

NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (NATS)
 Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Policy Committee Attendance
 January 24, 2023, Niles District Library & via Zoom

NATS MEMBER ORG./POSITION	MEMBERS (2022)	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Michael Majerek		x	A											
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	(Vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Dan Fette	x		A											
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	Eric Lester, M.D.		x	A											
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (Policy)	(Vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (TAC)	Kevin Stack	X		IP											
Bertrand Township	Butch Payton	x	x	A											
Buchanan Township	Lynn Ferris	x	x	A											
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Robert Benjamin		x	A											
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	Roseann Marchetti		x	IP											
Cass Co. Planning Commission	(Vacant)	x													
Cass Co. Road Comm. (Policy)	Sandra Seanor		x	IP											
Cass Co. Road Comm. (TAC)	Joe Bellina (TAC Chair)	x		IP											
City of Buchanan	Don Ryman		x	V											
City of Buchanan	Heather Grace	x		A											
City of Niles (1)	Georgia Boggs		x	IP											
City of Niles (2)	Serita Mason		x	V											
City of Niles (3)	(Vacant)		x												
City of Niles Community Dev. Director	(Vacant)	x													
City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit	Pepper Miller	x	x	IP											
City of Niles Public Works Dir./Airport	Joe Ray	x		IP											
Howard Township	Bill Kasprzak	x	x	IP											
Kinexus	(Vacant)	x													
Mason Township	Doug Fetters	x	x	A											
MDOT - Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	IP											
MDOT - Southwest Region	Josh Grab	x	x	V											
MDOT - Southwest Region (Alternate)	(Vacant)	Alt	Alt												
MDOT - Transportation Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	V											
Milton Township	Susan Flowers	x	x	A											
Niles Charter Township	Richard Cooper (P. Ch.)	x	x	IP											
Ontwa Township	Dawn Bolock	x	x	A											
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	(Vacant)	x	x												
Village of Edwardsburg	Dennis Peak	x	x	A											
Federal Highway Administration	Andy Pickard	NV	NV	A											
Federal Transit Administration	Susan Weber	NV	NV	A											
EGLE - Air Quality	Breanna Bukowski	NV		A											
MDOT - Modeling	Jon Roberts	NV		A											
MDOT - Office of Passenger Trans.	Fred Featherly	NV		A											
Michiana Area Council of Governments	Caitlin Stevens	NV	NV	A											
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	x	x	IP											
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat	NV	NV	IP											

P. Ch.: Policy Chair; Alt: Alternate; NV: Non-voting; P: Present in Person; V- Present virtually; A: Absent.

Others Present in Person: Richard Gerbeth, Patricia Gerbeth, Rick Gerbeth, Perter Agostino, Jackie Phlug

Minutes
Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study
Joint Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 24, 2023

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Technical Advisory Committee chair, Joe Bellina, called the meeting to Order at 1:30 pm. Kim Gallagher took roll call.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Gallagher said there was no staff report. The local updates will be given during the discussion on FY 2023 funds.

3. Public Comment

Richard Geberth introduced himself as the owner of the property on the Northeast corner of Redfield Rd. and Gumwood rd. The proposed Gumwood realignment would be built through the middle of his property. He said that he had already made comments about the Gumwood Realignment at both of the NATS Subcommittee meetings [held on December 13, 2022, and January 11, 2023]. A summary of these comments can be found in the January 11, 2023 NATS Subcommittee meeting minutes.

Peter Agostino, a lawyer representing Richard and Patricia Gerbeth, said he had asked about a two roundabout option for the Gumwood and Redfield intersections. He was told that the single roundabout option was based on the recommendation from an Engineering study [[2014 Study by CESO consultants](#)]. Agostino notated that the study, in fact, said that two roundabouts were also a possible solution, and would cost much less to construct. Two roundabouts would require about 0.4 acres while the realignment of gumwood requires taking 15 acres of private property. He believed that the single roundabout was not only bad for the Gerbeth's but a waste of public funds.

Patricia Gerbeth said she still didn't understand why the Realignment was necessary. She added that the loss of trees and the environmental impact of the project should be taken into consideration.

Jackie Phlug introduced herself as a property owner ¼ mile from the proposed intersection. She said the project would remove trees in front of her home, which she only found out about recently when the engineering firm designing the project contacted her. She claimed that contrary to what she read in the paper, the [Cass County] Road Commission did not discuss the impacts with all affected property owners. She expressed concerns about the project increasing traffic speeds and thus causing more crashes.

Rick Gerbeth, the son of Richard & Patricia Gerbeth, expressed concern about how the realignment would bring the road very close to his parent's front door. He said this would compromise their safety and the pollution would be detrimental to their health. He requested that, if two roundabouts couldn't be built, the project be altered to rebuild gumwood further away from his parent's house than currently proposed.

4. Approve Minutes from the November 22, 2022 Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 22, 2022, Joint NATS Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee Meeting. Made by Sandra Seanor and seconded by Roseann Marchetti. **Motion approved.**

5. Staff Report

None.

6. Local Agency Updates

Local updates were given as part of agenda item 9, Recommendation for Utilizing NATS Unprogrammed FY 2023 STBG & CRP funds

7. Transit Updates

None.

8. MDOT Updates

Ray said he gets frequent complaints about the condition of M-51. He wanted to have it made clearer that the 2023 M-51 project would have some prep work started this spring, but the main construction would occur in 2024.

9. Recommendation for Utilizing NATS Unprogrammed FY 2023 STBG & CRP funds

Gallagher described each project change and amendment that is required based on the recommendations of the NATS Subcommittee.

Kovnat explained that the Buchan Signal was originally programmed using \$287,304 in CMAQ funds, which were then removed from the project at the last Berrien CMAQ meeting. These funds would be replaced by \$78,783 in CRP and \$208,468 in STBG. If NATS awards the subcommittee's recommendation of \$339,282 to Buchanan, the city's net gain would be \$130,813 after accounting for the lost CMAQ funding.

Bellina gave an update about the Gumwood roundabout. This is an HSIP funded project which will be built in conjunction with the Gumwood realignment [MDOT considers these to be two separate projects]. The final plans for the roundabout have been submitted. A small portion of Right-of-Way still needs to be acquired.

Members of the NATS Subcommittee said that the total STBG funding for Buchanan is correct, but the subcommittee only recommends that these funds be added to the Front Street reconstruction; They do not recommend adding any STBG to the signal replacement.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend the Policy Committee approve the following items:

1. Add \$137,990 of NATS STBG to Bertrand Rd.
2. Add all \$78,783 of NATS CRP to the Front St. Signal
3. Approve the scope change and add \$339,282 of NATS STBG to the Front St. Reconstruction
4. Add the Gumwood Realignment project to NATS 2023-2026 TIP utilizing \$339,292 in NATS STBG along with \$532,244 in Cass RTF funding.

Made by Bill Kazprzak and seconded by Joe Bellina. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee. Made by Sandra Seanor and seconded by Roseann Marchetti. **Motion approved.**

10. Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment

None.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28, 2023.

Minutes Compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Transportation Planner