

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
 Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

January 24, 2012

1:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

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

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Flowers asked if Ganum would chair the meeting since both the Chair (Ray) and Vice-Chair (Bellina) were absent. Ganum called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. Minutes

- Motion by Cook with support by Frost to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2011 TAC Committee Meeting minutes. **Motion passed.**

3. Staff Report

- **Transportation Asset Management Trainings**

Thomas discussed two training opportunities with the Committee members. The first was on the road rating trainings taking place. He highlighted the specific dates that may be of particular interest to Committee members Road Rating training dates have been announced for the upcoming calendar year. This training is necessary if you want to assist in rating roads in your community. Communities can have their roads rated once every three years. Thomas explained that he attended the training and found the information very helpful in understanding how road ratings are done. The training dates are as follows: February 28, 2012-West Branch, February 29, 2012-Saginaw, March 1, 2012-Grand Rapids, March 27, 2012- Kalamazoo, March 28, 2012-Dearborn, and March 29, 2012-Lansing. Thomas suggested that those interested in signing up for the training should do the webinar session first then the classroom session.

- **Climate Change and Energy Planning for MPOs**

Flowers took part in a Climate Change webinar that focused on learning from the experiences of three communities and how climate change has affected the way that their planning focus has changed. The case studies reviewed New Orleans, Oregon State DOT, and U.S. DOT. They also focused on how the roles of MPO's are changing and that their focus on planning is becoming more regionally focused. In addition, MPOs are poised to be able to respond to the needs of communities with their work with GIS, understanding the regional implications of transportation decisions and networks, and their relationship with multiple agencies. It was interesting that communities are responding to the needs for climate change analysis differently. Oregon has a state DOT led initiative that has set the standards. In the U.S. DOT example, they reviewed the land use practices in Cape Cod, MA and how that could impact the people and land use decisions.

- **Buchanan Lions Club Meeting-March 8, 2012**

Flowers thanked Joseph Kring and his wife for helping to facilitate the presentation to the Buchanan Lions Club. Flowers explained that this will provide staff the opportunity to engage other people in the transportation process.

4. Project Updates

- **2010**

- **Michigan Department of Transportation (No representative present)**

- 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 (No representative present)**

- 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.

• 2012

- **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 (No representative present)**
 - 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 June 2012 construction
- **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 (No representative present)**
 - Bertrand Rd from Ironwood Dr. to Batchelor JN 112863 CON Phase-resurface-in design

5. Old Business

- CMAQ update
Thomas stated that CMAQ applications have to be to their respective agencies by February 1, 2012 to be submitted to MDOT. Communities from Berrien County would submit their projects to Brian Berndt and Cass County Communities will need to submit to Joe Bellina. Thomas also mentioned that there will be a call for CMAQ projects for 2015 and beyond coming up in November 2012 and that staff will keep Committee members of the request once it is received.

- **NATS TIP Policy**

Flowers explained the purpose of the policy and why a policy was being drafted. She referred to minutes from the December 2011 meeting to get all attendees up to speed.

-Gruchot asked that the purpose of the policy (item #2) be removed as a numbered item and added to the beginning of the document.

-Getman-Dissette asked that acronyms be used after the spelling of words such as NATS, TIP, and MPO.

-Flowers also stated that at the TwinCATS meeting Lenze had made some suggested changes. Staff will bring the policy back to the Committees next month once the changes have been made.

- **Annual Report**

Flowers stated that the Annual Report was completed and that the SWMPC Board will be taking action on the Annual Report on January 31, 2012. She asked for any comments or modifications from the Committee members.

A motion was made by Gruchot with support by Auvil to approve the fiscal year 2011 NATS Annual report. **Motion passed.**

- **Meeting dates (keep same or split)**

Flowers stated that the reason for the follow-up discussion on this issue was to give Committee members 1 month to review the pros and cons to splitting up NATS committee meetings. Flowers stated that the reason for the discussion was to ensure that proper notification is given to the public when TIP amendments are present on the agenda. Staff need at least 10 days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting to get out the legal notice, which requires a 7-day public comment period.

-Frost stated that it would be difficult for him to come to 2 separate meetings, he likes having 1 trip.

-Ryman stated that keeping the meetings on the same date would reduce the amount of money spent on travel.

-Harden mentioned that it would add additional travel time for many members of the committee and time commitments.

-Lenze stated that as long as the public comment period is being met the NATS Committee can set their meetings as they see fit.

-Auvil suggested having the TAC meetings one month and then the Policy the next month to allow for additional TIP changes.

-Lenze suggested that when a change needs to be made that waiting for the Policy to meet an additional month later would be a burden since the TIP is now processed every 2 months instead of every month.

-Cook suggested that delaying projects would not be good for local agencies.

A motion was made by Cook with support by Frost to keep the meeting schedule as it currently stands, TAC and Policy meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month unless otherwise noted. **Motion passed.**

6. New Business

- **Long Range plan Revenue Estimates**

Thomas explained that MDOT had released Long Range Plan revenue estimates for the purposes of planning. He further stated that new numbers will be given to staff in 2013. The base year numbers, which are representative of the planned 2011 dollars, do not change in years 2012 and 2013 and then increase by 2%.

-A question was raised about what a TMA versus small mpo meant. Lenze stated that the NATS area is part of the South Bend, IN transportation management area, which are mpo's with a population size

of 200,000. The money noted on the handout shows the portion of the TMA funds used for the NATS region. A small mpo, such as TwinCATS have populations over 50,000 but fewer than 200,000.

7. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

8. Privilege of the Floor

-Cook added that she had emailed Flowers about the costs of printing documents for the NATS meetings. Flowers stated that this utilizing the screen was a means of trying something new and that if Committee members did not like it we could explore other options.

-Ganum suggested that all materials should be digital.

-Flowers discussed the completion of the 9 county non-motorized map and plan and that cities and villages would be receiving their share of the maps over the next several weeks. Townships were not included in the allocation because there were so many in the 9 county regions. Flowers encouraged people to go to their local bike shops, city, village, and parks departments if they wanted to obtain a map. Flowers also mentioned a workshop that was being held on low impact development and planning for water quality. Flyers for the events were at the meeting.

-Ganum also mentioned that Niles Township was beginning to make some progress with their portion of the trail that they would like to have built and that discussions are ongoing. The biggest issue is how to cross US-12.

-Getman-Dissette stated that there has been concern of the South Bend, IN transportation agency, Transpo, reducing their fixed route connection to Niles DAR at Auten Road. This connection will continue until further notice.

9. Adjournment: 2:25 p.m.

- The next meeting is **February 28, 2012 at 1:30 P.M.**

Minutes compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Trevor Thomas, Transportation Planners, 1/2012