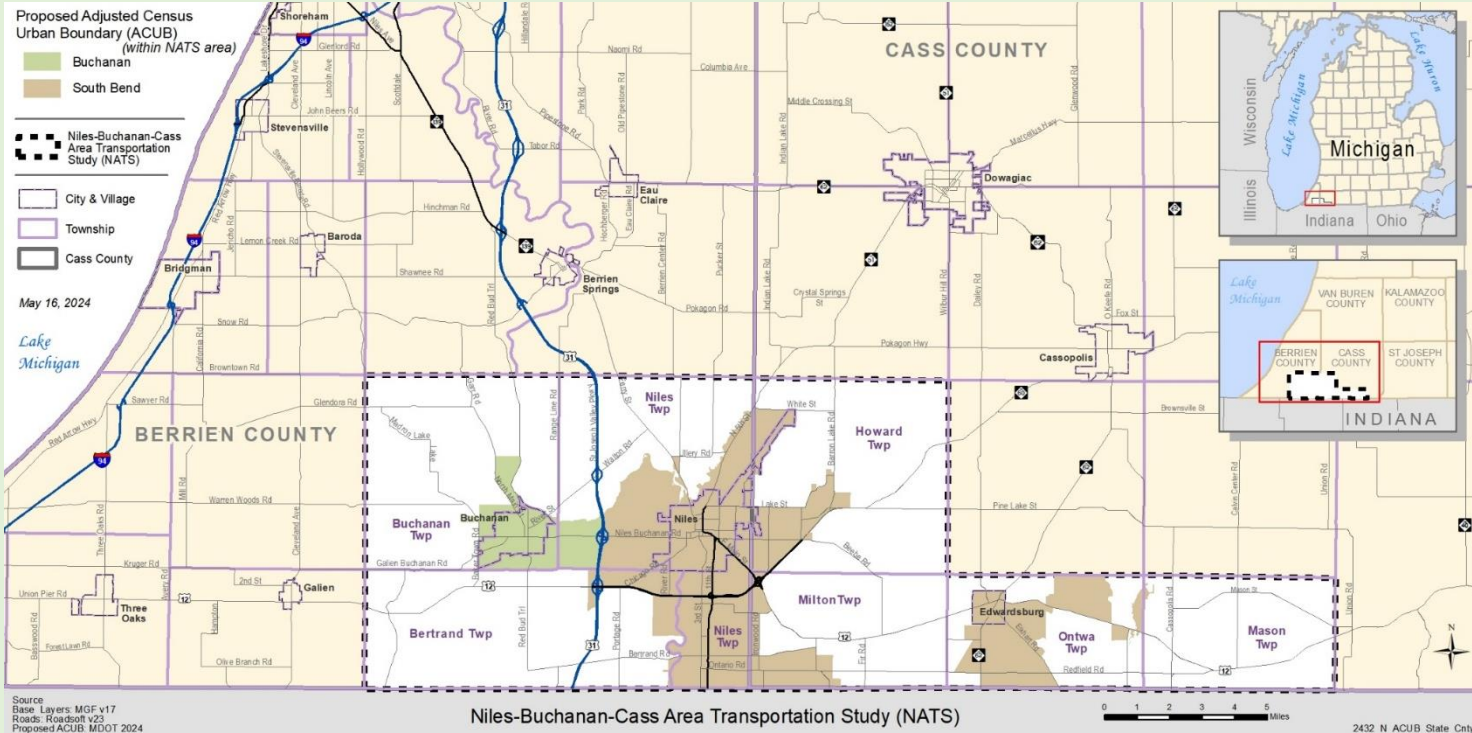


NATS 2026 – 2029 CALL FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS GUIDANCE PACKET

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT FUNDING (STBG)

A federal transportation program administered by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission in partnership with the Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study member communities and the Michigan Department of Transportation



Introduction

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC,) the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Niles Area Transportation Study (NATS) planning area is announcing the availability of funding for transportation projects through the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant program (STBG), funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program provides flexible funding that localities may use for projects that preserve and improve conditions and performance on any Federal-aid Eligible Road, on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, or for transit capital projects. STBG promotes flexibility in local transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address regional and local transportation needs.

Eligible Applicants

The eligible applicants include cities, villages, the Cass County Road Commission, and the Berrien County Road Department. If a township wishes to retain a consultant to handle the application and engineering for a project, the Berrien County Road Department or the Cass County Road Commission must be listed under the agency name on the application.

Location of Projects

NATS STBG funded road projects must be located on a federal aid eligible road that is within the NATS planning area. The NATS planning area includes the cities of Buchanan and Niles, the townships of Bertrand Township, Buchanan Township, Howard Township, Mason Township, Milton Township, Niles Charter Township, Ontwa Township, and the Village of Edwardsburg.

