

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

November 24, 2015

1:00 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

TAC Members Present:	Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Kelly Getman-Dissette, Niles Dial A Ride Darrell Harden, MDOT Southwest Region Erin Jolivette, MDOT Coloma TSC Melinda Michael, Four Flags Area Council on Tourism Kim O’Haver, Buchanan Dial A Ride Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Joe Ray, City of Niles
TAC Members Absent:	Barbara Cook, Cass County Planning Commission Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal Matthew Galbraith, MDOT Statewide Planning Representative, Berrien County Community Development John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Jason Latham, MDOT Southwest Region (Alternate) Stephen LeClaire, Bertrand Township Bill Marx, City of Buchanan Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Bob Sutton, Mason Township Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Joe Sobieralski, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Bob Sutton, Mason Township Planning Commission Kelly Sweeney, Milton Township
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani
Others Present:	Dennis Schuh, Berrien County Public Transit

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting was called to order by Bellina at 1:04 p.m. and Getman-Dissette led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes

Bellina made a clarifying comment based on the discussion at last month's meeting about reclassifying Section St. Bellina noted that because trucks do have an alternate route, the Village of Edwardsburg could still restrict truck traffic on Section St even if they reclassify it as federal-aid eligible.

Other minor typographical corrections to the minutes from October were noted. Mani said he would make the corrections.

A motion by Harden with support by Ray to approve the TAC Committee Meeting minutes, as presented, from October 27, 2015. **Motion passed.**

3. Changes to the Posted Agenda

There were no changes to the posted agenda.

A motion by Harden with support by Bradfield to approve the agenda as posted. **Motion passed.**

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Staff Report

Local Call for Projects for STP Funds

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.

Bellina asked if like with the RTF program, the MPO was being asked to lower its original targets for 2016 and 2017 as well in an attempt to reflect actual obligation authority. Mani believed that the MPO was not being asked to adjust its targets downward, but would clarify with 100% certainty. Dewey said that the lower targets also would go against the first-come, first-serve system under which obligation authority works in Michigan, and would place NATS at a disadvantage to other MPOs that use up more than their share of obligation authority.

Harden said that the RTF program was making target adjustments, so that our neighboring region, Region 3, there would be a 16% cut in the target for FY 2016, and a 22% cut in FY 2017. Harden said he was not sure of the exact figures for RTF Region 4.

Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects

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.

Bellina said that he had talked to Matt Wiitala and that his understanding was that NATS could only program two years' worth of TAP funding in one go if they reduced their STP programming by \$36,000 in that year, in order to maintain fiscal constraint. Harden said that it might require some work with how the project is noted in MDOT's accounting system. Mani said he thought the Office of Economic Development had resolved the issue, and that was why MDOT had given the NATS the go ahead to program two years' worth of funding. Mani said he would check in with Matt Wiitala regarding the funding.

Bellina also said that Phase I of the Gumwood Road non-motorized path had in fact used up the 2015 obligation authority for NATS, so even if he had submitted final plans for Phase II, it could not have been obligated in 2015. Mani said that he was told that Phase I was being rolled over due to a balance left in the TAP program, and that NATS could still program both allocations. He would check in with Matt Wiitala to clarify what had happened, as NATS had programmed the projects this way because of assurances from MDOT.

Dewey said that perhaps a formal agreement was needed between NATS MPO and MDOT Finance to resolve the issue.

- **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.

Dewey clarified that projects within the MPO area do go back through the MPO for approval. Mani said that they went through the MPO in order for them to be inserted into the TIP. Rural CMAQ projects go directly into the STIP.

The Cass County CMAQ meeting will be on Tuesday December 8th 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 14th 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 figures from Buchanan Dial-A-Ride and Niles Dial-A-Ride. O’Haver said that the ridership figure was wrong, as Buchanan DAR had over 10,000 riders to date in 2015. Gallagher apologized, as she had not gotten the most up-to-date report from the PTMS database.

6. Land Use Updates

None.

7. Project Updates

Bellina shared that 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**

- 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 Personette with support by Bradfield to recommend that the Policy Committee 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 4th. 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.

- **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.

Bradfield expressed concerns about local revenue sharing being impacted by movement of general fund revenues.

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

- **News Items of Interest**

None

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Privilege of the Floor

None.

12. Adjournment at 2:27 p.m.

- The next meeting will be December 15 at 1:00 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Gautam Mani, Associate Planner, 2015

DRAFT