

Fiscal Year 2014
October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014

FY 2014 Annual Report
For the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study
(NATS)



October 2014

Prepared by the
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<http://www.swmpc.org/nats.asp>

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) annual report is a federally mandated activity that identifies work activities approved in the FY 2014 Unified Work Program (UWP) and describes the progress and accomplishments that occurred during the period from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. The UWP guides the NATS transportation planning activities for each fiscal year. During that time, program tasks that will benefit member agencies, the region, and the state are undertaken to improve the efficiency of the overall transportation system. This report also identifies revenue sources utilized from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), including the corresponding local match amounts.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS). An MPO study area is an urbanized area that is designated by the U.S. Census and is determined by population density. This urbanized area can consist of one municipality or multiple municipalities. Within the MPO structure, there are two committees responsible for making transportation related decisions: the Technical Advisory Committee and the Policy Committee. Each municipality within the MPO study area has at least one representative on each of the MPO committees. MPO transportation planners supply information for the Technical Advisory and Policy Committees and serve as liaisons between local, state, and federal entities.

The Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) through coordination and technical support of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) provides an organizational structure to identify and guide local transportation planning activities.

The Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) is the Michigan piece of the South Bend, Indiana, urbanized area as designated by the United States Census. The Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study encompasses nine jurisdictions in Berrien and Cass Counties, these municipalities are: City of Niles, City of Buchanan, Village of Edwardsburg, Bertrand Township, Buchanan Township, Howard Township, Milton Township, Niles Charter Township, Ontwa Township, and Mason Township.



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Local Transportation Issues

The transportation planning program conducted by the SWMPC is designed to be responsive to federal and state regulations and concurrently address local transportation issues. The “local issues” are relevant both to the Niles-Buchanan-Cass area and to the prescribed federal/state transportation planning guidelines.

The following items were local issues that will continue to be addressed by the MPO. What is provided after each issue is a brief description of what the MPO did throughout the year to address the issue.

1. Preservation and Maintenance of the Transportation System

In FY 2014, the total number of miles of federal aid roadway that were preserved and maintained throughout the MPO was **17.85 miles** of the total federal aid network of **241 miles**, which accounts for **7%** of the eligible miles.

2. Continued Intergovernmental Cooperation in Transportation

Member communities throughout the MPO continued to stay engaged throughout the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program documents. This was demonstrated through consistent attendance at the meetings, outlined on pages 10-12.

3. Continued Focus on Public Participation, Environmental Justice, and Title VI

The MPO continues to monitor the progress of public participation by identified environmental justice populations and members of the general public. One new strategy that the MPO is engaged in is using advertisements instead of legal notices to better identify the opportunities for the members of the communities to engage in the process with the MPO.

4. Transportation and Economic Development including Freight Transportation

The complexity of freight movement throughout southwest Michigan has yet to be fully realized. There is a continued emphasis to move forward on a freight study of the region.

5. Emphasis on Including Safety and System Reliability in the Transportation Planning Process

Throughout the fiscal year the MPO staff has reviewed crash information for the MPO area for pedestrians, cars, and bicyclists through the efforts of the Walk and Roll Plan development. More attention has been placed upon this with the emergence of MAP-21.

6. Transportation Financing Issues and Financial Constraint

This continues to be an area that MPO Committee members and MPO staff struggle with. Information is shared with elected officials by the MPO and through the Michigan Transportation Planning Association. There is not much that can be done by the MPO to address this issue until legislative action is taken at the federal and state level. MPO staff continues to monitor the issues and present them to the MPO Committee members.

7. Public Transportation Service Levels and Delivery Alternatives

Throughout the year much work continues to focus on service levels within the Berrien County Transit Feasibility Study. As the plan will be done in the next six months, more specific discussions will take place on how to implement the plan suggestions.

8. Multi-Modal Systems Review and Integration to Include Transit, Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities, and Freight

Analysis has been underway to identify key corridors, activity centers, and gaps in the transit and pedestrian, and bicycle networks. This has been done with the Berrien County Transit Feasibility Study and also the NATS Walk and Roll process that is under development.

9. Meeting Air Quality Standards Prescribed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Identification of Ways to Reduce Climate Impact

The MPO continues to coordinate with the statewide CMAQ program and to look for new ways to reduce air quality emissions in the region by using various reduction methods such as: rideshare, signal upgrades throughout the roadway network, and replacing transit buses with more efficient models.

10. Consultation with Other Partners in the Development of the Transportation System

This process was done throughout the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. There has also been extensive coordination and consultation with transit riders and transit agencies throughout the Berrien County Transit Feasibility Study.

