

Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

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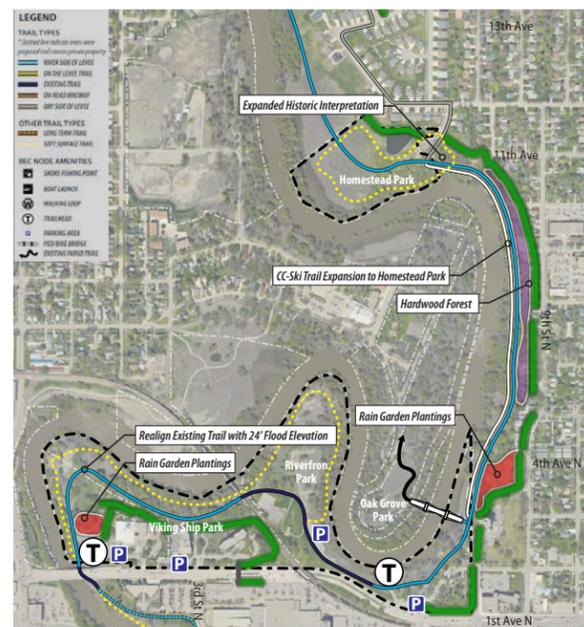
Moorhead River Corridor Study: Project Update and River Corridor Summit Details

In April, the City of Moorhead received the Phase I *River Corridor Needs and Issues Report*. This report documented existing conditions, summarized public input, outlined limitations along the river corridor, and presented a range of needs and opportunities as identified by residents and City staff. The Phase I Report may be viewed online at www.fmmetrocog.org

In June, Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. (HKGi) was contracted on behalf of the City of Moorhead and Metro COG to develop Phase II and Phase III of the Moorhead River Corridor Study. Metro COG and the River Corridor Technical Advisory Group (TAG) have provided preliminary guidance to HKGi as they prepare a master plan for the corridor. When complete, the master plan will become a long term guide to future recreation, habitat restoration, management, and maintenance of the river corridor.

On October 28th and 29th, Metro COG and the City of Moorhead held the River Corridor Summit, which included the River Corridor Field Day and Community Open House. The summit began with a series of meetings with key stakeholders to discuss ideas for the river corridor, coordinate planning efforts, and identify partnership opportunities. The Field Day gave the public the chance to visit six different locations along the river to better understand existing conditions and discuss future opportunities. The Community Open House allowed members of the public to view detailed exhibits developed during Phase II as well as provide input on preliminary approaches to trail and recreation opportunities, pedestrian bridge crossings, habitat restoration, and other corridor issues.

To view all of the Moorhead River Corridor Study materials to date, including the Community Open House exhibit boards and a new public input questionnaire, please visit Metro COG's website at www.fmmetrocog.org



River corridor opportunities from 1st Ave N to 15th Ave N in Moorhead

Metro COG is committed to ensuring all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability/handicap, sexual orientation, or income status have access to Metro COG's programs and services. Meeting facilities will be accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Metro COG will make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for translation services for meeting proceedings and related materials. Please contact Joan Geyer, Metro COG Executive Secretary at 701-232-3242 at least two days in advance of the meeting if any special accommodations are required for any member of the public to be able to participate in the meeting.

The FM Metropolitan Council of Governments

Vol 12 | Issue 3 | November 2013



Public Input Opportunity

Metro COG Announces Project Identification Phase for 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program

Metro COG will hold a public input meeting to gather public input on the project identification phase of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the years 2015-2018. The public input meeting will be held as part of Metro COG's Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) meeting on December 12, 2013, at 10:00 AM in the Metro COG Conference Room. This is an opportunity for the public to submit comments on the Candidate Project 2015-2018 TIP which entails projects previously selected for Federal funding, projects currently being submitted for Federal funding, or newly identified projects deemed to be regionally significant. New project identification is anticipated for following Federal aid programs:

- North Dakota Urban Roads (2018)
- North Dakota Regional Roads (2018 and 2019)
- North Dakota Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (2015-2018)
- North Dakota Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) (2015)
- North Dakota Transit Capital and Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
- Minnesota City/County Road & Bridge (2018)
- Minnesota Transportation Alternatives Program (2016-2018)

The Candidate Project 2015-2018 TIP will be posted for public comment starting on December 6th, 2013 at www.fmmetrocog.org.

