

# Unified Work Plan

## Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study

Prepared By:

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

**In Cooperation With:**

Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study

Technical Advisory & Policy Committees

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**DRAFT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally designated agencies existing in all census-designated urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more. An MPO's purpose is to prioritize, plan, and program transportation projects in order to receive federal transportation funding. The South Bend Urbanized area is served by two MPOs. The Indiana portion of the South Bend and Elkhart Urbanized area is a part of the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG). The Michigan portion of the urbanized area, referred to as the Niles-Buchanan-Cass area is part of the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS). The NATS MPO is staffed by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC), which is the federally recognized planning agency for the Michigan portion of the South Bend and Elkhart urbanized areas.

Federal legislation governing the MPO process (23 USC 134) requires MPOs to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) metropolitan planning process and provide consideration and implementation of projects, strategies and services that will address the federal planning factors. The FY 2022 Unified Work Program (UWP) incorporates in one document all federally assisted state, regional, and local transportation planning activities proposed to be undertaken in the NATS planning area by the staff at SWMPC during the fiscal year 2022. The program provides a process for the coordination and collaboration of transportation planning activities in the study area and is required as a basis and condition for all federal funding assistance for transportation planning. This UPWP also serves as an indispensable management tool, enabling the SWMPC to manage and administer its planning responsibilities with available program revenues.

The activities undertaken by the SWMPC transportation staff principally relate to overall transportation program management and fulfillment of federal requirements under the FAST Act and state mandated requirements. The cornerstone of the FAST Act highway/transit programs is the gradual transition to a performance and outcome-based program to increase accountability and efficiency in the way federal transportation dollars are spent. The intention is that, under this performance-based planning program, states/MPOs will invest resources in projects that help to achieve individual performance targets and collectively will make progress toward national goals.

Funding for all MPO activities is provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the MPO members on an 80/20 split. The 20% local match is mandated by federal law for any MPO to receive transportation planning funds. The local match assessed to the participating member agencies is based on a fair share process. The agencies appoint representatives to the Technical and Policy Committees of the NATS MPO.

Federal legislation governing the MPO process (23 USC 134) requires MPOs to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) metropolitan planning process, and provide consideration and implementation of projects, strategies and services that will address the federal planning factors. The transportation planning activities and budget for the 2022 UPWP are developed to address these factors and other state and federal requirements. The ten planning factors are as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
7. Promote efficient system management and operation
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm-water impacts of surface transportation
10. Enhance travel and tourism

Each of these areas is addressed through various work program tasks/subtasks included for FY 2022, as shown in the table below:

FAST Act Planning Factors	Economic Vitality	Improve Safety	Increase System Security	Increase Access & Mobility	Environment, Energy, & Quality of Life	System Integration Across Modes	Efficient System Operation	System Preservation	Resiliency & Reliability	Travel & Tourism
Program Administration	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Air Quality Conformity					x					
Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting										
Transportation System Data Collection	x	x		x			x	x	x	x
Data Mapping, Analysis, and Reporting	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Asset Management	x	x		x			x	x	x	
Functional Classification System Updates							x	x	x	
Transportation Planning										
Planning Technical Support to MPO Members	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ)				x	x	x	x			
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)		x					x	x		
Transit Planning	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Long Range Transportation Planning										
Environmental Justice & Equity Planning	x			x	x	x				
Environmental Quality					x					
Freight Planning	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Performance measures	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Travel Demand Model	x			x	x				x	x
Technological Innovation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Economic Development Linkage	x									
Public and Stakeholder Outreach							x			
Special Plans and Studies										
Human Services Transportation Coordination			x	x	x	x	x			
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

To achieve these tasks the NATS MPO works closely with partner agencies including the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), local elected leadership, local planning and public works directors, the business community, and citizens across the 10 jurisdictions within the Niles metropolitan planning area. As part of the planning process, the MPO develops the region's long-range transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). SWMPC staff serves as a guide regarding the MPO process and requirements. All project funding decisions are made by local officials through an open public meeting process at NATS.

The NATS Fiscal Year 2022 Unified Work Program (UWP) describes all of the transportation and supporting planning activities that are anticipated to be carried out by NATS staff during the period of October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022. This document is adopted annually in cooperation with MDOT, and MPO members to ensure that the most pressing regional transportation issues in the Niles Buchanan-Cass area are being addressed by the NATS MPO.

The UWP includes:

- A detailed description of the programs, projects, and tasks that the MPO plans to undertake in FY 2022.
- A budget for how much funding will be assigned to each program area.
- Deadlines for completion of the deliverable items in each task.
- A listing of resources (partner agencies or otherwise) that the MPO will use to accomplish the tasks.

## NATS Study Planning Area and Membership

At a minimum, a Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) must cover the urbanized area and contiguous geographic areas likely to become urbanized within the next 20 years. The Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) covers the Michigan portion of the South Bend, Indiana, urbanized area and the Elkhart, Indiana urbanized area as designated by the United States Census. The NATS area is defined by an area that includes communities in both Berrien and Cass Counties. The 2010 Census changed the urbanized area for the NATS study area, which led to Mason Township becoming the newest member to the NATS committees. The NATS MPO includes the following jurisdictions who each have voting representation on the NATS Policy Committee:

Cities/Villages:	Townships:
City of Buchanan	Bertrand
City of Niles	Buchanan
Village of Edwardsburg	Howard
	Mason
	Milton
	Niles Charter
	Ontwa

In addition, the following agencies are voting members of the NATS Policy Committee:

- **The Berrien County Road Department and Cass County Road Commission:** The agencies that maintain roads on behalf of townships within Berrien or Cass County. The Berrien County Road Department is represented on the Policy Committee by the Berrien County Board of Commissioners.
- **Public Transit Providers:** Include **Niles Dial A Ride**, a designated urbanized public transit provider serving the City of Niles and Niles Township; and **Buchanan Dial A Ride**, a public transit provider for the City of Buchanan and Buchanan Township
- **Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce:** An economic development agency for the greater Niles area
- **Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT):** Has voting representatives from the Coloma Service Center, the Southwest Region Office, and Statewide Planning
- **Berrien County and Cass County:** Are each represented by members of the county planning commission, and board of commissioners.
- **The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians:** Has territory in the NATS planning area (currently no active representative).

A map of the NATS planning area is shown on the following page





## Federal Transportation Legislation – State and MPO Impacts

MAP-21, which became effective October 1, 2012, made some important modifications to the metropolitan planning process, primarily requiring metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to establish and use a performance-based approach to transportation decision making and development of transportation plans. The FAST Act, which became effective December 4, 2015, continues with the same planning requirements. This work program has been developed to comply with changes regarding metropolitan planning called for in the FAST Act, as stated in the Final Rule on Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning, which was published in the Federal Register on May 27, 2016. At the time of drafting this document, the FAST Act is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2021. It is expected new surface transportation legislation will be enacted or that the FAST Act will be extended and that this UPWP will adhere to federal requirements associated with the legislation in place as drafted or modified to incorporate legislative changes.

In the FAST Act, the metropolitan transportation planning processes are continued and enhanced to incorporate performance goals, measures, and targets into the process of identifying needed transportation improvements and project selection. Public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process. Requirements for a long-range plan and a short-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) continue, with the long-range plan to incorporate performance plans required by the Act for specific programs. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan must describe the performance measures and targets used in assessing system performance and progress in achieving the performance targets. The TIP must also be developed to make progress toward established performance targets and include a description of the anticipated achievements.

### **Performance Measures and Targets**

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), SWMPC, and other MPOs in Michigan have coordinated to develop a strong methodology and approach regarding performance measures as required by MAP-21 and the FAST Act. Work for this item has included attending meetings hosted by MDOT to discuss feasibility of measures to be created within the MPO and MDOT frameworks as well as research regarding final USDOT guidance for the development of measures within the specified areas required by MAP-21 and the FAST Act. MDOT has coordinated with SWMPC and the MPOs statewide to develop and provide access to data necessary for the development of performance measures that will lead either to MPOs developing their own targets or agreeing to support the MDOT performance targets.

Future reports on the NATS MPO's progress in reaching targets will be included in future metropolitan transportation planning documents. A discussion is shown here for each of the performance areas.

## **Road Safety**

The safety measures are:

- Number of Fatalities
- Rate of Fatalities per 100 million VMT
- Number of Serious Injuries
- Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT
- Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Non-motorized Serious Injuries

In November 2021, NATS adopted to support the targets of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

## **Transit Safety**

As the designated recipient of urbanized area formula grant funding for the Michigan portion of the South Bend Urbanized area, Niles Dial a Ride (NDAR) established and approved its Public Transit Agency Safety Plan in December 2020. This plan includes strategies for minimizing the exposure of the public, personnel, and property to unsafe conditions and again include safety performance targets. The plan is based on the following safety performance measures established by FTA:

- Fatalities
- Injuries
- Safety Events
- System Reliability

In May 2021, NATS will adopt and support the targets set in the NDAR Safety Plan.

## **Pavement and Bridge**

The pavement and bridge measures are:

- Percent of Interstate pavements in Good condition
- Percent of Interstate pavements in Poor condition
- Percent of non-Interstate NHS pavements in Good Condition
- Percent of non-Interstate NHS pavements in Poor condition
- Percent of NHS bridges classified as in Good condition
- Percent of NHS bridges classified as in Poor condition

In January 2021, NATS adopted to support the targets of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

## **Transit Asset Management**

The Transit Asset Management (TAM) targets are:

- Equipment: Percent of non-revenue vehicles met or exceeded Useful Life Benchmark
- Rolling Stock: Percentage of revenue vehicles met or exceeded Useful Life

- Benchmark
- Facilities: Percentage of assets with condition rating below 3.0 on FTA TERM scale
- Infrastructure: Not applicable (The infrastructure performance measure element, which FTA requires, is limited to rail fixed guideway assets. There is no fixed guideway passenger transport in the NATS MPO).

Niles Dial a Ride established their first TAM plan and targets in January 2017.

In March 2019, NATS supported and adopted Niles Dial a Ride TAM targets.