A map of road ownership and functional class can be found here: <https://arcg.is/ePvft>

Eligible Project Costs

Only construction costs are eligible for STBG funding. Preliminary and construction engineering is the project sponsor's responsibility to complete without STBG funding.

Local Match

The project sponsor must have already committed matching funds when the project is submitted. Applicants that contribute to the minimum local match will be given extra consideration through the scoring system. Local match is at least 18.15 percent of the total eligible construction costs. The local match does not necessarily have to be provided directly by the sponsor, but it must be a non-federal source to qualify as match. A resolution of support for the project from the agency who is financially responsible for the project is required at the time of project application submission.

Project Prioritization & Selection

The project prioritization process has many steps, and SWMPC conducts a fair process. SWMPC encourages public input in accordance with the adopted SWMPC Public Participation Plan.

1. Eligible applicants submit projects using the 2026-2029 TIP Application along with supporting documentation.
2. SWMPC staff will review project submissions using an approved Prioritization Process and score each project.
3. SWMPC staff and the NATS Prioritization Subcommittee will develop a preliminary list of all projects based on the score of the Prioritization Process Factors.
4. The prioritized list will be adjusted to remain fiscally constrained.
5. The recommended project list will be reviewed at the Technical Committee level.
6. The NATS Technical Committee will then make a recommendation to the NATS Policy Committee for approval.

Key Dates

Date	Activity	Public Involvement
June 28, 2024	Call for STBG funded projects issued	X
September 27, 2024	Applications due to SWMPC staff	X
October, 11, 2024	Submitted candidate projects available for public review and comment	X
November-December 2024	Project Review Subcommittee creates a fiscally constrained draft list of projects.	X
January 2025	NATS TAC & Policy Committee discussion and vote on STBG and transit projects	X

For further information on eligible projects, submittal of applications or other questions related to the STBG program, please contact Brandon Kovnat at (269) 925-1137 ext. 1524 or email kovnatb@swmpc.org.

Illustrative List of Projects

NATS MPO will adopt a list of projects that are financially constrained with the amount of STBG funding available for programming. Applications not included in the fiscally constrained list will be placed on an illustrative list of projects, ranked in priority order based on the project's evaluation score. Should additional funding become available NATS intends to fund projects on the approved illustrative list. This illustrative list will be in effect only until the adoption of the next programming cycle.

General Considerations for Federal Funding

Projects carried out using USDOT funds must comply with applicable provisions in Title 23 of the United States Code dealing with Federal-aid highways, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (Davis Bacon), Buy America, competitive bidding, and other contracting requirements, regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

Applicants are urged to familiarize themselves with title 23 requirements. Federal aid, including STBG, is most efficiently used for major road rehabilitation or reconstruction. The administrative burden of a federal-aid project can be substantial. Thus, a small project is often best accomplished with local funds to avoid this burden.

Application Instructions

The fillable PDF application is attached to the email sent out for the Call for Project. The application can also be found here: https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/nats_20262029_application.pdf. **A sample application is attached to this packet**

The applicant must fill out a separate application for each project for which they are applying for, with each road segment being considered a separate project. Although this is a call for the 2026–2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), projects approved and programmed for 2026 do not need to reapply. If the agency had an approved project on the approved [2023-2026 Illustrative list](#) and would like it to be considered for the 2026-2029 funding, they need to reapply with updated information.

Please save your final file in the following format: AgencyName_ProjectName.dox.

All applications are due on **Friday, September 27, 2024**

Please email the completed application to both Brandon Kovnat at kovnatb@swmpc.org and Kim Gallagher at gallagherk@swmpc.org. Please include “NATS STBG Application” in the subject line

You may also mail your application to: Brandon Kovnat
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
376 W. Main Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

NOTE: SWMPC staff will contact you with an email confirmation of your submitted application. If you do not receive an email confirmation, please contact an SWMPC staff member.

Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study
2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Project Application

If you need assistance, please contact Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Transportation Planner
Email kovnatb@swmpc.org or call (269) 925-1137 x 1524

Applicant Information

Agency Name: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Engineer/Consultant: _____ Company: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Project Description

Project Name/Road Name: _____

Project Limits (From/To): _____

Project Length (to the nearest hundredth of a mile): ____ miles

City, Village, or Township: _____

Additional location description if needed

Major Work Type: _____ Preferred Year of Funding: _____

Detailed Work Description (Include all work items as part of this project e.g. drain cleaning, curb and gutter replacement, guardrail, tree clearing, grading, culvert replacement, all types of ROW, ADA upgrades, etc.).