11. Review of Potential Environmental Impacts (Mitigation) and Encourage Minimal Impacts Prior To and During Construction

During the development of the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program, maps and analysis were done for projects that would be near sensitive areas and the impacts were minimal. As those projects near the fiscal year in which they are to be obligated, those maps and lists of mitigation activities will be given to each agency prior to the start of their project.

12. Identification of Performance Measures

Performance measures were discussed at length internally at the MPO and some potential measures were listed in the 2013-2040 LRP. The MPO developed eight specific areas that are to be focused on prior to specific federal guidance. Staff will continue to monitor this topic and continue to engage with the MPO Committees as more guidance is given from U.S. DOT.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Technical Advisory Committee

The NATS metropolitan planning organization (MPO) holds monthly meetings with member communities to ensure that the goals and strategies developed in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRP) continue to take shape as outlined in the planning document.

Purpose of TAC Committee

The purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee shall be to provide technical advice to the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) Policy Committee. NATS is the MPO responsible for coordinating the transportation planning process within the Michigan piece of the South Bend, Indiana, urbanized area. The NATS MPO is a subset of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC), southwest Michigan's state-designated regional planning organization. Together, they manage all aspects of the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process.

*Ex-officio means nonvoting member

Committee Members

Chair: Joe Bellina	Cass County Road Commission Engineer
Vice-Chair: Richard Cooper	Niles Charter Township
Jason Auvil	Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
Pat Bellaire	Village of Edwardsburg
Brian Berndt	Berrien County Road Commission
Dawn Bolock	Ontwa Township
Barbara Cook	Cass County Planning Commission
*John Egelhaaf	SWMPC
*Fred Featherly	MDOT - Multi-Modal
Craig Bradfield	Howard Township
Juan Ganum	City of Niles-Community Development
Kelly Getman-Dissette/Evan Smith	Niles Dial-A-Ride
John Gruchot/Katie Montoya	Berrien County Planning Department
Darrell Harden/Jason Latham	MDOT - Southwest Region
Joe Sobieralski	Southwest MI Econ Growth Alliance
Matthew Kodis	Kinexus
Joseph Kring	Bertrand Township
Kelly Sweeney	Milton Township
Paul Lott, John Lanum, Kristina Welch	MDOT Planning
*Stewart McKenzie	FTA
Jane Mitchell	Buchanan Township
*Bradley Sharlow	MDOT - Travel Demand
Janet Personette	Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce
Joe Ray	City of Niles-DPW & Jerry Tyler Memorial Airport

*Representative	MDEQ - Air Quality Div.
Don Ryman	City of Buchanan
*Andrea Dewey	FHWA - Michigan Division
Sarah Woolcock/Erin Jolivette	MDOT Transportation Service Center, Coloma
*Representative	Michiana Area Council of Governments
Representative	Buchanan Township

Meetings were held on the following dates with the total Committee members attending and members of the public.

October 22, 2013	14 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
November 26, 2013	15 Committee Members + 3 members of the public
December 17, 2013	6 Committee Members + 2 member of the public
January 22, 2014	15 Committee Members + 2 members of the public
February 25, 2014	18 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
March 25, 2014	16 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
April 30, 2014- Joint Meeting	15 Committee Members + 7 members of the public
May 27, 2014	14 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
June 24, 2014	16 Committee Members + 3 members of the public
July 22, 2014	12 Committee Members +0 members of the public
August 26, 2014	13 Committee Members + 5 members of the public
September 25, 2014-Joint Meeting	13 NATS Committee Members

Note: Two transportation planning staff members are in attendance at every meeting, in addition to the attendees listed above.

The April 30 and September 25 Meetings were joint meetings with the TwinCATS committees.

Policy Committee

Purpose of Policy Committee

The Purpose of the Policy Committee shall be to provide policy level guidance, direction, and necessary approvals with respect to all aspects of the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process. Deliberations, findings, and approvals of the Policy Committee shall be made after due consideration of recommendations of the NATS Technical Advisory Committee, and when necessary, shall then be recommended to the SWMPC.