### **System and Freight Reliability**

The system performance and freight measures are:

- Percent of person-miles traveled on the Interstate that are reliable
- Percent of person-miles traveled on the non-Interstate NHS that are reliable
- Truck Travel Time Reliability Index

In December 2018, NATS adopted to support the targets of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

By agreeing to support the state’s targets for safety, pavement, bridge, and travel time reliability, and Niles Dial a Ride state of good repair targets the NATS MPO agrees to:

- Working with MDOT and stakeholders to address areas of concern regarding fatalities and serious injuries, pavement, bridges, system performance and freight within the MPO planning area.
- Work with Niles Dial a Ride to address area of concern regarding transit and transit asset management
- Integrate into the MPO transportation planning process the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets described in other MDOT plans and processes

## **FHWA and State Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAS) and Local Transportation Planning Initiatives**

### **FHWA & State Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAS)**

Annually, the Michigan Division Office of FHWA issues the planning emphasis areas to be addressed in Michigan's metropolitan planning organizations' future work programs. The purpose of the PEAS is to focus the efforts on implementing the programs and reforms of Moving Ahead for Progress in 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and implementation of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). Each of the Planning Emphasis Areas and has thoughtfully considered as this UWP was developed. These planning areas are described below:

1. Development of the new FY2023-2026 TIP a. incorporation of performance-based planning in project selection.
2. Maintaining FY 2020-2023 TIP in JobNet including:
  - a) Four years of projects listed in TIP (for each MPO program areas);
  - b) Correct utilization of GPAs, in alignment with the guidance document (should the MPO utilize GPAs).
3. Continued growth and expertise in JobNet application improvements.
4. Continue to ensure transit projects are accurately shown in the TIP and fiscally constrained, through coordination with local transit agencies and MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation.
5. Review, evaluate and update public participation plan (PPP):
  - a) Clear project map/data listing
  - b) Consideration of virtual options for public participation
  - c) Environmental justice and Title VI processes and connection to public involvement
  - d) Ensuring transparency and providing open access to the planning, decision making, and project evaluation & selection processes. These processes should be available to the public and easy to understand (digestible format) on the MPO website.
6. Ensure compliance with Transportation Performance Measures (TPM) requirements, including working with MDOT on data needed to identify how MPO is working to meet adopted targets.
7. Continue to focus on partnerships utilizing a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) approach to transportation planning.

## **Local Transportation Planning Initiatives**

### **Performance-Based Planning and Programming**

MAP-21 requires implementation of performance-based plans and programs, as well as the formal use of performance measures. NATS will work cooperatively with MDOT to set performance measures and targets. To further address this emphasis area, NATS will:

- Stay engaged in Michigan initiatives and national training opportunities
- Incorporate performance measures and targets into goals and objectives
- Document expected benefit of projects in TIPs, and LRTPs and how they will contribute to accomplishing performance targets
- Evaluate the benefits/performance of TIP and LRTP projects to determine progress towards performance targets
- Better align project selection criteria for TIPs / MTPs with performance measure targets

### **S/TIP Development and Improvements**

NATS will work cooperatively to develop the new NATS FY 2023-2026 TIP which will include:

- Meeting requirements of performance measure and planning regulations
- Ensuring transparency and providing open access to the planning, decision making, and project evaluation & selection processes
- Clear project map/data listing
- Consideration of virtual options for public participation
- Working cooperatively to implement next phase of JobNet development
- Continued efforts to improvement public involvement

### **Administration of MPOs**

SWMPC is committed to ensuring that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (PL 100.259), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. To ensure this SWMPC will:

- Review and update Title VI and ADA procedures as needed.

### **Consideration of Livability and Sustainability in the Transportation Planning Process**

SWMPC staff will continue to work with our transportation partners to analyze access to essential services (employment, health care, schools/education, and recreation). Some methods we may employ to accomplish this are:

- Identify criteria for underserved populations (low income, minorities, elderly, LEP, Disabled) and essential services (health care, schools, supermarkets, employment centers, voting/polling places, courthouses, recreational areas, motor vehicle depts.).
- Map existing connectivity.
- Identify gaps in connectivity and create solutions. Develop and implement analytical methods to identify gaps in connectivity in existing and developing transportation systems and determine potential solutions.
- Participation Plans. Evaluate the effectiveness of Participation Plans for engaging disadvantage communities in the decision-making process.
- Update the Coordinated Human Service Public Transportation Plan when needed.
- Bike/Ped facilities. Assess the safety and condition of bike/pedestrian facilities.
- Evaluate compliance with ADA, particularly around schools, concentrations of disadvantaged populations, social services, medical, and transit facilities.

### **Regional Models of Cooperation**

NATS is striving to increase collaboration between MPO members on transportation projects. In addition, SWMPC also serves as the MPO for the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph area its staff also address transportation planning for the rural areas of Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. SWMPC works with NATS members to integrate planning throughout this entire region. NATS, as part of the South Bend urbanized area collaborates with the neighboring MPO, the Michiana Council of Governments (MACOG). A joint travel demand model between the two planning agencies across the state line is a major step forward for this and future long range planning. In addition to regional collaboration, SWMPC works closely with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), to ensure all planning is conducted in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

The transportation work associated with the NATS MPO is a subset of the three-county regional planning work done within SWMPC. As such, there are regular opportunities for the regional planning work done by the SWMPC to compliment the transportation work done for NATS. These areas of cross-pollination include environmental planning, economic development planning, health planning, and community planning such as master and recreation planning.

The SWMPC is a member of numerous groups that engage in regional planning within southwest Michigan. Those groups include the Strategic Leadership Council (SLC), Be Healthy Berrien (BHB), West

Michigan Sustainable Business Forum (WMSBF), and other collaborations. The work done within these collaborations all have components that integrate with transportation planning. The interrelationship among them is greatly benefited in both directions by the deep understanding of the existing and planned transportation network.

The SWMPC is dedicated to improve and better define coordination between governing agencies in the selection of targets, linking planning, and programming to specific metrics and targets within those metrics.

### **Quality Public Transit Service**

The existing public transportation services in Berrien County are not adequately meeting the needs of residents and businesses. Previous studies, outreach, and analysis of data all indicate that the services currently provided by the four transit agencies in the county are too complicated, unaffordable for many, and don't sufficiently connect important destinations or operate during the hours needed. The two largest urban areas - St. Joseph Benton Harbor and Niles are not directly connected to each other by transit.

- **Connectivity:** There is a need for seamless mobility and the need to connect with other modes of transportation and transit service within and outside of the County to access vital life sustaining services.
- **Service Quality:** There is a need for performance measures and standards for assessing transit performance and level of service.
- **Service Design:** There is a need for an equitable, efficient and effective countywide transit service. Challenges include establishing the appropriate mix and amount of services to address the unmet needs of youth, seniors, low-income households, people with disabilities, as well as choice riders.
- **Service Expansion:** There is a need for transit service throughout the County centered on the parameters of activity centers in urban and rural areas and within a portion of the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph urbanized area where it does not currently exist.
- **Transit Investments:** There is also a need to develop and implement a policy framework and performance based methodology for prioritizing transit investment in the county so the countywide service planning effort will be part of an on-going cycle of continuous improvement.

In FY 2022, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission will continue to support efforts to implement an integrated countywide public transportation system that will serve 100 percent of Berrien County residents as compared to 58 percent today.



### **Preserving the Existing Road Network**

As of 2019, 58 percent of the federal-aid roads in the NATS area were in poor condition, meaning that significant expenditures are needed to improve the pavement condition. At the same time, many roads that are in fair condition now are in danger of deteriorating further without preventative maintenance. It has therefore become especially important that NATS keep its members apprised of the pavement conditions, the latest techniques for managing pavement, and all funding sources that are available. In order to improve and maintain the condition of the road network, NATS will need to continue to prioritize projects and target investments where they are most needed, and where they will have the most impact. Performance measures will assist NATS in evaluating the success of its investments in the future.

### **Pavement Data Collection**

For more than a decade, the SWMPC has coordinated this region's efforts to collect pavement condition data on the federal aid system. This important task will continue in FY 2022. In addition to data collection, SWMPC staff is responsible for the coordination of the multi-agency personnel that are present in the data collection vehicle during the survey process, the determination of the road network that is to be surveyed, reimbursement of local agencies who request it for their staff time, the internal processing of the data after it has been collected, and the transmission of the final data to the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC). SWMPC staff also coordinates the collection of data that has been developed for the local road system by local jurisdictions and forwards it to the TAMC for analysis in the statewide database. Data collected through this process will be used for the development of the pavement condition performance measures as outlined by MAP-21. Monitoring progress toward achieving the performance measures will also be a key use for the collected information.

### **Safety Planning**

A core emphasis of the FAST Act is the continual aggressive safety agenda. The MPO has and will continue to coordinate with MDOT regarding their Strategic Highway Safety Plan initiative to develop a regional and local process to identify safety problems by working with the Berrien County Road Department and other local agencies to address those known areas/locations where safety could be improved. This planning process is part of U.S.DOT/ FHWA effort to develop a National Strategy on Highway Safety – Toward Zero Deaths (TZD). The National Strategy is a data-driven effort focusing on identifying and creating opportunities for changing American culture to improve highway safety through engineering, education, enforcement and emergency medical services (4 E's). The MPO will continue to advance in the coordination and cooperation with a broad range of multidisciplinary stakeholders to improve transit, freight vehicle, non-motorized, and transportation network safety by assisting agencies in applying for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and other related transportation safety funds.



## Funding Sources

All work, including MPO staff time and consultant studies, listed in the UWP are funded by one or more of the following funding sources.

### **Federal Highway Administration Funding PL-112 and Federal Transit Administration Funding 5303**

NATS receives federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for transportation planning. Legislation requires a local match for these federal funds. Prior to FY 2016, a separate match calculation was required for each funding source. Since FY 2017, MDOT has grouped the two funding sources together into a single Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG). The consequence of the CPG is that a single funding stream and a single match calculation are in place.

### **Local Jurisdiction Funding**

All federal grant funds require at least an 18.15 percent non-federal match. The MPO requests funding from the fourteen participating member jurisdictions on a proportionate fair share basis using the population from the 2010 Bureau of Census population figures. The NATS Technical Committee and Policy Committee are responsible for approving the budget.

### **FHWA State Planning and Research (SPR) Grant Funds.**

SPR funds are federal dollars from the State Planning and Research Program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Some SPR funds are allocated to the MPO to help with planning studies. A twenty percent match is required that is provided by MDOT. At the writing of this document, no SPR funds have yet been budgeted for NATS.

### **FY 2022 FHWA & FTA Federal and Local Budget**

	Federal	Match	Total
CPG Grant	\$104,912	\$23,264	\$128,176

### FY 2022 Local Match Calculation

Jurisdiction	Population (2010)	Percentage of Total Population	Share of CPG Local Match
Bernard Township	2,657	4.7%	\$1,100
Buchanan Township	3,523	6.3%	\$1,459
Howard Township	6,207	11.0%	\$2,570
Mason Township	2,945	5.2%	\$1,220
Milton Township	3,878	6.9%	\$1,606
Niles Charter Township	14,164	25.2%	\$5,866
Ontwa Township	5,290	9.4%	\$2,191
City of Buchanan	4,456	7.9%	\$1,845
City of Niles	11,599	20.6%	\$4,803
Village of Edwardsburg	1,259	2.2%	\$521
Pokagon Band	199	0.4%	\$82
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,177</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$23,264</b>

*Source: Population based on 2010 Census*

## Funding Categories

To track MPO progress and spending, the FY 2022 budget and work items in this UWP are divided into the following four categories:

1. **Program Administration:** Covers all of the administration and other supporting tasks that are required to ensure efficient operation of the NATS MPO.
2. **Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting:** The gathering of transportation related data including the traffic count program. It also includes most mapping and GIS related tasks as well as any work related to the analysis, display, or reporting of data.
3. **Transportation Planning:** Includes technical assistance to members, public outreach, the administration of special plans, and updating the Long Range Plan.
4. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** The TIP is a listing of all federal or state funded transportation projects in the NATS planning area. The TIP work category covers project selection, TIP development, monitoring project status, and processing amendments.

