

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

October 28, 2008

Niles City Council Chambers

1:30 P.M.

TAC Members Present:	Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Paul Boggs, Milton Township Willie Brown, City of Buchanan Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Neil Coulston, City of Niles DPW/Airport Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Kimberly O’Haver, Buchanan Dial a Ride Joe Ray, City of Niles Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC
TAC Members Absent:	Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Jessica Mitchell, MACOG (ex officio) John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Public Works William Myers, Niles Charter Township Jennifer Osborne, MDOT John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride Robert Rusch, MDEQ Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sharon Tyler, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kelly Getman-Dissette Nickolas Musson
Others Present:	Meg Mullendore, City of Buchanan Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Vice Chairman Ray called the meeting to order at 1:37 P.M. Chairman Bellina arrived late to the meeting.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Berndt, supported by Ganum, to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2008 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

3. Staff Report

MAP Conference- Getman-Dissette and Musson attended the annual Michigan Association of Planning Conference (MAP) in Kalamazoo in October. There were many helpful sessions, some of which were related to transportation planning and its connection to land use planning.

- **Travel Demand Modeling Workshop-** Getman-Dissette and Musson attended a Travel Demand Workshop on October 6th in Lansing. The workshop dealt with deficiency analysis, alternative testing, and project impact analysis. The US-31 connection to I-94 was used as an example of impact analysis.

- **November 13 Trail Workshop** – Members were once again offered an opportunity to register for the half day trail workshop, hosted by SWMPC and held November 13, 2008 from 1-4:00 PM at the Thornapple Township Emergency Services Building. Workshop topics include state/local funding sources, urban/rural trail development, promotion of trails, water trail development, trail maintenance, and trail vision and planning. There will be a Paul Henry walking tour following the workshop.
- **2009 Michigan Concrete Repair Seminar** - Michigan's Local Technical Assistance Program will hold a Concrete Repair Seminar on Wednesday, January 28, 2009 in Howell. Getman-Dissette will e-mail registration information following the meeting. The Transportation Asset Management Council will provide partial scholarship for employees of public agencies to cover a portion of the registration fee for this workshop.
- **Safety Brochure** – SWMPC received a series of safety brochures. If anyone is interested in viewing them, contact SMWPC or visit the website, <http://safety.transportation.org/guides.aspx>.

4. Project Updates

- **Niles-Buchanan Road** – Was let on September 5. A preconstruction meeting was held three weeks ago, and construction should begin April 1, weather permitting.
- **3rd St.** – Project is scheduled for 2010. Berndt announced that the Berrien County Road Commission is currently without matching funds for this project. The Road Commission will be asking the townships for assistance with this and other future projects.
- **Ironwood** – Project should be complete in October.
- **US 12 (US 12 to Bell Road)** – Project will be let in January.
- **US 31 (stateline to US 12)** – A review meeting is scheduled for November 14.
- **M 51 (Over McKinzie Creek)** - Project has been advertised.
- **Niles Dial-A-Ride** - Coulston noted that, in response to public demand, some Saturday service would be retained.
- **US-31 BR (Front Street) and Main Street**- Bids will be opened November 15th. Discussion ensued over whether or not this project was named appropriately in the TIP. Because MDOT will be turning the route over to the City of Niles, it may be more appropriate to use the local street names, which would be “Main Street from Front to 9th.” Coulston noted that project length should be 0.55 miles. Changing the name of the project is most likely an administrative modification, given that there is no change to scope or cost of the project. However, clarification from FHWA will be sought. In the case that a formal amendment would be required, *a motion was made by Coulston, supported by Woolcock, to recommend that the project name for US-31 BR (Front Street) and Main Street be changed to Main Street from Front to 9th and the project length of 0.55miles be added. Motion approved.*

5. New Business

- **Buchanan Street Sweeper** – Due to confusion in procedure as well as staff changes, the City of Buchanan purchased its replacement street sweeper, scheduled for FY 2008 CMAQ funds, prior to obligating the federal funding. Ordinarily, federal funds cannot be used for any cost which has previously been incurred. However, Title 23 allows for exceptions to be made, under certain circumstances. Therefore, the City must compose a letter that requests that federal funds be used on a previously incurred expense and that explains the special circumstances involved in this case. MDOT will then review the letter and request the funds from FHWA. However, because the 2008 fiscal year has ended, the dollars originally set aside for this project are no longer available. Bellina and Berndt were asked to consider whether unallocated FY 2009 CMAQ dollars in Cass and Berrien Counties could be used to fund the street sweeper in 2009. Both Bellina and Berndt will follow up with their respective boards/taskforces. Buchanan will compose the necessary letter, and this item will be discussed again at the December meeting.

6. Old Business

- **Non-motorized Updates** - Getman-Dissette announced that she is still seeking local non-motorized updates for the long range plan. The City of Niles as well as the Berrien County Road Commission have provided some information, but no response has been received from Buchanan or Cass County.

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Privilege of the Floor

- Ryman questioned whether there were any new developments in the State's ability to match federal transportation funds. Discussion ensued.

9. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 pm. .
- The next meeting is December 16th, 2008 at 1:30 P.M.

Minutes compiled by: Nickolas Musson/Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planners, 11/17/08