

**NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Policy Committee

**MINUTES**

March 25, 2014

2:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Georgia Boggs, City of Niles (arrived at 3:30p.m.) Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Erin Jolivette, MDOT – Coloma TSC Serita Ann Mason, City of Niles Jess Minks, Berrien County Road Commission Kim O’Haver, Buchanan Dial A Ride Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Kelly Sweeney, Milton Township Robert Ziliak, Cass County Commissioner
Policy Members Absent:	Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Representative, Howard Township John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township John Lanum, MDOT Planning Jason Latham, MDOT-SW Region Paul Lott, MDOT Planning Bill Marx, City of Buchanan Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Joe Sobieralski, Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Evan Smith, Niles Dial A Ride Bob Sutton, Mason Township Planning Commission Kris Welch, MDOT Planning Representative, MACOG (ex-officio)
SWMPC Staff Present:	Gautam Mani, Suzann Flowers
Others Present:	Matt Kodis, Kinexus

**1. Call to Order & Introductions**

Meeting was called to order by Cooper at 2:36 p.m., also led the group in introductions. Bolock led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

## 2. Minutes

A motion by Mason with support by Ziliak to approve the Policy Committee Meeting minutes from February 25, 2014. **Motion passed.**

## 3. Public Comment

There were no public comments received.

## 4. Staff Report

### ▪ MTPA Follow up

- Flowers reported that the TIGER 6 grants are now open. Flowers noted that she would send information and contact information to the group in the Talking Points message after the meeting. She noted that there were three applications from the area from the last call, one by City of New Buffalo, Pokagon Band, and Berrien County.
- Flowers also noted that the SWMPC pre-uwp meeting is coming up in April, transit agencies are encouraged to participate either on the phone or in person. Flowers explained that the UWP is the annual listing of what the MPO will work on in fiscal year 2015 which starts on October 1, 2014.
- Dewey noted that on March 14, 2014 rulemaking came out regarding the first of 3 groupings of performance measures, the first is safety. There are 4 major measures to focus on and that the MPO should read and comment during this process. The information can be found at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) then enter FHWA-2013-0020. She also stated that in April planning regulations will be released, this is the interpretation of MAP-21, and this process does take some time to go through.

### ▪ Local legislative letter regarding R3 funds

Flowers noted that some changes had been made from Joe Bellina and that no other comments had been received. Flowers discussed the point of the letter is to encourage the Michigan House and Senate representatives to discuss project selection with the MPO as there is a tremendous amount of knowledge and expertise around the table.

A motion by Poehlman with support by Personette to recommend to approve the letter and send it out to the State representatives. **Motion passed.**

### ▪ Michiana Council of Governments (MACOG)

Mani noted that he has been attending MACOG meetings and learned a tremendous amount about US 31 and he asked our partners from MACOG to present information on that.

Mani reported on the information shared from James Turnwald from MACOG regarding three sections of US 31 that are taking place or have been built:

- Indianapolis section will be done in 2015 for a cost of \$342 million
- Kokomo section was completed in 2013 around Thanksgiving for \$55 million
- South Bend to Plymouth will be completed at the end of 2014 for a cost of \$225 million
- The US 31 coalition, is a group of citizens who are concerned about the gaps that the sections of US 31 are creating. They are asking about the gaps from Plymouth to Kokomo and Indiana DOT stated that there were no projects planned for completing this section

## 5. Project Updates

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Bid Savings	Obligation Month	Bills Submitted
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<b>2012</b>		Niles Dial A Ride	Preventative maintenance	The projects have been assigned grant numbers and the projects should move forward summer 2012. There will be some project changes for the March meeting, need last approved TIP letter; ongoing	July 2013			
		Niles Dial A Ride	Free fare days-CMAQ project	Extended to summer 2013; happening in the summer; ongoing	July 2013			
<b>2013</b>	112102	Buchanan	Front St. Red Bud Trail to east city of Buchanan limit	will obligate by end of Aug; submitted for obligation; February letting-spring/summer construction; Project has been bid and awarded, and construction is tentatively scheduled for 4/21.	March 2014		May/June	
		Buchanan Dial A Ride	Transit operations	Still operating	November 2013			
	112107	Cass County	Elkhart Road	From Redfield to May St. Partial Milling and Total Resurface; design; obligated; let November 4; May Construction	November 2013			
	118207	Berrien County	IN-MI River Valley Trail	CON to be done July 25, 2014	March 2014			
<b>2014</b>	112104	Berrien County RC	Third St., Portage Rd	Plans developed; in process; will be obligated once TIP changed and approved; waiting to obligate when TIP amendment is process	February 2014			