**Budget by Work Element**

<b>Work Element</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>1.0 Program Administration</b>	\$34,357
<b>2.0 Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting</b>	\$27,808
<b>3.0 Transportation Planning</b>	\$32,891
<b>4.0 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</b>	\$33,120
<b>Total</b>	\$128,176

The following section describes each work category in further detail, with subcategories for each major work element. It provides an objective for each subcategory and the major procedures and tasks that will be carried out. It also gives a list of outcomes with a timeline that can be used as a basis for tracking staff work and budget. The timeline will either specify the quarter in which the outcome will be complete, the frequency of the task, or list the outcome to be done on an as needed basis. As needed means that at this time we cannot predict exactly when or how frequently we might undertake these tasks.

# 1 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION

## 1.1 Program Management and Support

**Objective:** Conduct administrative activities necessary for the efficient operation of the NATS MPO.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Administration activities are undertaken to ensure MPO compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and ensure a successful MPO, which can carry out all of the other work tasks contained in the UWP. Program management and support includes:

- **Administering the MPO's committees:** Manage the Policy Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Walk and Roll Subcommittee, which includes developing meeting materials (agenda, minutes, and presentations), providing committee education through presentations and handouts, revising the committee handbook, and updating the NATS website. Prepare and distribute information material regarding MPO & staff activities.
- **Reviewing and updating documents:** This includes an annual review of both the Policy and Technical Advisory Committee bylaws to ensure they are up to date and provide clear roles and procedures for the MPO committees. This also includes a periodic review and update of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) that NATS maintains with MDOT, the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), Buchanan Dial A Ride, and Niles Dial A Ride.
- **Preparation of reports to state and federal partners:** The preparation of reports regarding transportation planning activities funded through PL112 and Section 5303. It includes an annual report and quarterly progress reports, which document NATS accomplishments. It also includes annually submitting the disadvantaged business enterprise report and the title VI reports to MDOT to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations.
- **Accounting and Budget:** This includes tracking the spending of the NATS budget and reporting expenditures to MDOT, as well as any other task related to the fiscal management of the MPO.

Outcome	Timeline
Adherence to all appropriate planning regulations through coordination with state and federal agencies.	Continuous
Direct staff planning efforts under the FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program.	Continuous
Preparation of Policy Committee and Technical Committee meeting materials such as agendas and meeting minutes	Monthly
Preparation of presentations to committee members on transportation topics	Continuous
Maintenance of MPO web pages	Continuous
Create and maintain project specific website applications, sections and/or additional websites as needed for transportation planning activities	As Needed
Review of committee bylaws	Annually
Review and update of MOUs	As Needed
Activity and financial reporting to Michigan Department of Transportation	Continuous
Assure equal opportunities to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and minorities in contracts and subcontracts.	As Needed
Completion of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Reports	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Annual Title VI Report	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Summarize all activity / reimbursement requests, prepare the required documentation and submit the requests to MDOT for each of the four-quarters in FY 2022	Quarterly
Annual Report	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter

## 1.2 Interagency Coordination

**Objective:** Work with state, federal, and regional partners on common goals and issues affecting transportation in the wider region, state, and nation.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Staff participates in a variety of programs where they collaborate with other organizations to work toward common goals. Staff engage with the following organizations:

- **Westrain:** SWMPC will chair and participate in the Westrain Collaborative, which seeks to preserve, promote, and improve passenger rail service in West Michigan.
- **Michigan Transportation Planning Association (MTPA):** An association of public organizations and agencies, which are responsible for transportation planning activities throughout Michigan. Staff also work with a subgroup of the MTPA comprised of smaller MPOs to address the unique challenges faced in areas with smaller population and limited resources.
- **Michigan Public Transit Association (MPTA):** Provides leadership, resources, support, and technical assistance to advocate and strengthen public transportation in Michigan. Staff attends the Legislative Conference and the MPTA annual conference to; develop and maintain communication with federal, State and local governments and exchange information and ideas to improve public transit.
- **Be Healthy Berrien:** A partnership of organizations interested in improving health in Berrien County. Staff provides insight into how transportation can be used as a tool for promoting active lifestyles.
- **The Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy:** With the elimination of the St. Joseph River Harbor Authority, a group of stakeholders has been meeting regularly to discuss the future of the harbor including governance and potential developments.
- **Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council:** A council made up of business, non-profit, and community leaders who work on improving quality of life in Berrien County.
- **University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) Consultative Panel:** SWMPC serve on the counsel that advises the REI University Center faculty and staff on the overall project objectives and scope of work. The REI is a program of Michigan State University that works to improve the economy in Michigan's most vulnerable communities.
- **The Quad State Directors:** Meetings of the directors of Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, and Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and SWMPC



Outcome	Timeline
Attend and participate in:	
Michigan Association of Regions meetings	Bi-Monthly
Michigan Transportation Planning Association, Michigan Public Transportation Association, Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council, Be Healthy Berrien, The Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy, Region 8 Regional Prosperity Initiative, and the University Center for Regional Economic Innovation Consultative Panel	Monthly
Quad State Directors, Westrain	Quarterly
MTPA and MPTA annual conferences	Annually
Provide additional support to the above organizations	As Needed
Written comments on other studies as appropriate	As Needed
Preparation and distribution of various maps, program guidelines and other transportation or land use materials for outside groups or agencies	As Needed
Public presentations as requested	As Needed

### 1.3 Professional Development and Technical Training

**Objective:** Keep staff trained on the latest regulations, rules and procedures related to transportation planning.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Professional development and training are fundamental components of maintaining a qualified, up-to-date professional staff. As new regulations and guidance are developed, staff will seek out resources to ensure compliance. This will include staff attending training sessions hosted by state and federal agencies on new rules, regulations, and guidance for topics that include performance-based planning and programming. In addition, staff will attend relevant conferences and workshops to learn about the best practices in transportation planning. Whenever possible, staff will use webinars, online courses, and other digital resources for training to reduce the cost of travel.

Outcome	Timeline
Staff trained in the latest techniques and best practices in the field of planning.	Continuous
Monitoring and review new federal and state legislation regarding transportation planning regulations, transportation systems funding, and other relevant transportation regulations	Continuous
Attend state or federally sponsored trainings on new regulation and rules	As Needed
Attendance at conferences and workshops for professional development and training of staff	As Needed
Use of digital educational tools to stay apprised of latest developments in transportation planning	As Needed

## 1.4 Unified Work Program (UWP)

**Objective:** Develop NATS’s Unified Work Program (UWP) for Fiscal Year 2023, as well as monitor the implementation of the FY 2022 work program and making amendments as necessary.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Staff will consult with the FHWA, MDOT, and the MPO committees to identify appropriate work elements for the 2023 UWP. MDOT staff will determine what level of federal funding (PL112, Section 5303, etc.) will be allocated. NATS staff will then determine the appropriate assignment of these funding allocations to the various work elements, and determine the amount of local matching funds that will be requested. Staff will make amendments to the 2022 UWP if new funding sources are granted.

Outcome	Timeline
Pre UWP meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter (March 2022)
Development of FY 2023 Unified Work Program and Budget in conjunction with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter (May 2022)
Amendments to the 2022 UWP	As Needed
Attend MTPA Technical Funding Allocation Meetings	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter

## 1.5 Air Quality Conformity

**Objective:** The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) established the mandate for better coordination between air quality and transportation planning. The CAAA requires that all transportation plans and transportation investments in non-attainment and maintenance areas be subject to an air quality conformity determination. The purpose of such determination is to demonstrate that the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) conform to the intent and purpose of the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The intent of the SIP is to achieve and maintain clean air and meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Therefore, for non-attainment and maintenance areas, the LRTP and the TIP must demonstrate that the implementation of projects does not result in greater mobile source emissions than the emissions budget.

On October 1, 2015 the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set the primary and secondary national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone at 70 parts per billion (or 0.070 parts per million). In 2018, Berrien County was designated non-attainment for the 2015 ozone standard, thus SWMPC must follow conformity guidance for all transportation projects within the county.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Staff will work with and assist MDOT on Michigan Transportation Conformity - Interagency Workgroups (MITC-IAWG), and develop regional transportation conformity analysis to ensure projects are consistent with the SIP.

Outcome	Timeline
Coordinate the Berrien County MITC-IAWG	Continuous
Provide assistance to MDOT for regional transportation conformity analysis	Continuous
Facilitate conformity analysis through committee process	Continuous
Ensure regionally significant projects are reviewed	As Needed
Conduct public participation for conformity analysis determination	As Needed
Conformity analysis of proposed 2023-2026 projects	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter

## 2 DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING

### 2.1 Transportation System Data Collection

**Objective:** Collect data on the state of the transportation network including traffic counts, Highway Performance Management System (HPMS) data, Model Inventory of Roadway Elements (MIRE), and any other data request by MDOT.

**Procedures and Tasks:**

Staff will solicit and fulfill traffic count requests from member jurisdictions, as well as fulfilling rail-crossing counts from MDOT. Staff will continue to identify areas that have not had counts for several years and determine if updated counts are necessary. Staff will coordinate the traffic count program with MDOT and the local road agencies to ensure the best count coverage while reducing duplication. The collected counts will result a clear picture of traffic levels throughout the region and will be used for travel demand modeling. Counts will be made publicly available in both map and database form via the SWMPC website.

Under federal reporting requirements, the Model Inventory Roadway Elements (MIRE) Fundamental Data Elements (FDE) is a federal reporting requirement for safety roadway data. Work on implementation by MDOT and its vendors (CSS, Roadsoft, and ESRI) of the MIRE FDE data repository schema in MDOT Roads & Highways should be completed. Beginning in FY22, MPO and local agency participation in the MIRE data collection process will be considered part of the requirements in fulfilling Data Collection responsibilities to MDOT. The first set of MDOT MIRE FDE data and tools should be available in Roadsoft in the April 2022 release. Agencies should receive MIRE data in Roadsoft in V22 and may export changes to MDOT for V22 and beyond. The five (5) data items that MPO staff will be requested to review will be surface type, number of through lanes, access control, median type, and junction traffic control. MPO and MDOT staff will begin the process of meeting to discuss and plan for annual maintenance and validating these data items going forward. The end goal will be to draft a plan to fill 100% of the five MIRE data items and submit to MDOT by August of 2025.

Outcome	Timeline
Management of the traffic count program.	Continuous
Respond to requests from the public and the MPO members for traffic count information	Continuous
Updated traffic counts on roads where development has occurred or land use has changed.	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Collection of traffic counts as requested by member jurisdictions.	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Up to date searchable online data base of requested traffic counts	Continuous
Monitor existing traffic volumes on the federal aid roadway system throughout the NATS study area for use in project development in accordance with the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL)	Continuous
Collection equipment in state of good repair	Continuous
Coordination with local road agencies to obtain MIRE data.	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Collect Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data, which is used for national trends and for air quality conformity monitoring.	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter
Use the data collected to support the development of technical analysis tools as required by the planning process.	Continuous

## 2.2 Data Mapping, Analysis, and Reporting

**Objective:** Effectively research, maintain, monitor, and analyze a wide variety of data and information needed for the comprehensive transportation planning process.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Facilitate better data-driven decision making by communicating the results of transportation data analysis. Present transportation analysis to MPO members and the public using maps and graphics to make transportation issues easier to understand. Prepare necessary technical reports on a wide variety of transportation issues that will influence the MPO and our participating agency's overall planning coordination.

