



# **AGENDA**

## **FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Tuesday, June 20, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Cass County Road Commission-Board Room

340 North O'Keefe Street  
Cassopolis, MI 49031

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Vice Chair Kurt Doroh**

Pledge Allegiance  
Roll Call

### **2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Meeting Agenda \*
- b. Minutes of Commission Meeting, April 18, 2023 \*
- c. Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, June 6, 2023 \*
- d. Chairman's Report
- e. Treasurer's Report\*

### **3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT \*Accept**

**K. John Egelhaaf**

### **4. 2022 SWMPC ANNUAL AUDIT**

**Alex Schaeffer – Kruggel Lawton CPAs**

Copies of the Audit will be available at the meeting.

[https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/2022\\_annual\\_audit.pdf](https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/2022_annual_audit.pdf)

### **5. 2022 SWMPC ANNUAL REPORT \*Approve**

**K. John Egelhaaf**

### **6. NATS 2050 LONG RANGE PLAN**

**K. John Egelhaaf**

Presentation of the Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

[https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/nats\\_2050\\_long\\_range\\_plan\\_draft\\_publiccomment.pdf](https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/nats_2050_long_range_plan_draft_publiccomment.pdf)

### **7. RESOLUTION 2023-5 \*Approve**

*To Approve the NATS 2050 LRP "...contingent on NATS Policy Committee approval."*

### **8. RESOLUTION 2023-6 \*Approve**

**Cass County Air Quality Conformity Analysis**

[https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/cass\\_county\\_ozone\\_conformity\\_report\\_nats\\_2050\\_lrt\\_public\\_comment\\_draft.pdf](https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/cass_county_ozone_conformity_report_nats_2050_lrt_public_comment_draft.pdf)

### **9. RESOLUTION 2023-7 \*Approve**

**Berrien County Air Quality Conformity Analysis**

[https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/berrien\\_co\\_conformity\\_analysis\\_new\\_nats\\_2050\\_lrt\\_public\\_comment\\_draft.pdf](https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/berrien_co_conformity_analysis_new_nats_2050_lrt_public_comment_draft.pdf)

### **10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**11. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

***\*enclosures***

Next meeting will be held August 15, 2023 at the Cass County Road Commission Board Room.

*SWMPC Mission: Our team uses its passion and expertise to connect people, assist communities, and advance cooperative solutions to regional challenges experienced by the communities that created us.*



# Minutes

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
FULL COMMISSION MEETING  
Tuesday, April 18, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Held in Person at Cass County Road Commission

## **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Marchetti, Roseann, Chair, Cass County Commissioner  
Doroh, Kurt, Vice Chair, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Gundersen, Kristen, Alternate Secretary, Berrien County Representative  
Remus, Richard, Treasurer, Berrien County Representative  
Petersen, Jan, Alternate Treasurer, Van Buren County Representative  
Catherman, Rick, Van Buren County Representative  
Curran, Jim, Berrien County Commissioner  
DeLong, Don, Cass County Representative  
Dodd, James, Cass County Representative  
Fette, Dan, Berrien County Representative  
Freehling, Teri Sue, Berrien County Commissioner  
Hanson, Sandra, Van Buren County Representative  
Newton, Matthew, Van Buren County Representative  
Pantaleo, Paul, Berrien County Representative  
Patterson-Gladney, Gail, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Torzynski, Robert, Pokagon Band Representative  
Tyler, Doug, Cass County Representative  
Wood, Gary, Berrien County Representative  
Wuerfel, Julie, Berrien County Commissioner

## **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Preston, Linda, Secretary, Cass County Representative  
Leary, Tina, Van Buren County Representative  
Stauffer, Dick, Berrien County Representative

## **GUESTS PRESENT:**

Baumann, John, Proxy for Dick Stauffer

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Roseann Marchetti called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Office Manager, Maria Vettraino took roll and a quorum was present.

### **2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Marchetti presented the Consent Agenda. Jim Dodd moved to **“ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.”** Kurt Doroh seconded. A roll call vote was taken, the motion carried unanimously.

### **3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Egelhaaf presented the Executive Director’s Report, shared updates on personnel changes, and opened the floor for questions.

Kurt Doroh wondered if Zach Morris or Sarah Snoeyink might be used to fill the available Ex Officio seat for economic development on the SWMPC board. Egelhaaf stated he will see if either might be available.

Gail Patterson-Gladney asked for more information on Rural Transportation Funding, specifically the TAP. Director Egelhaaf gave more details on this funding.

Richard Remus inquired on the cost of the Regional Economic Resiliency Plan Video. Egelhaaf stated the cost is about three thousand dollars. Remus also asked about SWMPC’s responsibilities for the Michigan State Housing Plan. Egelhaaf explained the plan and shared that we will most likely not be placed as the regional lead on this project.

Jan Petersen moved to **“ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT.”** Paul Pantaleo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

### **4. 2023 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM**

Director Egelhaaf presented the 2023 Overall Work Program. Matthew Newton moved to **“APPROVE 2023 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM.”** Sandra Hanson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **5. 2022 AUDIT**

Director Egelhaaf explained the status of our 2022 audit. It initially appeared that the SWMPC would be in single audit territory but after research and discussion with our auditors, in fact, we are not. He stated the audit would possibly be ready to be approve in May and we anticipate the need to set up an Executive Committee meeting for that approval.

### **6. FACILITATED BOARD DISCUSSION**

*Your Big, Audacious Ideas for SW Michigan*

Director Egelhaaf walked through the IJA and presented some federal funding themes and amounts, how it can be tapped, and who is eligible. He touched on some of our regionally specific assets and opened the floor for ideas.

Robert Torzynski suggested passenger rail from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo. Egelhaaf said this passenger rail is being considered by Amtrak in their long-term strategic planning. Kurt Doroh would like to see more advertising/greater recognition of passenger rail and implement multimodal transportation to and from the train.



Jan Petersen shared her experience as a farmer and talked about our need for a more equitable and robust food system. She would like to see more regenerative agriculture and farmscapes to better sustain farmland and possibly develop a map to see where the best places are to produce more high-quality food.

Matthew Newton suggested we expand on a current project and use funds to survey all known contaminated properties proximate to transmission lines and public institutions, to see whether those can be redeveloped for solar production in order to offset cost of public institution's energy bill.

Gary Wood talked about the need for infrastructure to support EV stations. He shared ideas to extend the trail from Marquette Greenway to Kal-Haven, and to look for fish farming as an economic development theme.

Kurt Doroh talked about mental health and the need to find ways to help our youth. Matthew Newton built upon this issue of lack of mental health resources/providers. He proposed better online resources to find a mental health provider.

Don DeLong proposed using the Heritage Trail to create connections. Rick Catherman built upon this idea of connections, wondering if there is a better way to connect young adults to places such as educational institutions, jobs, and mental health resources; to create more accessible transportation.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None


## **8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Chair Marchetti wanted to acknowledge Jerrid Burdue as an outstanding member of the SWMPC staff. Gary Wood motioned to create and pass a resolution to honor employees, Jerrid Burdue and Kristopher Martin. Matthew Newton moved to **“CREATE AND PASS A RESOLUTION TO HONOR EMPLOYEES, JERRID BURDUE AND KRISTOPHER MARTIN.”** Kurt Doroh seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Matthew Newton moved to adjourn the meeting. James Dodd supported the motion. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

Respectfully submitted by:



K. John Egelhaaf, AICP

Date: April 18, 2023



# Minutes

## Southwest Michigan Planning Commission EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at 4 p.m.

Meeting Held in Person at Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

### **MEMBERS PRESENT (in person):**

Marchetti, Roseann, Chair, Cass County Commissioner  
Doroh, Kurt, Vice Chair, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Preston, Linda, Secretary, Cass County Representative  
Gundersen, Kristen, Alternate Secretary, Berrien County Representative  
Remus, Richard, Treasurer, Berrien County Representative  
Petersen, Jan, Alternate Treasurer, Van Buren County Representative

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Roseann Marchetti called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and Maria Vettraino took roll call, and a quorum was present.

### **2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Marchetti presented the Agenda. Kurt Doroh moved to “**ACCEPT THE AGENDA.**” Linda Preston seconded. Unanimous consent.

### **3. 2022 SWMPC ANNUAL AUDIT**

Alex Schaeffer from Kruggel, Lawton & Co. presented the annual audit and walked through the findings; auditor responsibilities, balance sheet, liabilities, revenue, cash flow statement, auditor notes that included explanation of grant funding through subrecipients, and updated graphs.

Richard Remus moved to “**APPROVE 2022 SWMPC ANNUAL AUDIT.**” Linda Preston seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion carried unanimously.