	104152	MDOT	CON phase Bridge replacement	Let in December, Construct in 2014; not constructing in 2014, will be constructed in 2015; CON in fall, bridge removed in 2015	November 2013			
	112105	Niles	17 <sup>th</sup> Street	GI submitted, January letting; project over bid by 16K; April 7 construction	February 2014			
	118114	Niles DAR	Free fare days					
		Niles DAR	Maintenance software					
		Niles DAR	Preventative maintenance					
		Niles DAR	Replacement computers					
		Niles DAR	Replacement bus					
		Niles DAR	Operating assistance					
		Cass County RC	Bertrand Rd (Batchelor road to Gumwood) - Resurface	Plans in development; will be a force account project may have 6% savings; obligated	March 2014			
		Cass County RC	Redfield (Fir to Kline) -Resurface	Plans in development; GI submitted; let on April 4	March 2014			
		Cass County RC	Gumwood Road TAP project	Township will fund design and local share	March 2014			

## 6. Old Business

- **Rotating PASER Ratings**

Mani said that a request at the TwinCATS meeting in February that MPO jurisdictions go into a rotating system, so that a few jurisdictions could have their local (non-federal aid eligible) roads each year, and all NATS member jurisdictions would have their local roads rated every three years. Act 51 agencies are eligible to have their local roads rated every three years with reimbursement from the state. Staff would review local roads to see who had had their roads rated recently. Mani

said it was likely that all jurisdictions in NATS would be eligible right away, and that SWMPC staff were not always aware when local road ratings were done. Mani is planning to set this system up in Berrien County and wanted to find out if Cass County would also be interested.

- **TIP Plan Amendment**

The TIP amendment and administrative modifications policy was approved at the February 2014 meeting and in order to keep this document together the MPO staff are asking for the Committee to amend the 2014-2017 TIP document and in order to do so we need to put the amendment out for a 7 day public comment period.

A motion by Poehlman with support by Ziliak to put the 2014-2017 NATS TIP out for a 7 day public comment period to amend the plan to include the Administrative Modifications vs. Amendments Policy. **Motion passed.**

- **Walk and Roll**

- **Survey and Community stakeholder meetings**

Flowers noted that additional communities have agreed to input meetings and with a bit of press we have over 90 survey responses so far. Surveys continue to be available and committee members can ask for the surveys at any time.

## **7. New Business**

- **Land Use Updates**

Flowers stated that she and Mani attended the Kalamazoo MPO meeting last month and that they provide updates for land use in their MPO. Flowers noted that she thought it would be a good addition to the agenda each month and Mani added that it would allow communities to provide updates to the MPO even if they do not have construction projects happening in their community.

- **TIP Amendments**

Two amendments are being proposed to be changed in the 2014-2017 TIP:

