January the rides were up for the fixed route and then again in February. Transit was excited when the rides got to 400 riders a day on the fixed route, now the 500 numbers are being hit, of the 18 days in February, three of those days were Saturday and Saturdays are not big days, but of the other days, six of those days were over 500. Actually on the 12th of February there were 566 rides that day. Now everything is pretty consistent in the high four hundreds and now starting into the five hundreds. They are now seeing that the change is taking place, it is slow but it is happening. Transit is looking down the road, one of the plans is: some of the New Freedom money and JARC money is going to be released shortly. There has been a meeting of the community people and they put together a list of some of the needs. One of the things they want to apply for JARC funding on is hiring a marketing person and using the money from JARC to fund that. They are still looking at a part-time position that would help train. They know that a lot of the developmentally disabled individuals can ride the fixed route, but they don't know how and they are afraid. The developmentally disabled (DD) providers do not have the staff to go out with them, ride with them, show them how, get them familiar and comfortable with it. That is not only the DD people, but the elderly as well. They have never ridden a bus and the concerns are there. Transit would like to do some group training with them. Some meetings have been done, last week at Library Square in Mandan there was a group and they had a lot of questions. The bus goes right by there and it would be so easy for them to walk out their door and get on it, but the fear is there because they have never done it. Transit wants to work with a trainer to get some of these groups comfortable with the fixed route. There are some needs to look at expansion of the routes, whether it is to expand the hours and go beyond 6:30 at night or add on some routes. There has been a request from the University to go out there as well. That is a route in itself and is probably not the highest priority. They do want to get more involvement with BSC and what they are looking at is a total change in the Mandan route. They would like to keep a bus in Mandan that is just a shuttle that goes around Mandan and makes a connection with a bus that goes between Bismarck and Mandan. Hopefully, to either Gateway Mall where it hasn't been going or to Kirkwood Mall, where it has been going. They have talked to the Bank of North Dakota and they are willing to give space as a transfer point so the bus coming back and forth can go there and meet the Bismarck bus. Probably looking at the college as another transfer point if it is done on the north side. Transit has not worked out all of those details yet but those are some of the thoughts that have been played around with. The other thing, in looking at down the road to maybe some of the JARC and New Freedom money is just what has been talked about with the parking. Transit has been contacted by the School of Nursing about the parking problem and is there anyway, they would like to get their students to use the fixed route more than what they are. Looking at the possibilities in the funding to look at

even some shuttles. Transit has looked at the shift work, what has come out of the statewide meetings is that it does not work really well to run fixed route into the industrial areas because of the shift hours. Transit does not meet those hours. Instead of that more shuttles could be used to do almost like a door to door service, specifically working with the industrial areas, Sykes has been interested, but also looking at the hospitals, some nursing homes and downtown. Transit would almost be giving them door to door service. If you look at their lower level of employees with their housekeeping staff, their dietary staff, and things like that, if we can do some shuttles with them, every shuttle would save twelve to fifteen parking spots.

Mr. Berg said, just too piggy back onto that, the Parking Study does have those recommendations to work with the transit system to better provide pick up and drop off points and things of that nature. Mr. Berg added that he has a spreadsheet of Med Center's times in fifteen minute increments he could provide transit.

Ms. Werre stated those are some of the things that could be worked on jointly. The hospitals are close enough. Missouri Slope and St. Vincent's are right across the street from each other too, close enough if some shuttles were run it could be done. Those are some things that are being looked at for down the road, it is not going to happen tomorrow.

Mr. Benning stated they haven't seen the numbers from Federal Highway for how much money is available, but they have seen them from FTA.

Ms. Werre said she talked to Annette Tait last week and it is just a matter of them releasing the numbers. She added that the rural stuff has been released. She said they are just looking at the guidelines.

