

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

MINUTES

April 26, 2016

2:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Steve Hicks, Bertrand Township Jason Latham, MDOT Southwest Region Pete Fournier, Cass County Road Commission Jess Minks, Berrien County Road Commission Kim O'Haver, Buchanan Dial A Ride Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Jonathon Smith, MDOT Coloma Office Debbie Sullivan, Mason Township Robert Ziliak, Cass County Board of Commissioners
Policy Members Absent:	Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Melinda Cole-Crocker, Buchanan Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Serita Mason, City of Niles David Newell, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Representative, Buchanan Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Representative, City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Representative, 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 2:37 p.m. and Bradfield led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes

Ryman noted that on page 3 of the minutes from March, under "MDOT," the first sentence should read "US-12 bridge deck over M-51 restore and rehabilitate is still on track for construction in 2017, though a study is being done regarding whether to remove the bridge and potentially make a surface street there."

A motion by O'Haver with support by Ziliak to approve the Policy Committee meeting minutes from March 22 as corrected. **Motion passed.**

3. Changes to the Posted Agenda

None.

4. Public Comment

None

5. Staff Report

▪ Performance Measures Updates

Mani said that it had been some time since the NATS MPO had been updated on the state of national performance measures, which had been in the works since the previous legislation, MAP-21 was passed in 2012. The FAST Act continued MAP-21's performance-based planning framework. Mani said that rulemakings to set performance measures were starting to be released, and others were still being released for a public comment period. Mani reported that the final rule on safety performance measures had been released. The five performance measures chosen at the federal level were:

- Number of fatalities
- Rate of fatalities based on Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Number of serious injuries
- Rate of serious injuries based on Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Number of non-motorized serious injuries and crashes

Mani reported that the performance measures on non-motorized crashes were added in after much public comment. The state now has until August 31, 2017 to set targets for reducing fatalities and serious injuries, and the MPOs must establish targets within 180 days after the state sets its targets

An overview of the status of other performance measures rulemakings, including congestion mitigation, system performance, and pavement and bridge asset management, were provided in the meeting packet. In addition, information was provided about the status of performance measures related to public transit asset management and safety. Mani said that this section would serve as the Performance Measures section in the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program.

Latham said that regarding asset management performance measures, MDOT regions were already under a directive to maintain interstates at 90% good condition, and thus had to divert funds from other trunkline routes towards that end. That process would be continuing over the next few years.

▪ 2017-2020 TIP Development Update

Mani said that development of the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program document was well underway, and that NATS could anticipate further sections of the TIP being brought forward in May for approval in June. In particular, the consultation list was being developed and the environmental justice analysis of projects proposed in the 2017-2020 TIP was taking place.

▪ 2017 Work Program (UWP) Update

Mani said that development of the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program document was well underway, and that NATS could anticipate further sections of the TIP being brought forward in May for approval in June. In particular, the consultation list was being developed and the environmental justice analysis of projects proposed in the 2017-2020 TIP was taking place.

Gallagher said that to that end, SWMPC was requesting that the NATS May meeting be moved back to its original date of May 24th. SWMPC's Executive Director and the new planner will be in attendance to present the UWP, as Mani will have departed and Gallagher will be in conference. However, the May 24th date will allow SWMPC to make changes to the UWP as needed prior to submitting to MDOT on June 1.

- **Railroad Crossing Count Requests and other traffic counts**

Gallagher said that SWMPC had been receiving requests for traffic counts at railroad crossings from local agencies that MDOT had asked them to complete. This was the first time that SWMPC had received these sorts of requests. Gallagher said that Bellina had noted that the Cass County Road Commission had already completed railroad counts requested for its townships. The program is relatively new and is designed to help with rail safety funding applications.

Mani encouraged NATS member jurisdictions that needed help with railroad counts to mark "YES" to the question on the traffic count form about whether this was being done to fulfill an MDOT count request.