- Niles Dial A Ride

Fiscal Year	County	Responsible Agency	Project Name	Limits	Length	Primary Work Type	Project Description	Phase	Federal Cost	Federal Fund Source	State Cost	State Source	Local Cost	Local Source	Total	Local ID	MPO action date	Air Quality	Total Project Cost (\$1000s)
2014	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Operating Assistance	Niles area		Transit operations	Public transit operations	T-Ops	110,000	5307	110,000	CTF	85,000	Tral	305,000	201401		Exempt	305
2014	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Preventive Maintenance	Niles area		Transit maintenance equipment and parts	Preventive maintenance	T-Cap	104,000	5307	26,000	CTF	0	Tral	130,000	201402		Exempt	130
2014	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Computers	Niles area		Transit operations equipment	Purchase and install up to 3 replacement office computers, associated software, and monitors	T-Cap	6,000	5307	1,500	CTF	0	Tral	7,500	201403		Exempt	8
2014	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Software Upgrades	Niles area		Transit operations equipment	Purchase scheduling software upgrades	T-Cap	2,000	5307	500	CTF	0	Tral	2,500	201404		Exempt	3
2014	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Bus	Niles area		Transit vehicle additions/replacements	Replace one bus	T-Cap	72,270	5307	18,068	CTF	0	Tral	90,338	201405		Exempt	90
																			0
2015	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Operating Assistance	Niles area		Transit operations	Public transit operations	T-Ops	125,000	5307	110,000	CTF	92,000	Tral	327,000	201501	3/26/2013	Exempt	327
2015	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Preventive Maintenance	Niles area		Transit maintenance equipment and parts	Preventive maintenance	T-Cap	104,000	5307	26,000	CTF	0	Tral	130,000	201502	3/26/2013	Exempt	130
2015	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Tires	Niles area		Transit maintenance equipment and parts	Purchase replacement tires and dispose of old tires	T-Cap	3,840	5307	960	CTF	0	Tral	4,800	201503	3/26/2013	Exempt	5
2015	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Bus	Niles area		Transit vehicle additions/replacements	Replace one cutaway bus	T-Cap	56,000	5307	14,000	CTF	0	Tral	70,000	201504	3/26/2013	Exempt	70
																			0
2016	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Operating Assistance	Niles area		Transit operations	Public transit operations	T-Ops	125,000	5307	115,000	CTF	95,000	Tral	335,000	201601	3/26/2013	Exempt	335
2016	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Preventive Maintenance	Niles area		Transit maintenance equipment and parts	Preventive maintenance	T-Cap	104,000	5307	26,000	CTF	0	Tral	130,000	201602	3/26/2013	Exempt	130
2016	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Software Upgrades	Niles area		Transit operations equipment	Purchase scheduling software upgrades	T-Cap	2,000	5307	500	CTF	0	Tral	2,500	201603	3/26/2013	Exempt	3
2016	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Parking Lot	Niles area		Transit facility	Parking lot and driveway repairs	T-Cap	7,200	5307	1,800	CTF	0	Tral	9,000	201604	3/26/2013	Exempt	9
																			0
2017	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Operating Assistance	Niles area		Transit operations	Public transit operations	T-Ops	125,000	5307	115,000	CTF	95,000	Tral	335,000	201701	3/26/2013	Exempt	335
2017	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Preventive Maintenance	Niles area		Transit maintenance equipment and parts	Preventive maintenance	T-Cap	105,000	5307	26,000	CTF	0	Tral	131,000	201702	3/26/2013	Exempt	131
2017	Berrien	Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Bus	Niles area		Transit vehicle additions/replacements	Replace one cutaway bus	T-Cap	56,000	5307	14,000	CTF	0	Tral	70,000	201703	3/26/2013	Exempt	70

A motion by Harden with support by Personette to approve the TIP amendments as presented. **Motion passed.**

▪ **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

○ **Federal**

Flowers asked if Dewey would present information about Inactive Projects and what that means for local agencies. Dewey noted that an inactive project is when a project is obligated and there have been no expenditures on the project in 12 months. MDOT has done a great job of closing out projects and ensuring that they take action on inactive projects. Michigan is not unique in this issue but MDOT is working on an internal policy to ensure that projects are tracked for inactivity. There was much discussion about what this means to local projects and how MPO staff should work with local agencies to see when billings have been made on projects. This was noted by MPO staff to include in project updates.

○ **State**

There was discussion about SB 608 which approved \$215 million dollars from the general fund for transportation projects, \$100 million will be distributed by formula for winter road maintenance, the remaining \$115 million will be for projects selected by the legislature and prioritized by the legislature leadership. Harden added that if projects are selected within the MPO boundaries that it is up to the MPO Committee to decide if the projects are regionally significant and should be included in the TIP. He cautioned that it can take up to 2 months to process TIP amendment changes and from the Senate Bill, all legislatively selected projects have to be obligated by July 1, 2014, and that could pose a challenge for local agencies.

**8. Public Comment**

Kodis stated that Berrien County was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest visited county in Michigan for leisure tourists in 2012 and that maintaining good quality roads are critical for the regions continued success.

**9. Privilege of the Floor**

-Personette expressed frustration with the legislature and their lack of inactivity in fixing the roads.

-Cooper asked MDOT who enforces right of way encroachments on 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Jolivette stated this was Brett Aarons at MDOT and she passed along contact information to Cooper.

**10. Adjournment at 3:35 p.m.**

A motion by Bradfield with support by Personette to adjourn the meeting.

- The next meeting is MPO committee meeting will be April 30, 2014 from 1-5 in Berrien Springs

*Minutes compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Gautam Mani, Transportation Planners, 2014*