*Ex-officio, means nonvoting member

Committee Members

Chair: Richard Cooper

Vice-Chair: Vacant

Jason Auvil

Georgia Boggs

Dawn Bolock

Cliff Poehlman

Brian Berndt

*John Egelhaaf

*Fred Featherly

Craig Bradfield

Evan Smith/Kelly Getman-Dissette

John Gruchot/Katie Montoya

Darrell Harden/Jason Latham

Joe Sobieralski

Joseph Kring

Kelly Sweeney

Serita Ann Mason

*Stewart McKenzie

Jane Mitchell

Robert Ziliak

*Bradley Sharlow

Janet Personette

*Representative

Don Ryman/Bill Marx

*Andrea Dewey

Erin Jolivette

*Representative

Representative

Additional representative

Niles Charter Township

Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians; Berrien County
Planning Commission

City of Niles

Ontwa Township

Cass County Road Commission

Berrien County Road Commission

SWMPC

MDOT - Multi-Modal

Howard Township

Niles Dial-a-Ride

Berrien County Planning Department

MDOT - Southwest Region

Southwest MI Econ Growth Alliance

Bertrand Township

Milton Township

City of Niles

FTA

Buchanan Township

Cass County Commission

MDOT - Travel Demand

Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce

MDEQ - Air Quality Div.

City of Buchanan

FHWA - Michigan Division

MDOT Transportation Service Center, Coloma

Michiana Area Council of Governments

Buchanan Township

Four Flags Chamber of Commerce

Meetings were held on the following dates with the total Committee members attending and members of the public.

October 22, 2013	10 Committee Members + 2 memberS of the public
November 26, 2013	13 Committee Members + 2 members of the public
December 17, 2013	7 Committee Members + 3 members of the public
January 22, 2014	10 Committee Members
February 25, 2014	16 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
March 25, 2014	14 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
April 30, 2014- Joint Meeting	15 Committee Members + 7 members of the public
May 27, 2014	14 Committee Members + 1 member of the public
June 24, 2014	13 Committee Members + 2 members of the public
July 22, 2014	13 Committee Members +1 member of the public
August 26, 2014	10 Committee Members + 5 members of the public
September 25, 2014-Joint Meeting	13 NATS Committee Members

Note: Two transportation planning staff members are in attendance at every meeting, in addition to the attendees listed above.

The April 30 and September 25 Meetings were joint meetings with the TwinCATS committees.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND WORK ACTIVITIES

Each year, the SWMPC is responsible for a variety of tasks under five categories: Program Management, Database Management, Long Range Planning, Short Range Planning, and Other Planning. Accomplishments in each of these categories are described below.

Program Management

The goal of the Program Management category is to effectively administer the urban transportation planning program. The SWMPC utilizes a combination of strategies to achieve this goal.

1. Participated in seminars, workshops, and classroom-type courses designed to develop technical skills and broader perspectives on transportation-related subjects.

- *Michigan Transportation Planning Association (MTPA)* - The Michigan Transportation Planning Association is a voluntary association of public organizations and agencies which are responsible for the administration of transportation planning activities throughout the State of Michigan.
<http://www.mtpa-mi.org/default.asp>
 - October 15, November 19, December 17, January 21, February 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, August 7, August 19, September 16.
 - SWMPC also served as Chair of the MTPA Committee from August 2012-August 2014, and Secretary of the MTPA Committee beginning in August 2014.
 - Michigan Transportation Planning Association Annual Conference August 5-8, 2014 in Port Huron, MI.

- *Michigan Public Transit Association (MPTA)*
The MPTA is a professional association which provides leadership, resources, support and technical assistance to public transit agencies in Michigan. The association acts as a unified voice advocating and strengthening the role of public transportation in improving the quality of life for all Michigan citizens.
 - Attended MPTA annual Legislative meeting
 - Attended MPTA Annual Conference August 2014

- *Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)*
CTAA is a professional organization consists of organizations and individuals that supports creating mobility for all Americans regardless of where they live or work.
Attended CTAA annual EXPO sessions that included the following:
 - Improving Transit Service Delivery
 - New Models to Meet Health Care and Job Access Realities
 - Federal Transportation Funding Update

- *Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Training Opportunities* - Staff utilize free training opportunities offered by MDOT to stay abreast of new research and state requirements. These trainings provide the staff that opportunity.
 - MDOT Long Range Plan Training- March 2014

- *Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Technical Assistance* – In addition to attending trainings, MPO also assisted MDOT with two ongoing projects.
 - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Technical Advisory Panel- Attended meetings and provided feedback in February and May 2014.
 - Southwest Region Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee - Facilitated stakeholder outreach and attended meetings in February, May, and August
 -

- *Other Transportation Related Training Opportunities* - Staff are expected to stay current on new research and transportation topics that impact the development of planning documents and projects in the study area.
 - October 2013
 - Greentown Michiana Conference
 - Michigan Association of Planning Annual Conference
 - November 2013
 - NIRPC Livable Communities Webinar
 - Southwest Michigan Traffic Safety Committee Meeting
 - December 2013
 - National Charrette Institute Training
 - Statewide Rideshare Meeting
 - February 2014
 - Michigan Association of Planning Transportation Bonanza
 - March 2014
 - Michigan Traffic Safety Summit
 - FHWA Freight and Land Use Workshop
 - April 2014
 - Greentown Michiana 2.0
 - May 2014
 - Asset Management Spring Conference in Bay City
 - Great Lakes Water Trails Conference
 - June 2014
 - Southwest Michigan Traffic Safety Meeting
 - July 2014

- MACOG Livable Communities Workshop
- August 2014
 - Non-Motorized Solutions Outside Urban Areas Webinar from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
 - MTPA Annual Conference in Port Huron
- September 2014
 - Asset Management Workshop

3. Committees

The SWMPC transportation planning staff is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the NATS MPO.

