

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

January 26, 2010

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 Irving Frost, Howard Township John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Jim Kidwell, Niles Charter Township Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Kimberly O'Haver, Buchanan Dial a Ride Joe Ray, City of Niles
TAC Members Absent:	Paul Boggs, Milton Township Willie Brown, City of Buchanan Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning Kelly Getman-Dissette, Niles Dial-A-Ride Shelley Klug, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Jessica Mitchell, MACOG (ex officio) John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Public Works Jennifer Osborne, MDOT Robert Rusch, MDEQ Ron Sather, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sarah Van Buren, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC
SWMPC Staff Present:	Nickolas Musson Anna Rahtz
Others Present:	Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Melinda Michael, Four Flags Area Council on Tourism John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride

1. Call to Order

- Chairman Bellina called the meeting to order at 1:31 P.M.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Ray, supported by Harden, to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2009 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

3. Staff Report

- **CSS Presentation** – Rahtz announced that she had met with Paul South and Brad Peterson from MDOT about the Context Sensitive Solutions presentation, which will happen at the March meeting. It will be a joint meeting. It will cover the basics with an example of US-12BR historic bridge and an interactive activity. Brad Peterson would like to know if any of the committee members have any specific questions or topics they would like him to cover.

4. Project Updates (2010)

- **Berrien County Road Commission**
 - Stateline Road and Third Street – Going to be amended at this meeting.
- **Cass County Road Commission**
 - Redfield Street – On target
 - Gumwood Road – GI package will be submitted by January 29th
 - Ironwood Road – On target
- **City of Niles**
 - East Main – February 5th letting
 - Lake Street – February 5th letting
- **MDOT**
 - US-12 BR – Has been let

5. Old Business

- **Traffic Count Presentation**
 - Musson went over a handout explaining how to access traffic count data online, as well as how to interpret the pdf reports.
- **Opinions of Berrien County Businesses on Transportation Infrastructure**
 - Rahtz went over a handout explaining the results of data that had been compiled. The data was the results of 230 interviews conducted by Kim Fedison of Berrien County Economic Development and Pat Moody of the Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce. It shows what Berrien County businesses think of their transportation infrastructure, on four criteria: public transportation, local road network condition, interstate highway system condition, and airports. Overall, there were very high opinions on all aspects except public transportation.
 - Bellina asked if the trend could be shown of how the businesses answered from year to year. Rahtz and Gruchot answered that a true trend would not be shown because the same businesses were not asked the same questions each year. Rather the total of 230 businesses had been interviewed over the time period of four years. The interviews were not done with the intention of showing a trend.
- **Fill out transportation importance survey**
 - Rahtz asked the committee to fill out the “What’s Important to You in Transportation Projects?” survey and reminded the committee members that they should write “NATS Member” on their surveys so that she could keep the NATS and public surveys separate. She added that 75 public surveys had been turned in, thanks to the work of the committee members and the article that Coulston had gotten in the Niles Daily Star.
- **TIP Applications**
 - Musson announced that all TIP new project applications were due January 26, 2010. These would be applications for FY 2014 projects, or any new projects that were not applied for when the FY 2010-2013 TIP was being created.
 - He also announced that the TIP project selection meeting will be at 3:00pm on February 24, 2010 in the Niles City Council Chambers.
 - **“Jobs for Main Street”**
 - Musson also announced that a new economic stimulus package similar to ARRA just passed the US House of Representatives and is headed to the Senate. The same funding levels as ARRA are anticipated. 50 percent of the funds will have to be contracted within 90 days.

The funding could be used to cover engineering costs for the projects that are funded after the first 90 days of the legislation.

- Musson remarked that is not known what will happen with this bill, since it only passed the House by four votes, and that if passed the legislation will not go into effect until at least March. He emphasized that whatever happens, TwinCATS has to be prepared for it, and so an illustrative list of projects needs to be compiled. This will be done at the TIP project selection committee meeting on February 19th.
- Bellina asked how MDOT will handle the tight 90-day timeframe. Lenze responded that it will have to be a unified effort by all parties involved, and that some shortcuts will have to be taken, such as reducing advertising time and reducing the time that contractors have to sign the contract.
- Musson added that the letter from the US Department of Transportation is uploaded onto the NATS web page.
- **Total Cost Column**
 - Musson announced that, due to a change in the TIP e-file format to conform to federal regulations, he will need the true "total" cost for every project for the 2011-2014 TIP.
 - Harden asked whether he would receive the revised e-TIP form. Musson responded that he was waiting to receive the official revised form from MDOT.
 - Bellina asked who is on the TIP project selection committee, and Musson and Rahtz responded: Bellina, Coulston, Getman-Dissette, Harden, Lenze, Ray, and South.
- **CMAQ Call for Projects Meeting**
 - Musson reminded the committee that the Call for Projects meeting for the 2012-2014 CMAQ projects will be held on February 3, 2010 at 1:00pm at the Berrien County Road Commission.

