

## **NATS 2017-2020 TIP Roadway Call for Projects (Deadline: February 1, 2016)**

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is pleased to announce the Call for Projects for the 2017-2020 Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study MPO (NATS). Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This Call for Projects is intended to program Surface Transportation Program Block Grant (STP) funds towards transportation projects over the next four years. Between 2017 and 2020, NATS is estimated to receive **\$518,608 in STP funds per year**. This is the largest block of funds that NATS receives to do road improvement projects such as resurfacing and reconstruction of roads. STP funds may also be spent on pedestrian, bicycle, transit infrastructure and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements as well as certain streetscape projects. The projects must be on a federal-aid eligible road. For a definition of federal-aid eligible road, please see the glossary below. A full list of eligible activities is available here: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/stp.cfm>.

You are receiving these instructions because you are an elected or appointed representative of **a city, village, township or road commission**, and you may be interested in a project. Please note that **if you are a township, the Road Commission must be the applicant for the project**. Even if you, as the township, retain a consultant to handle the application and engineering for the project, the Road Commission must be listed as the "Applicant Agency". However, you may list your consultant under "Contact Name" and provide their email address and phone number if appropriate.

Note that the STP funds within the NATS MPO only fund construction. Design and engineering costs are the responsibility of the local agency. **In addition, a local match of 18.15% of the construction cost is REQUIRED for any project**. Projects that provide additional local match up to 30 or 40% of the construction cost may be rewarded in the prioritization process, but that is still to be determined by the committees.

Instructions for the application are on **Page 3**. Please read all instructions **BEFORE** you begin filling out the application form. We recommend saving your work often.

Projects will be prioritized based on a set of criteria that the NATS committees agree to at the January meetings. A draft set of criteria have been developed and vetted. On **page 5** of this document, you will find an explanation of the rationale for the questions asked on the application and how they might lead to a prioritization procedure. Criteria will be available at least two weeks prior to the January NATS meeting to allow time to give us your feedback.


**On page 7**, you will find a glossary with helpful links and places that you can go to find additional data.

**On page 9**, you will find a matrix detailing what the Federal Highway Administration considers a conflict of interest when it comes to a single engineer handling multiple aspects of a project that uses federal funds. NOTE: Because NATS only uses STP funds to fund construction, it is highly unlikely that any issues would arise with your applications where a conflict of interest would be an issue. Nonetheless, we recommend familiarizing yourselves and your agencies with this matrix.

## FY 2017-2020 TIP Application Instructions

The application form is attached in the email. You must fill out a form for each project for which you are applying. This form is a fillable Microsoft Word Document with a series of checkboxes and areas to fill in text. It is a **macro-enabled form**, so you may receive a security warning asking if you want to enable macros. Please choose "Yes" if asked. You may save your work and come back to it at a later time.

To fill in a text area, please click in the area where you want to enter text until you see a blue highlighted area, as shown below. When you see the blue highlighted area, you can start typing. If you end up expanding some of the boxes to complete your response, do not worry too much about formatting as long as your application is still legible. Please save your final file in the following format: AgencyName\_ProjectName.docm.

Section 2: Project Proposal and Funding Request		
Project Name		
Project Limits (i.e. Napier to Britain)	Proposed Year(s) of Project Funding	<input type="checkbox"/> 2017 <input type="checkbox"/> 2018 <input type="checkbox"/> 2019 <input type="checkbox"/> 2020
Project Length	<i>(miles, to the nearest hundredth)</i>	
Improvement Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconstruction <input type="checkbox"/> Preventative Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> 3R <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Motorized Only	
Project Description <i>(please provide major work items including any sidewalks, utility work, and ADA upgrades)</i>		
Project Funding		
Funding Type	Source (i.e. STP, Village)	Amount
Federal	STP - R	\$
State	D- Funds	\$
State	MTF (Transit only)	\$
Local		\$

If you are applying for multiple projects, we highly recommend doing a "Save As" after each application and then modifying information as needed. This way, you will not need to modify information that is the same for each project.