Describe any non-participating work if applicable

What is the need and purpose for this project (what issues are being addressed by the proposed work)

If you are submitting multiple applications, please rank your applications by priority. Rank: ____ of ____

Proposed Budget

	Amount	Percent of Total
Total Participating Construction Estimate	\$	100 %
STBG Requested	\$	%
Local Match	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%

Are the other funding sources secured? Yes No *If no, provide details on when these funds will be secured*

Non-Participating Cost Estimate: \$_____

Total Project Estimate with Non-Participating: \$_____

Are you willing to contribute additional local match above the minimum 18.15% required: Yes No

Are you willing to use an Advance Construct (AC): Yes No

If so, what is the maximum Amount: \$_____

Estimated Project Schedule

Activity	Date (Month/Year)
NEPA/SHPPO Submitted	
Right-of-Way Certification Submitted	
Grade Inspection (GI) Completed	
Full Biddable Package Submitted to MDOT	
Project Letting	
Construction Start	
Project Completion	

System Preservation

What is the most recent PASER rating (<https://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/tamcMap/>): _____

Do the project limits begin or end at a road with a PASER of 7 or higher: Yes No

Which MDOT guidelines will the project use:

What is the expected increase in Remaining Service Life (RSL): _____ Years

What is the current state of drainage on the road:

Regional Significance

What is the average annual daily traffic (AADT) volume for the limits of this project? _____ Vehicles/day

What is the National Functional Classification (NFC) of the road:

Safety

For the questions below use the five-year totals from 2019-2023 (<https://www.michigantrafficcrashfacts.org/>)

All Crashes

Total number of crashes: _____

Number of fatalities: _____

Number of Serious Injuries: _____

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes

Total number of crashes: _____

Number of fatalities: _____

Number of Serious Injuries: _____

List the safety countermeasures included in the project
Use the attached list of countermeasures and associated crash types

Counter Measure	Crash Type Addressed	Does this address a fatal or serious injury crash
<i>Improved pavement markings</i>	<i>Angle, Rear-End Crashes</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Complete Streets

Are there existing pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities within the limits of the project? If so, please explain

Describe any improvements to pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities included with the project

Will the new/improved pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities connect to existing pedestrian/bicycle facility or one that is planned to be completed before 2029: Y/N Yes No

Does your agency have a policy for maintaining non-motorized transportation infrastructure, such as bike lanes and pedestrian pathways/sidewalks? Yes No

Accessibility and Equity

Is the project located in a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), as identified by the Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool (<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>): Yes No

Does this project remove a priority ADA barrier, as identified in an adopted ADA Transition Plan or similar plan? Yes No

Strategic Planning & Investment

The project crosses jurisdictional boundaries. Yes No

The project will coordinate with other infrastructure projects (i.e. utility, water, sewer, etc.) Yes No

The Project is identified in a pavement asset management plan Yes No

There is an asset management plan covering utilities along the length of the project Yes No

The city/village/Township has adopted an asset management policy Yes No

The project supports goals or objectives from another planning document (ex. master plan or rec plan) Yes No

If the project supports goals or objectives in another planning document please identify the plan, specify the relevant goals or objectives, and describe how this project will help achieve them

Risk Assessment

Does right of way need to be acquired? Yes No Unknown

Does the project intersect with a railroad crossing? Yes No Unknown

Does the project require utility relocation? Yes No Unknown

Are the project limits within a defined FEMA floodplain? Yes No Unknown

Will there be trees removed within the project limits? Yes No Unknown

Is the project within 100 feet of a cemetery? Yes No Unknown

Are there historic elements withing 100 feet of the proposed work* Yes No Unknown

Describe approximately how many individual mature trees or acres of trees will be removed if applicable

* Historic elements include any of the following if they are 50 years old or older: **objects** (ex. Statues or monuments), **structures** (ex. bridges, stone curbs, or brick streets), intentional/designed landscapes, **buildings**, **Historic districts**, **intentional/designed landscapes**

Existing and Proposed Roadway Design

	Existing			Proposed		
Number of lanes	Through Lanes: ____	Center Turn Lane (Y/N): ____	On Street Parking (Y/N): ____	Through Lanes: ____	Center Turn Lane (Y/N): ____	On Street Parking (Y/N): ____
Shoulder	<input type="checkbox"/> Paved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unpaved		Width: ____ Ft.	<input type="checkbox"/> Paved <input type="checkbox"/> Unpaved		Width: ____ Ft.
Sidewalk/path	Placement		Width: ____ Ft.	Placement		Width: ____ Ft.
On road bicycle facilities	<input type="radio"/> Bike Lanes <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="radio"/> Sharrows			<input type="radio"/> Bike Lanes <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="radio"/> Sharrows		
	<input type="radio"/> Wide Shoulders		<input type="radio"/> None	<input type="radio"/> Wide Shoulders		<input type="radio"/> None
Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Utility Work is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Water/Sewer Work is needed			<input type="checkbox"/> Replacement of utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Relocation of utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer and/or water line work		

Applicant Acknowledgements

By signing below, the project sponsor ensures that they have read and understood the appropriate federal guidance and agree to follow all applicable federal regulations and requirements from the acceptance of federal funds, should this project receive an award. In addition, the project sponsor acknowledges the potential loss of federal funds if the project is not obligated within the programmed fiscal year or if Michigan Department of Transportation statewide obligation limitations have been met.