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Richard Remus moved to adjourn the meeting. Linda Preston supported the motion. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

K. John Egelhaaf, AICP

Date: June 6, 2023

# Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

## Balance Sheet

As of May 31, 2023

|  | Total                |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                          |                      |
| Current Assets                         |                      |
| Bank Accounts                          |                      |
| 1010 Petty Cash                        | 65.00                |
| 1020 Checking                          | 449,245.27           |
| 1060 CD                                | 82,180.68            |
| Total Bank Accounts                    | \$ 531,490.95        |
| Accounts Receivable                    |                      |
| 1100 Accounts Receivable               | 58,464.62            |
| 1110 A/R Grants                        | 0.00                 |
| Total Accounts Receivable              | \$ 58,464.62         |
| Other Current Assets                   |                      |
| 1200 Other Receivable                  | 0.00                 |
| 1240 Undeposited Funds                 | 0.00                 |
| 1300 Prepaid Expenses                  | 12,000.10            |
| 1499 Security Deposit - 376 W. Main    | 11,220.00            |
| Met Life Stock                         | 0.00                 |
| Repayment                              |                      |
| MISC DEDUCTION                         | 0.00                 |
| Total Repayment                        | \$ 0.00              |
| Total Other Current Assets             | \$ 23,220.10         |
| Total Current Assets                   | \$ 613,175.67        |
| Fixed Assets                           |                      |
| 1350 Furniture and Equipment           | 42,229.00            |
| 1360 Accumulated Depreciation          | -42,499.00           |
| 1400 Right of Use Asset                | 128,332.01           |
| 1410 Right of Use Asset - Amortization | -64,741.60           |
| Total Fixed Assets                     | \$ 63,320.41         |
| Other Assets                           |                      |
| 1250 Grants Receivable - Old           | 0.00                 |
| Total Other Assets                     | \$ 0.00              |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                    | <b>\$ 676,496.08</b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>          |                      |
| Liabilities                            |                      |
| Current Liabilities                    |                      |
| Accounts Payable                       |                      |
| 2000 Accounts Payable                  | -3,834.90            |
| Total Accounts Payable                 | -\$ 3,834.90         |
| Other Current Liabilities              |                      |
| 2010 Accounts Payable - Old            | 0.00                 |
| 2250 Accrued Payroll                   | 7,084.45             |

|  |           |                   |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| <b>2400 Payroll Liabilities</b>        |           | 3,844.56          |
| 2420 457b Payable                      |           | 119.32            |
| 2430 Health Insurance                  |           | 454.10            |
| 2438 HSA                               |           | 87.05             |
| 2440 Federal Withholding               |           | 0.00              |
| 2450 Medicare Payable                  |           | 0.00              |
| 2460 FICA Payable                      |           | 3,417.26          |
| 2480 State Withholding                 |           | 1,463.35          |
| 2490 Michigan UIA Payable              |           | 158.20            |
| 2495 Benton Harbor withholding         |           | 212.26            |
| 457b Catch-Up                          |           | 0.00              |
| MISC                                   |           | 3.84              |
| MISC DEDUCTION                         |           | 2.16              |
| <b>Total 2400 Payroll Liabilities</b>  | <b>\$</b> | <b>9,762.10</b>   |
| 2500 RPI                               |           | 0.00              |
| <b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b> | <b>\$</b> | <b>16,846.55</b>  |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>       | <b>\$</b> | <b>13,011.65</b>  |
| <b>Long-Term Liabilities</b>           |           |                   |
| 2260 Accrue Annual Leave               |           | 34,033.95         |
| 2290 SJ Watershed Escrow               |           | 1,207.99          |
| 2300 NATS-FHWA-Escrow                  |           | 2,591.54          |
| 2310 NATS-FTA-Escrow                   |           | 13,901.33         |
| 2320 TCATS-Escrow                      |           | 19,397.05         |
| 2340 EDA Escrow                        |           | 409.09            |
| 2550 Unearned Revenue                  |           | 0.00              |
| 2600 Lease Liability                   |           | 64,762.83         |
| <b>Total Long-Term Liabilities</b>     | <b>\$</b> | <b>136,303.78</b> |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               | <b>\$</b> | <b>149,315.43</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |           |                   |
| 32000 Unrestricted Net Assets          |           | 372,398.90        |
| Net Income                             |           | 154,781.75        |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    | <b>\$</b> | <b>527,180.65</b> |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>    | <b>\$</b> | <b>676,496.08</b> |

Thursday, Jun 08, 2023 11:08:34 AM GMT-7 - Accrual Basis

**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission**  
**Budget vs. Actuals: FY\_2023**  
January - May, 2023

|                                   | Total                |                        |                         |               |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
|                                   | Actual               | Budget                 | over Budget             | % of Budget   |
| <b>Income</b>                     |                      |                        |                         |               |
| 4000 Federal Grant                | 220,065.30           | 1,029,942.52           | -809,877.22             | 21.37%        |
| 4010 State Grant                  | 176,307.81           | 782,107.00             | -605,799.19             | 22.54%        |
| 4020 County Contribution          | 59,112.00            | 59,112.00              | 0.00                    | 100.00%       |
| 4030 Local Match                  | 52,436.16            | 118,796.80             | -66,360.64              | 44.14%        |
| 4040 Local Contract               | 72,154.51            | 150,683.00             | -78,528.49              | 47.88%        |
| 4050 Other Fee Income             | 150,747.63           |                        | 150,747.63              |               |
| 4100 Interest Income              | 652.73               | 2,250.00               | -1,597.27               | 29.01%        |
| <b>Total Income</b>               | <b>\$ 731,476.14</b> | <b>\$ 2,142,891.32</b> | <b>-\$ 1,411,415.18</b> | <b>34.14%</b> |
| <b>Gross Profit</b>               | <b>\$ 731,476.14</b> | <b>\$ 2,142,891.32</b> | <b>-\$ 1,411,415.18</b> | <b>34.14%</b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>                   |                      |                        |                         |               |
| 6000 Direct Expenses              |                      |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 6200 Salaries                     | 152,934.96           | 383,306.75             | -230,371.79             | 39.90%        |
| 6220 Payroll Taxes                | 11,699.55            | 29,262.42              | -17,562.87              | 39.98%        |
| 6230 Pension Expenses             | 6,242.97             | 16,375.64              | -10,132.67              | 38.12%        |
| 6240 Employee Insurance           | 45,523.29            | 116,940.76             | -71,417.47              | 38.93%        |
| 6300 Mileage & Travel             | 2,820.79             | 10,634.00              | -7,813.21               | 26.53%        |
| 6310 Meals                        | 258.45               | 2,406.25               | -2,147.80               | 10.74%        |
| 6315 Lodging                      | 996.38               | 5,825.00               | -4,828.62               | 17.11%        |
| 6330 Printing                     |                      | 375.00                 | -375.00                 | 0.00%         |
| 6340 Postage                      | 112.38               | 187.50                 | -75.12                  | 59.94%        |
| 6410 Dues & Subscriptions         | 3,895.75             | 3,230.00               | 665.75                  | 120.61%       |
| 6420 Supplies & Materials         | 2,217.78             | 3,548.75               | -1,330.97               | 62.49%        |
| 6430 Computer Services            | 730.00               | 8,592.50               | -7,862.50               | 8.50%         |
| 6440 Advertising                  | 50.00                |                        | 50.00                   |               |
| 6500 Conferences & Training       | 2,979.82             | 5,020.00               | -2,040.18               | 59.36%        |
| 6550 Contractural Srvs-OffSite    | 181,295.05           | 1,136,085.00           | -954,789.95             | 15.96%        |
| 6610 Equipment                    |                      | 2,035.00               | -2,035.00               | 0.00%         |
| 6630 Equipment Maintenance        |                      | 35.00                  | -35.00                  | 0.00%         |
| 6715 Audit Services               | 600.00               |                        | 600.00                  |               |
| 6720 Accounting Services          | 5,500.00             | 14,539.00              | -9,039.00               | 37.83%        |
| 6950 General Commission Expenses  | 610.21               | 1,300.00               | -689.79                 | 46.94%        |
| 6960 Commissioner Mileage         | 1,370.13             | 1,700.00               | -329.87                 | 80.60%        |
| 6970 Commissioner Per Diem        | 1,370.00             | 2,700.00               | -1,330.00               | 50.74%        |
| 6980 Bank Fees                    | 380.74               | 800.00                 | -419.26                 | 47.59%        |
| 6990 Pass Thru                    | 10,116.65            |                        | 10,116.65               |               |
| <b>Total 6000 Direct Expenses</b> | <b>\$ 431,704.90</b> | <b>\$ 1,744,898.57</b> | <b>-\$ 1,313,193.67</b> | <b>24.74%</b> |
| <b>7000 Indirect Expenses</b>     |                      |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 7200 Salaries-Indirect            | 51,061.60            | 135,433.72             | -84,372.12              | 37.70%        |
| 7220 Payroll Taxes-Indirect       | 4,781.05             | 11,936.76              | -7,155.71               | 40.05%        |
| 7230 Pension Expenses-Indirect    | 9,781.66             | 21,908.57              | -12,126.91              | 44.65%        |

