

MINUTES
NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Technical Advisory Committee
December 18, 2007
Niles City Council Chambers
1:30 P.M.

TAC Members Present:	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Neil Coulston, City of Niles & DPW/Airport Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning John Gruchot, Berrien County Planning Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Ray Lenze, MDOT – Planning William Myers, Niles Charter Township Jennifer Osborne, MDOT John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride Joe Ray, City of Niles Joe VanderMeulen, City of Buchanan
TAC Members Absent:	Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Mary Beth McAdams, MACOG (ex officio) Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Public Works Robert Rusch, MI Department of Environmental Quality/Air Quality Division Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sharon Tyler, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance/Cass Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kelly Getman-Dissette, SWMPC Suzann Flowers, SWMPC
Others Present:	

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Vice-Chairman Ray called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM. Bellina was absent.

2. Minutes

- Motion by Harden, seconded by Coulston, to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2007 TAC meeting. Motion approved.

3. Staff Report

- **Membership responses** – As a follow-up to the work of the bylaws subcommittee, local units of government have been contacted regarding membership in NATS. Other contacts have not yet been made in order for Getman-Dissette to work on socioeconomic (SE) data verifications, TIP revisions, and the annual report. Thus far, responses regarding membership have been received from:
 - City Niles
 - Berrien and Cass County Drain Commissioners
- **Getman-Dissette maternity leave** – The Dissette baby is due December 27th. Once the baby is born, Getman-Dissette will be on leave full-time for 10 weeks. She will then return to work part-time, working Monday through Wednesday through December 2008, and then resume full time work early 2009. Until the new Transportation Planner is working, committee members should contact Kim Gallagher regarding MPO business.
- **New SWMPC Transportation Planner** – A new Transportation Planner has been hired to replace Rachael Tupica. The planner is Nick Musson, a University of Wisconsin graduate. Musson will spend two days with the commission this week, and begin full time after the start of the New Year.

- **FY 2008-11 TIP – FWHA comments and responses** – The FY 2008-11 TIP was approved by the SWMPC full board in July and then submitted to FHWA. SWMPC received and responded to several minor comments from FHWA (below) and resubmitted the document. It is anticipated that we will hear back about final approval sometime after the New Year. The updated document is available online at (http://www.swmpc.org/nats_docs.asp), and if anyone would like a hard copy, they should contact Getman-Dissette. Lenze reported that the FY 2006-08 TIP and STIP will remain in effect until February 1, 2008. Also, amendments to the FY 2008-11 TIP cannot be processed by MDOT until the new STIP is in effect. However, amendments can be approved locally and sent to MDOT for faster processing once the new STIP has been approved.

FHWA TIP Comments

1. Missing codes and descriptions in the FY 2009, 2010, and 2011 project listing. – *Project codes were identified and added.*
2. Environmental Justice analysis should be MPO specific and the maps used for the analysis should be included in the Environmental Justice section to make it easier for the public to reference. – *The document originally referred to both NATS and TwinCATS because the procedures used to identify EJ areas were the same. References to the TwinCATS MPO were removed. Per discussions between FHWA and Rachael Tupica, the maps were left in the appendix.*
3. Public Participation section lacks detail. In accordance with the participation activities outlined in the Participation Plan, the specific outreach conducted for the FY 2008-2011 TIP must be included. Also, since the Benton Harbor urbanized area is a maintenance area, there must be at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process (23 CFR 450.324 (b)). – *Discussion of the efforts in this section was enhanced. Public comment was invited on several occasions. Copies of notices sent were included in the appendices, and these documents were referenced more frequently in the text.*
4. The financial plan does not describe the assumptions and methods for estimating available and anticipated revenues. Also, the discussion on the cooperative process with MDOT for forecasting and distributing revenue by year is limited. The basis for the Operations and Maintenance costs must be included in the financial plan. – *Research on this requirement was conducted, and text was added to comply.*
5. The total proposed commitments, listed in the paper copy of the financial constraint table, differs from the total proposed commitments in the electronic version for FY 2008-2011. – *The errors were corrected. Both documents now match.*
6. The “year of expenditure dollars” discussion is limited and does not state the inflation rate used. – *Research on this requirement was conducted, several committee members were contacted regarding their cost estimation procedures, and text was added to comply.*
7. Regulation 23 CFR 450.324(l) (1) states the TIP should identify the criteria and the process for prioritizing projects to be included in the TIP. While there is a general discussion of the process for selecting projects, there is nothing regarding the criteria used. – *This information was well documented, and this text was added to comply.*