Mr. Benning added that they are holding some things up, Title 6 stuff and DBE stuff that they are playing hostage with those two programs and haven't released the funds. He has the federal register. Ms. Werre stated she also got a copy of it. It is just a matter of waiting until they put out the requests.

Mr. Benning said last week they got all the paperwork approved so that it should be coming out in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Johnston asked if there was any change in the possibility of getting the fixed route to Lincoln. Ms. Werre stated no, that is the other group that has asked, the para transit goes out there, but again that is a route in itself and right now Lincoln has absolutely no money to help support it. Ms. Werre has met with them in the past and requested it. That is going to be the same thing with the University, it is going to have to have funding from the University to help provide those routes. What is happening with Transit funding is; yes they are getting the federal funding and it has been increasing but it is the local match that is needed. The last legislature, when they didn't get the increase from three dollars to six dollars from the registration fees, what the legislature did was put out from the general fund and gave transit, a million dollars for the biennium, that will be done with this next legislative session and they don't know what is going to happen with the request. There are committees working on it, meetings with legislatures and the local money needs to get increased in order to match the federal money.

Mr. Benning said on the DOT side they can only put in a budget that follows state law, they cannot go over that so the requests do not always match the funds.

Mr. Mill said probably the big issue is that if folks could be convinced to give up their independence and driving themselves. He doesn't know if there is any desire in the Lincoln area, even if the rate was a little higher to compensate for going out that far. Mr. Johnson said that when the fixed route was first started there was some discussion, but not recently. Once the cost figures came out that was pretty much the end of it. He added that the City has grown substantially, but the frequency of services and the times, because of the core hours, there would be some traffic would be in between there but the bulk of the traffic coming out of there would be during core hours.

Ms. Werre said the core hours are the busiest getting people into town. What they find is that it is a long run and when you get to town you have to transfer, depending on where you transfer and where you are going, you could spend quite a bit of time on a bus and that is a problem. People aren't going to give up a car to do that.

Mr. Johnston stated that if he could get on the bus at the time he needed to and get to work within a reasonably close time with what could be driven, people might do it, but if it is going to take an hour or so longer people won't do it. It is timing as well as cost that factors into that decision. School kids are another matter, but some might take the transit service if that were available, but that's another matter.

Ms. Werre said transit is not in the business to take away from the private sector as long as Harlow's is providing that service to them. Para transit is out there quite a bit and right around Lincoln.

Mr. Johnston stated that it is out there quite a bit.

Ms. Werre said a couple different foster homes out there have developmentally disabled clients.

Mr. Mill stated that in the past the weather plays a part in transportation. Mr. Mill said a lot of parents will take their kids to school when it is nice, but when it is cold and vehicles don't start, parents will put them on the school bus. That might play into it if the bus went to Lincoln, rather than scrap windows or if vehicle won't start rather than buy a new battery just take the bus.

Ms. Werre said the colder it is the better the rides are. There is still some work to do with the routes in town to make them more efficient and better serve the population so they don't have to transfer twice, maybe once to get where they have got to go. But they are definitely seeing an increase in calls coming in from people and there is still some confusion of people standing on the corner and the bus went by and didn't pick them up, in most cases it wasn't a fixed route bus it was a para transit bus and they don't pay attention if the illuminator is not on. Sometimes

people are on the wrong side of the street and the driver isn't looking there because that is not where they are supposed to be and if it is dark out you may not see someone standing there.

Mr. Saunders asked Ms. Werre and Mr. Berg if it was in any of the reports about carpooling to get to some of the bus sites, like Lincoln, if there was some significant carpooling that could be done to get to Kirkwood or someplace. He didn't know if that would help.

Ms. Werre said she hadn't heard anything.

Mr. Johnston stated that wouldn't be an advantage because they would already be driving to town anyway. If you were going to another City maybe, but not just in Bismarck.