|                                     |                      |                        |                         |               |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| 7240 Employee Insurance-Indirect    | 17,411.53            | 68,232.28              | -50,820.75              | 25.52%        |
| 7300 Mileage & Travel-Indirect      | 119.21               | 291.07                 | -171.86                 | 40.96%        |
| 7310 Meals-Indirect                 | 163.99               | 351.37                 | -187.38                 | 46.67%        |
| 7320 Telephone-Indirect             | 1,059.60             | 2,927.73               | -1,868.13               | 36.19%        |
| 7340 Postage-Indirect               | 300.89               | 3,100.12               | -2,799.23               | 9.71%         |
| 7410 Dues & Subscriptions-Indirect  | 350.00               | 3,643.11               | -3,293.11               | 9.61%         |
| 7420 Supplies & Materials-Indirect  | 2,671.90             | 9,173.71               | -6,501.81               | 29.13%        |
| 7430 Computer Services-Indirect     | 17,862.06            | 44,714.12              | -26,852.06              | 39.95%        |
| 7440 Advertising-Indirect           | 75.00                |                        | 75.00                   |               |
| 7520 Rent & Janitorial-Indirect     | 29,260.00            | 79,223.50              | -49,963.50              | 36.93%        |
| 7540 Contract Srvs-OnSite-Indirect  | 77.38                |                        | 77.38                   |               |
| 7550 Contract Srvs-OffSite-Indirect | 982.62               | 4,720.20               | -3,737.58               | 20.82%        |
| 7610 Equipment-Indirect             |                      | 266.60                 | -266.60                 | 0.00%         |
| 7715 Audit Services-Indirect        | 2,500.00             | 4,985.33               | -2,485.33               | 50.15%        |
| 7720 Accounting Services-Indirect   | 3,777.00             |                        | 3,777.00                |               |
| 7730 Insurance Corporate-Indirect   | 2,754.00             | 7,066.44               | -4,312.44               | 38.97%        |
| 7980 Bank Fees-Indirect             |                      | 2.33                   | -2.33                   | 0.00%         |
| <b>Total 7000 Indirect Expenses</b> | <b>\$ 144,989.49</b> | <b>\$ 397,976.96</b>   | <b>-\$ 252,987.47</b>   | <b>36.43%</b> |
| <b>9000 Payroll Expenses</b>        |                      |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 9020 Salaries & Wages               | 0.00                 |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 9040 FICA Taxes                     | 0.00                 |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 9060 Medicare Taxes                 | 0.00                 |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 9080 Michigan UIA Taxes             | 0.00                 |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| 9200 Mileage, meals, and lodging    | 0.00                 |                        | 0.00                    |               |
| <b>Total 9000 Payroll Expenses</b>  | <b>\$ 0.00</b>       | <b>\$ 0.00</b>         | <b>\$ 0.00</b>          |               |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>               | <b>\$ 576,694.39</b> | <b>\$ 2,142,875.53</b> | <b>-\$ 1,566,181.14</b> | <b>26.91%</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Income</b>         | <b>\$ 154,781.75</b> | <b>\$ 15.79</b>        | <b>\$ 154,765.96</b>    |               |
| <b>Net Income</b>                   | <b>\$ 154,781.75</b> | <b>\$ 15.79</b>        | <b>\$ 154,765.96</b>    |               |



## SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION

376 West Main Street, Suite 130, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Phone: 269-925-1137 • Website: [www.swmpc.org](http://www.swmpc.org)

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

FROM: K. John Egelhaaf

DATE: June 12, 2023

RE: Staff Report for the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission June 20, 2023

#### Office/Administrative Updates

##### A. Personnel Changes

- i. New Associate Planner - Rebekah Schrag
  1. Hired May 30, 2023
  2. Start Date June 26, 2023
  3. Previously: Assistant City Planner – City of Warsaw Indiana
  4. Master of Science – Urban Ecology and Sustainable Planning (Unity College)
  5. Bachelor of Arts – Environmental Science, Sustainability Focus. Minors in Agroecology and Business (Goshen College)
- ii. New Associate Planner – Zane Aldrich
  1. Hired May 31, 2023
  2. Start Date July 10, 2023
  3. Previously: Researcher at HuntScore, Inc.
  4. Master of Science – Business Analytics (Northwood University)
  5. Bachelor of Arts – Economics (Northwood University)

##### B. New SWMPC Board Members

- a. Tina Leary - Van Buren County Appointee
- b. Sarah Snoeyink – Ex Officio Economic Development, Market Van Buren

#### Project Updates

##### A. Existing Project Developments

- a. Rural Leadership Summit
  - i. Partnership w/new State Office of Rural Development
  - ii. July 20<sup>th</sup>
  - iii. Location TBD
- b. Michigan State Housing Plan – Regional Housing Partnership
  - i. Lead for Prosperity Region 8 = Southcentral MI Planning Council (Kalamazoo)
- d. Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) Coordination for IIJA Assistance
  - i. SWMPC Template for Project Concept Submissions – Under Development
  - ii. Goals Mined from: Cass Master Plan (2014), VB Master Plan (2020), Berrien Master Plan (2015), TwinCATS 2050 LRP, CEDS (2022), Berrien Strategic Plan (2021), Regional Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan (2022), Cornerstone Alliance Strategic Plan

## **SWMPC Staff Report – June 20, 2023**

### **A. Existing Project Developments**

#### **a. Transportation**

##### **i. Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) Scheduling**

###### **1. SWMPC has scheduled each county for annual PASER road ratings**

- a. Cass June 26-29**
- b. Berrien July 10-13**
- c. Van Buren July 17-20**

##### **ii. Chikaming Township Local Road Asset Management Planning**

###### **1. Starting in June**

#### **b. Recreation**

##### **i. MI DNR SPARK Grant Assistance (the SWMPC is assisting in a variety of ways for the following potential applications – due June 26)**

- 1. Vandalia to Cassopolis Trail**
- 2. Marcellus**
- 3. Cass County Lawless Park & Observatory**
- 4. Van Buren County Parks Committee – Lakeshore Trail @ Syndicate Park**

##### **ii. Paw Paw River Water Trail**

###### **1. Seasonal Maintenance of Trail Has Begun for 2023**

- a. SWMPC manages this work for the 68 miles of the trail**

#### **c. Community Planning**

##### **i. Weesaw Township Master Planning**

##### **ii. Van Buren County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

##### **iii. New 2020 US Census Data**

###### **1. SWMPC is processing new data**

- a. Age**
- b. Gender**
- c. Housing**



# Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



**Planning Great Communities Together**

Serving Berrien, Cass & Van Buren Counties

# 2022

# Annual Report



## Southwest Michigan Planning Commission 2022 Board

### Berrien County

County Commissioners  
Jim Curran  
Teri Sue Freehling  
Julie Wuerfel

Representatives  
Yemi Akinwale  
Dan Fette  
Kristen Gundersen  
Donnie Meeks  
Paul Pantaleo  
Rich Remus  
Gary Wood  
Dick Stauffer  
Jim Stover

### Cass County

County Commissioner  
Roseann Marchetti

Representatives  
Don DeLong  
James Dodd  
Linda Preston  
Doug Tyler

### Van Buren County

County Commissioners  
Kurt Doroh  
Don Hanson  
Gail Patterson-Gladney

Representatives  
Rick Catherman  
Sandra Hanson  
Janice Petersen  
Matthew Newton

### Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

Robert Torzynski

### Economic Development

Zach Morris

### Our Team

**K. John Egelhaaf, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Marcy Hamilton**  
Deputy Director/Senior  
Planner

**Kim Gallagher**  
Senior Planner

**Maria Vettrai**  
Office Manager

**Jill Plescher**  
Geographic Information  
Systems Specialist

**Jerrid Burdue**  
Senior Planner

**Brandon Kovnat**  
Transportation Planner

**Kristopher Martin**  
Associate Planner

376 West Main Street, Suite 130  
Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022  
269-925-1137

[www.swmpc.org](http://www.swmpc.org)

Photo: Wightman—Union Pier



## **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC)**

We are one of fourteen state recognized regional planning governmental non-profit organizations in Michigan. The organization was enabled by state legislation (the Regional Planning Act, 1945 PA 281) and formally created in 1971 by the three counties it serves, Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren. SWMPC is a regional planning resource staffed with professional regional planners and is designed to be responsive to the planning needs of our region.

SWMPC is the USDOT and MDOT recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Twin Cities Area (Benton Harbor-St. Joseph) and the Niles-Buchanan-Cass County Area Transportation Studies, as well as the rural and small urban transportation Regional Planning Agency for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. SWMPC is the state designated area-wide water quality management planning agency under the Clean Water Act, and the SWMPC leads and participates in watershed management planning. SWMPC is also the U.S. Economic Development Administration designated Economic Development District for those same three counties.

### **SWMPC Mission Statement**

Our team uses its passion and expertise to connect people, assist communities and advance cooperative solutions to regional challenges experienced by the communities that created us.



## Message from Our Executive Director

The year 2022 was an amazing two-lane road where the COVID crisis was in the opposite lane headed into the past and we were headed in the lane toward new opportunity and change. This is not to suggest that those who continued to struggle with the personal, physical, and emotional consequences of the virus were forgotten.

In fact, the human impact of our work has never been more in focus for us. We saw the struggle by looking around us, listening to our peers, and digging deeply into the data. As we measured the fallout, we could see where change was demanded; in mobility, housing, broadband access, food, social cohesion, and new approaches to maintaining our health. The SWMPC responded by putting regional voices together to build plans and strategies for a better future less disrupted by major shock and stress.

Our Annual Report for 2022 reflects some, but certainly not all, of our work from this unique year. We have learned from past reports that being encyclopedic is the wrong approach. Rather, the goal is to give the reader a look at the overall range of our docket. I trust that for those interested in digging deeper, or whose curiosity we have stirred, the Report will help with information on how to find more. Thank you to all who contributed to the good work of 2022. I know that without our SWMPC Board and our many collaborators, none of the work would have been possible.

K. John Egelhaaf, AICP, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. John Egelhaaf", written in a cursive style.