What is the TIP?

The TIP is a compilation of the significant surface transportation improvements scheduled for implementation in the FM Metropolitan area during the next four years (FY 2015-2018). The TIP is developed by Metro COG as part of its overall transportation planning process. The TIP is developed in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), and Metro Area Transit (MATBUS) of Fargo-Moorhead.

How Do TIP Project Get Identified?

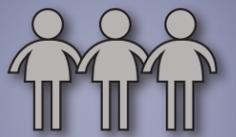
Metro COG annually solicits for projects seeking Federal funding through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Projects are typically submitted by cities, counties, or public transit operators. Once received, projects are evaluated based on local needs and anticipated project benefits. Final project selection is the responsibility of MnDOT, NDDOT, or MATBUS. Project selection is a cooperative process between those entities and the Metro COG Policy Board. The FHWA and the FTA require that projects included within an approved TIP be consistent with Metro COG's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Projects appearing in the TIP have typically undergone some level of previous planning level study to determine preliminary project justification.

How Long is the Public Comment Period?

Metro COG will accept written comments until Noon, December 19th, 2013. Comments can be sent to Case Plaza, Suite 232, One Second Street North, Fargo, ND 58102, or emailed to kline@fmmetrocog.org. On December 12th, Metro COG's TTC will recommend the Candidate Project TIP to the Metro COG Policy Board for approval on December 19th, 2013.

What Happens after the Candidate Project TIP is Approved?

Following Metro COG Policy Board approval of the Candidate Project TIP, MnDOT and NDDOT work with Metro COG to finalize project selection. A Draft TIP would then be released in April or May of 2014 which would outline which, if any, of the new candidate projects have been selected for Federal funding or any modifications to previously selected projects. Upon development of the Draft TIP, additional public input will be solicited by Metro COG. Contact Wade E. Kline, Executive Director at 701.232.3242 (Ext. 32) if additional information is required or go to www.fmmetrocog.org.



PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITY!

Look for this symbol

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Metro 2040 Futures Summit

On September 10th and 11th, Metro COG and LSA Associates, Inc. hosted the Metro 2040 Futures Summit. The summit included three public input sessions on the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and were held at locations in Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo. These sessions were designed to inform and engage the public on anticipated future growth trends and transportation needs for the FM Metropolitan area over the coming decades. A total of 83 individuals participated in the summit.

During the presentation, participants learned how previous improvements to the transportation network from 1990 to 2013 have done well at keeping up with travel demand in the FM area. The presentation also looked at demographic trends and how projections will impact transportation needs by 2040. Current modeling of the 2040 transportation network shows congestion to be a significant problem in the future. Many areas will be subject to traffic delays without roadway and alternative transportation improvements to mitigate anticipated impacts.

As part of the Futures Summit, participants were asked to work in groups on a Connections Exercise. This exercise involved group consensus on what major infrastructure improvements participants thought were needed in the FM Metropolitan area by 2040. Every group was required to work within a set budget that included both federal/state and local funds. Each group had one or two facilitators to assist with the exercise and keep track of spending tallies.



Participants discuss different transportation improvements during the Connections Exercise in Fargo

Metro 2040 Public Input Summary

The Metro 2040 Public Input Summary was created by Metro COG to better understand the community's desire for various transportation needs. The summary is comprised of three components: the Connections Exercise that was their key feature of the Futures Summit, questionnaires given to participants at the Futures Summit, and an online survey Metro COG had on its website.

