

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
 Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

November 22, 2011

1:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

TAC Members Present:	Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Irving Frost, Howard Township Barbara Cook, Cass County Planning Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning Kelly Getman-Dissette, Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development-Representing BC Planning Erin Kercheval, MDOT Coloma TSC Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township Don Kronewitter, Milton Township Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Joe Ray, City of Niles Don Ryman, City of Buchanan
TAC Members Absent:	Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Neil Coulston, City of Niles DPW/Airport Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal Darrell Harden, MDOT Southwest Region Shelley Klug, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Kimberly O’Haver, Buchanan Dial a Ride Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Robert Rusch, MDEQ Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Evan Smith, Niles Dial A Ride Transit Representative, MACOG (ex officio)
SWMPC Staff Present:	Suzann Flowers Trevor Thomas
Others Present:	Sue Kronewitter

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Ray called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. Minutes

- Motion by Cook with support by Frost to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2011 TAC Committee Meeting minutes. **Motion passed.**

3. Staff Report

▪ **Michigan Rail Summit**

Flowers discussed her attendance at the Michigan Rail Summit on October 31 in Lansing. Governor Snyder, Senator Proos, and several people from the Federal Rail Administration and Federal Highway Administration spoke about the advantages of rail service for the state of MI. The Governor was clear that the Chicago to Detroit high speed rail line was a focus along with the building of the new bridge. There was also increased attention on the MI to Canada connection. The Wolverine Line gets money from the Federal Rail Administration, the Battle Creek to Port Huron line and Pere Marquette lines get money from the State of Michigan. The Summit focused on the importance of rail as an economic driver for the recovery of the state of Michigan. For southwest Michigan, connecting the South Shore line is very important so that we don't have people drive all the way to South Bend to pick up the train. Discussions about the importance of Transit Oriented Development in providing valuable and sustainable connections for our region. We need to think about the multi-modal activities that must be connected to our rail stations, such as walking, biking, and transit. Questions that we need to ask of our region: Who were we in the past, who are we now, and who do you aspire to be?

▪ **Freight Workshop**

Flowers attended a freight workshop in Lansing on November 10 and the focus of the workshop to discuss the supply chain role in transportation planning and economic development for the state of Michigan. The key speakers were two MSU professors from the Department of Supply Chain Management. The scope of the workshop focused on 6 key areas: An overview of supply chain management how supply chain management is used to maximize firm profits, private sector opportunities to add value public sector opportunities to add value, discussion of the results of research work done by the professors, and what the next steps should be. One of the key geographic areas that were discussed were the importance of regions, Michigan's connection to Canada, and the interconnected region of the Midwest. Lee Scherwitz from the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport was also in attendance from southwest Michigan.

▪ **Officer elections due in 2013**

The next cycle of officer elections will be held in 2013 unless any officer resigns, then an immediate election will be held at the next regularly scheduled committee meeting.

▪ **New TIP Calendar (Next process date is January)**

The Michigan Transportation Planning Association has issued the latest version of the Amendment Schedule for the Transportation Improvement Program. Handouts are available and the schedule was posted on the TwinCATS FY 2012 Meeting handouts. Flowers pointed out that there are not only changes on when TIP amendments will be processed but each TwinCATS meeting is listed along with when Staff need to have TIP amendments submitted to be processed.

Bellina asked why there was a TIP submission at the end of September. Lenze stated that this submission is for MDOT to tie up loose ends for the next fiscal year.

▪ **McCoy's Creek Trail**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources announced that the Friends of McCoy's Creek Trail received 440 out of 510 points from the DNR Trust Fund. The Friends were 20 points higher than Ann Arbor and 30 points higher than St. Joseph. The grant request was for \$288,000. The development will take place between the Tinshop, where the existing trail ends and continue to Fireman's Park.

4. Project Updates

- 2010

- **Michigan Department of Transportation**

- M-139 over St. Joseph River Bridge Replacement – in progress with draft hydraulics study, base plan alignment, and traffic plan; will be holding a design charrette in the fall; environmental assessment will be done fall 2011-2014 Construction-design phase
- M-139 over Dowagiac River bridge work – new bridge will be built, 2012 May-October-letting,

- 2011

- **Michigan Department of Transportation**

- US-31 freeway signing upgrade (jn108921) – Let, construction 2012 April-August
- M-139 (Main St) over St. Joseph River bridge replacement SUB and PE phases (104152) – design phase
- M-51 slope stabilization near Pucker St (108186) –continuing to monitor the slope, consultant hired for base design
- M-60 weigh station at US-12 interchange (110758) –spring 2012 Construction
- US-12 resurfacing from M-60 to Edwardsburg (90361) –let construction 2012 May-October
- M-139 Over Dowagiac River, near N limit of Niles-JN 86785 bridge replacement-2012 Construction
- US-12, .68 miles east of Cassopolis Rd-JN 112819 ROW Phase-MDOT is obtaining culvert right of way

- **Niles Dial-A-Ride**

The grant was just awarded in September 2011 and the projects will be completed in 2012

- Bike racks-purchase up to 5 bicycle racks and install kits for buses
- Generator
- On bus camera system
- Preventative maintenance
- Ramp lift
- Replacement tires-ordered October 2011
- Landscaping

- **Cass County Road Commission**

- ~~Pine Lake St. M-60 to Anderson Rd JN 112861 CON Phase resurface done~~
- ~~Redfield St from Kline Rd to Conrad Rd JN 110361 CON Phase resurface done~~
- Redfield St. over Christina Creek-JN 109283 bridge replacement CON phase-ROW, let in Feb.
- ~~Redfield St and Bertrand Rd Berrien County Line to Ironwood Rd JN 107691 CON Phase resurface done~~
- Redfield St. M-62 to Brande Creek Rd-, JN 114517 CON Phase-construction 2012, let in Jan.