Staff will continue to create online mapping tools in addition to creating hard copy maps upon request. Staff will also publish reports on performance measures, and other topics of interest for MPO members. System performance data encompasses all information necessary for good decision-making, including traffic counts, safety, demographics, economic indicators, and land use.

Outcome	Timeline
Data necessary for transportation system performance, socioeconomic, demographic, land use, and environmental analysis.	Continuous
Mapping of land use, transportation systems, crashes, economic data etc. to facilitate decision-making.	Continuous
Annual report on federal and local performance measures and targets	3rd Quarter
Catalog of data sets for use in GIS applications and other types of analysis.	Continuous
Proficiency in ARCPRO & ARC GIS Online Software.	Continuous
Identification of changes in land use plans and assessment of their impacts on transportation.	Continuous
Online/interactive mapping applications to display data on land use, transportation, environmental, and socio-economic factors.	Continuous
Provide mapping applications for our members and public to communicate data in a user-friendly format.	Continuous
2020 Census data updated as released	Continuous
Review urban boundary data when released by US Census	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter

## 2.3 Asset Management

**Objective:** Provide technical assistance to the Asset Management Council (TAMC) as required by Public Act 499 of 2002.

**Procedures and tasks:** The resources allocated to the Metropolitan/Regional Planning Organization (MPO/RPO) from the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) annual budget shall be utilized to assist in the completion of the TAMC Work Program. All work shall be consistent with the policies and priorities established by the TAMC. All invoices submitted for reimbursement of Asset Management activities shall utilize Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) standard invoice forms and include the required information for processing. The MPO/RPO shall complete the required products and perform tasks according to the timeframes and directives established within TAMC's data collection policies, which are located on the TAMC website ([https://www.michigan.gov/documents/tamc/Policy\\_for\\_Collection\\_of\\_Roadway\\_Surface\\_Condition\\_Data\\_602939\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/tamc/Policy_for_Collection_of_Roadway_Surface_Condition_Data_602939_7.pdf)). The MPO/RPO will emphasize these tasks to support the top 125 Public Act 51 agencies (agencies that certify under Public Act 51 a minimum of 100 centerline miles of road) within the planning area when resources are limited. The activities eligible for TAMC reimbursement include the following:

### TASKS

1. Training Activities
  - A. Attendance at training seminar(s) on the use of Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) and Inventory-based Rating System for unpaved roadways.
  - B. Represent MPO/RPO at TAMC-sponsored conferences and seminars, including attending either the spring or fall TAMC Conference.
  - C. Attend TAMC-sponsored Investment Reporting Tool (IRT) training seminars.
  - D. Attend TAMC-sponsored Asset Management Plan Development training seminars.
2. Data Collection Participation and Coordination
  - A. Federal Aid System:
    - 1) Organize schedules with Public Act 51 agencies within MPO/RPO's boundary for participating in Federal Aid data collection efforts; ensure all participants of data collection have access to State of Michigan travel reimbursement rates.
    - 2) Coordinate, participate, and facilitate road surface data collection on approximately one-half of the Federal Aid System in accordance with the TAMC Policy for the Collection of Roadway Condition Data on Federal Aid Eligible Roads and Streets.
    - 3) Collect unpaved roadway condition data on approximately half of any unpaved Federal Aid eligible roadways using the Inventory-based Rating System developed by the Michigan Technological University's Center for Technology and Training.
  - B. Non-Federal Aid System:
    - 1) The RPO/MPO may allocate reimbursements for Non-Federal Aid data collection to Public Act 51 agencies according to the resources available to them in the manner that best reflects the priorities of their area and supports the TAMC work.



- 2) Coordinate Non-Federal Aid data collection cycles with Public Act 51 agencies with an emphasis on the top 125 agencies.
  - 3) Ensure all participants of data collection understand procedures for data sharing with TAMC as well as TAMC policy and procedures for collecting Non-Federal Aid data.
  - 4) Participate and perform data collection with Public Act 51 agencies on an as-needed basis for the data collection of Non-Federal Aid roads when requested.
3. Equipment
    - A. Ensure rating teams have the necessary tools to complete the federal aid data collection activity by maintaining a laptop compatible with the Laptop Data Collector and Roadsoft programs, a functioning Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, and other required hardware in good working order.
    - B. Communicate any equipment needs and purchases with the TAMC Coordinator; laptops are eligible for replacement on a three-year cycle.
  4. Data Submission
    - A. Develop and maintain technical capability to manage regional Roadsoft databases and the Laptop Data Collector program; maintain a regional Roadsoft database that is accurate and consistent with local agency data sets.
    - B. Coordinate Quality Assurance/Quality Control activities and data submission tasks according to protocols established in TAMC Data Collection Policies for Federal Aid and Non-Federal Aid Roads.
    - C. Monitor and report status of data collection efforts to TAMC Asset Management Coordinator through monthly coordinator calls and/or monthly or quarterly program updates that are mailed with invoices.
    - D. Provide links on agency websites and reports to the TAMC website, interactive maps and dashboards for the dissemination of roadway data.
  5. Asset Management Planning
    - A. Participate and attend TAMC-sponsored training and workshops in order to provide technical support for Asset Management Plan development activities.
    - B. Provide an annual reporting of the status of Public Act 51 agency Asset Management Plans and keep abreast of the status of these plans for updates and revision.
    - C. Provide technical assistance and training funds to Public Act 51 agencies during the development of local Asset Management Plans using TAMC templates when applicable; coordinate these tasks with an emphasis on the Top 125 agencies.
  6. Technical Assistance
    - A. Provide technical assistance to local agencies in using the TAMC reporting tools for planned and completed infrastructure investments or any other TAMC Work Program Activity.
    - B. Integrate PASER ratings and asset management into project selection criteria:
      - 1) Analyze data and develop road preservation scenarios.
      - 2) Analyze performance of implemented projects.

Outcome	Timeline
PASER data for Federal Aid System submitted to TAMC via the IRT.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
PASER data for Non-Federal Aid System submitted to TAMC via the IRT.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Quarterly reports submitted with invoices to TAMC Coordinator.	Quarterly
Create an Annual Report of Asset Management program activities as well as a summary of annual PASER condition data by local agency, functional classification, and Public Act 51 Legal System; provide links to the Regional Annual Report on agency website and submit copies to TAMC Coordinator by April 1 of each year.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
Prepare a draft status report of Public Act 51 agency Asset Management activities and plans within MPO/RPO boundary by September 30 of each year.	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter

## 2.4 Functional Classification System Updates

**Objective:** Review the National Functional Classification (NFC) based on changes to traffic counts and local development to determine if updates are required. Assist road agencies with the NFC reclassification process.

**Procedures/Tasks:** The National Functional Classification (NFC) is a federal system of classifying all streets, roads, and highways according to their function. The NFC determines federal-aid eligibility of roadways. Local road agencies are charged with approving any change to the NFC on roads within their jurisdiction. As traffic volumes and land use change, roads must adapt. Occasionally these changes alter the function of a road such that a change in the NFC is required. Staff will stay informed about major changes to land use, and traffic volumes to identify when a NFC change might be warranted. NATS will coordinate NFC revisions with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the appropriate road agencies within the planning area.

Outcome	Timeline
Work with local jurisdictions and Michigan Department of Transportation to determine if changes to the NFC classifications are required.	As needed
Provide technical assistance to local road agencies in the reclassification process.	As needed

## 3 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

### 3.1 Planning Technical Support to MPO Members

**Objective:** Provide technical assistance to the public and MPO members; including public transit providers, local jurisdictions, MDOT, and federal agencies.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Technical assistance is a constant work item for the SWMPC and includes planning activities such as impact studies, master plan reviews, corridor reviews, or other coordination or data collection tasks to assist other organizations in implementing transportation-related projects. This work item will also include assisting members in preparing documentation for funding applications. Staff will provide technical assistance in the following areas:

- **Non-Motorized Planning:** Staff strive to examine non-motorized transportation from the perspective of all users. Activities may include assisting in the evaluation the federal-aid network, or a portion thereof, for the installation of bike lanes, wayfinding system planning and coordinated signage, preparation of grant applications for nonmotorized projects, preparation of printed materials that promote non-motorized modes and cooperative education/enforcement efforts with local law enforcement agencies related to nonmotorized modes. This task will also include evaluating connections and integration between passenger transportation and active transportation networks, including first and last mile connections.
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ):** Staff assists with the administration of the CMAQ program, including convening meetings and monitoring the status of CMAQ projects. As air quality standards change, staff keep MPO members apprised of any changes that affect CMAQ funding and eligibility.
- **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP):** Staff will promote the HSIP program and assist with applications. This includes providing safety data and analysis for use in project applications.
- **Transit Planning:** To enhance and continue the development of an efficient and effective transit service in Berrien County area. This activity will provide the avenue to perform in-depth studies of transit-related problems in operations/management and service planning. Staff will perform any unanticipated work including activities resulting from the interpretation and/or implementation of certain FAST Act requirements by FHWA/FTA and/or MDOT, results from the Niles Dial a Ride 2021 Triennial Certification Review, or any new state or federal transportation legislation that may be put in place. Specifically, this could include activities related to working with MDOT and Niles Dial a Ride in the review and development of performance targets and/or activities resulting from new guidance released from FHWA/FTA or development of specific performance measures by MDOT.

Outcome	Timeline
Sharing of expertise and knowledge with appropriate agencies and the general public	Continuous
Applications prepared	Continuous
Improve research, collection, management, and integration of safety data	Continuous
CMAQ 2023-2026 Project Selection Meetings	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Monitoring of air quality conformity designation	As Needed
Providing safety data for use in HSIP applications	As Needed
Facilitate opportunities to promote and plan for improved and expanded options for transit, carpooling, walking, and biking.	Continuous
Coordinate the implementation of the Marquette Greenway MDOT TAP grant in New Buffalo Township, City of New Buffalo, and Grand Beach.	As Needed
Support efforts to expand the use of electric public transportation vehicles, including through public private partnerships and collaboration with other Michigan agencies.	On-going

### 3.2 Public and Stakeholder Outreach

**Objective:** Follow the SWMPC Public Participation Plan when carrying out all planning activities by: Informing the general public, local officials and the NATS committee members about transportation related issues and MPO activities, and providing the opportunity for public involvement in all transportation-planning initiatives undertaken by NATS.

**Procedures and Tasks:** A robust and ongoing public involvement process is a vital component to successful transportation planning. The SWMPC Public Participation Plan provides guidance for this by requiring the following: providing complete information to the public and stakeholders, timely public notice of NATS meetings, public comment periods, full public access to key decisions and decision-making processes; and support for early and continuing involvement of the public in all planning and programming activities. For all planning initiatives, staff will engage in numerous activities to encourage public involvement. Appropriate means of announcement such as newspaper notices, direct mailings, the SWMPC web site, and social media, will be used as appropriate. Staff will continue its efforts to make NATS documents and meeting material easily accessible online. Staff will also use a variety of education and outreach methods to help promote public awareness of transportation issues and NATS involvements. All public outreach efforts will be documented and reviewed to make improvements to the process. Staff will also periodically review the Public Participation Plan and make updates to ensure the plan reflects the best practices in public engagement.