6. Public Transit Updates

- **SWMPC Transit Updates**

Gallagher said that responses had come in to the request for proposals (RFP) for the Countywide Service Plan. There were a total of three proposals. The evaluation team, made up of stakeholders from throughout Berrien County, would be evaluating the proposals in the weeks ahead based on overall strength and the ability of each respondent to complete each of the work tasks. One or two respondents would be invited in for an interview. Gallagher said that SWMPC hoped to have a contract in place by late May.

Gallagher also said that in follow up to the Regional Coordinated Plans for Human Services Transportation, there was a group in Michigan looking at consolidating mobility managers over multiple counties. This could potentially pose a number of coordination challenges.

- **Agency Updates**

No report.

7. Land Use Updates

None.

8. Project Updates

Berrien County Road Commission

- Preventative Maintenance project on Bertrand Road, Stateline, and Third Sts has been obligated.
- Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail was currently in the midst of an archaeological study to make sure no historic artifacts were being disturbed. Once the study concludes, the grant can be officially awarded for 2017 construction.

Cass County Road Commission

- Adamsville Road from May St to US-12 Resurfacing was obligated March 30th and is on track for a June letting.
- Fir Road from Redfield St to US-12 resurfacing was obligated on April 12th. It is scheduled for a June letting.

- Fir Road from Stateline Road to Redfield Road resurfacing was obligated in April and is scheduled for a June letting.

Bellina said that the GI package for Phase II of the Gumwood Road project had been tossed out at MDOT when it was not obligated in time in 2015, so CCRC had to restart the process.

The design phase of the Edwardsburg Sports Complex Non-Motorized Path CMAQ project was under contract.

City of Buchanan

-The Red Bud Trail resurfacing from the South City limits to Front Street, and Red Bud and Front St traffic signal replacement project is scheduled for construction over the summer.

MDOT

- US-12 bridge deck over M-51 restore and rehabilitate is still on track for construction in 2017.
- US-12 from Bakertown Road to the start of the divided section has been moved to 2018 construction.

9. Old Business

None.

10. New Business

▪ **Resolution of Support for 5303 Competitive Application**

Mani said that one grant opportunity to do planning studies may be coming through a competitive statewide process for 5303 transit planning funds. The state has accrued a balance of approximately \$6 million in these planning funds that went unused by MPOs, and it is opening up this balance for projects. Many activities are eligible, but they must relate to transit planning.

SWMPC is filing two applications, but only one project impacts the NATS area. Mani said SWMPC was looking for approval in support of an application for:

- An update of Berrien County's Coordination Human Services Plan. This was a requirement imposed under President George W. Bush that in order for an agency to use FTA funds, it needs to have a plan for coordinating travel needs with human services. The Berrien County plan requires an update. This impacts funding of mobility management programs as well as Job Access and Reverse Commute programs.

A motion by Bellaire with support by Personette to approve the resolution of support for 5303 funding. **Motion passed.**

▪ **2014-2017 TIP Amendment**

Mani said that he had coordinated with Dan Roberts at the Coloma Office to understand better the location of the "US-31 BR" signal optimization project that was proposed for 2016 construction by MDOT. Mani presented a map of the location, stating that it covered much of Main St in Niles as well as M-51. This project was funded for \$72,000 entirely in National Highway Performance Program funds.

Mani also noted that the 2017 road projects for the Berrien County Road Commission, the Cass County Road Commission, and using the NATS' allocation of STP funds, would be administratively modified to take into account the proportionate reduction in funds that were needed in order to bring the MPO into fiscal constraint. The MPO was previously overprogrammed for 2017, despite approval from FHWA. This was already agreed to and submitted in the NATS 2017-2020 TIP.

A motion by Bellaire with support by Bradfield to approve the 2014-2017 TIP Amendment, retroactive to last month's meeting. **Motion passed.**

▪ **State and Federal Updates**

None

11. Public Comment

None.

12. Privilege of the Floor

Mani once again thanked committee members for an excellent experience these past four years. He said he would really miss this region, and while his job in New York state would be focused on helping the MPOs there, he encouraged MPO members to reach out to him if they ever needed to.

13. Adjournment at 3:23 p.m.

- The next meeting will be May 24 at 2:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Gautam Mani, Associate Planner, 2016