# transportation & mobility

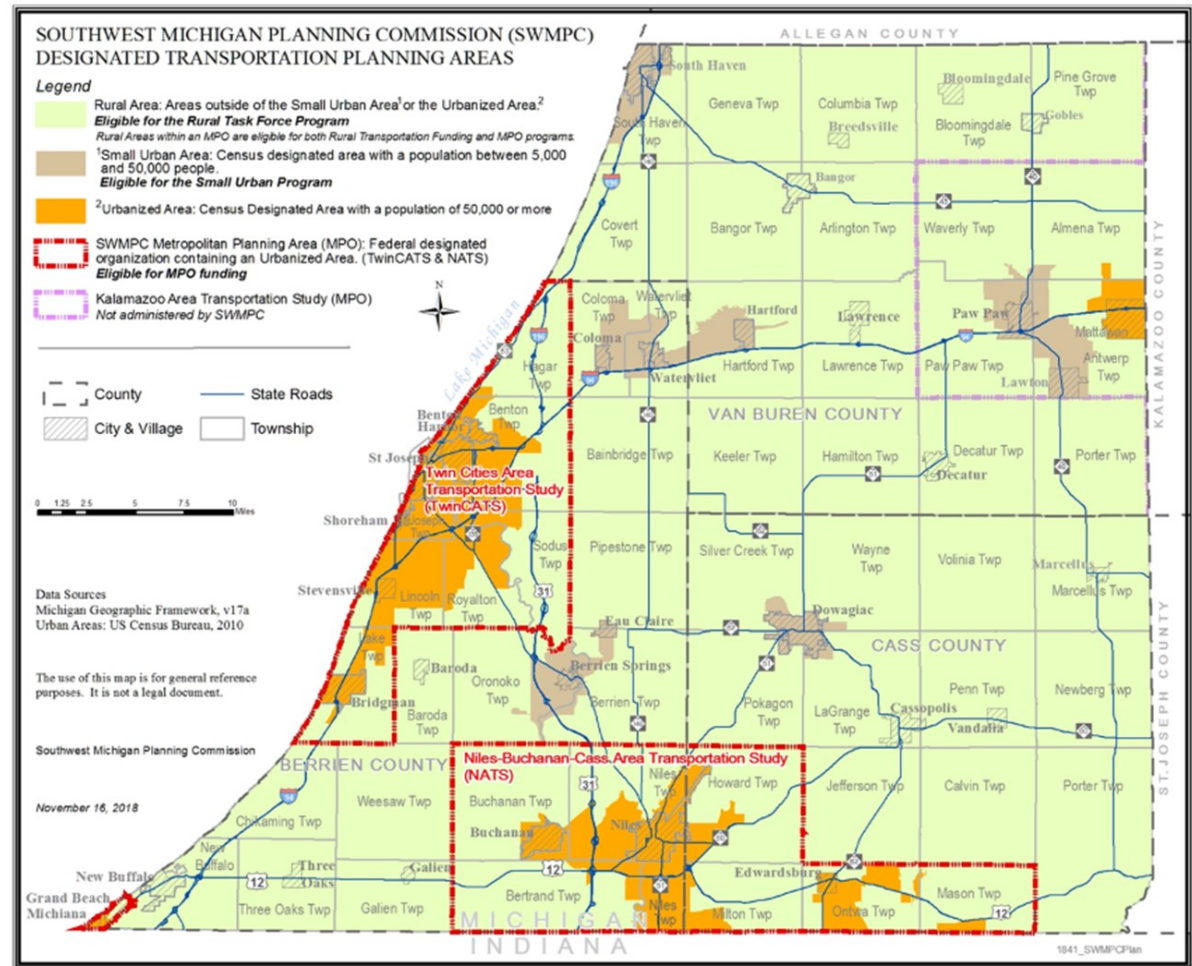


# Transportation Planning

The SWMPC is the federal and state designated center for Transportation Planning for the region's urbanized and non-urbanized areas. Certified by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, SWMPC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for two urbanized areas in the region – St. Joseph, Benton Harbor (TwinCATS) and the Niles, Buchanan Cass Area (NATS).

The SWMPC staff work closely with MDOT as well. We are often the bridge that links local roads and transit agencies with state and federal funding for transportation improvements and operations. With representation from elected officials and transportation agencies, federal and state-funded transportation projects are coordinated through SWMPC.

SWMPC transportation planning staff members facilitate regular public meetings and work closely with area road and transit agencies to identify and plan for roads, public transit services, and non-motorized pathways. This program coordinates and facilitates regional planning for federal and state investments in surface transportation.



## Program Contact

Kim Gallagher  
gallagherk@swmpc.org

Brandon Kovnat  
kovnatb@swmpc.org

# Improving Public Transit Human Service Coordination

The state of Michigan has 78 public transit agencies serving every county of the state, complemented by hundreds of private transportation providers. Whether by choice or circumstance, these transportation providers are the key to mobility for Michigan citizens who lack access to a personal vehicle for their transportation needs. Despite this statewide coverage and transit agencies being responsible for more than 81 million rides in 2019, numerous gaps in Michigan's transportation network still exist. These gaps particularly impact transportation-disadvantaged populations such as individuals with disabilities, older adults, and lower-income persons who experience higher costs, fewer options, and less flexibility as a result.

To address some of the strategies outlined in the 2045 Michigan Statewide Public Transit Plan, the Michigan Office of Passenger Transportation (MDOT OPT) reached out to SWMPC in 2022 to manage two statewide projects which will conclude in the summer of 2023. The two projects include:

## **Regional Coordinated Transportation Plans for Michigan's 14 Planning Regions**

The Coordinated Transportation Plans will provide an assessment of available transportation services and identify mobility needs and potential improvements in each of the 14 designated planning regions in Michigan. Coordination between transportation providers and human service agencies will also be evaluated to identify opportunities for providing more rides using the same or fewer resources, making transportation easier to use and giving customers more options of where and when to travel. SWMPC and MDOT OPT are working with KFH Group, a national transportation planning firm that has led similar statewide, regional, and local efforts in Michigan.

Project Website: <https://michigancoordinationplans.com/>

## **Statewide Mobility Management Strategy**

To implement the strategies outlined in the Regional Coordinated Transportation Plans, a Statewide Mobility Management Strategy project is simultaneously being worked on to provide a solid platform for coordination efforts across the 14 regions. SWMPC has contracted with Easter Seals Project Action and is working with MDOT OPT and various stakeholders to create a foundation for implementation of the Regional Coordinated Plans.

The key components of the Statewide Mobility Management Strategy project are:

**Development of Statewide Standards:** A crucial aspect of the project involves formulating consistent statewide standards for the Mobility Management Program. These standards will serve as a guiding framework for coordinating transportation efforts across the state.

**Mobility Management Application Guidebook:** This guidebook will provide detailed instructions, best practices, and valuable insights to aid stakeholders in effectively utilizing and implementing mobility management strategies.

**Mobility Management Evaluation Tools:** To gauge the effectiveness of the initiatives, the project will develop evaluation tools to help assess the impact of the Regional Coordinated Plans, identify areas of improvement and measure the overall success of the Mobility Management Program.



**Project Contact**  
Kim Gallagher  
gallagherk@swmpc.org

# Asset Management Data Collection

Every year, the SWMPC collaborates with the County Road Agencies to evaluate the condition of Federal-Aid (FA) eligible roads in compliance with Michigan's Act 51 (P.A. 499 in 2002 and P.A. 199 in 2007), which requires local road agencies to annually report the condition of the roads under their jurisdiction to the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC). The guidelines from TAMC for pavement assessment require a team consisting of representatives from the regional planning agency and the county road agency to evaluate half of the federal aid roads in each county every year using the PASER system. The PASER system, short for Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating, employs a visual survey method that provides a straightforward, efficient, and consistent approach to assess the condition of paved roads that assigns each segment a score ranging from 1 to 10. These scores correspond to the categorization of roads as either good, fair, or poor.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, TAMC waived the rating requirements for the year 2020 and implemented changes to the Federal Aid (FA) PASER data collection requirements. These changes included reducing the rating teams from three members to two members and making adjustments to the training criteria to address the pandemic cancellation of on-site training and certification opportunities. In 2021, data collection resumed and teams were required to assess 100% of the FA system.

From 2022 onward, the obligation to rate half of the county's federal aid eligible roads per year was reinstated. To obtain a comprehensive picture of the pavement condition for an entire county, ratings from two consecutive years are used. The ratings obtained in 2022 for the southern portion of the counties will be paired with the ratings from 2023 for the northern half of each county.

## Program Contact

Kim Gallagher  
gallagherk@swmpc.org

Brandon Kovnat  
kovnatb@swmpc.org

## 2022 County PASER Road Ratings

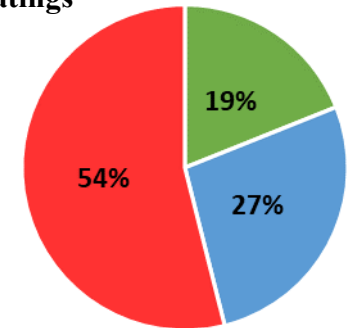
### Berrien County

*Miles Rated 369*

**70 Miles in Good Condition**

**100 Miles in Fair Condition**

**199 Miles in Poor Condition**



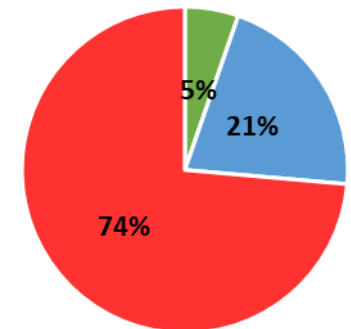
### Cass County

*Miles Rated 184*

**10 Miles in Good Condition**

**38 Miles in Fair Condition**

**135 Miles in Poor Condition**



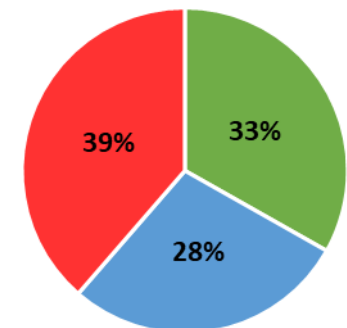
### Van Buren County

*Miles Rated 195*

**65 Miles in Good Condition**

**55 Miles in Fair Condition**

**75 Miles in Poor Condition**





# Regionwide Transportation and Infrastructure Funding

In 2022, transportation programs experienced a significant boost in funding attributed to two primary sources. The first was the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRSSA or "Crissa"), which provided funds aimed at pandemic recovery. The second source of funding was the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA or "Infrastructure Act").

