

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee

MINUTES

October 26, 2010
Niles City Council Chambers
3:00 P.M.

Policy Members Present:	Betty Arndt, City of Niles Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Paul Boggs, Milton Township Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Irving Frost, Howard Township Debbie Johnson, Cass County Commissioner Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Bill Marx, City of Buchanan Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner Paul South, MDOT – Coloma TSC Tracy Vines, Berrien County Planning Commission
Policy Members Absent:	Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Georgia Boggs, City of Niles John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Jessica Mitchell, MACOG (ex-officio) Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) Representative, Buchanan Dial-a-Ride Representative, Ontwa Township
SWMPC Staff Present:	Anna Rahtz Trevor Thomas
Others Present:	

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Vice-chair LaMore called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. and led the group in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. *Chairman Rodebush was absent.*
- Rahtz stated that the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission would like to recognize Don Ryman for his 16 years of service on the boards, and the Vice-chair presented him with a gift and certificate.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Poehlman, seconded by Frost, to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2010 Policy Committee meeting. Motion approved unanimously with no corrections.*

3. Staff Report

- **Annual Report**

- Rahtz announced that the fiscal year 2010 Annual Report for NATS will soon be completed and will be available on the NATS Documents page at http://swmpc.org/nats_docs.asp, mentioning that she will bring hard copies to the next meeting. The Annual Report is a list of planning activities conducted during the fiscal year, as well as the budget for the year.
- Vines asked if any action was needed by the committee to approve the Annual Report, and Lenze responded no.

- **CMAQ Meeting – November 10th, 1:00pm, BCRC**

- Thomas announced that a special CMAQ meeting has been called by St. Joseph and the Berrien County Road Commission. The purpose of the meeting is to reprioritize the project selection for 2011-2014 to see if the Hilltop Road sidewalk project can be funded in 2011.
- Lenze noted that the 2011 CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program) applications are being reviewed and will be forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration within the next week.
- Lenze added that because of the new EPA standards, three-quarters of the State of Michigan will qualify for CMAQ funding starting in fiscal year 2012, and so the same amount of CMAQ funding for the State of Michigan will be divided up amongst far more counties.
- Ryman asked if CMAQ funds were only for areas in nonattainment status, noting that Berrien and Cass had been moved back to attainment status. Lenze responded that they are actually in attainment maintenance status and thereby are still eligible for CMAQ funds, because once an area is in nonattainment it is never moved back to full attainment status. Lenze added that with the new EPA standards, Berrien and Cass will be moved back into nonattainment status along with most of the state.
- Ryman noted that studies had proven that the emissions in Berrien County and Cass County do not come from a source within their own counties, but are blown eastward across Lake Michigan, meaning that there is nothing that can be done within Berrien or Cass County to improve the air quality that results from those emissions. He added that it benefits the counties to receive the CMAQ funding, but that it would be unfair if development of new industry was prevented from coming to southwest Michigan due to air quality concerns.

- **NTI Transportation and Land Use Workshop**

- Thomas reported on the workshop that he, Rahtz, and Auvil had attended two weeks earlier, held at the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and sponsored by the National Transit Institute. He mentioned that he and Rahtz could make the materials available from the workshop for anyone who was interested, including the PowerPoint presentations.

- **Planning Michigan Conference**

- Thomas reported on the statewide planning conference he had attended the previous week in Detroit. He attended sessions a number of informational sessions, covering equity in planning, grant strategies, and technological applications for small and medium-sized communities.

4. Old Business

- **Public Participation member survey**

- Rahtz went over the results of the survey of NATS members regarding NATS' progress in fulfilling participation requirements.
- She added that at the TwinCATS meetings there had been a suggestion to form a subcommittee to further study public participation, as well as a suggestion to hold an annual meeting in the evenings jointly with the county commissioners.
- She also added that she and Thomas plan to begin implementing the strategies discussed at a previous NATS meeting, including posting flyers on buses and using partner organizations to distribute information.

- **Long Range Plan / Socioeconomic Data Update**

- Thomas reminded the committee members to hand in their revisions to the employment data to him before leaving the meeting, or to email him comments as soon as possible. He thanked everyone who had submitted comments thus far.