NATS TAC and Policy Committees

- Provided staff support to the NATS TAC and Policy Committees.
- Reported on NATS activities to the federal and state agencies and to the SWMPC, as appropriate.
- Prepared for, facilitated, and generated minutes for monthly NATS TAC and Policy Committee meetings.
- Created Transportation Alternatives Program Funds Subcommittee, created application guidance and issued call for projects. Completed in December 2013.
- Issued a second call for projects in August of 2014.
- Conducted an annual review of membership and participation for the Technical Advisory and Policy committees.
- Established a schedule of public meetings as an ongoing element of the planning process for public information and input.
- Created Committee Talking Points to better facilitate the discussion of MPO business back with local jurisdictions.
- Updated NATS MPO Committee Handbook as needed.
- Published Transportation-specific newsletter

4. Public Participation Efforts

SWMPC engage in specific public participation efforts as outlined in the Public Participation Plan which can be found at <http://www.swmpc.org/participation.asp>.

- Actively implemented public involvement activities through community meetings, distribution of committee and planning information to radio, television, and newspapers.
- Monthly communication with the press through press releases and via telephone about current transportation issues.
- Maintained a database of strategies and outcomes of public participation measures.

- Used appropriate visualization techniques to describe plans and perform other public participation activities as required by MAP-21
- Updated the Transportation Participation Plan as required by MAP-21, including community outreach to address air quality conformity, Title VI, and Environmental Justice requirements.
- Monthly email messages to interested citizens regarding transportation trainings, meetings, and topics related to transportation planning.
- Actively partnered with other agencies such as the Disability Network’s Transportation Advocacy Group and others to obtain greater participation in, and information about, the diverse needs of the population.
- Coordinated with MDOT on regional activities affecting transportation developments.
- Maintained the SWMPC and **MyWayThere.org** website for transportation information dissemination.
- Consulted as appropriate with state, local, private agencies, and Tribal agencies who are responsible for economic growth, land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation, and human service transportation providers to enhance the transportation planning process.

Products of Program Management Tasks	Status
1. Created, disseminated, and uploaded Committee meeting information, including agendas, minutes, and handouts	Completed and published
2. Public notice of annual meeting schedule	Completed and published
3. FY 2013 Annual Report	Completed and published
4. FY 2015 UWP	Completed and published
5. Public notices of various transportation activities	Completed and published
6. Regularly updated SWMPC website	Completed and published
7. Annual listing of FHWA and FTA projects on the SWMPC website	Completed and published
8. Annual review of Transportation Participation Plan	Completed and published
9. Monitored SWMPC Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan	Completed and published
10. Conducted yearly evaluation of Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan	Completed
11. Completed quarterly progress reports	Completed
12. Updated MPO Committee Handbook	Completed

Program Management Funds	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
FHWA	44,341	44,341	0
FTA	13,203	13,202	0

Database Management

The goals of Database Management include the collection and maintenance of a solid database of information. They also the implementation of the technical tools to accurately assess system priorities and to produce an accurate model of the transportation system for use in model updates for corridor studies and other planning endeavors. The SWMPC utilizes a combination of strategies to achieve these goals.

1. Collaboration activities with the Asset Management Council.

The SWMPC actively collaborates with the State Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) to maintain its partnership in the collection and analysis of road surface quality data. The SWMPC executive director is a TAMC board member. Twelve meetings

- Collaborated with local entities in meeting the goals of the Asset Management Council established under P.A. 499.
- Scheduled, coordinated, and attended Investment Reporting Tool training.
- Attended PASER road rating webinar and PASER road rating training.
- Sent out a reminder to local communities about investment report for TAMC; answered their questions about the reporting process.
- Assisted local communities with information about local road rating eligibility and local asset management plans.

2. Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Data Extract (State of the Region Report)

The SWMPC created a document known as the State of the Region Report, containing a wealth of data from the 2010 Census and other available data sources. In FY 2014, the SWMPC:

- Displayed selected variables in different graphic representations that will be more useful to a diverse group of government agencies, non-profit groups, businesses, and private citizens.
- Worked with graphic designer on layout of final document.
- Modified graphics and text for repackaging as part of other documents, both within SWMPC and beyond.
- Distributed document to partner agencies and interested citizens.
- Guided MPO committee members and SWMPC board members through navigating the document, both online and in paper format.

3. Long Range Transportation Plan

The Long Range Transportation Plan provides a region wide vision of transportation planning for the next twenty years. There are many activities done throughout the duration of the plan that are updated on a regular basis.

- Assisted MDOT by providing the requested data and information for the development of the projections of Travel Demand in the NATS area in preparation for the next Long Range Plan Update.
- Continued to collect, compile, analyze, and maintain socioeconomic (SE), land use, transportation, and transit data and information necessary for planning in the region.

- Compiled employment data updates into maps and spreadsheets and facilitated NATS member data review at NATS monthly committee meeting.
- Began collecting local data on zoning and projected land uses to better inform next Long Range Plan Update.

4. SWMPC Traffic Count Program

The SWMPC provides a service to municipalities and others interested in learning more about the travel volumes and patterns on their roadways.

- Reviewed and directed the urban traffic count program.
- Conducted traffic counts for the three-county area and uploaded them to the SWMPC website.
- Continued refining traffic count database for the new SWMPC traffic count website.
- Conducted traffic counts for the HPMS program.
- Maintained the SWMPC asset management website http://www.swmpc.org/asset_mgmt.asp.

5. Additional Tasks Completed

SWMPC Transportation staff is involved in activities that relate to the multi-modalism of transportation planning. Regional public transit and coordination with local road commissions are activities that are seen as important to the planning for regional transportation.

Transit

- Continue to receive and analyze transit data from Niles Dial A Ride and work with the agency to facilitate cooperative arrangements with local entities and organizations for improving equitable and effective access to public transportation.
- Continue to review the interconnected transit system in the MPO area by collecting and analyzing ridership data throughout Berrien and Cass Counties.
- Performed a fully allocated cost allocation peer review for the four public transit systems in Berrien County. Analysis included: per hour costs – driver wages and fringe. per mile costs – maintenance wages and fringe, parts, fuel, tires, per vehicle – management, advertising, legal fees, office supplies, training, overhead items, utilities, etc.
- Researched tax equalization values to support the Berrien County Public Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study. Created map illustrating areas of Berrien County that currently collect millages to support public transit.
- Researched and downloaded three consecutive years of performance and financial data from PTMS system for Buchanan Dial a Ride and Niles Dial a Ride.

Products of Database Management Tasks	Status
Updated SE data	Continuous project
Traffic count data	Continuous project
PASER results (report and maps)	Reports completed and published.

Review and Analyze Niles Dial A Ride Ridership Data	Continuous Project
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Database Management Funds	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
FHWA	14,779	14,779	0
FTA	4,401	4,401	0

Ongoing Tasks:

- Monitor and update functional road classifications.
- Continue to receive and analyze transit data from Niles DAR and to work with Niles DAR to facilitate cooperative arrangements with local entities and organizations for improving equitable and effective access to public transportation.

Long Range Planning

The goal of the Long Range Planning category is to research the new federal focus areas of livability, sustainability, climate change, and greenhouse gas reduction and to develop strategies to incorporate them into the transportation planning process.

1. Long Range Transportation Plan

The Long Range Transportation Plan provides a region-wide vision of transportation planning for the next twenty years. There are activities done throughout the duration of the plan that are updated on a regular basis.

- Monitored and discussed at monthly committee meetings the impacts of projects through the MPO.
- Performed air quality conformity analysis in cooperation with MDOT for pertinent parts of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Monitored and assisted communities with incorporating non-motorized transportation in their community plans and projects.
- Cooperated with MDOT in encouraging public input in the planning of MDOT-managed transportation projects. Provided internet links to MDOT websites and announcements. Communicated MDOT activities in SWMPC quarterly publications.
- Continued to provide resources to NATS committee members related to long range planning topics such as non-motorized transportation and the status of the NATS Walk and Roll Plan.
- Maintained website for the 2013 Long Range Transportation Planning Process at www.swmpc.org/2013lrp.asp.
- Researched potential impacts of climate change on Southwest Michigan and developed strategies for addressing climate change, including planning work for Transportation and Environment workshop.
- Reviewed long range transportation plans from surrounding regions and continued to perform literature review of other MPO long range plans to find applicable measures in our own community.

The movement of goods throughout our region is an area of study for the MPO.

- Worked closely with local officials and stakeholders to monitor freight related issues within the metropolitan area.
- Worked closely with state and federal transportation partners to further integrate freight planning into the transportation planning process.