Over the span of five years, the combination of these two Acts promised transportation programs managed by the SWMPC an estimated \$11 million in additional funding, representing a 40% increase above the expected funding amounts for 2022-2026 based on 2021 projections. While both federal Acts were passed prior to 2022, it was in January 2022 that MDOT announced the specific fund amounts available for fiscal year 2022 projects.

## Staff Actions to Program the Additional Funds

Projects for 2022 and 2023 were already in process when additional funds were announced. Actions had to be taken quickly to either ensure funds could be added to existing projects or to apply the funds to new projects approved before the funds expired at the end of the fiscal year. To ensure every dollar was utilized, SWMPC staff:

- Created multiple scenarios across the relevant funding sources. These were then used to open up discussions with road agencies for the creative use of the additional funding.
- Engaged in conversations with road engineers about projects that needed more funding due to inflation.
- Worked with MDOT to allow fund additions to projects which had already been approved.
- Organized and facilitated 30+ meetings where committees presented and voted on the projects involved.

In 2022, MDOT announced an additional \$11 Million in funding across the 12 transportation programs the SWMPC manages for the years 2022-2026

## Outcomes:

- Added length to existing road reconstruction projects.
- Rescheduled projects to make needed repairs sooner.
- Funded non-motorized projects previously planned but not yet funded.
- Added projects that were previously not selected because of limited funding.
- Provided additional funding for public transit to cover a dramatic rise in bus purchase prices.
- Reduced local match burden due to significant construction and material cost increases that increased overall project costs.

## Examples of Projects Utilizing the Funding:

- Extended the limits for the reconstruction of Red Arrow Highway through the Village of Stevensville (Berrien)
- Added the Resurfacing of Calvin Center Road (Cass)
- Reduced Van Buren County Road Commissions' local match for the resurfacing CR687 (Van Buren)

**Project Contact**  
Brandon Kovnat  
kovnatb@swmpc.org

# community development

# Broadband

At all levels of government, COVID showed us that we have a need for universal access to broadband internet. Consequently, in 2022, unprecedented levels of public funding began to emerge to solve for gaps in broadband. The SWMPC recognized the generational impact involved. We maintained a high level of engagement with partners at the local, state, and national level to insure that we remained a resource for local action. By remaining engaged, the SWMPC became aware of the opportunity to be the Broadband Navigator for the region with support from the Michigan Strategic Fund. A letter of intent was signed to that effect in October.

For southwest Michigan, broadband provision historically happened almost exclusively through the use of private infrastructure, by private providers. Suddenly, local and county governments were asked to influence local change in this ecosystem through this once-in-a-generation public assistance to fill broadband gaps. To help clarify this opportunity for our units of government, the SWMPC developed a broadband roadmap to assist them in their broadband journeys.

The SWMPC has taken steps to be a mapping resource for broadband infrastructure for the long-term. We added the most detailed household coverage maps available for two of our three counties (Van Buren and Berrien). Those maps have been instrumental in addressing inaccuracies in the data used by the Federal Communications Commission to determine whether households are considered served by broadband. Additionally, we have portions of our middle mile infrastructure mapped because of carefully constructed non-disclosure agreements with multiple infrastructure owners.



**Project Contact**  
John Egelhaaf  
[egelhaafj@swmpc.org](mailto:egelhaafj@swmpc.org)

# Public Education Plan

## Southwest Michigan Watershed Partnership

Several communities in southwest Michigan have come together to develop and implement a public education program about protecting water resources. The goal of the program is to increase awareness of the connection between individual actions and the health of the watershed and water resources and to motivate the public to take appropriate actions to protect water quality. All of southwest Michigan drains to Lake Michigan and all have similar water quality concerns, so a partnership approach to education and outreach enables the municipalities and the counties to maximize their resources to more effectively reach a larger audience than could be accomplished alone.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is the lead agency that develops and implements the plan. SWMPC has a display and handouts that travel around to libraries, municipal buildings and events (see photo). SWMPC sends out media releases, maintains a Facebook page, co-hosts events and develops signage such as the one seen at the Meijer rain garden in Benton Harbor.

We are blessed to have such wonderful streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, wetlands and of course Lake Michigan in our region. It is imperative that everyone does their part to protect and improve them. For more information visit [www.LetsKeepItBlue.org](http://www.LetsKeepItBlue.org) and follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LetsKeepItBlue>.



Water Quality Display - Lincoln Township Public Library



## WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

A rain garden (Bioretention Basin) is a natural water filtration system. Bowl-like depressions are planted with deep-rooted native plants to temporarily **catch and hold stormwater runoff** that flows from parking lots and rooftops and let it **infiltrate into the ground**. This filters the water to **improve water quality** before it reaches nearby waterways.



**Project Contact**  
Marcy Hamilton  
[hamiltonm@swmpc.org](mailto:hamiltonm@swmpc.org)



# Pucker Street Dam Removal

## A Free Flowing Dowagiac River

The City of Niles purchased a wooden dam that was built in the early 1800's and constructed a concrete dam structure in 1928. The Pucker Street dam once provided significant economic benefit to the community by providing electricity. As the impoundment built up with sediment causing the equipment to continuously fail, the dam became too costly for the City to operate. The dam had not produced power since 1995 and the dam was rated number one for removal in the St. Joseph River Watershed according to a study funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The City of Niles worked with several partners to remove the dam and return the Dowagiac to a free flowing river and contribute to the overall goal of its restoration. The Dowagiac River is the largest cold water river system in southern lower Michigan and supports a diverse fishery.

SWMPC assisted the City in securing over \$2 million in grant funding for the dam removal and restoration of the Dowagiac River. The project took over 10 years to complete and involved 20 partners and 6 funders. The dam had disconnected 159 miles of river and stream and 11,000 acres of wetlands from the St. Joseph River. Those connections have now been restored along with the hydrology and habitat of a 2 mile section of river. During construction, 270,000 cubic yards of sediment (equal to 81 Olympic size pools) was removed. This project benefitted 37 native fish and 4 salmon species.

**For more information visit:**  
[www.swmpc.org/puckerstdam.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/puckerstdam.asp)



**Project Contact**  
Marcy Hamilton  
hamiltonm@swmpc.org

SWMPC has been instrumental in assisting communities with creating water trails on our region's rivers for canoeing and kayaking. The major water trails include the Lake Michigan Water Trail from New Buffalo to South Haven, Galien River Water Trail, St. Joseph River Water Trail, Dowagaic River Water Trail, Paw Paw River Water Trail and the Bangor to South Haven (Black River) Heritage Water Trail.



- convening stakeholders,
- writing grants to improve access sites,
- providing letters of support for grants,
- creating maps,
- developing logos,
- developing and installing signage,
- helping to develop and maintain the Michigan Water Trails website,
- developing and maintaining Facebook pages,
- hiring contractors to clear pathways.

[www.MichiganWaterTrails.org](http://www.MichiganWaterTrails.org)

North Paw Paw St.  
2.5 miles to next access

**Project Contact**  
 Marcy Hamilton  
 hamiltonm@swmpc.org



After years of working with Buchanan City, recently, SWMPC facilitated and wrote the first joint recreation plan for Buchanan City and Buchanan Township. This collaboration has been growing and SWMPC continues to assist the Buchanan Community with the funding for the extension of the McCoy's Creek Trail to connect to the IN MI River Valley Trail.