- **Berrien County**

- Red Bud Trail at Old Bitty Creek JN 114518 CON Phase- design phase
- West River Rd, Ullery Rd, Pucker St, and Main St. JN 112101 CON Phase-plan submitted
- Bertrand Rd, Ontario Rd, Fulkerson, and Bell Rd. JN 112086 CON Phase-plan submitted
- Bertrand Rd. from Mayflower Rd to Red Bud Trail CON Phase JN 112084-in design

- **MDOT**

- M-51 near Pucker St. JN 108186 CON Phase-restore and rehabilitate-design phase 2013 construction-consultant working on design
- US-31 Walton Rd over US-31, US-31 NB JN 111239 CON Phase-bridge-let in March 2012 construction-turned in Jan

- **Niles Dial A Ride**
Will not have permission to move forward on these projects until August 2012
 - Garage equipment
 - Garage maintenance
 - Preventative maintenance
 - Scheduling software
 - Parking lot
- **Cass County**
 - Bertrand Rd from Ironwood Dr. to Batchelor JN 112863 CON Phase-resurface-in design

5. Old Business

None

6. New Business

- **NATS TIP Subcommittee Review Meeting**
Staff will be setting up a meeting to review and discuss TIP projects for FY 2012-2014 along with the Illustrative List to ensure that there are not any anticipated problems for projects that may not be able to find their local match or changes in the scope of projects.
-Bellina asked who was in attendance at the last meeting and Flowers stated that she will look into this more and sent out the information when the meeting is firmly set. The meeting was tentatively set for December 13, 2011 with the meeting to be in the morning around 9:30a.m. The meeting will be noticed and is open to the public.
- **Asset Management Federal Aid Report**
Thomas handed out a 2 page fact sheet that displayed the results from the 2011 Road Ratings for Berrien and Cass Counties. He explained that only 50% of the federal aid eligible roads are rated each year. In Figure 1 if you compare the years of 2009 and 2011 those would be the same roads rated and that if people wanted to a full list of the rated roads then they can go online to view those ratings since 2003.
-Ganum asked how the roads were rated. Bellina stated that the road are rated by a team of 3 people: one from SWMPC, one from the local jurisdiction, and a MDOT representative it is a team of 3 people from SWMPC the local jurisdiction, and MDOT who have all been trained to evaluate the condition of the road on a scale from 1-10.
- **Participation Plan Annual Review**
Staff are in the process of updating the Transportation Participation Plan for the MPOs. Several copies were brought for committee members to review and the draft plan was put on the FY 2012 meeting website. The maps in the Environmental Justice section of the plan need to be updated to review 2010 Census data. Staff will continue to make changes but encourage the Committee members to begin reviewing the proposed changes and sharing feedback with staff. The comment period for public participation is 45 days and staff will be asking for this plan to be put out for public comment in December.
-Getman-Dissette asked if the goals can be placed in a separate document for review for the Committees. Flowers stated that she will make the change on the website and send an email out the first week of December with this information.
- **Attendance for 2011**
Staff are reviewing attendance records for the past year and will be sending letters to communities that do not have an assigned representatives or if representatives have not been attending meetings.

- **2013 CMAQ Call for Projects**

Thomas handed out several items related to CMAQ including a CMAQ 2013 Call for Projects letter from MDOT, project list for 2011-2014 Berrien County CMAQ projects, and CMAQ 2013 Funding Amounts table. Thomas explained that due to the slight decrease in population in Berrien County there is a slight decrease in CMAQ funds. The funds available to 2013 are \$528,765 and the project list for desired CMAQ projects is at \$587,099. A meeting needs to be held to discuss 2012-2014 CMAQ projects with a projection of lower funds for each year. He also reported that Rachael Tupica from Federal Highway is reviewing the list of 2012 projects and that he should know the status of those shortly.

Thomas announced that a meeting on December 19, 2011 at 8:00a.m. was set at the TwinCATS meeting to review this topic. The meeting will be held at the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport, this is also the same date as the next TwinCATS Committee.

Thomas reminded Committee members that this is not an MPO function and is a county level project. Flowers and Thomas will help Berndt advertise and announce a call for projects in the region.

- **Move March 2012 Meeting**

There was a possibility of needing to move the March 2012 meeting to ensure that all TIP Amendments were submitted to MDOT in a timely manner. After speaking with Lenze there is no need to change our meeting date.

- **Letter of Support for River Park Trail in South Bend, IN**

Flowers presented a letter to the Committee to support the expansion of the River Park Trail in South Bend, IN. She stated that since we are the MI portion of the MACOG MPO, which includes the City of South Bend, that it would be good to show our support of the project.

Motion by Bellina with support by Kercheval to have the Policy Committee approve the Policy Chairman to sign the letter of support for the River Park Trail extension in South Bend, IN. **Motion approved.**

7. Public Comment

-Auvil asked if the printed materials would be ending at the end of the year. Flowers stated that yes that was correct since it was approved by the Committees. Cook stated that it would be good to project the information on the screen in the meeting room. Flowers stated that this was always the plan so that if people came to the meeting would be able to see what was being discussed.

8. Privilege of the Floor

None

9. Adjournment: 2:10 p.m.

- The next meeting is **December 20, 2011 at 1:30 P.M.**

Minutes compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Trevor Thomas, Transportation Planners, 11/2011