Outcome	Timeline
A well informed public who are able to have their wishes reflected in the work NATS conducts.	Continuous
Documentation of the public involvement process.	Continuous
Documentation of public notices placed to solicit public involvement in planning initiatives.	Continuous
Articles written for the SWMPC newsletter.	Quarterly
Educational materials to promote awareness of transportation issues.	As Needed
Soliciting public feedback through comment forms, surveys, and other methods.	As Needed
Hosting public meetings to facilitate discussion between staff and members of the public.	As Needed
Maintaining a list of stakeholders and interested parties.	Continuous
Review of the SWMPC Public Participation Plan	Annually

### 3.3 Transportation System Security & Emergency Preparedness

**Objective:** The purpose of this task is to identify and advance strategies that increase the security of the transportation system.

**Procedures and Tasks:** One of the goals of the NATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan is to develop a transportation system which is safe and secure for all of its users. Staff will continue to coordinate with local road agencies and transportation providers to identify system security and emergency preparedness plans which are currently in place. Staff will also coordinate with the Berrien County Emergency Services Department, which has been working with local units of government to prepare plans and strategies for emergency response. Staff assistance will be offered to NATS members to identify strategies regarding mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Outcome	Timeline
Coordination with local road agencies and Niles Dial a Ride, Cass County Public Transit and Buchanan Dial a Ride in the development of appropriate emergency relief and disaster preparedness strategies for motorized and non-motorized users	Ongoing
Participate in meetings of the Berrien County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) as well as other entities focused on mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts related to transportation.	Monthly

### 3.4 Human Services Transportation Coordination

**Objective:**

Foster livable communities by ensuring public transportation and mobility options are accessible and integrated throughout the study area.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Continue to address the importance of transportation needs for the older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents in conjunction with ongoing public transit, paratransit, mobility management, and community-based transportation planning activities. This task will include assisting organizations to help establish or expand community-based transportation services, including active transportation, non-emergency medical transportation, senior services center transportation, and veteran transportation. Staff will provide coordination, outreach, and technical assistance to the local human service agencies including: Disability Network of Southwest Michigan, Berrien County Health Department, Area Agency on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services, Riverwood Mental Health, local governments, human service agencies, and community organizations that seek to enhance and extend safe mobility for the older adults, individuals with disabilities and low income residents.

Outcome	Timeline
Analyze MDOT Public Transit Management System (PTMS) reports to monitor the performance of Niles Dial a Ride and Buchanan Dial a Ride for mobility-impaired populations.	Continuous
Consult and coordinate with mobility-impaired advocates to develop funding and project approaches that address access issues.	Continuous
Compile data on obstacles to access and mobility and assist in the preparation of informational materials for community education on access and mobility issues.	Continuous
Create and administer surveys as needed.	As needed
Develop strategies to create efficiencies in transportation services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities.	Continuous
Assist local sponsors in developing grant applications.	As Needed
Provide technical assistance to MDOT when needed regarding mobility planning guidance and processes	As Needed
Facilitate ways for different transportation providers to interact	Continuous



## 3.5 Long Range Transportation Planning

**Objective:** Implement the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that provides goals, objectives, and performance measures, to guide all future transportation activities in the NATS MPO area.

**Procedures and Tasks:** The current Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Principles in Motion 2045* was adopted in December 2018. Continuing activity in this work element will be made during FY 2022 for maintenance of the adopted document. Staff will monitor current and future projections of populations, household, and employment locations with MPO communities. Staff will coordinate with MDOT on the development of the state long range plan, Michigan Mobility 2045.

Key objectives will be outreach efforts to continue to inform and educate the public and other stakeholders about the goals, strategies, projects, and programs in long range plan. Special attention will be placed upon the incorporation of transit, bicycle/pedestrian and intercity rail planning. The next Long-Range Plan Update will be due in December 2023. Data that will be necessary in the next Long-Range Plan update will continue to be collected, analyzed, and reviewed as it is released by the US Census.

### **Environmental Justice and Transit-Dependent Populations**

In alignment with FHWA/FTA's emphasis areas, SWMPC staff will continue to monitor demographics in the area to identify populations that depend on transit and other accessibility measures to reach life-sustaining destinations, due to age, disability, or income level. These individuals are often disqualified from the healthcare, education, or jobs they need to sustain themselves and their families because of their inability to own or operate a car. SWMPC staff will continue to work with the MPO member communities and transit agencies to identify areas where there is a persistent need for transit to help develop the long-term fixed-route transit service plan for the County and other strategies for meeting the demand for transit.

### **Environmental Quality**

SWMPC staff will continue to educate committee members on the new research and information presented from FHWA, EPA, and others regarding climate, air quality, and water quality. Key objectives will be to include recent research and best practices into the NATS planning process. SWMPC staff will be focused on implementation of the air quality standard for ozone. SWMPC staff will also improve documentation and consideration of environmental consultation with outside environmental agencies including federal, state, and local partners.

## **Freight**

Coordinate with the businesses and key agencies in developing a better comprehensive understanding of the various air, water, road, and rail freight distribution points in Berrien County. The key objective of this work area in FY 2022 will be to continue to seek input from freight stakeholders to identify freight issues/concerns in the NATS area.

## **Performance Measures**

SWMPC staff will continue to monitor the release of federal performance measures and align NATS measurement of the success of LRP projects with these new measures. SWMPC staff will disseminate information on performance measures to the committees, and discuss incorporation of these measures into the next long range plan. Performance data will be monitored and reported in the System Performance Report component of the long-range planning process

The key objective of this task will be to ensure that NATS policies and procedures align both with unique local needs and federal and state planning processes.

## **Travel Demand Model**

During FY 2022, MDOT staff will be updating the travel demand model for the 2050 NATS LRP with assistance from MACOG, SWMPC staff and NATS member communities. A finished model is expected to be completed during FY 2022. SWMPC staff will review and verify the necessary data for the model in collaboration with NATS member communities. Work will also include participating in conference calls and attending meetings for the update of the travel demand model.

SWMPC will also focus on applying the current travel demand model in innovative ways that recognize that the transportation deficiencies of the region are not always tied to capacity issues. This work will include applying the model to possible road diets, non-motorized paths, and one-way to two-way conversions. A key objective of this area will be to encourage data-driven decision making that efficiently uses excess roadway capacity.

## **Technological Innovation**

MPO staff will conduct research and inform committee members regarding emerging clean energy solutions and intelligent transportation systems (ITS). Specific areas to be investigated include bicycle sharing, car sharing, transit bus conversions, Smartphone applications, information displays on the transportation network, and technologies for motor vehicle accident avoidance. A key objective of these tasks will be to make sure committee members are educated on the latest technology trends when making decisions about transportation funding.

### Economic Development Linkage

MPO staff continues to inform economic development stakeholders in Berrien County about the transportation planning process, and will continue to catalog the needs of economic development agencies regarding transportation. A key goal of this work task will be to tie future transportation investments to workforce and business needs through a common set of goals for the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Outcome	Timeline
Monitor federal guidance on performance measures	Ongoing throughout fiscal year
Research to meet the changing environmental needs and demands of the region (climate change, livability, and freight)	Ongoing throughout fiscal year
Use travel demand model to identify infrastructure and connection deficiencies within the transportation network	As Needed
Begin preliminary work for 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan	Ongoing throughout fiscal year.
Assist MDOT in tasks associated with updating the travel demand model for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan	As Needed.

## 4 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

### 4.1 Transportation Improvement Program Development

**Objective:** Develop the FY 2023-2026 NATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in a manner consistent with performance-based planning and programming requirements.

**Procedures and Tasks:**

As required by the FAST-Act, the TIP shall be designed such that once implemented, it makes progress towards achieving the performance targets. Additionally, the TIP shall also include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets identified in the NATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

This task will focus on the continued development and improvement of the NATS TIP and its interface with other documents, particularly as the state and region work towards the improvement of the JobNet system. All work will conform applicable rules and regulations from the Moving Ahead towards Progress for the 21st Century (MAP-21) and Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) transportation authorization Acts and any new legislation. The TIP includes documentation ensuring compliance with federal, state, and regional requirements regarding financial feasibility, the planning process as well as Title VI compliance, Environmental Justice Analysis and other analysis as required.

**Performance-Based Planning and Programming**

The phase-in of new requirements defined in the *Final Rule for Metropolitan Transportation Planning* (May 27, 2016) states that;

*On or after May 27th, 2018 (2 years after the publication date of this rule), FHWA/FTA may only determine the conformity of, or approve as part of a STIP, a TIP that has been developed according to the provisions and requirements of this part, regardless of when the MPO developed the TIP.*

Staff will incorporate the requirements in the development of the 2023-2026 TIP. The expected benefits of projects in the TIP will be documented as to how they will contribute to accomplishing performance targets. The SWMPC will continue to make a dedicated effort to better align project selection criteria for the TIP with performance measure targets.

Outcome	Timeline
Conform with federal requirements including project priority setting, adhere to financial constraints and public participation.	Continuous
Update MPO Performance Measures targets once identified	On-going
Maintain and update, as needed, the FY2020-2023 TIP as required by the FAST Act in cooperation with ITP, MDOT, FHWA, and FTA.	On-going
SWMPC and Niles Dial a Ride staff will review annual capital equipment and facilities needs in relation to previous and current programs, including short-range transit planning efforts.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Conduct environmental justice (EJ) analyses and consultation in support of the federal fundamental EJ principles.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter & On
Participate in/conduct MITC-IAWG meetings, as needed, to ensure that TIP amendments are air quality compliant.	As Needed
Conduct environmental justice (EJ) analyses and consultation in support of the federal fundamental EJ principles.	On-going
Conduct project selection meetings for 2023-2026 NATS TIP	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Create graphic online maps of proposed 2023-2026 NATS Projects	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Submission of selected 2023-2026 projects into MDOT JobNet System	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
Production of a draft 2023-2026 NATS TIP	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
Production and approval of the final 2023-2026 NATS TIP document	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter

## 4.2 TIP Amendments

**Objective:** Process amendments to the 2020-2023 TIP as necessary.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Staff will accept and process amendments to the TIP, including changes to currently listed projects, deletions of projects, and new project additions. This task involves ensuring all State and federal regulations are followed such as conformity with air quality standards, financial constraints, and meeting environmental justice principles. Staff will also ensure amendments follow NATS amendment policy, public participation plan, and the complete streets policy. When necessary, staff will send out a call for projects and convene separate meetings to reprogram local agency projects to use newly available federal funds. Staff will revise the TIP amendment process as necessary to make the process transparent, simple to follow, and easy to use. As amendments are made, the most up to date TIP project list will be uploaded on the website. In addition, staff will look for ways to make the TIP table of projects simpler to read with MPO members and the public. Staff will also insure that TIP projects are uploaded into JobNet and accurately maintained.

