

# NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

## MINUTES

November 24, 2015

2:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Georgia Boggs, City of Niles (left early) Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Serita Mason, City of Niles Kim O’Haver, Buchanan Dial-A-Ride Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce (left early) Robert Ziliak, Cass County Board of Commissioners
Policy Members Absent:	Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Matt Galbraith, MDOT Statewide Planning Erin Jolivette, MDOT – Coloma TSC John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Steve LeClaire, Bertrand Township LeRoy Krempec, Cass County Road Commission David Newell, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Representative, Buchanan Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Jess Minks, Berrien County Road Commission Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Bob Sutton, Mason Township Representative, City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Joe Sobieralski, Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani

### 1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting was called to order by Cooper at 2:41 p.m. and Personette led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 2. Minutes

A motion by Bradfield with support by Personette to approve the Policy Committee Meeting minutes from October 27, 2015. **Motion passed.**

### 3. Changes to the Posted Agenda

There were no changes requested to the posted agenda.

#### 4. Public Comment

None.

#### 5. Staff Report

- **STP Call for Projects**

Gallagher said that the Call for Projects for the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program was currently out. This is the call for funding for specifically for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, which is the largest block of funding that NATS receives to allocate to road projects. MPO staff are working aggressively to finish up the TIP application and complete the development of project selection criteria, but that process has been delayed. NATS' STP funding target for all four years is \$518,608 annually.

- **Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects 2016-2017**

Mani announced that NATS had issued its Call for Projects for 2016 and 2017, and that a deadline would be announced soon. Mani said that NATS had the opportunity to use two years of TAP funding at a time, instead of one, as that allowed a larger project to move forward at \$72,000 rather than \$36,000 in cost. Mani encouraged committee members to apply using the MDOT Grant System (MGS). MDOT would conduct its technical review and then a subcommittee would meet to review the applications submitted. Mani said he was working to clarify that NATS could in fact program two years worth of funding.

- **CMAQ Call for Projects**

Mani announced that MDOT had issued its call for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds for 2017-2020 to align with MPO TIP development cycles. These are funds each county in Southwest Michigan receives for being in non-attainment or attainment maintenance for certain pollutants. Mani said that the three most common types of projects that had been done in our area were traffic signal replacements, non-motorized paths, and transit vehicle upgrades. One new innovation that would make things easier for the MPO this year would be an online application. Gallagher said that applicants would still need to fill out the emissions worksheets, but then attach them to the online application.

The Cass County CMAQ meeting will be on Tuesday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM, and the RTF meeting will be at 10:00 AM at the Cass County Road Commission. The Berrien County CMAQ meeting will be on December 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM and the RTF meeting will be at 2:30 PM at the Berrien County Road Commission.

#### 5. Public Transit Updates

- **SWMPC Transit Updates**

Gallagher said that the RFP for the Countywide Service Plan was under review by MDOT and awaiting approval.

- **Agency Updates**

Gallagher shared ridership data for Niles Dial-A-Ride and Buchanan Dial-A-Ride for 2015. To date, Niles Dial A Ride has had over 41,395 riders in 2015, and Buchanan Dial A Ride has had over 10,000.

Mason said that there are more people with disabilities and older adults requesting Niles Dial-A-Ride service than ever, and that the City needs to take this increased ridership into account in service planning.

## **6. Land Use Updates**

None.

## **7. Project Updates**

The Adamsville Road Reconstruction from Stateline to May in Cass County is complete. In 2016, the segment of Adamsville Road from May-US 12 will be reconstructed. That segment is in design.

Cass County's resurfacing projects on Fir Road from Stateline to US-12 are in design as well.

The Berrien County Road Commission is preparing plans for the resurfacing projects on Bertrand Road, Third St, and Stateline Road.

The City of Buchanan is currently working on program applications for its resurfacing project on Red Bud Trail from Front St to the South City Limits and its traffic signal replacement project on Red Bud Trail at Front St. They anticipate having a grade inspection (GI) meeting in January.

Harden shared that the M-139 bridge completion was anticipated during the second week of December, at which time it would be reopened for traffic. Lights are currently being installed. Sidewalks and other paving will take place next week. Harden requested patience as weather could still delay reopening.

Harden also shared that MDOT has obligated its design money for a US-12 resurfacing project within the village of Edwardsburg, and also the PE phase for US-12 from Bakertown Road to Mayflower Road had been obligated in 2015.

## **8. Old Business**

None.

## **9. New Business**

- **TIP Amendments**
- **TIP Amendments**
- Mani said there were several TIP amendments this month. The amendments requested were:

2015 (obligated already)

### **a. JN 125133 M-205 at Old M-205 and Five Points Intersection: Intersection Improvement and Install Roundabout.**

PE Phase: \$175,978 in Federal STP, \$39,022 in M funds, for a total phase cost of \$215,000.

ROW Phase: \$21,027 in Federal STP, \$4,663 in M funds, for a total phase cost of \$25,690.

- 2016

**a. JN 125133 M-205 at Old M-205 and Five Points Intersection: Intersection Improvement and Install Roundabout.**

CON Phase: \$1,584,616 in Federal STP, \$351,384 in M funds, for a total phase cost of \$1,936,000.