- **FY 2009 Local Safety and High Risk Rural Roads** – A call for projects for the local safety and high risk rural roads programs was announced. Projects cannot exceed \$400,000 and applications are due February 29, 2008. Rural road projects would not require MPO approval, but safety projects would. Coulston noted that MDOT was going to submit a project at Main and Broadway last year, but he is not sure whether or not that happened. Harden will follow up with Woolcock. Lenze told the group that safety projects should come before the TAC for approval at the January meeting. The safety program is competitive, so if there is more than one project, the group should decide on the best one to submit for funding.
- **Asphalt seminar** – As previously e-mailed, Michigan’s LTAP will be holding a seminar on maintaining asphalt pavements on January 8 and 9 in Mt. Pleasant.

4. Project Updates

- City of Buchanan - Vandermeulen reported that he is working with the city’s engineers on Front St.
- Berrien County Road Commission - Berndt reported that preliminary plans for Niles Buchanan Rd. are in progress.

5. Old Business

- None

6. New Business

- **FY 2008 and 2009 CMAQ projects** – A list of CMAQ projects was distributed. This is the same list that was discussed in October, with the exception of the Cass County truck replacements. This project is yet to be approved by FHWA. There was discussion about whether or not Cass County transit projects need to be in the Niles TIP. Getman-Dissette will follow up to find out for sure. *A motion was made by Coulston, supported by Vandermeulen, to recommend approval of the FY 2008 and 2009 CMAQ projects, contingent upon the possible removal of the Cass County transit projects. Motion approved.* The projects are listed below. Lenze reminded everyone that they should not sign contracts on these projects because the FY 22008-11 TIP is not yet approved. However, work that is not covered by federal funds can begin.
- **SE data approval – Jen Osborne** – Getman-Dissette and Flowers have conducted meetings with local officials and made calls to local employers in an effort to verify socioeconomic data for the NATS area. Osborne explained that this information is essential for the travel demand model for the new long range transportation plan. Osborne is not yet comfortable with the data and would like committee members to take another look at their community’s information and send corrections to her. Maps and tables for committee members to use were distributed, and she asked that corrected data be returned to him no later than January 15. Osborne will compile the new information so that population, household, and employment numbers can be approved at the January meeting.
- **2008 meeting schedule** – Currently, the NATS TAC meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month (unless a holiday conflicts) at 1:30 pm at the Niles City Council Chambers. Committee members agreed that this schedule is amenable for 2008. *A motion was made by Harden, supported by Gruchot, to approve the 2008 meeting schedule. Motion approved.*

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Privilege of the Floor

- Berndt reported that Walton Rd. from Old 31 to new US 31 has been transferred from MDOT to the Road Commission.

9. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 2:14 PM. The next meeting is January 22, 2008 at 1:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planner, 12/27/07

FY 2008 and 2009 CMAQ Projects

Year	Jurisdiction	Project	Limits	Description	Federal	State	Local	Total
2008	City of Buchanan	Street sweeper	Citywide	Replace 1 diesel street sweeper with Alternative Fuel (CNG) clean vehicle	\$169,900 CM		\$42,967 City	\$212,867
2008	MDOT	M-62	M-62 at Redfield Rd.	Signal upgrade and optimization using semi articulated signal camera detection	\$65,000 CM			\$65,000
2008	SWMPC	Rideshare	Countywide	Standard rideshare program	\$12,000 CM			\$12,000
2009	SWMPC	Rideshare	Countywide	Standard rideshare program	\$12,000 CM			\$12,000