Outcome	Timeline
Conduct bi-monthly amendment coordination meeting with MDOT	Bi-Monthly
Manage the TIP amendment process	As Needed
Timely submittal of amendment requests to MDOT	As Needed
Develop, publish, and distribute amendments to the FY 2020-2023 TIP document.	Bi-Monthly
Current list of all projects in the TIP available on the SWMPC website.	Continuous
Call for projects and project review meetings	As Needed
Proficiency in programing projects into various JOB NET development phases.	As Needed
Participation in regional and state discussions to develop methods to streamline the TIP process	As Needed

### 4.3 Obligation Status Monitoring and Reporting

**Objective:** Track the status of all projects in the TIP to ensure projects are obligated and completed on schedule.

**Procedures and Tasks:** Staff will create project update sheets for all FY 2022 and FY 2023 projects in the NATS TIP. These sheets will be used to solicit monthly updates from agencies with projects. This allows staff to keep the MPO committees informed on the status of all projects. Staff will monitor the remaining FY 2022 obligation authority from MDOT to keep the MPO committees informed so that obligation authority does not run out before all NATS projects are obligated. Each year staff will produce a report on the status of projects in the TIP indicating when projects went over the estimate or produced bid savings. Staff will explore ways to report on the TIP projects that are easy to understand for MPO members and the public. This includes putting more information about projects on the SWMPC website using maps and photos to better visualize where projects are occurring and what type of work will be completed.

Outcome	Timeline
Monitor and report progress regarding implementation of projects in the TIP.	Monthly
Continued monitoring of projects in the FY 2020-2023 TIP	Continuous
Full utilization of bid savings	Continuous
Updating project data on the SWMPC website	As Needed

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Resolution of Approval

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE  
NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022**

WHEREAS, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Niles Buchanan Cass Area Study (NATS) according to the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the SWMPC has designated the Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) Policy Committee responsible for the development of a Unified Planning Work Program (UWP) for the designated MPO planning area; and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Year 2022 Unified Planning Work Program has been developed pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134, as amended, and Section 8(f) of the Federal Transit Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transportation Study Policy Committee approves Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2022.

---

Richard Cooper, Chair  
NATS Policy Committee

---

Date



## Appendix B: NATS Committee Members

NATS has two committees, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Policy Committee. The purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee is to provide technical advice to the Policy Committee. The purpose of the Policy Committee is to provide policy level guidance, direction and necessary approvals to all aspects of the continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process carried out by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission in the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area. Deliberations, findings and approvals of the Policy Committee are made only after due consideration of the recommendations of the NATS Technical Advisory Committee.

*\*Ex-officio means nonvoting member. \*\* Consultant \*\*\* Alternate*

### ***Policy Committee Members***

**Officers**

**Chair:** Richard Cooper, Niles Township  
**Vice-Chair:** Sandra Seanor, Cass County Road Commission

**Local Jurisdictions**

**City of Niles:** Serita Mason, Georgia Boggs, Jessica Nelson  
**City of Buchanan:** Don Ryman  
**Village of Edwardsburg:** Dennis Peak  
**Bertrand Township:** Butch Payton  
**Buchanan Township:** Lynn Ferris  
**Howard Township:** Bill Kasprzak  
**Ontwa Township:** Dawn Bolock  
**Mason Township:** Vacant  
**Milton Township:** Susan Flowers  
**Niles Charter Township:** Richard Cooper

**Cass County**

**Cass County Board of Commissioners:**  
Michael Grice, Roseann Marchetti  
**Cass County Planning Commission:** Vacant  
**Cass County Road Commission:**  
Sandra Seanor

**Agencies**

**FHWA:** Andy Pickard\*  
**FTA:** Susan Weber\*  
**MDOT Planning:** Jim Sturdevant  
**MDOT, Southwest:** Brian Sanada  
**MDOT Coloma TSC:** Jonathon Smith  
**SWMPC:** John Egelhaaf\*  
**Niles Area Chamber of Commerce:**  
vacant  
**Michiana Area Council of Governments:** Caitlin Stevens\*  
**Michigan WORKS!/Kinexus:** Vacant

**TRIBAL**

**Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians:** Vacant

**Public Transit**

**Buchanan Dial A Ride:** Vacant  
**Niles Dial A Ride:** Kelly Getman-Dissette

**Berrien County**

**Berrien County Board of Commissioners:**  
Michael Majerek  
**Berrien County Planning Commission:**  
Eric Lester, M.D.

## ***Technical Advisory Committee Members***

### **Officers**

**Chair:** Joseph Bellina, Cass County Road Comm.

**Vice-Chair:** Joe Ray, City of Niles

### **Local Jurisdictions**

**City of Niles:** Joe Ray, Sanya Vitale

**City of Buchanan:** Heather Grace, Don Ryman\*\*\*

**Village of Edwardsburg:** Dennis Peak

**Bertrand Township:** Butch Payton

**Buchanan Township:** Lynn Ferris

**Howard Township:** Bill Kasprzak

**Ontwa Township:** Dawn Bolock

**Mason Township:** Vacant

**Milton Township:** Susan Flowers

**Niles Charter Township:** Richard Cooper

### **Public Transit**

**Buchanan Dial A Ride:** Vacant

**Niles Dial A Ride:** Kelly Getman-Dissette

### **County**

**Berrien County Community Development:**  
Evan Smith

**Berrien County Road Department:**  
Kevin Stack

**Cass County Road Commission:**  
Joseph Bellina

### **Agencies**

**FHWA:** Andy Pickard \*

**FTA:** Susan Weber\*

**MDEQ, Air Quality:** Breanna Bukowski\*

**MDOT Planning:** Jim Sturdevant

**MDOT, Southwest:** Brian Sanada

**MDOT Coloma TSC:** Jonathon Smith

**MDOT Urban Travel Analysis:** Jon Roberts\*

**MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation:**  
Vacant

**SWMPC:** John Egelhaaf\*

**Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce:**  
Vacant

**Michiana Area Council of Governments:** Caitlin Stevens\*

**Michigan WORKS!/Kinexus:** Vacant

**Southwest MI Econ Growth Alliance:**  
Vacant

**Jerry Tyler Memorial Airport:** Vacant

### **TRIBAL**

**Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians:** Vacant

## Appendix C: NATS MPO Staff

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
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## Appendix D: Public Notice

## Appendix E: Public Comments received

## Appendix F: Cost Allocation Plan and Indirect Cost Rate

### Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Background

#### Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Background

##### The Origin of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is one of fourteen Planning and Development Regions in the State of Michigan and one of approximately five hundred in the United States. In Michigan, regions were created under a Governor's Executive Order in 1968.

The SWMPC was officially organized in 1973 by resolutions of the Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren County Boards of Commissioners. The Commission was staffed in 1974.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) Board reflects representation across county, city, village, and township officials, in addition to citizen members who represent a variety of interests, including business, seniors, and minorities. Van Buren, Berrien and Cass counties are currently represented in all eligible capacities. Of the forty-two current appointments, eleven of the members are female and six of the members are from a minority group.

##### SWMPC Planning Overview

In addition to serving public and private entities within Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties by providing planning, technical, or management assistance, the SWMPC acts as an intergovernmental forum to address regional issues. The SWMPC addresses issues and administers programs which its membership deems appropriate and which are in keeping with locally established area-wide planning and development goals. The SWMPC engages in outreach to build support for wise planning and awareness of vital regional development issues. A diversely skilled SWMPC staff provides a range of support to jurisdictions throughout the three-county region. These efforts regularly lead to program initiatives that address local needs. The needs that the SWMPC regularly responds to include customized planning and information services to local governments and organizations including comprehensive and land use planning, research and analysis, GIS mapping, surveys, recreation planning, grant writing, and grant administration.

The SWMPC is an Economic Development District of the EDA to: 1) give technical assistance and support others in planning and implementing economic development projects that diversify and strengthen the district's economy; 2) maintain economic and demographic databases and respond to requests from public and private users; and 3) support a local economic development process capable of meeting the planning, coordination and implementation requirements of the district.

Federal legislation requires a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative process for transportation planning in all urbanized areas. To respond to that requirement, the SWMPC's responsibility is to develop and refine plans and policies by analyzing their social, economic, environmental, health, safety, welfare, and mobility impacts. The State has designated the SWMPC as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the two urban areas in our region; the Niles/Buchanan/Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) for the Niles/Buchanan/Cass area, and the Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS) in the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor area.

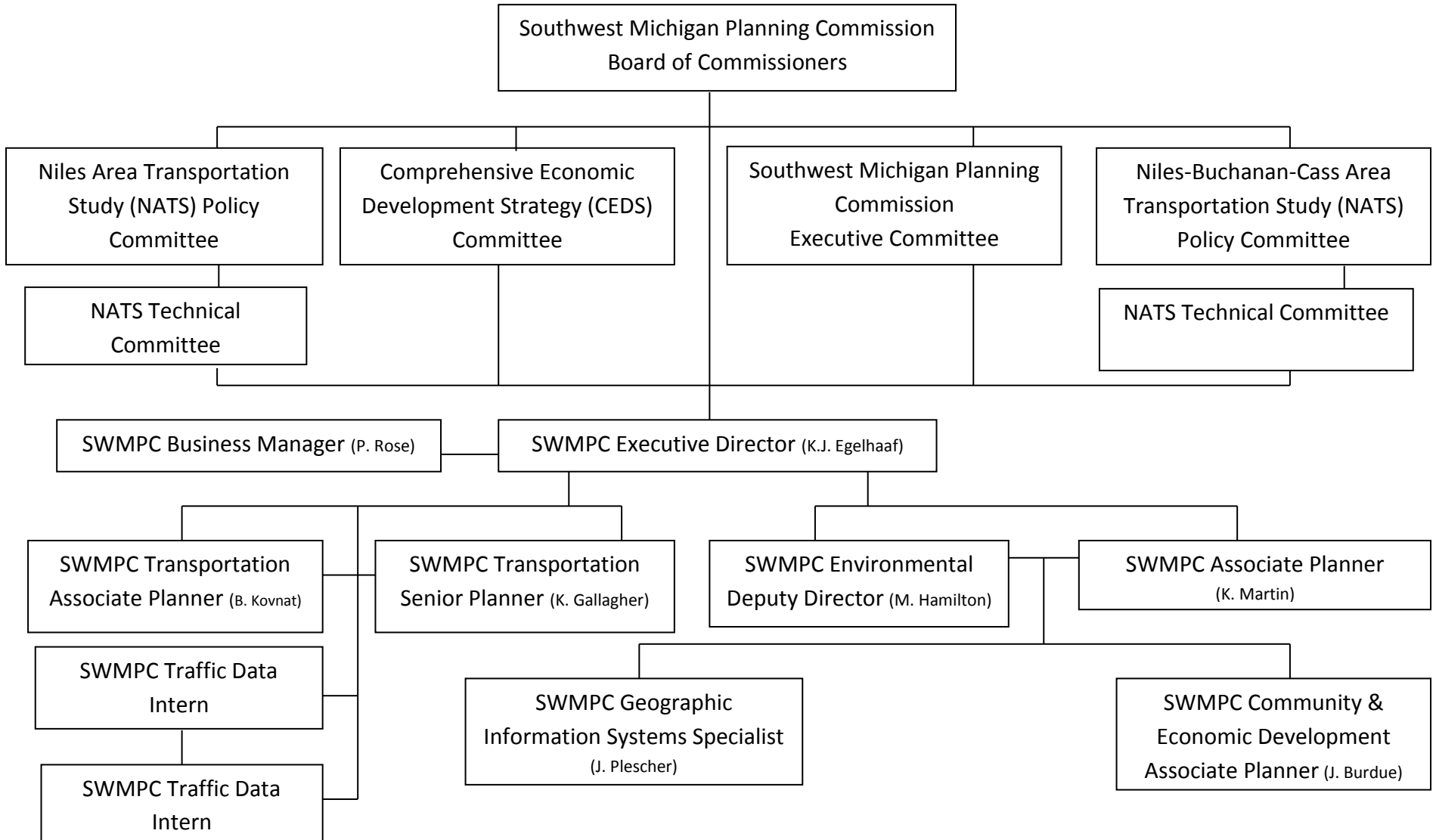
The MPO planning process is a cooperative effort between the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the member local governments (for NATS: the Berrien County cities of Niles and Buchanan, the village of Edwardsburg, the townships of Niles, Buchanan, and Bertrand, and the Cass County townships of Howard, Ontwa, and Milton; for TwinCATS: the Berrien County cities of Bridgman, Benton Harbor and Saint Joseph, the villages of Grand Beach, Michiana, Shoreham and Stevensville, and the townships of Benton Charter, Lake, Lincoln Charter, Royalton, St. Joseph Charter, and Sodus).