3. Passenger Rail

SWMPC is actively engaged in discussions regarding the importance of passenger rail service in the region. Moving people safely and efficiently throughout the state by passenger rail service is one way that transportation planning strives to be truly multi-modal.

- Collaborated with the Michigan Association of Rail Passengers (MARP) in the dissemination of passenger rail subject topics.
- Collaborated with Berrien and Cass Counties to develop strategies to maintain and improve passenger rail service in the NATS area.

- Presented information on the status of high-speed rail in Michigan.

4. Transit

The SWMPC assists the transit agencies in the NATS planning area with technical assistance as needed.

- Public Transit – continued partnership with Niles Dial-a-Ride to advance public transportation as a viable alternative that meets the needs of residents, especially under-represented vulnerable population groups, in the urban area.

5. Air Transportation

The SWMPC planning region is home to several airports. Their function is integrated as part of the movement of people and goods.

Provide planning assistance in the development of long and short-range strategies.

6. Additional work tasks

SWMPC Transportation staff is involved in activities that relate to the multi-modalism of transportation planning. Coordinating with local road commissions are activities that are seen as important to the planning for regional transportation, along with providing technical support requests.

Products of Long Range Planning Tasks	Status
What Moves You Berrien and Cass County: How will we arrive in 2040?	Completed and submitted to MDOT

Long Range Planning Funds	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
FHWA	20,323	20,323	0
FTA	6,052	6,052	0

Ongoing Tasks:

- Delineate linkage between local land use policies and activities and the transportation system. *In progress.*
- Work closely with local officials and interests to inventory and monitor freight routes and intermodal facilities within the metropolitan area.
- Gather input from freight stakeholders and integrate freight planning into existing transportation planning processes.
- GLISA Climate Change Report for TwinCATS; this report was conducted with the TwinCATS MPO but much information can be extrapolated from the report and the implementation will be a discussion over the next several years.

Short Range Planning

The goal of the Short Range Planning category is to monitor and coordinate regional work activities identified in the 2014-2017 TIP, in addition to other studies and reports required by changing circumstances.

1. 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the four-year project document that details transportation projects funded by FHWA and FTA to be constructed in the region.

- Published 2013 annual listing of obligated projects.
- Created NATS TIP Policy for the movement of TIP projects.
- Monitored projects for the TIP and LRP for air conformity.
- Tracked obligation and letting progress of projects in TIP.
- Monitored the financial constraint document for FY 2014-2017 TIP.
- Monitored and revised the FY 2014-2017 TIP in accordance with the current LRP to address changes in local circumstances and local priorities in transportation.
- Processed the following amendments in the FY 2011-2014 TIP (for a complete description of which specific projects changed during these months, see the corresponding NATS Policy Committee Meeting minutes at www.swmpc.org/nats.asp):
 - **October 2013**-No amendments were processed.
 - **November 2013**- Administrative Modifications Only
 - **December 2013**- No amendments were requested.
 - **January 2014**- FY 2017: Amended 1 Cass County Road Commission Project and 3 Niles Dial-A-Ride projects, 1 Berrien Bus project, 1 Buchanan DAR project, and 1 Berrien County Road Commission project. FY 2014- Added 1 Cass County Road Commission project.
 - **February 2014** – No amendments were processed.
 - **March 2014**- FY 2015- Amended 4 Niles Dial-A-Ride projects, and 1 Buchanan Dial-A-Ride project; FY 2016: Amended 1 Cass County Road Commission project and 4 Niles Dial-A-Ride projects; FY 2017: Amended 3 Niles Dial-A-Ride projects.
 - **April 2014** – No amendments were processed.
 - **May 2014**- Amended Cost of 1 MDOT Project.
 - **June 2014** – No amendments were processed.
 - **July 2014**- Added 5 MDOT Projects
 - **August 2014**-No amendments were processed.
 - **September 2014**- Administrative Cost Modifications to MDOT Projects only.

3. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

This program provides a flexible funding source for state and local governments to fund transportation

projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and its amendments. CMAQ funding supports transportation projects that reduce mobile source emissions in areas designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as in nonattainment or maintenance of national ambient air quality standards.

- Submitted FY 2015-2019 CMAQ project applications.
- Coordinated a CMAQ Call for Projects meeting in Berrien and Cass Counties
- Monitored the CMAQ projects within the 2014-2017 NATS TIP.
- Continued to coordinate the local agencies receiving Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds in Berrien County.

4. Non-Motorized Transportation

The SWMPC has been involved in the development and advancement of non-motorized transportation as an integral part of a connected transportation network.

