

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

August 25, 2009

Niles City Council Chambers

1:30 P.M.

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

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Vice-chair Ray called the meeting to order at 1:37 P.M. Chairman Bellina was absent.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Berndt, supported by Woolcock, to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2009 TAC meeting, with a date correction and a project update correction. Motion approved.*

3. Staff Report

- **Public Participation and TIP Amendment Process**
 - Musson and Rahtz announced that they are reviewing the Public Participation Plan and currently

refining their procedures to most effectively address public participation and environmental justice outreach. They made a community mailing list for TwinCATS and NATS meeting materials. They will be revising the TIP application in the next few months to make sure it's effective for the next TIP, but in the meantime the old TIP application and TIP amendment application still need to be turned in as appropriate for TIP amendments, within 10 days of the meeting date, so that there is enough time for public notice of the amendments.

- Harden asked whether the TIP amendment application would be revised to be more effective. Musson and Rahtz responded that they would be revising it and would bring a draft to the September meeting for review.

4. Project Updates

- Musson announced that all 2009 projects receiving federal funding (besides ARRA funding) must be obligated by September 15, 2009.
- Musson announced that bids are needed for the two City of Niles ARRA projects so that it will be known how much ARRA funding is remaining. Berrien County Road Commission's Range Line Road project came in \$10,000 under estimate. Any projects to receive ARRA funding have to be obligated by December 2009.
- Berrien County Road Commission
 - **Range Line Road (ARRA)** – Completed
- City of Niles
 - **East Main Street (ARRA)** – Grade Inspection scheduled for 8/28/09
 - **Lake Street (ARRA)** – Grade Inspection scheduled for 8/28/09
- MDOT
 - **M-51, over Mckinzie Creek** – Second half under construction
 - **US-31 NB** – Completed
 - **US-31 SB** – Construction will begin after Labor Day
- Niles Dial-A-Ride
 - **Facility rehabilitation** – Will begin 9/1/09

5. Old Business

- **Freight presentation** – Musson announced that Chris Dingman will most likely be available to give a presentation on the basics of freight planning at the October NATS meeting.

6. New Business

- **TIP amendments** – The following TIP amendments were discussed:

The Cass County Road Commission requested the following modification and amendment to the NATS FY 2008-11 Transportation Improvement Program:

- Modify in FY 2009, the project named Elkhart Road. The federal cost (STUL) changed from \$54,800 to \$51,360. The local cost (\$41,000 – County) will be reduced proportionate to the reduction of the federal cost.
- Delete in FY 2010, the project named Elkhart Road (the same as above project). These funds are no longer needed in 2010 because the project came in under bid and will be completed as a 2009 project.

A motion was made by Berndt, supported by Woolcock, to recommend that the Policy committee amend the FY 2008-2011 TIP to include the above mentioned modification and amendment. Motion Approved.

- **Complete Streets Legislation**

- Rahtz announced that a letter was received from the Michigan Association of Planning asking for support of a statewide resolution for Complete Streets. MAP is encouraging MPOs and local agencies to pass the resolution as well.
- South commented that Complete Streets legislation is more effective at the local level or as a

grassroots effort than statewide. Harden explained that the "Complete Streets" idea should be incorporated into a comprehensive planning process rather than stand-alone legislation.

7. Public Comment

- Ryman asked whether the US-31 Northbound and Southbound projects are financed by stimulus (ARRA) funding, and Woolcock replied that they are not.
- Ryman commented, relative to the Complete Streets discussion, that many bicyclists are not educated about the rules of the road or about bicycle safety. Rahtz replied that Suzann Flowers, SWMPC Program Assistant, has done work in bicycle safety awareness, including Bicycle Safety days, distributing informational pamphlets, and two "Bike Rodeos" that are planned for October 2009. Ryman also commented that bicyclists frequently do not use proper lights at night.

8. Privilege of the Floor

- South announced that the Canadian National railroad crossing at US-12 will be closed for a two-to-three day emergency fix starting 8/31/09.
- Jason Auvil introduced himself as the new Staff Planner for the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. He stated that his work will include transportation planning projects in the area, and he will be working closely with NATS.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Woolcock, supported by Gruchot, to dismiss the meeting. Motion approved.

- The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 pm. The next meeting is September 22, 2009 at 1:30 P.M.

Minutes compiled by: Anna Rahtz and Nickolas Musson, Transportation Planners, 8/26/09