6. New Business

- **TIP Amendments**
 - **Niles Dial a Ride**
 - Modified in FY 2010, project named PM. The Federal cost changed from \$128,000 (5307) to \$170,000, the toll credits increased from \$25,600 to \$34,000 and the limits changed from Citywide to Areawide.
 - Deleted in FY 2010, project named Facility rehab for a Federal cost of \$80,000 (5307) and a State cost of \$20,000 (CTF).
 - Modified in FY 2010, project named Efficiency Study to study operations and efficiency. The project name changed from Efficiency Study to Transit Development Plan, the limits changed from Citywide to Areawide, and the project description changed from operations and efficiency study to Contract with consultants to study the DART operation and complete a transit development plan. The Federal cost changed from \$51,400 (5307) to \$60,000 and the toll credits changed from \$10,280 to \$12,000.
 - Modified in FY 2010, project named Connections to Utilities Building to connect to utilities building for shared network and internet services. The limits changed from Citywide to Areawide, the Federal cost changed from \$20,000 to \$49,000 (5307) and the toll credits changed from \$4,000 to \$9,800.
 - **Berrien County Road Commission**
 - Amend in FY 2010, the project description, federal, and local cost, for project named Stateline Road and Third Street to resurface with minor drainage. The project description changed from "resurface road, minor drainage" to "seal coat and microsurface". The federal cost changed from \$478,000 to \$115,000 (STUL), and the local cost changed from \$112,000 to \$25,000 (Cnty).
 - Added in FY 2010, project named Lake Street/East Main Street/Galien-Buchanan Road to seal coat Lake Street from the City of Niles to Cass County line, East Main Street from the City of Niles to Cass County line, and Galine-Buchanan Road from Bakertown Road to Boyle Lake Road. The federal cost is \$77,000 (STUL) and the local cost is \$17,000 (Cnty).

- Added in FY 2010, project named Bertrand Road from Red Bud Trail to St. Joseph River to seal coat for a federal cost of \$77,000 (STUL) and a local cost of \$17,000 (Cnty).
- (Lenze added that the project could be a candidate for Jobs for Main Street money, but money cannot be obligated for it yet at the time that it is submitted as a JFMS project. Discussion ensued on whether it is better to have it in the TIP and hope that it can be amended later or keep it out of the TIP until the JFMS project becomes a reality. It was decided to amend the TIP so that the project will be in the TIP and be ready for the JFMS if and when it comes available.)
- *Motion by Berndt, with support from Bellina, to recommend that the Policy Committee make the above amendments to BCRC projects in the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved.*
- **CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program)**
 - Add in FY 2010, CMAQ project Rideshare for a federal cost of \$12,000.
- **City of Niles**
 - Deleted in FY 2011, project named East Main Street from Maple to 17th to cold mill and resurface, including construction of ADA ramps. The Federal cost is \$118,700 and local cost is \$26,300.
- **MDOT**
 - Added in FY 2010, project CPM CSM Bridge Trunkline GPA for Federal cost of \$657,700 (ST) and State cost of \$164,426.
 - Added in FY 2010, project EPE/PE/ROW Trunkline GPA for Federal cost of \$81,850 (ST) and State cost of \$18,150 (M).
 - Added in FY 2010, project Highway Safety Trunkline GPA for Federal cost of \$765,000 (M).
 - *Motion by Harden, with support from Gruchot, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the remaining amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved.*
- Bellina commented that he is bringing three new projects to the table for 2010, as per the conversation at the last meeting. CCRC is the only agency that has available match funding to do projects using ST funds. Lenze asked him to wait until the next month's meeting so that staff can send out public notice of the TIP amendments.
- **Investment Reporting Tool Training** – Musson announced that the Investment Reporting Tool (IRT) Training will take place on February 18th at the Van Buren ISD. Representatives of all municipalities are encouraged to attend.
- **Trails Input Meeting for Berrien County** – Rahtz announced that, as part of SWMPC's SMART nine-county non-motorized planning project, a public input meeting will be held on Thursday, February 4th from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at Andrews University Chan Shun Hall.
- **ADA workshop**
 - Musson stated that MDOT is offering to put on a workshop about ADA design requirements due to the rising number of lawsuits stemming from ADA issues. He asked if local agencies would be interested in attending and paying around \$200 to attend.
 - Bellina and Coulston commented that they did not think the workshop would be necessary for their agencies.
- **Signal Retiming**
 - Musson stated that at the MTPA meeting a presentation was given by Jason Firman of Congestion and Mobility on signal retiming. MDOT is willing to help local agencies perform technical reviews of optimization projects whether they are funded through safety funds, CMAQ or on their own budget. MDOT will also help find funding for these projects.
- **Safety Projects**
 - Musson announced that MDOT has opened a FY 2012 local safety program call for projects.

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Privilege of the Floor

- None

9. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 P.M. The next meeting is February 23, 2010 at 1:30 P.M.

Minutes compiled by: Anna Rahtz and Nickolas Musson, Transportation Planners, 1/27/10