- Conducted public survey of non-motorized transportation needs in the NATS planning area, which received approximately 240 responses.
- Analyzed and presented data from the survey to NATS committee members to inform their decision making.
- Monitored local initiatives and legislative actions that have possible impacts on non-automobile oriented means of transportation, such as bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- Provided data, technical assistance, and planning services to local initiatives for incorporating non-motorized system(s) into the transportation system.

5. Transit

The SWMPC assists the transit agencies in the NATS planning area with technical assistance as needed.

- Researched data collection software for automatically analyzing transit stop locations.
- Provided updates regarding regional bus transportation to the NATS committees.

6. Mobility Management Efforts

- Attended Berrien County Local Advisory Council Meetings (*October, January, February, and March*).
- Attended meeting with MPTA NEMT agency and Niles Dial a Ride to discuss Berrien County NEMT pilot program for DHS brokerage service. - *September 2014*
- Assisted Mobility Manager in preparing meeting materials and presentation for regional Aging and Disability Conference.
- Attended monthly meeting of Office of Emergency Planning(EOP) to discuss incorporating public transit into role of evacuating vulnerable citizens.
- Provided OEP Countywide vehicle and facility inventory for public transit. Also provided her with senior center vehicle inventory and service info.
- Assisted MDOT passenger division with regional transportation provider information

that met the requirements of the new United Way 211 taxonomy.

- Made several updates to MyWayThere Find a Ride pages.
- Researched USDA Telemedicine grant program to reduce the number of trips to medical facilities for routine vital checks. End users include Pokagon Tribe and medical facilities in the region.
- Attended the North America Conference on Elderly Mobility. Participated in land use and transportation track courses that included Aging In Place and livability initiatives.

7. Other Tasks

- Coordinated regional transportation strategies with community transportation needs, development and land uses and assisted in the development of local plans, strategies and actions to integrate regional goals and local goals.
- Worked with MDOT, the Berrien County and Cass County road commissions, and the local units of government on the development of local inputs to the State Asset Management Plan.
- Continued to coordinate, monitor, and follow-up on transportation issues with transportation studies such as corridor studies, local traffic impact studies, and/or site plan review.

Products of Short Range Planning	Status
Amendments and administrative changes to the 2011-2014 TIP, as needed	Completed and submitted
Regularly updated 2011-2014 TIP and Fiscal Constraint Tables	Published
Public participation notices	Ongoing
Developed NATS TIP Amendment Policy	Completed
Created Online 2014-2017 TIP Application	Ongoing
Completed the 2014-2017 TIP Document	Completed and submitted
Submitted and monitored CMAQ projects in the 2011-2014 TIP	Ongoing
Developed and will monitor project list of CMAQ projects for the 2014-2017 TIP	Ongoing

Short Range Planning Funds	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
FHWA	9,237	9,237	0
FTA	2,752	2,752	0

Other Planning Activities

The goal of Other Planning Activities category is to be responsive to the needs of the local area in meeting safety-conscious planning, non-motorized activities, and various unanticipated transportation-related planning activities as work arises.

1. Revenue Assistance

As revenues to local communities continue to shrink, the SWMPC works with agencies on how to utilize other funding sources to fund transportation related projects.

- Assisted local communities in researching grant opportunities for funding transportation-related projects.
- Researched revenue sources for communities to meet growing funding gap.
- Researched transportation funding / state budget issues, including complete streets rule for Transportation Alternatives funding.

2. Transit

Berrien County Transportation Coalition

Assisted in the facilitation of Berrien County Transportation Coalition bi-monthly meetings to bring about the following work products:

- Regional Reduced Fare Card for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Standardized Operating Policies for future adoption by all Berrien County transit agencies. Policies include: requesting rides, same day service requests, personal care attendants, pets and service animals, transporting children, mobility devices, canceling rides, no-shows, subscription trips, inclement weather.
- Continue pursuing opportunities for coordination between consumers, human service agencies and transportation providers
 - Gather Senior Center transportation service information to begin the coordination process between the nine senior service agencies in the region that provide transportation to seniors.
 - Continue developing and aggregating useful disability resources for the website www.Mywaythere.org
 - Assisted State and local government bodies to build the capabilities and capacity of human service and other service networks to address their customers' mobility needs by participating and providing input/feedback on transportation needs/issues in collaborative local or regional coordinated public transit/human services transportation planning processes.

Berrien County Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study

- Prepared materials and facilitated meeting with Berrien County officials and transit providers to discuss future countywide transit authority formation.