Ms. Werre said last fall when they did the survey of the Capitol people to see why they weren't using it as much, being the bus goes right through the Capitol grounds and there is such a problem parking, particularly during the legislature. There was good response but a lot of the response was that people live out of the city and need their car to get into town. A few did not know it went through the Capitol, a few riders have been picked up there. Some responses were that they had to take their kids to school and they live out of the city limits or they live in Mandan. It is faster to drive.

Mr. Troe believes that the focus should remain on Bismarck State College and the transfer of the para transit riders over to the fixed route is probably where you still need to be focusing for the next couple of years. Then you got that built in the ridership pool on the para transit you have to try to figure out how to better serve that clientele on the fixed route. He doesn't know what the elderly population in Lincoln is, but something tells him that a younger family or person living in Lincoln they are not a real good candidate for transit, but if there is an elderly population, it's the medical trips, the grocery trips, etc. that would probably be the best people to focus on for Lincoln, but that is not going to create an everyday, eleven hour a day fixed route service. The distance and population are just not conducive yet. That doesn't necessarily mean that in five years, if that's the population that the community starts to try to attract because it's not like they are becoming destitute. That population has considerable income plus they don't create a lot of the problems that you get. When you start adding population you have to add schools, you have to start dealing with more police, more fire and the elderly population doesn't require the same increments of those things.

Ms. Werre stated that in the meeting they had, one of the Associate Dean from BSC was there, and she happens to be on the Mandan School Board. The School Board over there has asked that transit consider transportation to the new junior high which is up on the north side farther than the routes go now. When transit did their routes, they had laid them out to go by the schools in Mandan. Then the schools decided to provide busing for their students, so you can ride a bus over there. She said that is something they would again look at and the possibility of discontinuing it and providing more support for the public system or the fixed route system. Also, she is interested in getting the college students more involved in riding the fixed route and knowing their numbers, they don't have a large population that live on campus, they live off campus and have to commute. They would like hold off in building parking lots up there. She said she does see more students on the corner using the system on a gradual basis compared to

what she has seen in the past and she's taking the idea back, knowing how the colleges around the state use it and it is part of their activity tickets that could help support the system. Transit is starting to work with them and that is one of the things Ms. Werre would like the marketing person to do, get out into the community and do things that she doesn't have time to go out and do and work with the Downtowners. Transit is a member of the Downtowners and did get the Parking Study and read some of it. It takes footwork and time to get some of those things set up.

Mr. Saunders stated that he and Ms. Werre would appear before the City Commission on the 26th to ask for their approval for the 2008 Operations Grant for the fixed route and para transit and also to present these charts again.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Saunders stated that in the next couple of months, Mr. Ehreth and himself will be trying to get a jump on budgetary things for the upcoming UPWP for 2009-2010 budget for the MPO, specifically studies, so if the entities would give it some thought, with everybody's budget seemingly due in the summer time, the MPO needs to get an early jump to see what works and what does work for the next two years.

Mr. Benning stated that the two year UPWP was something that was created by the three MPO's. He added that in Fargo, because of the uncertainty with the highway bill they are looking at going just one year at a time. That is something that the three MPO's may want to talk about, whether they want a two year program or a one year program. It makes no difference to the DOT. It makes a little less paperwork if it is every two years, back in 1992 it started with a one year program in Grand Forks. That worked good so a two year program was tried in Bismarck and Fargo and have been using these two year programs ever since. The department would like to keep all three MPO's on the same tract.

Mr. Saunders added that it was talked about at the mid-year review last time and has strong sympathy with Fargo, but there is a considerable amount of effort that goes into that budget, so doing it every two years would help Bismarck's staffing situation. On the other hand he knows what Fargo is talking about because the second year into that budget there are a ton of changes, it is almost like reinventing the wheel, because the budget gets pretty sketchy that second year.

Mr. Benning said from the department standpoint it is up to the three MPO's to decide. It can be done any way. He would like them to be consistent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m. to meet again on March 17, 2008, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Nadeau
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

Steve Saunders, Chair