The SWMPC is also a resource for transportation planning assistance to the rural areas outside the metropolitan districts. Through these services the SWMPC provides assistance through road data, public transportation resources, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) assistance, heritage route management, ridesharing connections, and other customized needs.



# Organizational Structure

*As of May 2021*



## Job Descriptions

**Executive Director:** Under the direction of the SWMPC Board, implements and administers the policies and procedures established by the SWMPC in accordance with the state and federal legislative requirements. Responsible for management, administration, and professional work in the development, coordination, and execution of programs and projects, as well as supervision of personnel and administration of finances for various federal, state and local programs. Management, administration, and professional work is often assigned as direct expenses to specific programs.

**Senior Planner:** Performs administrative and professional work in the development, implementation, and coordination of SWMPC's local and regional planning programs. Duties involve administration, development and implementation of work program objectives, development and monitoring of budgets, and supervision of persons assigned. Work is performed under the general direction of the Executive Director.

**Associate Planner:** Under the supervision of the Executive Director, and Senior Planner, will develop plans and facilitate decision making in planning program areas or projects. Duties include the coordination of programs through communications, data gathering, computer analysis, report preparation, and organization and follow-up of meetings.

**Planning Aide:** Under the supervision of the Executive Director, Senior Planner, Associate Planner, will assist in the development of plans and facilitation of decision making in planning program areas or projects. Duties include assisting in projects through communications, data gathering and portrayal, computer input and analysis, report preparation, and organization and follow-up of meetings.

**Business Manager:** Under the direction of the Executive Director, administers and manages all aspects of SWMPC business and financial matters. Duties include operation and maintenance of the agency's computerized accounting system, receivables and payables, budget monitoring, financial reporting, benefits administration, and supervision of persons assigned.

## **Definition of Terms**

### Terms

**Acceptable Costs:** Costs that are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of SWMPC projects. They are ordinary and necessary as a cost for the typical operation of the project. The prices paid are considered to be at market prices for comparable goods. Costs are the result of prudent actions by SWMPC staff.

Base: The accumulated direct costs (ie. direct salaries, wages, and fringe benefits) used to distribute indirect costs to SWMPC programs. The base should result in each SWMPC program with its fair share of indirect costs.

Direct Costs: Include costs that: 1) can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective and attributed to a project, 2) include compensation to employees for time devoted specifically to project performance, 3) include materials acquired, consumed, or expended for the purposes of the project, 4) equipment and other approved capital expenditures, 5) travel expenses to carry out a project.

Provisional: A temporary indirect cost rate applicable to a specified period which is used for funding, interim reimbursement, and reporting indirect costs on awards pending the establishment of a final rate for the period. (U.S. Dept. of Labor: *Guide for Indirect Cost Rate Determination*; August 2020, P. I-1)

Indirect Costs: include costs that are for a common or joint purpose for more than one project and are not easily assignable to projects specifically benefited.

Indirect Cost Rate: a method to determine the proportion of indirect costs each program should bear. A ratio of indirect to direct cost base.

### Cost Categories

Advertising: Costs from advertising are assigned as direct costs if they are required to post meeting times, announce specific work products, or to solicit responses to a job posting for a specific program. Advertisements that serve the SWMPC in a general way are assigned as indirect costs

Computer Services: Computer services are currently supplied by an outside supplier. Services are assigned as direct if the particular piece of computer equipment or software is associated with a single program. If the service is on a machine or software that is for general use it is assigned as an indirect expense.

Conferences/Training: Costs relative to staff training, skills improvement, and technical proficiency often include meetings, seminars, conferences, and workshops. Expenses are charged to this category as they relate to specific job responsibilities. These costs are generally direct expenses but can be assigned as indirect occasionally.

Contents, Liability Insurance: Coverage for the loss or damage of agency assets, general agency liability, and employee and commissioner bonding.

Contractual Services: Costs in the contractual services category are incurred for consultant services by outside agencies and individuals. Temporary project staff including internships are also placed in this category of expense and considered direct if they are specifically assigned to a single project. All costs under this category are considered direct expenses except for a temporary administrative staff or other general expertise.

Commission Audit: Costs associated with the annual Commission audit will be assigned as a direct cost charged to local revenues and are exempt from indirect cost. No audit costs are charged to federal funds.

Depreciation: Equipment that is purchased through general funds are considered fixed assets and are depreciated at approximately 20% annually based on Internal Revenue Service Rulings.

Direct Equipment: equipment that has a unique use for the completion of work activities within the scope of work for a specific project. This is equipment that is not generally used across all programs in an office but rather, is specific to the accomplishment of tasks within a single project. Items defined in this way include: a notebook computer to be used for Asset Management PASER road ratings, traffic counters for traffic data collection, a new desktop computer for a transportation planner (who works exclusively on a single transportation project (with a single funder)).

Dues, Subscriptions, and Publications: Most items in this category are indirect expenses. Planning resources and memberships tend to be general in nature and not assignable to a particular program. Some items within this category are assignable as direct but they are specific in nature to the program for which they are attributable.

Fringe Benefits (payroll taxes, employee related insurance, pension): Fringe benefits are assigned as either direct or indirect in the same proportion as the assignment of salary and wage.

Postage: Similar to telephone charges, postage is coded at the SWMPC postage meter. Thus, direct expenses are classified at the initiation of the charge and a summary of those expenses is created through a cyclical report.

**Printing:** Printing expenses include both direct and indirect costs. Major print jobs that can be produced with the SWMPC printer/copier and are part of a specific program activity are assigned as direct expenses. Major jobs that require an outside printshop to complete are also assigned as direct if they are associated with a specific program. Common indirect print expenses include the SWMPC newsletter, annual report, brochures, etc.

**Salaries and Wages:** Salaries and wages for employees with direct responsibilities in specific program areas are assigned as direct expenses. When employee activities are dedicated to activities that have a broad-based benefit among SWMPC programs, their salary and wage is assigned as indirect. All SWMPC personnel engage in activities that are assigned as direct expenses. It is rare for administrative personnel (business manager, administrative assistant) to engage in activities that are assigned as direct but they are available for occasional direct assignments. Staffing assignments are managed by the executive director.

**Supplies and Materials:** Items that are necessary for a particular project are assigned as a direct expense. SWMPC letterhead, copy paper, and general office supplies are assigned as indirect expenses.

**Telephone:** The SWMPC pays a single flat charge for monthly calls. The monthly bill itemizes all long distance calls. The bill is cross referenced with staff call logs so that calls can be assigned directly to projects. Local phone charges cannot be individually itemized so they are billed as indirect .

**Travel, Meals, Lodging:** Travel, meals, and lodging expenses can be assigned as either direct or indirect depending on the activity being undertaken when the costs are incurred. Typical charges consist of mileage, reimbursement for meals, and lodging expenses in the course of staff activity.

**Equipment Maintenance:** Maintenance agreements on heavily used office machines including the main copier/printer, computer equipment are assigned as indirect expenses.

**Rent, Janitorial, and Recycling:** The expenses associated with the leased office space and the maintenance of that space.

## **Listing of Fringe Benefits for Covered Employees**

### Current Fringe Benefit Policies

The SWMPC fringe benefit policy consists of the following items derived from the Commission's Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook available to all employees at the time of hire.

**Social Security and Medicare Withholding Benefits:** The SWMPC adheres to Federal tax rulings and remits matching withholding benefits each pay period in each calendar year.

**Annual Leave and Sick Leave are Combined as Follows:** In the first category of leave accrual, an employee who has been with the SWMPC for between zero and five completed years must work a minimum of sixty-two hours to a maximum of seventy-five hours per (bi-weekly) pay period. That employee will be considered a full-time employee and will accrue five and a half hours per pay period for annual and sick leave.

In the second category of leave accrual, an employee at the end of their fifth year until their tenth year of employment will receive seven hours per pay period for annual and sick leave.

The third category of leave accrual is for employees at the end of their tenth year and beyond. Employees in the third category receive eight and a half hours per pay period for annual and sick leave.

The SWMPC does not distinguish between annual leave and sick leave. The two categories are considered a single account of accrued time. All employees may carry forward into the next year a maximum of one year's annual leave accrual. All excess time that is not taken will be forfeited except for employees with more than five years of experience. When employees have five or more years experience, the SWMPC will make an employee contribution to their retirement plan account in an amount equal to 37.5 hours of excess time not taken at their respective rate of pay.

**Paid Holidays:** The SWMPC provides twelve paid holidays per calendar year for its employees.

**Pregnancy Leave:** SWMPC employees receive pregnancy leave up to 975 hours.

**Administrative Leave:** An administrative leave of absence cannot exceed six months. Accumulated annual leave must be used as part of the administrative leave. After depletion of the accumulated annual leave, there is not compensation for administrative leave.

**Military Leave:** Military leave is granted as a leave of absence per State and Federal rulings.

**Health Insurance:** The SWMPC provides health insurance coverage to all employees. Employees are eligible to apply for health insurance benefits for themselves as well as dependents as of their initial date of employment. The SWMPC pays 98 percent of the total cost of the premium for full-time employees who seek the coverage. Part-time SWMPC employees are eligible for health insurance but must pay a percentage of the premium based on what percentage of a full-time position their time represents plus the standard two percent cost share. The health insurance program provides both medical, hospital, and prescription coverage plus vision and dental insurance. The coverage is a “high deductible” type with a Health Savings Account (HSA). The deductible for the insurance is deposited into each employee’s HSA account by the SWMPC. The entire amount is funded by the SWMPC.