**To find PASER Ratings, please go to the following website:**

<http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/MITRP/Data/paserMap.aspx>

**Questions:** Contact Gautam Mani at the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission at manig@swmpc.org or 269-925-1137 x1524 or Kim Gallagher at 269-925-1137 x1518

**For Traffic count information, please consult the following websites:**

- MDOT TMIS: <http://mdotnetpublic.state.mi.us/tmispublic/Search.aspx>  
(Look for short count hourly data).
- SWMPC Traffic Counting Website: [http://www.swmpc.org/traffic\\_count\\_db.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/traffic_count_db.asp)

**Questions:** Contact Gautam Mani at the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission at 269-925-1137x 1524 or Kim Gallagher at 269-925-1137 x1518.

All applications should be **emailed** as an attachment to BOTH Gautam Mani at [manig@swmpc.org](mailto:manig@swmpc.org) AND Kim Gallagher at [gallagherk@swmpc.org](mailto:gallagherk@swmpc.org) **no later than Monday February 1, 2016 at 5:00 PM EST**. Please contact us with any questions about the application, getting PASER, traffic count, or crash data, or technical issues with the application. We are happy to assist.

# **Overview and Rationale for Sections for the 2017-2020 NATS TIP Application**

## **Section 1: Applicant Information**

This section provides basic applicant information and will not be scored in any way.

## **Section 2: Project Proposal and Funding**

This section looks at existing conditions, the proposed project, and what improvements it would make to the transportation network. It also looks at the proposed funding amount and funding sources . There are two key criteria that will be evaluated here.

1. A local match equivalent to 18.15% of the construction cost is REQUIRED. Projects that provide 30% or greater local match will be prioritized because they allow the MPO to spread its limited federal dollars across more projects.
2. A project already scheduled for 2017 in the 2014-2017 TIP will be allowed to proceed unless there are changes to the project scope that warrant reconsideration, or the project applicant has chosen not to reapply for funding.

## **Section 3: Safety**

This section looks at the safety improvements that the transportation project makes. State performance measures for MPOs regarding safety are being developed. Projects that, in addition to preserving or repairing a roadway, provide for safety will get additional weighting.

As a small MPO, our members often struggle with meeting the required crash thresholds to be competitive for federal safety funds. Just because a fatal or severe injury crash has not occurred at a particular location does not mean that a safety issue is not present. We encourage our members to pursue safety funding as an additional funding source. Projects that have tried to address a safety issue previously by going through the rigorous application process and have been rejected will get some prioritization for STP funding.

The criteria that will be evaluated in this section include:

1. The types of safety improvements being made, including better driving surfaces.
2. Whether the applicant has, in the past, applied for a safety project and been rejected based on too low of a crash volume.
3. The volume of crashes at a particular location (if safety measures are being implemented).

#### **Section 4: Proposed Improvements**

This section looks at exactly what changes a particular project would make to roadway lanes, and the types of non-motorized facilities that would be provided. This section looks at the whole street, including roadway geometry, pedestrian and bicycle elements, transit connectivity, and infrastructure below or adjacent to the road.

Projects will also be given extra weight if they connect to existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, or facilitate safer connections to fixed route transit through biking, walking, or facilities for people with disabilities.

#### **Section 5: System Preservation**

The MPO recognizes that STP funding is the largest funding source that NATS receives to do roadway improvement projects, and that the long range plan goal of System Preservation has become increasingly important as a backlog of maintenance needs has developed.

Projects will be prioritized based on the appropriate timing for preventative maintenance or reconstruction, based on PASER ratings and the extent to which the proposed treatments will extend the useful life of the roadway.

#### **Section 6: Project Readiness and Targeting Investments Strategically**

This section looks at whether any element of a project has documented local support, whether potential issues to delay a project have been considered such as railroad permitting, and whether the project is coordinated with other investments, other jurisdictions, and other planning processes. Projects will be prioritized on whether the project has local support via plans, whether the project needs to be coordinated with other planned infrastructure investments, and whether the project is a continuation of other projects that are already funded. The section also looks at the importance of the roadway to the overall transportation network in terms of its traffic count and National Functional Classification.

The questions regarding utilities, water mains, and sewers are designed to ensure that agencies are considering the condition of their sewer, water, and utilities at the time of their road projects so that projects may be coordinated and infrastructure costs potentially saved.