5. New Business

- **State Transportation Budget**

- Rahtz asked an MDOT representative to give an update on the state transportation budget.
- South explained that the State had sold around \$50 million worth of bonds as well as taken money from MDOT's budget in order to make the local match to fund the full state transportation program for fiscal year 2011. He added that this solution had not addressed the bigger concern of a steady revenue stream for transportation.
- Rahtz went over the budget, noting that the guidance for the Transportation Enhancement grants is being revised by spring 2011, to state that communities with complete streets policies will be favorably looked upon for receiving Enhancement grants. She added that SWMPC staff are willing to assist any communities who are interested in writing complete streets policies.

- **TIP Amendments**

- **BCRC**

- *Rahtz noted that these amendments are being made because BCRC was given approval by the committees to use remaining ARRA funds in FY 2010; however, the project that was selected was not eligible for that ARRA money because it did not fall within the South Bend urbanized area. The project was switched with the Niles-Buchanan Rd project that had been planned for FY 2012, and then all of the projects had to be rearranged due to the requirement that projects in the same year be at least 2 miles apart.*
- Amend in FY 2011, the project named Red Bud Trail, Bertrand Rd, Orange Rd, Portage Rd, and Ontario Rd for resurfacing. Project name changed to "Dayton Rd, Pucker St, Red Bud Trail, and Orange Rd." Limits changed to "Dayton Rd from US-12 to State Line, Pucker St from Ullery to Niles Twp Line, Red Bud Trail from US-12 to Buchanan City limits, and Orange Rd from Bertrand Rd to State Line." Length changed from 5.00 miles to 5.54 miles. County cost changed from \$19,052 to \$17,052, total phase cost changed from \$83,800 to \$93,952, and total project cost changed from \$105,000 to \$117,600. Comments: Moving Dayton Rd and Pucker St, previously approved to use ARRA money in 2010, to use STUL money in 2011.
- Delete in FY 2012, the project named Niles-Buchanan Rd for resurfacing from 0.3 miles west of Mayflower Rd to Niles City limits, for length of 3.00 miles. Federal cost (STUL) was 76,900. Comments: moved to FY 2010 to use ARRA funds.
- Amend in FY 2012, the project named Ontario Rd, Bell Rd, Ullery Rd, and Pucker St for resurfacing. Project name changed to "Bertrand Rd, Ontario Rd, Fulkerson Rd, and Bell Rd." Limits changed to "Bertrand Rd from St. Joseph River to County line, Ontario Rd from Third St to County line, Fulkerson Rd from Third St to M-51, and Bell Rd from Fifteenth to County line." Length changed from 4.90 miles to 4.84 miles. County cost changed from \$19,225 to \$17,052, total phase cost changed from \$96,125 to \$93,952, and total project cost changed from \$105,000 to \$107,374. Comments: Pucker St moved to FY 2011 and Ullery combined with other FY 2012 project.
- Amend in FY 2013, the project named West River Rd and Warren Woods Rd for resurfacing. Fiscal year changed from FY 2013 to FY 2012. Project name changed to "West River Rd, Ullery Rd, Pucker St, and Main St." Limits changed to "West River Rd from US-12 to BR-12, Ullery Rd from Old US-31 to Pucker St, Pucker St from Ullery Rd to M-51, and Main Street from Buchanan City limits to Reed Rd." Length changed from 4.10 miles to 4.22 miles. County cost changed from \$19,225 to \$17,052, total phase cost changed from \$96,125 to \$93,952, and total project cost changed from \$105,000 to \$107,374. Comments: Moved from FY 2013 to FY 2012 to use funds left from Niles-Buchanan Rd.