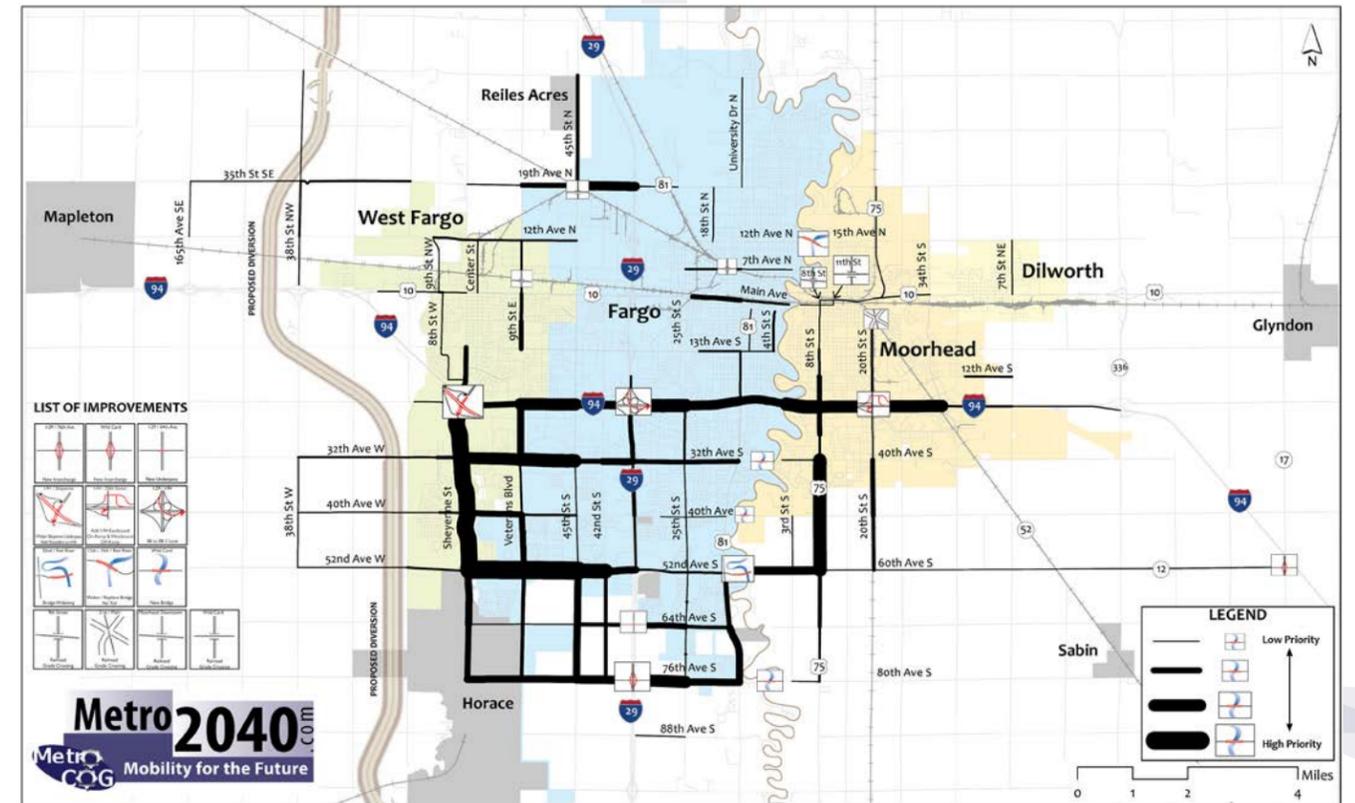
A total of 14 groups participated in the Connections Exercise during the Futures Summit. In addition, Metro 2040 facilitators and Metro COG staff worked on an additional four maps, bringing the total to 18 completed exercises.

As part of the Connections Exercise, each participant was given ten chips and asked to prioritize the seven goals of MAP-21. MAP-21 is the federal funding and authorization bill which governs surface transportation and other transit programs.

Maintaining the existing transportation system, improving its efficiency and performance, and promoting consistency between land use and transportation plans were ranked amongst the top MAP-21 goal priorities with regard to the LRTP. Protecting the environment and conserving resources was seen as the least important goal.

A public investment compilation map was created by Metro COG detailing group totals for various improvements during the Connections Exercise. Thicker lineweights signify more groups supported new lanes or widen existing lanes along certain corridors. Larger icons for major improvements represent larger group support for a transportation enhancement.