**b. JN 128723 US-12 from the West Village Limits of Edwardsburg to M-62: Cold Milling and HMA Overlay.**

PE Phase: \$163,700 in Federal STP, \$36,300 in M Funds, for a total phase cost of \$200,000.\

ROW Phase: \$16,370 in Federal STP, \$3,630 in M funds for a total phase cost of \$20,000.

**c. JN 128736: Overband Crack Fill on M-60 from the West End of the Divided Section--the Urban Area Limits of Niles to South of the South Village Limits of Cassopolis.**

PE Phase: \$2,130 in Federal STP and \$472 in M funds for a total phase cost of \$2,603.

- 2017

**a. JN 128723 US-12 from the West Village Limits of Edwardsburg to M-62: Cold Milling and HMA Overlay. (Move to 2018/Illustrative List)**

CON Phase: \$1,456,930 in Federal STP and \$323,070 in M funds for a total phase cost of \$1,780,000.

**b. JN 128736: Overband Crack Fill on M-60 from the West End of the Divided Section--the Urban Area Limits of Niles to South of the South Village Limits of Cassopolis.**

CON Phase: \$53,196 in Federal STP and \$11,796 in M Funds for a total phase cost of \$64,992.

Changes (MDOT):

- **JN 127449** Moved US-12 Resurfacing from Bakertown Road to the start of the divided section Construction Phase from 2017 to 2016.
- **JN 127563** Moved PE Phase year of M-139 from the Front St to Marmont St Cold Milling and HMA Overlay from 2015 to 2016.

New Project: City of Buchanan

- 2016

- a. **JN 128836** Traffic signal replacement on Red Bud Trail at Front St using CMAQ funds for a federal cost of \$219,500, and a non-federal cost of \$30,700 for a total project cost of \$250,200.

Bradfield asked about the overband crack fill project, and why it was being done on a road that just got resurfaced. Harden said that it was part of Capital Preventative Maintenance to prevent road deterioration and extend the surface life of the road.

A motion by Mason with support by Bradfield to approve the November TIP amendments. **Motion passed.**

## **FHWA Updates**

Dewey said that the House and Senate transportation bills were in conference committee and that MAP-21 had been extended until December 4<sup>th</sup>. USDOT was stressing the urgency of a new transportation bill, and was in a position where it would have to stop making payments to State DOTs if very short-term extensions continue.

O'Haver said that she had spoken to Congressman Upton about transportation authorization. He is on the conference committee discussing the two transportation bills, and he had said to anticipate a new bill before the end of the calendar year, as they were close to resolving many issues.

Mani said that SWMPC had an analysis of the differences between the House and Senate transportation bills. The analysis was provided by an organization called Transportation for America. Mani said that the analysis was for information purposes only, and once there was a final bill, they would provide a more detailed analysis. One item of note was that neither bill provided for a new sustainable source of transportation revenue for the Highway Trust Fund; both bills rely mainly on non-transportation revenue to make up the deficit in the Trust Fund. The Transportation for America analysis can be found at: <http://t4america.org/2015/11/12/with-conference-underway-how-do-the-house-and-senate-bills-stack-up/>

Dewey also shared that notices of proposed rulemakings for performance measures are continuing to be released, with final rules being released beginning next February. Gallagher asked whether a new federal transportation bill might completely alter MAP-21 performance measures. Dewey said that the House and Senate transportation bills do not roll back any of MAP-21's performance measure requirements, so those will continue to be implemented.

## ▪ **MDOT Updates**

Harden provided an overview of the legislative package that was enacted in the state of Michigan to fund transportation, and Mani and Gallagher provided estimates of the revenue that each city, village, and road commission would receive under the bills signed into law by Governor Snyder.

Harden noted that no new revenue would go through the Act 51 formula until 2017. In addition, public transit would not get revenue from the general fund, only from the increase in the gasoline tax and registration fees. Harden also said that future legislatures could move funding in the general fund away from transportation. This is the first time that roads are funded out of the general fund as a matter of course and not via an annual appropriation. Harden said that the \$300-\$400 million annual appropriation transferring money from the general fund to the Michigan Transportation Fund would possibly cease.

Ziliak expressed concern about MDOT's possible revenue shortfalls in the first years of the bill and wondered whether MDOT would be selling bonds to help make up the shortfall. Harden said he had not heard about that happening, but it was a possibility.

The revenue estimates for each jurisdiction are available here: [City Village within County Estimated Revenue Package.pdf](#)

A detailed analysis of the transportation funding package enacted into law is available here: [http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa/PDF/Summaries/road\\_funding\\_pkg\\_summary\\_senate\\_passed.pdf](http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa/PDF/Summaries/road_funding_pkg_summary_senate_passed.pdf)

- **News Items of Interest**  
None.

**10. Public Comment**

None.

**11. Privilege of the Floor**

Mason complimented the City of Niles for listening to the public on its infrastructure projects and particularly for tearing down blighted buildings that had long been a cause for concern.

**12. Adjournment at 3:30 p.m.**

- The next meeting will be December 15 at 2:30 PM.

*Minutes compiled by: Gautam Mani, Associate Planner, 2015*