**BUCHANAN**  
Life is better here.

**McCoy's Creek Trail**

**Legend:**

- Improved Trail (Orange line)
- Unimproved Trail (Dashed orange line)
- Future Trail (Dotted orange line)
- Trailhead (Red house icon)
- School (Purple square icon)
- Library (Blue book icon)
- Park (Green square icon)
- Cemetery (Brown square icon)
- School Athletic Field (Light green square icon)
- Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (Dark green square icon)
- Historic Bainton Mill (1)
- Pears Mill (2)
- Trail Mural (3)
- The Pressey Tower (4)
- Major Road (Thick black line)
- Minor Road (Thin black line)
- Railroad (Black line with cross-ticks)

**Scale:** 0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission** April 22, 2023

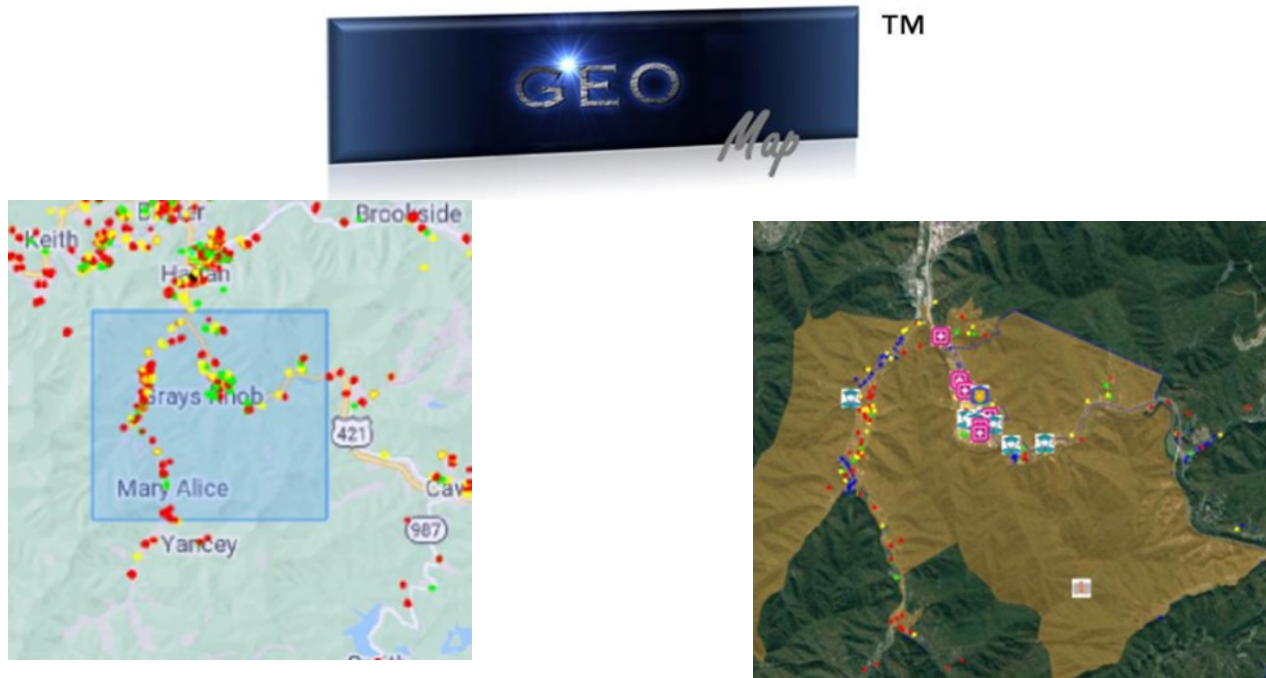
**GET INVOLVED!**  
Please share your ideas in an on-line survey. Your input will help guide the future of Berrien Township and its parks.

**Project Contact**  
 Marcy Hamilton  
 hamiltonm@swmpc.org

# GEO Software for Broadband

The SWMPC, in collaboration with the Berrien County Broadband Internet Taskforce, joined forces with GEO Partners to utilize their innovative tool, GEO map. Geo Map is an advanced online mapping tool designed to accurately predict the costs associated with broadband deployment in a specific area. By leveraging its mapping interface, users can dictate precisely the areas to be studied. With a focus on establishing a broadband network, the tool offers a wide range of customizable options to generate projections for household coverage, household costs and total network costs.

This tool proved invaluable in pinpointing and assessing the relative performance of specific geographic areas that were the primary targets for broadband grants and improvement initiatives. Its purpose was to offer a statistically sound measurement of overall performance within a given region, thereby identifying areas, cities and communities that required additional support to enhance broadband accessibility. By adopting a statistical approach, the focus shifted from individual PC or ISP performance to the broader statistical performance of the population within a region. As a result, several townships received assistance from SWMPC in determining the cost estimates necessary for delivering broadband services to their residents. These cost estimates played a pivotal role in the grant writing process.



## Project Contact

Jill Plescher  
[jplescher@swmpc.org](mailto:jplescher@swmpc.org)



# economic development

# Regional Economic Resiliency Plan

As the COVID emergency began to show signs of receding, understanding the damage left in its wake rose in importance. The SWMPC was the recipient of funding through the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration to study the economic impacts of COVID and develop a plan to mitigate them. The federal funds involved were from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). This ambitious project called for a unique approach that included a regional economic health check, an exploration of gaps in the sub-regional recovery efforts, and actions to build resiliency based on the best available economic modeling from the University of Michigan's Economic Growth Institute. Ultimately, resiliency actions were organized into four categories:

**Restorative** – Actions that represent the opportunity to bring us back to pre-pandemic conditions,

**Incremental** – Actions that bring a modest improvement over pre-pandemic conditions,

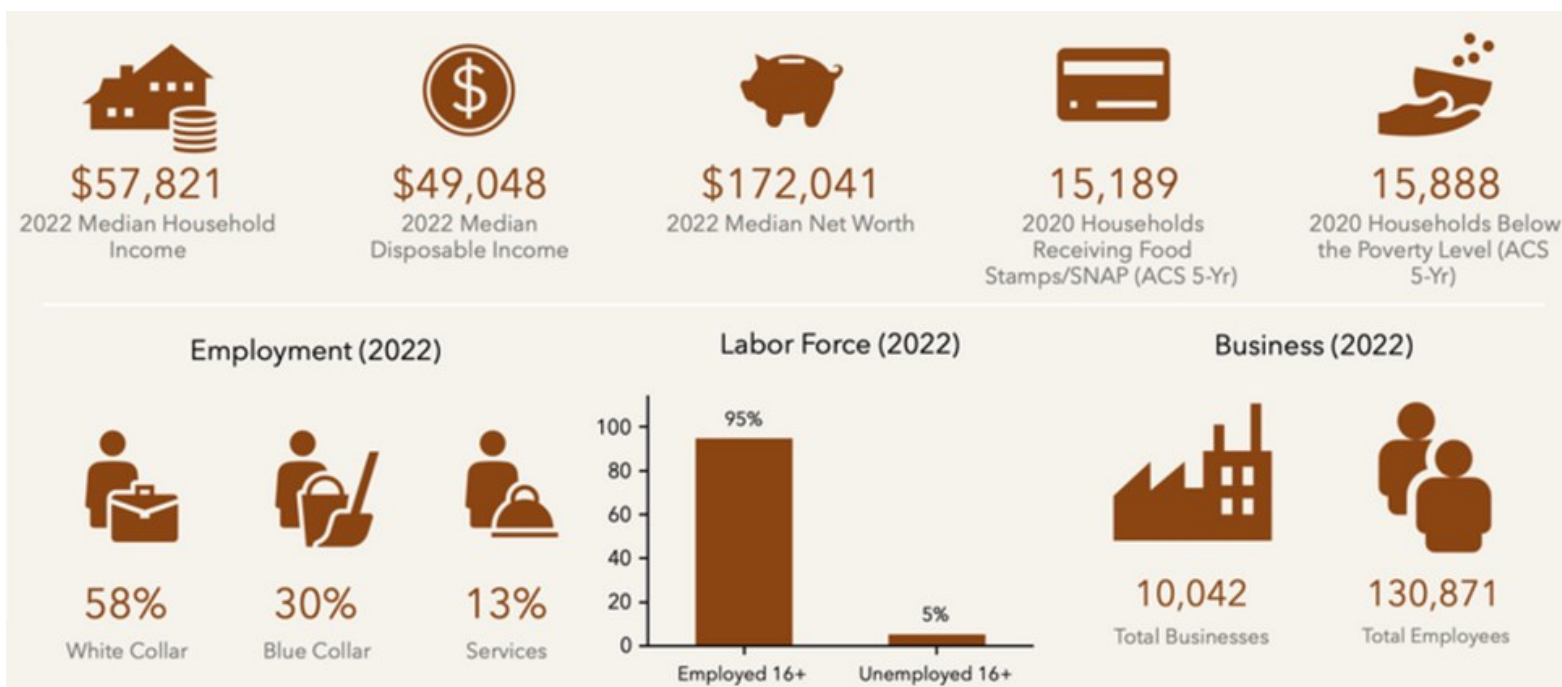
**Exponential** – Actions with a significant improvement over pre-pandemic conditions,

**Transformational** – Actions that substantially reorient the region.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a5c4dd1e5a904c6e814a66e558ed6f7d>

The final Plan can be found in the form of a StoryMap to allow for an interactive user experience.