Almost every group chose 52nd Ave S in Fargo and Sheyenne St in West Fargo as corridors which will need to be widened. Many groups also sought to widen stretches of 76th Ave S, 32nd Ave S, 19th Ave N, University Dr and Highway 75 in Moorhead. Different stretches of I-94 were also selected by groups in need of improvements.



Futures Summit compilation map summarizing public investment priorities during the Connections Exercise

The Sheyenne St interchange at I-94 was selected by most groups as the single most important large infrastructure improvement needed in the FM Metropolitan area. Fourteen groups chose this improvement compared to 11 groups for an expanded flyover at I-29 and I-94, 11 groups for a new interchange at 76th Ave S and I-29 in Fargo, and nine groups for an enhanced interchange at 20th St S and I-94 in Moorhead.

Several groups made the point that a new interchange south of Glyndon could help make County Road 12 a "mini-beltway" by providing a direct east-west link to I-94 for people living in the southern Metropolitan area.

With regard to river crossings, most groups thought it ideal to enhance current crossings at 52nd Ave S/60th Ave S and 12th Ave N/15th Ave N. These were seen as priorities before potential crossings at 76th Ave/80th Ave S and 32nd Ave S/40th Ave S.

On railroad grade separations in the area, 16 of the 18 groups saw the need to build some sort of grade separation in downtown Moorhead. While 8th St is on the national highway system and subject to federal funds, most groups preferred a grade separation at 11th St. Only four

groups chose a grade separation at Main Ave and 20th/21st St S in Moorhead, most likely because of funding limitations in the exercise. Groups also chose grade separations at 45th St N and 7th Ave N in Fargo, as well as 9th St NE in West Fargo.



Wade Kline, Executive Director of Metro COG (right) and Ray Moe, Principal at LSA Associates, address the Futures Summit session in Fargo

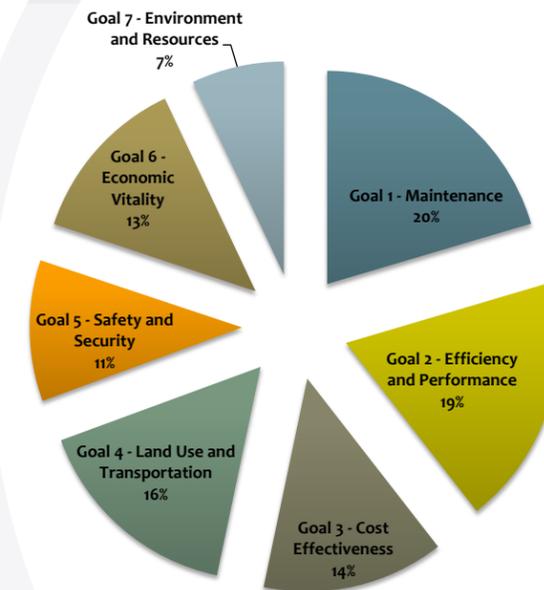
Groups chose from a number of transportation improvements in the form of game pieces. These pieces included new lanes, lane widenings, intersection improvements, new or improved interchanges, new or improved river crossings and grade separations at railway crossings. Each improvement was assigned a dollar amount (in \$millions) according to improvement type or length. Participants were also asked to choose areas that needed new or enhanced bus transit service, enhanced bicycle/pedestrian corridors and bike gap/barricade removal.

Funding for the Connections Exercise was split between North Dakota and Minnesota. Totals were based on historic and projected revenues, including programmed revenue in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and funding changes brought about by MAP-21.

Metro 2040: What's Next?

As Metro 2040 moves forward, Metro COG and LSA will begin the preparation of a Roadway Vision Plan. This Vision Plan will be based on project ideas generated during the Futures Summit, input from the Metro COG Study Review Committee (SRC), and technical travel demand modeling analysis. The objective of this analysis is to identify a list of roadway needs to accommodate travel demand in 2040. Preparation of the Vision Plan will also include refining goals and evaluation performance measures as they relate to planning factors and priorities for transportation system improvements.

Additional opportunities for public involvement on Metro 2040 will be available in January 2014 so stay tuned for further updates. To review current Metro 2040 materials, please visit Metro COG's website at www.fmmetrocog.org.



MAP-21 goal priorities by Futures Summit participants