

MINUTES
NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Technical Advisory Committee
 Tuesday, February 27, 2007
 Niles City Council Chambers
 1:30 P.M.

TAC Members Present:	Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Neil Coulston, City of Niles & DPW/Airport John Gruchot, Berrien County Planning Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Ray Lenze, MDOT – Planning Joe Ray, City of Niles
TAC Members Absent:	Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Administration Elaine Lou, MDOT-Multi-Modal Mary Beth McAdams, MACOG (ex officio) Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning Kate McIlwee, Berrien County Planning John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Public Works Kristi Ross, Niles Dial-A-Ride Robert Rusch, MI Department of Environmental Quality/Air Quality Division Rick Smigielski, City of Buchanan Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sharon Tyler, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance/Cass Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC Rachael Tupica, SMPC (Staff)
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kelly Getman-Dissette, SWMPC
Others Present:	Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner

1. Call to Order & Introductions – Chairman Bellina called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.
2. Minutes
 - Motion by Berndt, seconded by Coulston to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2006 TAC meeting. Motion approved.
3. Staff Report
 - **Pre-UWP Meeting with MDOT and FHWA** – The pre-UWP meeting, February 12, 2007, was an opportunity to review the current UWP as well as plan for the next fiscal year. Tupica, Getman-Dissette, and John Egelhaaf (SWMPC Director) were in attendance, as well as several representatives from MDOT and FHWA. Discussion included how the committees are staffed, whether each of the municipalities has representation, progress on the environmental mitigation and consultation plan, and the need to update committee bylaws. In addition, substantial discussion centered on transit, and the need for a coordinated plan that includes human service providers. This plan is necessary in order for transit agencies to receive certain types of FTA funding, such as JARC (5316), New Freedom (5317), and funds for the elderly and disabled (5310). SWMPC will be conducting a county-wide transit study for Berrien, and it is hoped that components of this plan will fulfill the coordinated plan requirement.
 - **Post-processing 2006 traffic counts** – Tupica has been post-processing 2006 traffic counts, renaming the files and aggregating them so that they are in a useable format. Getman-Dissette reminded everyone to be

sure to request traffic counts at sites where upcoming work is expected so that we have current information.

- **Visualization Techniques workshop** – SAFETEA-LU mandates that MPOs utilize visualization techniques as a part of their public participation processes. Therefore, Tupica and Getman-Dissette attended a workshop on January 31st to learn about available and commonly used techniques. Possibilities include techniques such as enhanced digital photography, maps, animated demonstrations of traffic features like roundabouts, and even virtual reality. Cost, time, and expertise are all major factors when deciding on the type of visual aids to use.
- **CMAQ Project Selection** – FY 2007 CMAQ projects were submitted to Pete Porciello at MDOT. After Porciello performs a cursory review, he will submit the projects to FHWA. Once FHWA makes a decision on the projects, they will notify MDOT, and MDOT will notify us of the decision. FY 2008-2009 projects will be selected at a meeting in July.

4. New Business

- **Chair and Vice Chair nominations** – Chair and Vice-Chair were nominated in January. Joe Bellina and Joe Ray accepted the nominations.
- **Culvert Installation & Maintenance Workshop** – This training will occur in several locations during the month of March. The nearest to us will be on March 12th at the Grand Rapids Crowne Plaza. Those interested should contact LTAP at 906.487.210. The fee is \$70 per public agency (\$90 for private agencies).
- **Network Attribute Maps** – Getman-Dissette distributed maps and instruction sheets and asked for the maps to be reviewed as soon as possible and returned to Tupica or Jennifer Osbourne at MDOT.
- **Asset Management Training Opportunities** – There are two asset management training opportunities in March. The first, March 12th at the Lawrence ISD Technology center from 9:30-noon, will cover the internet based reporting tool that all Act 51 agencies must use. Register by contacting Tupica at tupicar@swmpc.org. The second, March 19th at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission all day, will train those who desire to be part of the team that will rate road surface condition. Register by contacting LTAP at 906.487.2102.
- **FY2008 FY2007 UWP Changes to include Green Infrastructure Plan/Escrow Account** – At the January meeting, SWMPC staff discussed the Green Infrastructure project. With the assistance of the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, SWMPC will identify environmentally sensitive areas and prioritize the ones with greatest value for conservation. Also, we will receive an analysis tool for environmental impact assessment that will ensure our compliance with the environmental mitigation component of the SAFETEA-LU legislation. The ultimate product of this effort will be a regional plan that links together environmentally sensitive areas as well as other “green” spaces, such as public parks and other protected lands. In order to use NATS planning dollars for this project, an amendment to the FY 2007 UWP is necessary.

In the NATS area, planning funds allocated by FHWA were \$5,446 greater than the amount estimated in the UWP. In order to utilize the extra funds, we need to add a work task to the UWP and increase the local match in order to maintain the 81.85% federal / 18.15% local funding structure. However, in the NATS area, there is an escrow account with unused local match dollars from previous years. Therefore, instead of re-billing each NATS municipality for the increase in local match, this balance can be covered with funds from the escrow. The new work task and associated funds will be added to Database Management.

In addition, because the consultant requires \$6,000 of the NATS budget, the remaining \$554 not covered by the increase in planning funds will be transferred from the Long Range Planning budget into Database Management.

Harden moved, supported by Lenze, to recommend approval of an amendment to the TwinCATS FY 2007 UWP to include the addition of the Green Infrastructure work task under Database Management and associated budget adjustments. Motion approved.

- **Projects for FY2008-2011 call for projects** – TIP applications were submitted to Getman-Dissette. The subcommittee will meet March 15th at 1:30 pm to prioritize projects for the March regular meeting. The meeting on the 15th will be at Niles City Hall.

5. Old Business

- **Federal Local Safety Program FY 2008 Call for Projects** – The safety application deadline is March 1st. While there were no prepared applications for the committee to support, there are several projects that Berndt (Main and Broadway) and Bellina (Ironwood and Redfield; Dickson and Indian Lake Rd.) are considering submitting. *Lenze moved, seconded by Harden, to support safety projects within the NATS boundaries. Motion approved.*

6. Public Comment - None

7. Privilege of the Floor

- Lenze distributed new Michigan road maps. For additional copies, contact the Coloma TSC.
- Getman-Dissette discussed the MDOT Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture and Deployment Plan for the Southwest Region. Each MDOT region has such a plan. A workshop was held on February 26th in Kalamazoo, and additional workshops will be held during the spring in order to receive local input to develop the plan.

8. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 2:05 PM – Next meeting March 27, 2007 at 1:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by:

Kelly Getman-Dissette

Transportation Planner 3/05/07