[https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/economic\\_recovery\\_and\\_resiliency\\_plan\\_final.pdf](https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/economic_recovery_and_resiliency_plan_final.pdf)

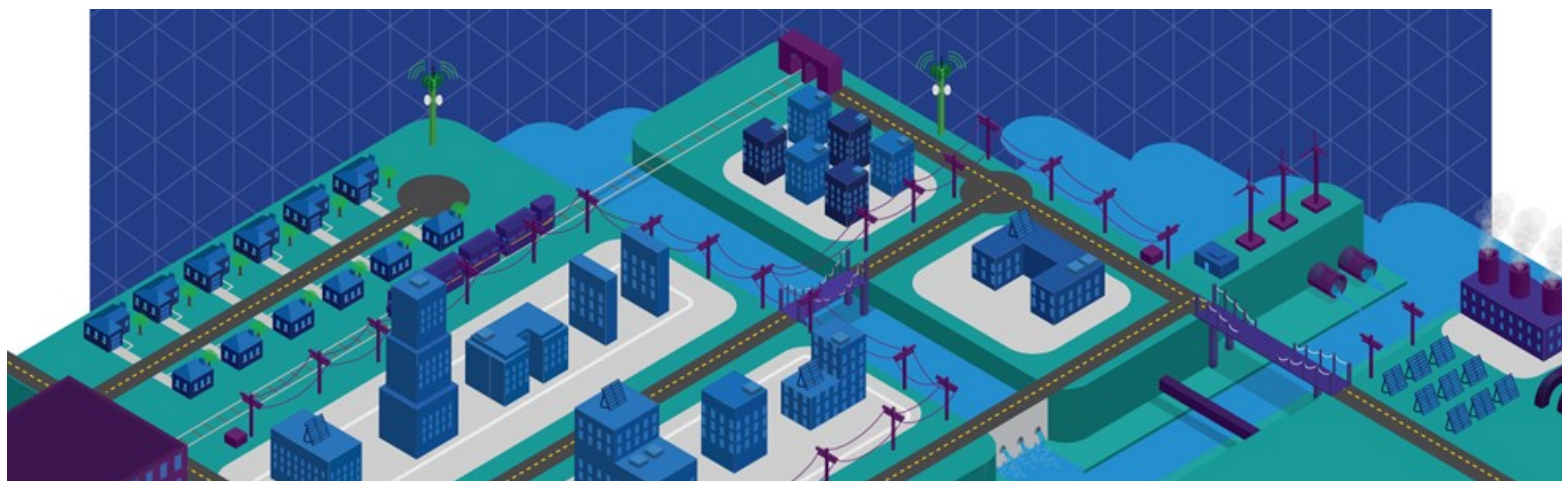
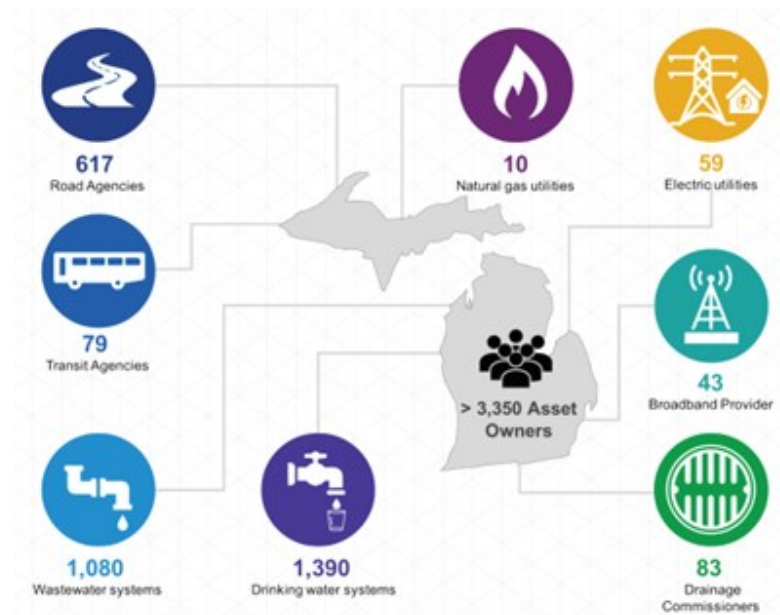


**Project Contact**  
John Egelhaaf  
egelhaafj@swmpc.org

# Infrastructure Asset Management

For those who have been long-time partners of the SWMPC, the concept of asset management is nothing new. We have been an essential partner in Michigan's Transportation Asset Management program since its inception two decades ago. The success of that effort has blossomed into an even more ambitious approach to infrastructure asset management that includes water, communications and energy. The state has begun the development of a 30-Year Integrated Asset Management Strategy and the SWMPC has been an invited participant throughout the process.

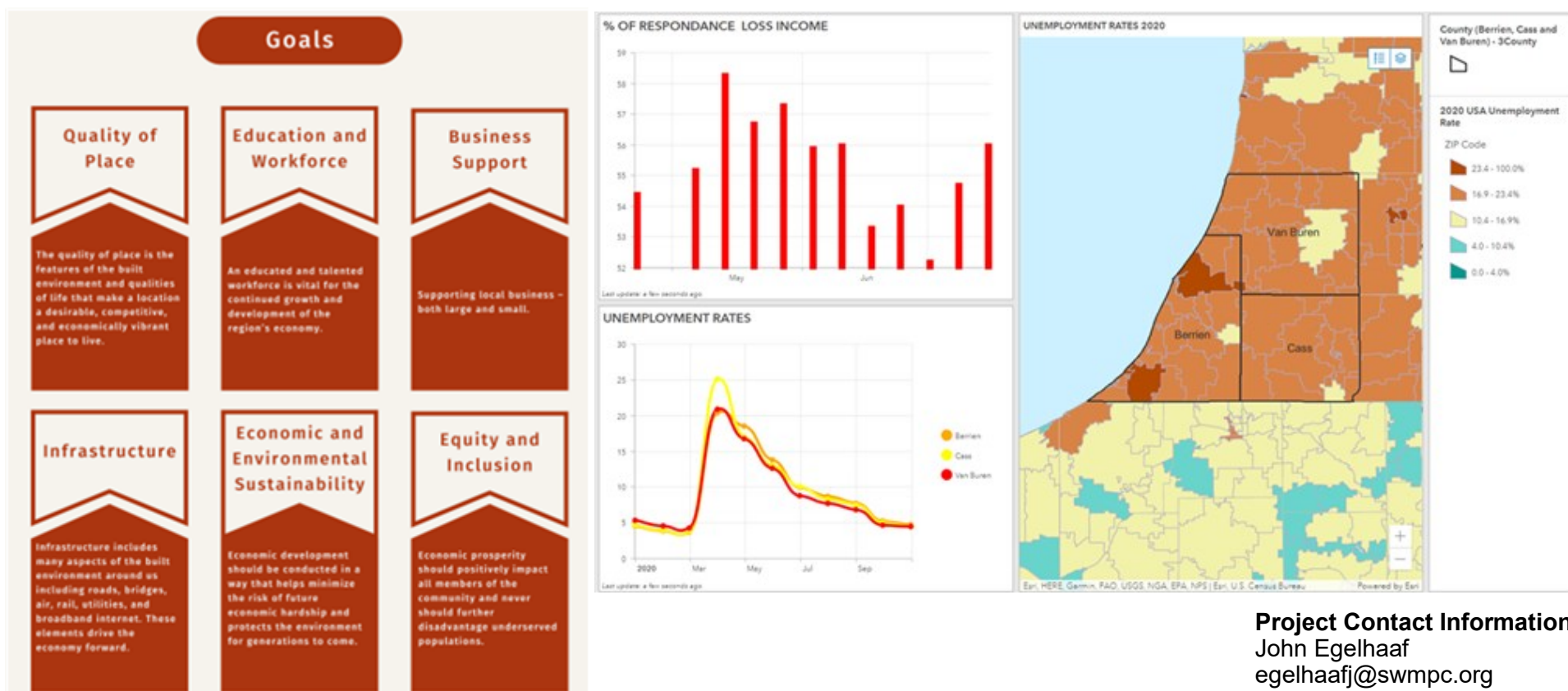
Included in the drive to more fully incorporate asset management across disciplines and infrastructure, the SWMPC has been a partner in facilitating the Asset Management Champions program. The intent is to establish a network of leaders to champion best asset management practices within southwest Michigan and across the state. 2022 saw the roster of Champions grow exponentially. The SWMPC had two Champions among our staff and actively recruited additional participants from across the region.



**Project Contact**  
John Egelhaaf  
egelhaafj@swmpc.org

# 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The SWMPC is designated as the Economic Development District (EDD) for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties by the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The keystone of our EDD work is the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). It helps provide clarity to the breadth of economic development activity across the region for the EDA and for ourselves. That is done through a healthy dose of research but most importantly, we draw in experts from across the region to help guide the planning process. In 2022, we added a significant component of high school student engagement to our outreach. Over 400 students participated in the discussion. With the combined help of the expertise of the CEDS Strategy Committee and our extensive public outreach, six goals were identified to improve economic conditions in the region. Those goals have been packaged along with a dense but accessible and interactive product called an online StoryMap, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1088d0f26689491cb3497ee19092192d>. The StoryMap model has become an effective way for the SWMPC to migrate away from the traditional static product and into output that is more engaging in the way users are coming to expect.



# awards



# Graham Woodhouse Award - Imagine Cass-Embrace the Vision

The SWMPC presented the 2022 Graham Woodhouse Intergovernmental Effort award at its Board meeting held on December 20, 2022, to the Imagine Cass-Embrace the Vision, Cassopolis Transformation Project. The award is presented annually for projects that exemplify cooperation between and among governments, non-profits and private entities. It was established to recognize and reward the partners who execute complex, regional problem solving that optimizes the use of limited resources. The partners involved were deemed deserving for their resourcefulness, dedication and persistence. The 2022 Graham Woodhouse award was given to project partners that included the Village of Cassopolis, Michigan State University Extension, Cassopolis Main Street, Midwest Energy & Communications, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, Cass County and Cass County Economic Development Corporation.