SWMPC Board Meeting, Berrien County Commission Meeting, NATS Meeting, Southwest

Leadership Council, Regional Interagency Council,

- Presentation by Kim Gallagher on Berrien County Transit Consolidation Study (June)
- Created new web pages and narrative to house narrative for Berrien County Final Draft transit plan and public comment section.
- Made changes to web pages and Public Participation Plan to reach compliancy with FTA.

Products of Other Planning Tasks	Status
Berrien County Transit Study Implementation Plan	100% Complete

Other Planning Funds	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
FHWA	3,694	3,694	0
FTA	1,098	1,098	0

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The table that follows displays the revenue received for transportation planning from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Authority (FTA). The “Budgeted in UWP” numbers are reflective of the estimated transportation planning costs as outlined in the Unified Work Program for FY 2013 for each program element. The table then shows the dollars spent on each program element. The last column demonstrates the SWMPC ability to be good stewards of federal funds as reflected in money being saved in each program element.

**Please note that figures displayed in this table are not final and are subject to audit.*

Federal Highway Administration Funds

Program Element	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
Program Management	44,431	44,431	0
Data Management	14,779	14,779	0
Long Range Planning	20,320	20,320	0
Short Range Planning	9,237	9,237	0
Other Planning	3,694	3,694	0
Totals	92,371	92,371	0

Federal Transit Authority Funds and Local Match Funds

Program Element	Budgeted in UWP	Spent	Under/(Over)
Program Management	13,202	13,202	0
Data Management	4,401	4,401	0
Long Range Planning	6,053	6,053	0
Short Range Planning	2,752	2,752	0
Other Planning	1,098	1,098	0
Transit Pass Through	6,250	6,250	0
Totals	33,756	33,756	0

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Web Page Views

The following table shows web page visits in fiscal year 2014 for the transportation pages on www.swmpc.org. The table shows the total number of views for FY 2014 (October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014) as a means to compare the difference in activities that the SWMPC focuses on. Web pages are added and removed as projects begin and end.

Page	Page Views in FY 2014	Page views in FY 2013	Page views in FY 2012	Average time spent on page in FY 2014	Average time spent on page in FY 2013
TRANSPORTATION Transportation.asp	633	714	812	:48	:38
NATS MAIN PAGE nats.asp	809	892	754	:52	:53
TRANSPORTATION DOCUMENTS					
nats_docs.asp					
Items on this website include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transportation Improvement Program ○ Long Range Plan ○ Unified Work Program ○ Annual Report 	22	72	154	1:14	2:36
Midwest Rail Initiative mwri.asp	65	76	130	2:18	1:08
2013 Long Range Plan 2013lrp.asp	25	90	194	0:23	1:26
NATS 2040 Final Plan Nats_2040.asp	135	131	NA	1:22	3:08
NATS 2014-2017 TIP Nats_1417_tip.asp	177	334	NA	2:16	2:05
Participation Plan participation.asp	76	39	224	1:40	1:13
NATS Walk and Roll Nats_walkroll.asp	275	21	NA	3:16	:16
COMMITTEE MEETINGS					
FY 2014 Fy_2014_nats.asp	804	917	NA	4:34	3:57
FY 2013 fy_2013_nats.asp	110	81	937	1:45	1:13

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION					
Transit swmitransit.asp	126	189	174	1:27	1:30
Cass County Transit casstransitstudy.asp	9	7	11	3:05	:07
Berrien County Transit Study transit_study.asp	97	111	181	2:21	3:48
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION railwayefforts.asp	711	128	235	0:50	:49
U.S. Bicycle Route 35 usbr35.asp	177	386	521	2:26	2:23
SMART Plan smart_plan.asp	1,252	1000	2,613	2:01	1:50
Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail inmitrail.asp	2,228	664	350	3:54	3:04
DATA					
Asset Management asset_mgmt.asp	114	115	108	1:13	1:56
Traffic Counts traffic_counts.asp	1,203	1091	884	0:54	:57
CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY cmaq.asp	150	338	188	1:27	2:46
OTHER					
Environmental Justice Ej_transport.asp	45	111	NA	0:52	2:14
Calendar of Events calendar.asp	428	605	626	1:12	2:15
Transportation Library trans_library.asp	17	23	42	1:32	2:14
Legislative Updates legupdate.asp	66	122	91	0:54	2:04
SWMPC Press inthenews_2.asp	304	331	458	2:34	2:04

Other Measurable Indicators

Number of Facebook fans	FY 2014: 317 FY 2013: 226
Email Outreach (Total number of interested in transportation)	FY 2014-510

	FY 2013-437
Media Outreach (Total number of media contacts)	FY 2014-105 FY 2013- 105
Total number of articles in SWMPC newsletter	FY 2014-4 FY 2013-4