## **Glossary and Helpful Links for the Application (Organized by application section)**

### **General Terms**

**Federal-aid eligible-** A road must be federal-aid eligible in order to use the STP funds. A federal aid eligible road is one that is ranked as a minor collector or higher on the map seen here: [http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/maps\\_nfc/pdf/NFC14\\_BERRIEN.pdf](http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/maps_nfc/pdf/NFC14_BERRIEN.pdf) for Berrien County or here for Cass County: [http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/maps\\_nfc/pdf/NFC14\\_CASS.pdf](http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/maps_nfc/pdf/NFC14_CASS.pdf) . Any road with a thick colored line is eligible for federal-aid (meaning any road labeled “Local” is not). Note that NATS funds can be spent outside the urbanized area, but can only be spent within jurisdictions that are NATS members.

### **Section 2: Project Proposal and Funding**

**Advance Construct-** An Advance Construct or AC project refers to a situation where an agency, in addition to the 18.15% required local match, pays all or a portion of the federal share up front using local money. The agency is then reimbursed with NATS federal funds in a later fiscal year, when the project is marked as “Advance Construct Conversion” or ACC. This technique allows agencies to deliver projects to their citizens more quickly even if federal funds are allocated to other projects in a given fiscal year.

### **Section 4: Proposed Improvements**

**Shared Use Path:** This is a path that accommodates both cyclists and pedestrians, and can be used bi-directionally. These paths are a minimum of 8 feet wide.

### **Section 5: System Preservation**

**PASER-** Stands for Pavement Evaluation and Surface Rating System. Over the course of each two year period, SWMPC, MDOT, and Road Commission staff rate the condition of each of the federal-aid eligible roads. Roads are rated on a 1-10 scale, 10 being a road in excellent condition and 1 being a road that has failed. More specifically, the rating system is as follows:

PASER Rating 8-10= Good condition; only routine maintenance needed

PASER Rating 5-7= Fair Condition; Capital Preventative Maintenance needed

PASER Rating 1-4 = Poor Condition; Reconstruction or major resurfacing needed

The latest PASER rating for your road can be found by zooming in and clicking on your road on the map at : <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/MITRP/Data/paserMap.aspx>

If you have trouble with the map, PASER ratings are also available from SWMPC staff upon request. Please contact Gautam Mani at [manig@swmpc.org](mailto:manig@swmpc.org) for further information.

### **Section 6: System Preservation**

**ADT= Average Daily Traffic—**This is a reference to the average number of cars, trucks, and motorcycles that travel on a given roadway on a given day. This count can come from SWMPC, MDOT, or your local agency and is valid as long as you provide the source.

**National Functional Classification (NFC)**- The National Functional Classification of a Roadway determines its importance in the overall movement of goods and services because it is based on the number of vehicles moved and the level of access it provides to land. Again, an NFC higher than “Local” means that a roadway is eligible for federal aid, and STP funds can be used for 81.85% of the construction cost.

**NATS TIP 2014-2017**- To see whether your project is a continuation of a project funded in the 2014-2017 TIP, please click on the following link:

[http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/niles\\_fy1417\\_tip\\_amendments\\_12615.xlsm](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/niles_fy1417_tip_amendments_12615.xlsm)

In addition, you can see whether your project is a continuation of a segment funded under the Rural Task Force program from 2014-2017 here: [http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/rtf\\_4\\_12\\_4.xlsm](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/rtf_4_12_4.xlsm)



**Local Agency Federal Aid Project  
Consultant Conflict of Interest Matrix**

Case	Local Agency	Preliminary Engineering		Construction Engineering		Conflict of Interest?	Action
	Engineer or Program Mgr.	Non-Fed Participating	Fed Participating	Non-Fed Participating	Fed Participating		
1	X	X		X		No	None
2	X	X			X	Yes	Prohibited
3	X	X				No	None
4	X		X	X		Yes	Prohibited
5	X		X			Yes	Prohibited
6	X		X		X	Yes	Prohibited
7	X			X		No	None
8	X				X	Yes	Prohibited
9		X		X		No	None
10		X				Potential	Mitigate
11		X				No	None
12			X	X		Potential	Mitigate
13			X		X	Potential	Mitigate
14			X			No	None
15				X		No	None
16					X	No	None

X: Indicates that a single consultant or its affiliate is performing the work in each case.

Action Definitions:

None: There is no conflict of interest, and no further action is required to allow the case.

Mitigate: There is a potential for a conflict of interest, but the case may be allowed if control procedures are identified.

Prohibited: This is a conflict of interest, and the case will not be allowed.

Note: This matrix is written with the understanding that the physical construction of the project is funded with federal-aid.