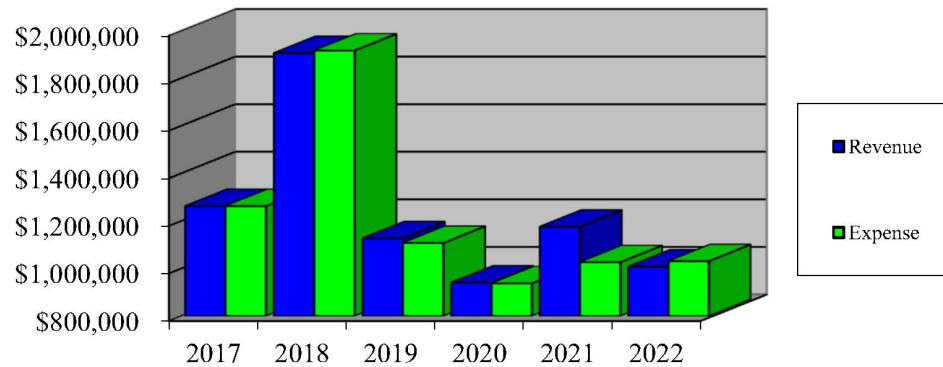
“The Imagine Cass Project sought to transform our entire community, stop the perpetual decline and unite, for the first time in decades, under the core principles of community vision, collaboration, citizen-led change and the premise that if you invest in yourself, others will invest in you. It has been our goal of the project to create a community that our residents can be proud of,” stated Emily LaGrow from the Village of Cassopolis. Major collaborative projects in small communities are challenging as public officials and resources are often stretched thin. In Cassopolis, community-wide collaboration between any two of the organizations involved in this project was challenging enough, let alone an ambitious partnership involving multiple organizations. In addition, as a small community it was historically difficult for the Village to have the required match funds needed to seek grant dollars. All these characteristics make the accomplishments of this project particularly noteworthy. With the strong partnerships and collaboration created, the Village was able to successfully navigate through massive change spurring significant outside economic development.

The Imagine Cass-Embrace the Vision, Cassopolis Transformation Project, is the quintessential multi-sectoral engagement of 21 identified partners and 25 separate funders that comprised of public, corporate, non-profit, and private sectors. This project involved the elimination of five blighted municipal buildings, the addition of murals throughout the community, 20,000 ft. of new roads including water mains and sewer mains, new playground areas designed by elementary school students, a new skate park, bike pump track, community events and numerous other improvements. The project also included the new Southwest MI Advanced Research & Technology (SMART) Park which continues to expand and create new job opportunities for the region.

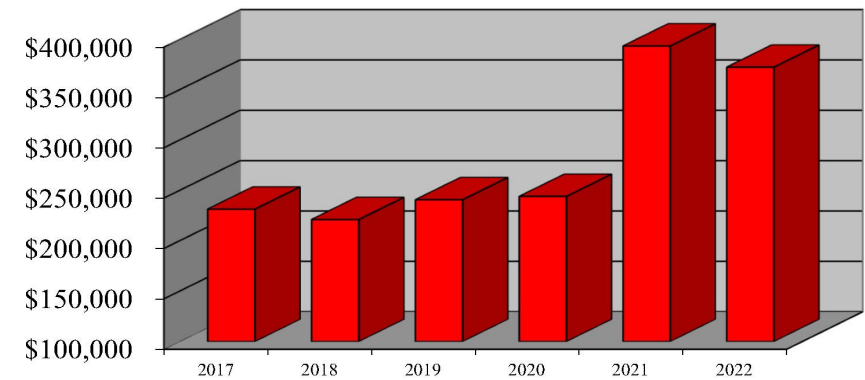


# 2022 Annual Audit

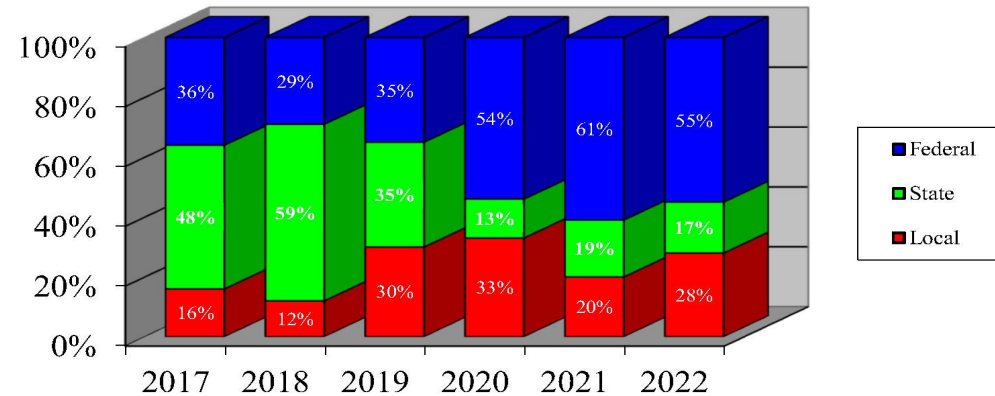
**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
Revenue - vs- Expense Analysis**



**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
Fund Balance Trends**



**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
Revenue Analysis**





# Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Planning Great Communities Together.

[www.swmpc.org](http://www.swmpc.org)

376 West Main, Suite 130  
Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022  
269-925-1137







**RESOLUTION 2023-5  
RESOLUTION APPROVING  
THE NILES BUCHNANAN CASS AREA  
TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**Whereas**, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Benton Harbor – St. Joseph Federal Aid Urban Area; and

**Whereas**, the SWMPC has designated the Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) Technical Advisory and Policy Committees as the committees responsible for developing the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program and all other transportation-related planning activities for the designated metropolitan planning area; and

**Whereas**, the NATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan has been developed pursuant to provisions of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA)

**Whereas**, the NATS Long Range Transportation Plan identifies transportation facilities and activities that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system in conformity with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration; and

**Whereas**, the NATS Long Range Transportation Plan was analyzed for fiscal constraint of proposed projects and activities over a 27-year planning horizon, was developed through a process that included input from citizens, public agencies and other interested parties, and has demonstrated conformity with the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality; and

**Whereas**, the NATS Long Range Transportation Plan has identified goals, objectives, policies, recommendations, strategies, and activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

**Now therefore be it resolved**, contingent upon adoption of the Plan by the NATS Policy Committee, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission board approves the 2050 Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study Long Range Plan.

This action is taken pursuant to rules and regulations of the Federal Highway Administration and the Michigan Department of Transportation by vote of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, this the 20th day of June 2023.

RESOLVED ON THIS TWENTIETH DAY OF JUNE 2023.

---

Kurt Doroh, Vice Chair

Date

---

Linda Preston, Secretary

Date



## **RESOLUTION 2023-6 RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE FINDINGS OF TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY DETERMINATION REPORT FOR 1997 OZONE NAAQS CASS COUNTY MAINTENANCE AREA**

**WHEREAS**, per the decision in South Coast II, beginning February 16, 2019, transportation conformity determinations for the 1997 ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) will be needed for those areas that were maintenance areas when the 1997 ozone NAAQS was revoked and then attainment for the 2008 and 2015 NAAQSs, referred to as “orphan” areas; and

**WHEREAS**, in November 2018, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated guidance to assist in implementing the court decision in South Coast II, providing the requirements to demonstrate transportation conformity for areas that were “orphan” areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the EPA designated the Cass County nonattainment area as a maintenance area for the 1997 ozone NAAQS in May 2007 and attainment in July 2012 for the stricter 2008 ozone NAAQS and in August 2018 for the 2015 ozone NAAQS; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cass County maintenance area is deemed an “orphan” area, and the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) is partially contained in the Cass County orphan maintenance area; and

**WHEREAS**, The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Board is the designated regional planning agency for Cass County; and

**WHEREAS**, the conformity of the NATS 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, will be pending approval by the Federal Highway Administration after local action on the conformity report by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission supports the conclusions of the Transportation Conformity Determination Report for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS for the Cass County orphan maintenance area for the NATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan and the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Transportation Conformity Determination Report for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS for the Cass County orphan maintenance area demonstrates that these planning documents meet the Clean Air Act and Transportation Conformity rule requirements for the 1997 ozone NAAQS to conform to the State Implementation Plan as required by provisions of Title 40 CFR 51.390 and 93 Subpart A, and the South Coast II decision.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BY A VOTE OF THE SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION ON JUNE 20, 2023

RESOLVED ON THIS TWENTIETH DAY OF JUNE 2023.

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Kurt Doroh, Vice Chair

Date

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Linda Preston, Secretary

Date



**RESOLUTION 2023-7  
RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE  
FINDINGS OF AIR QUALITY  
CONFORMITY ANALYSIS FOR THE  
BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN 2015  
OZONE NAAQS NONATTAINMENT  
AREA**

**WHEREAS**, on August 3, 2018, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated Berrien County as a Nonattainment Area for the 2015 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS); and

**WHEREAS**, The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Board is the designated regional planning agency for Berrien County; and

**WHEREAS**, United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) transportation conformity rules establish the criteria and procedures for determining whether Metropolitan Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), Transportation Improvement programs (TIPS), and federally supported highway and transit projects conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) (40 CFR Parts 51.390 and 93 subpart A); and

**WHEREAS**, transportation projects proposed for 2023-2050 in Berrien County, as contained within the Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS) 2023-2050 LRTP, and Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS) 2050 LRTP and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), were analyzed in accordance with 40 CFR 51 for air quality conformity; and

**WHEREAS**; the results of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Berrien County, Michigan 2015 Ozone NAAQS Nonattainment Area, published by MDOT on May 15, 2023, show that VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions for Berrien County are currently below the maximum levels allowed by the County's emissions budget and are forecasted to remain below the allowed levels through 2050, thereby demonstrating conformity;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission accepts the results of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Berrien County, Michigan 2015 Ozone NAAQS Nonattainment Area.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BY A VOTE OF THE SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION ON JUNE 20, 2023

RESOLVED ON THIS TWENTIETH DAY OF JUNE 2023.

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Kurt Doroh, Vice Chair

Date

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Linda Preston, Secretary

Date