- Amend in FY 2013, the project named Red Bud Trail and Walton Rd for resurfacing. Project name changed to "Walton Rd." Limits changed to "City of Buchanan to Old 31." Length changed from 6.80 miles to 4.18 miles. County cost changed from \$19,225 to \$17,052, total phase cost changed from \$96,125 to \$93,952, and total project cost changed from \$105,000 to \$107,374. Comments: Red Bud Trail was moved to a separate project in FY 2013.
- Add in FY 2013, the project named Warren Woods Rd and Red Bud Trail for resurfacing Warren Woods Rd from Boyle Lake Rd to Madron Lake Rd and Red Bud Trail from US-12 to Bertrand Rd. Length is 5.68 miles and project description is "hot patching and single seal coat." Construction phase. Federal cost (STUL) is \$76,900, county cost is \$17,052, total phase cost is \$93,952, and total project cost is \$107,374.
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Main St and Red Bud Trail for resurfacing. Project name changed to "Red Bud Trail, Third St, and Portage Rd" and limits changed to "Red Bud Trail from Buchanan City limit to Miller Rd, Third St from Bell Rd to Fort St, and Portage Rd from US-12 to State Line." Length changed from 4.00 miles to 6.15 miles.
- *Motion by South, seconded by Auvil, to approve the amendment of the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program to include the above seven BCRC amendments. Motion approved unanimously, with the correction of removing the comment on the Walton Rd project.*
- **CCRC**
 - *Rahz noted that the ACC years for the Huntly Rd project are no longer needed in FY 2012 and FY 2014, so the project is no longer being added in those years. The project was already completed in FY 2010. This leaves \$61,697 of STU funds available in FY 2012 and \$8,603 available in FY 2014).*
- **MDOT**
 - Add in FY 2012, the project named M-139 for bridge replacement over Dowagiac River near the north limit of Niles. Project description is superstructure replacement. Construction phase. Federal cost (BRT) is \$1,869,568, state cost (M) is \$467,392, total phase cost is \$2,336,960, and total project cost is \$2,496,604. MDOT job number 86785. Comments: FY 2012 construction.
 - Add in FY 2012, the project named US-31 for bridge work at Walton Rd over US-31 and US-31 NB & SB over Matthew Rd (urban) and Range Line Rd over US-31, Lake Chapin Rd over US-31, Snow Rd over US-31, Old US-31 over US-31, and E Shawnee Rd over US-31 (rural). Length is 6.13 miles, primary work type is Bridge – other, and project description is "Healer sealer, joint replacement, concrete surface coating for railing." Construction phase. Federal cost (BHN) is \$306,279, state cost (M) is \$76,571, total phase cost is \$382,850, and total project cost is \$1,004,259. MDOT job number 111239. Comments: 41.44% of project is in NATS area; full project cost is \$739,133 federal BHN, \$184,785 state.
 - Add in FY 2012, the general program account named Pre-Construction Phases GPA. Limits are regionwide, and project description is "Pre-Construction Phases Trunkline." Federal cost (ST) is \$4,093, state cost (M) is \$907, and total cost is \$5,000.
 - Add in FY 2012, the general program account named Program Development Scoping Trunkline GPA. Limits are regionwide and project description is "Program Development Scoping Trunkline." Early Preliminary Engineering phase. Federal cost (ST) is \$39,162, state cost (M) is \$11,842, and total cost is \$51,004.
 - *Motion by Poehlman, seconded by Cooper, to approve the amendment of the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program to include the above four MDOT amendments. Motion approved unanimously with no corrections.*
- **NDART (Conditional CMAQ project)**
 - Add in FY 2011, the Niles Dial-a-Ride Transit project named Free Fare Days for areawide transit operations. Project description is "Offer free fares when an Ozone Action Day is declared by MDNRE to encourage public transit use." T-ops phase. Federal cost (CM) is \$2,000, city cost is \$500, and total cost is \$2,500.

- *Rahatz noted that this project will only be added if it is approved for CMAQ funding, as proposed, by the Federal Highway Administration.*
- *It was noted that according to NDART's CMAQ application there will be up to 10 days, as declared by MDNRE.*
- *It was clarified that Niles Dial-a-Ride has not done this project in past years.*
- *Motion by Personette, seconded by Auvil, to approve the amendment of the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program to include the conditional addition of the above CMAQ project for NDART. Motion approved unanimously with no corrections.*
- **BCRC Local Match**
 - Rahtz noted that this discussion is being postponed to the next meeting.

6. Public Comment

- None.

7. Privilege of the Floor

- Personette announced that the City of Niles has finished work on its walking/biking trail, and invited everyone to attend the dedication at 10am on Saturday, October 30th.
- Arndt added that it is a testament to complete streets to see how many people are using the trail who would have limited mobility without it.
- Arndt asked if Niles Dial-a-Ride Transit services Howard Ellis School, and Pleveich responded yes.
- Johnson noted that there is a bridge in critical condition on the north shore of Eagle Lake in Cass County. It is a road that has low traffic and is not federal aid eligible. Although nearby residents would be greatly inconvenienced by the closing of the bridge, there are alternative routes. The fire and police departments have been able to work around it. There was discussion about whether bridges on non-federal aid eligible roads could be added to the critical bridge list. It was concluded that the bridge needs to be added to the critical bridge list in the next year.

8. Adjournment

- *Motion by Personette to adjourn the meeting at 3:35 P.M.*
- The next meeting is **November 16, 2010 at 3:00 P.M.**

Minutes compiled by: Anna Rahtz and Trevor Thomas, Transportation Planners, 10/27/10