**Disability Insurance:** The SWMPC provides short term disability coverage to all employees. Employees shall be eligible at their date of employment. The SWMPC pays the total cost of the premium for full-time employees who seek this coverage.

**Workman’s Compensation Insurance:** The SWMPC provides workman’s compensation insurance for all employees. Employees are eligible at their date of hire. In case of a work injury or illness an employee is eligible for workman’s compensation benefits. The employee must use accumulated annual leave to the extent available for the first seven days of the disability after which time the workman’s compensation insurance coverage shall begin without annual leave supplementation.

**Life Insurance:** The SWMPC provides life insurance coverage for all employees. Employees shall be eligible at their date of hire. The Commission pays the total cost of the premium for full-time employees who seek this coverage. The face amount of the policy shall be equal to the amount of the employee’s annual salary and double in the event of accidental death as described in the health insurance policy provided by the carrier.

**Unemployment Compensation Insurance:** The SWMPC provides each employee with this State benefit. The cost is calculated using the State determination rate multiplied by the gross wage earned by each employee. The SWMPC pays the total cost and adheres to the State tax rulings of calculation and remuneration.

**Pension Fund:** Currently the SWMPC has 401 and 457 pension plans available to all employees who work at least one thousand hours per year. New employees are enrolled on the annual enrollment date of January 1<sup>st</sup> provided that they have completed six months of full-time

employment. The SWMPC contributes into the plan on behalf of each enrolled employee in the amount of 6.5% of the employee's annual salary or wage. Employee contributions are not mandatory. Employees enrolled shall be vested at the rate of twenty percent for each full year of vesting. The SWMPC calculates the contribution amount both at fiscal and calendar year end to reflect the accrual on financial statements. All accruals are reviewed by the pension advisors before any remittances are made. The SWMPC meets all tax rulings regarding dates of contribution, dollars contributed, and necessary tax forms.

Fringe Benefit Costs: The SWMPC total benefit costs have been included as a worksheet below.



## SWMPC Personnel Expenses Budget 2021

POSITION	2021							GROUP INSURANCE COVS							ADDED	TOTAL	TOTAL	Group Insurance			Staff 2%
	BUDGETED	WORK	DAILY	ANNUAL	RELEAS	CHGBLE	SALARY	FICA	HEALTH	Hlth Svcs Act	DISAB	LIFE	WORKERS	UCI				PENSION	COST	BENEFITS	
ADMINISTRATION																					
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (JE)</b>	86,660	260	333	6,644	4,000	10,644	76,016	6,629	23,725	4,600	761	118	278	8	5,633	43,137	53,781	129,797	343	1,666	624
ADM ASS'T	\$0	260	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8	8	8	0	0	0
ADM ASS'T	\$0	260	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8	8	8	0	0	0
BUSINESS MGR. (PR)	\$46,134	243	190	5,046	2,495	7,541	38,593	3,150	6,257	1,150	531	90	152	8	2,999	14,793	22,335	60,927	113	517	173
PLANNERS																					
SENIOR PLANNER(MH)	68,425	260	263	6,386	3,158	9,544	58,881	5,235	9,009	4,600	808	118	226	8	4,448	25,293	34,837	93,718	208.00	947.00	313.81
ASSOCIATE PLANNER	\$0	260	0	0																	
SENIOR PLANNER (KG)	\$62,549	260	241	5,838	2,887	8,725	53,824	4,785	21,251	4,600	761	118	206	8	4,066	37,230	45,955	99,779	344	1,666	575
ASSOCIATE PLANNER (JB)	\$44,500	260	171	3,263	2,054	5,317	39,183	3,404	3,661	2,300	534	95	147	8	2,893	13,527	18,844	58,027	113	517	144
ASSOCIATE PLANNER (BK)	\$45,933	260	177	3,368	2,120	5,488	40,445	3,514	14,036	4,600	575	100	152	8	2,986	27,554	33,042	73,487	344	1,666	426
STAFF																					
PLANNING AIDE (JP)	52,199	260	201	3,828	2,409	6,237	45,962	3,993	10,271	2,300	637	111	172	8	3,393	21,237	27,474	73,436	113.00	517.00	278.99
TRAFFIC COUNTPLIST (MG) Hrly	\$4,001	120	99	0	0	0	4,001	306	0		0	0	13		0	319	319	4,320	0	0	0
TRAFFIC COUNTER (LD) Hrly	6,413	60	96	0	0	0	6,413	491	0		0	0	21		0	512	512	6,925	0	0	0
ASSOCIATE PLANNER (KM)	45,053	260	173	3,304	2,079	5,383	39,670	3,447	8,398	4,600	549	95	149	8	2,928	21,034	26,417	66,087	209	947	296
INTERN (RG) Hrly	\$5,002	46	78	0	0	0	5,002	383	0		0	0	17	0	0	399	399	5,402	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>466,870</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>2,022</b>	<b>37,678</b>	<b>21,202</b>	<b>58,880</b>	<b>407,990</b>	<b>35,716</b>	<b>96,608</b>	<b>28,750</b>	<b>5,156</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>1,533</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>29,344</b>	<b>205,431</b>	<b>264,311</b>	<b>669,469</b>	<b>1,787</b>	<b>8,443</b>	<b>2,832</b>

## The SWMPC Accounting System

The SWMPC uses QuickBooks to manage its accounting system. The SWMPC is audited by a CPA annually.

## Method of Calculating Indirect Cost Rate

The SWMPC uses the simplified method to determine indirect cost rate. As a single purpose agency there are no elements of indirect cost assigned through a central cost allocation plan. Only specifically identified budgeted indirect costs are included in the indirect cost rate proposal. This method provides an equal distribution of all indirect costs to all programs.

The SWMPC classifies all costs and their activities as direct or indirect (less unallowable costs) as described per 2 CFR 225. Indirect costs are thereby classified as being incurred for a common purpose for which more than one program benefits. Any costs stipulated as being unallowable per 2 CFR 225 have been excluded from the calculation of the indirect cost rate.

### Calculation for Provisional Indirect Cost Rate

The SWMPC computes the indirect cost rate by dividing the Indirect Cost Pool (total allowable indirect costs) by an equitable Base (total direct salaries and fringe benefit costs). The result is a "Provisional Indirect Cost Rate."

C = Indirect Costs

U = Unallowable Costs (per 2 CFR 225)

I = Total (budgeted) Indirect Costs

$$C - U = I$$

I = Total (budgeted) Indirect Costs

Y = Direct Base projected (budgeted) costs for direct salaries & fringe benefits for **all** programs

Pcr = Provisional Indirect Cost Rate

$$Pcr = I/Y$$

SWMPC Actual  
Indirect Cost Rate  
Based on FY 2020  
Costs

	<u>DIRECT</u> <u>COSTS</u>	<u>INDIRECT</u> <u>COSTS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>COSTS</u>
SALARIES AND WAGES	\$ 316,995.00 (Y)	\$122,681	\$439,676
FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 139,885.00 (Y)	\$65,465	\$205,350
TRAVEL	\$ 7,241.00	\$100	\$7,341
TELEPHONE	\$ 0.00	\$2,119	\$2,119
PRINTING AND POSTAGE	\$ 3,519.00	\$674	\$4,193
PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$ 711.00	\$11,993	\$12,704
ADVERTISING	\$ 23,864.00	\$0	\$23,864
DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$ 1,800.00	\$2,496	\$4,296
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	\$ 6,925.00	\$4,119	\$11,044
COMPUTER SERVICES	\$ 8,181.00	\$29,648	\$37,829
CONFERENCES/TRAINING	\$ 815.00	\$0	\$815
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES-OFF SITE	\$111,342.00	\$0	\$111,342
CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL-ON SITE	\$ 0.00	\$0	\$0
RENT/JANITORIAL/RECYCLING	\$ -	\$69,474	\$69,474
DIRECT EQUIPMENT	\$ 2,505.00	\$0	\$0
EQUIP. MAINTENANCE	\$ 0.00	\$538	\$538
GENERAL COMMISSION	\$ 1,451.00	\$0	\$1,451
INDIRECT COST POOL	\$312,067.00	\$0	\$312,067
DEPRECIATION	\$ -	\$2,743	\$2,743
BANK FEES	\$ 52.00	\$17	\$69
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b><u>\$ 937,353</u></b>	<b><u>\$312,067</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,249,420</u></b>
<b>Total Direct Base (Y)</b>	<b>\$ 456,880</b>		
<b>Total Indirect Costs (I)</b>		<b>\$312,067</b>	

**INDIRECT COST RATE FORMULA:**

TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (I)	<u>\$312,067</u>
TOTAL DIRECT BASE (Y)	<u>\$456,880</u>

**INDIRECT COST RATE  
PERCENTAGE**

<b>64%</b>
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**Procedures Used to Allocate Cost of Benefits to SWMPC Projects**

Calculation to Derive the Percentage of Total Base Represented by Each Program

Direct costs that can be attributable to a particular program are allocated as such. The remaining costs are assigned as indirect costs and allocated according to the formula below.

X = Actual costs for direct salaries & fringe benefits for **each** program

Y = Actual Direct Base costs for direct salaries & fringe benefits for **all** programs

P = Percentage of total direct salaries & fringe represented in each program

$X/Y = P$
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Calculation to Derive Total Indirect Costs

The percentage of direct salaries/fringe that each program represents of the total direct salaries/fringe for all programs is then used to derive the formula to allocate the total related indirect costs.

Y = Actual Direct Base costs for direct salaries & fringe benefits for **all** programs

Z = Total Expenses for all programs

I = Total Indirect Costs

$Z-Y=I$
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Combined Calculation Used to Allocate Indirect Costs

Program	Actual Direct Salaries & Fringe	Percentage of Total Direct Salaries & Fringe	Indirect Allocation
a	Xa	Xa/Y	Pa*I
b	Xb	Xb/Y	Pb*I
c	Xc	Xc/Y	Pc*I
d	Xd	Xd/Y	Pd*I
e	Xe	Xe/Y	Pe*I
Total of All Programs	Y	100%	I

## CERTIFICATE OF INDIRECT COSTS

This is to certify that I have reviewed the indirect cost rate proposal submitted herewith and to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- 1) All costs included in this 2021 proposal to establish billing or final indirect cost rates for FY 2021 are allowable in accordance with the requirements of the Federal award to which they apply and per 2 CFR 225, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." Unallowable costs have been adjusted for in allocating costs as indicated in the cost allocation plan.
- 2) All costs included in this proposal are properly allocable to Federal awards on the basis of a beneficial or causal relationship between the expenses incurred and the agreements to which they are allocated in accordance with applicable requirements. Further, the same costs that have been treated as indirect costs have not been claimed as direct costs. Similar types of costs have been accounted for consistently and the Federal Government will be notified of any accounting changes that would affect the predetermined rate.

I declare that the foregoing is true and correct.

Governmental Unit: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Signature:



Name of Official: K. John Egelhaaf

Title: Executive Director

Date of Execution: May 14, 2021