Certification of Matching Funds

By signing below, the Project Sponsor assures that sufficient funds are available to pay any costs above the awarded federal fund amount and that completion of this project is not contingent upon additional grants (the sources of matching funds may be changed after STBG funding has been awarded, in accordance with all established TIP amendment guidelines).

Name: _____ Title: _____

SEGMENT CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Geometric Safety Enhancements		
Center Left-Turn Lane - Construct	80%	Rear-End Left-Turn
	50%	Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Head-On, Angle, Sideswipe*
	15%	Non Left-Turn Rear-End, Other*
Right-Turn Lane - Construct	65%	Rear-End Right-Turn
	30%	Angle
	15%	Rear-End
	10%	Other*
Horizontal Curve Flattening	30%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 1' each side)	5%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 2' each side)	10%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 3' each side)	15%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 4' each side)	20%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 5' each side)	25%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 6' each side)	30%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 7' each side)	35%	Lane Departure***
Vertical Curve Modification	20%	All Applicable Crash Types +++
Superelevation Correction	20%	Lane Departure***
General Segment Enhancements		
Access Management - Improve	15%	Drive-way Related Applicable Crashes
Centerline Rumble Strips - Install	44%	K and A injury Applicable Crashes
	46%	Single Vehicle Run off Road Left Crashes
	43%	Sideswipe Same Crashes
	55%	Sideswipe Opposite Crashes
	35%	Wet Crashes
High Friction Surface Treatment - Install	20%	All Other Applicable Crashes
Recessed Durable Pavement Markings	5%	All Applicable Crashes
Road Diet (4-3 Lane Conversion) - Install	50%	Suburban - All Applicable Crashes
	30%	Urban - All Applicable Crashes
Shoulder Rumble Strips	20%	Run-Off the Road Right Crashes
Signing/Delineation on Horizontal Curves (Including Recessed Durable Pavement Markings) - Install	20%	Lane Departure***
Install Edgelines - Where none currently exist	15%	Lane Departure*** (CMF Clearing House ID 10243)
HMA Safety Edge Improvement	13%	All non-intersection crashes
Roadside Enhancements		
Fixed Objects From Clearzone (Trees, Culverts, Etc.) - Removal	75%	Fixed-Object Applicable Crashes
Guardrail - Install	55%	Lane Departure *** Fatalities and "A" Injury Crashes
	7%	Lane Departure *** B/C/O Applicable Crashes
Slope Flattening	15%	Fixed-Object, Overturn Applicable Crashes
Living Snow Fence	20%	Crashes due to wintry surface conditions
Lighting - install on segment	20%	Dark Unlighted Crashes

INTERSECTION CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Signal Timing / Hardware Enhancements		
Install Reflectorized Backplates	15%	All Applicable Crashes
Add All-Red Clearance Interval - <i>Add per ITE</i>	20%	Head-On Left-Turn, Angle
Yellow-Change Interval - <i>Increase</i>	10%	All Crash Types
Box Span Signal - <i>Upgrade from Stop Control</i>	65%	Angle
	-25%	Rear-End (Increases Crashes)
	20%	All Other Non Rear-End Crashes
Box Span Signal - <i>Upgrade from Diagonal Span</i>	10%	All Applicable Crashes+
Protected Left-Turn Signal Phase - <i>Add</i>	30%	Left-Turn
Signal Head Size - <i>Increase to 12 "</i>	10%	All Applicable Crashes +
Signal Optimization & Timing Updates	10%	All Applicable Crashes +
Removing Night Flash from Signal Timing	50%	Nighttime Flash mode Related Crashes
Intersection Geometric Enhancements		
Center Left-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	80%	Rear-End Left-Turn
	50%	Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Head-On, Angle, Other
	15%	Non Left-Turn Rear-End
Intersection Improvements (Realignment, Sight-Distance Improvements, Radii Improvements, Etc.)	30%	Angle
	15%	Rear-End
	10%	Head-On, Sideswipe, Pedestrian, Bicycle, Left-Turn Related
Offset Left-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Angle-Turn, Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Rear-End Left-Turn
Offset Right-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Angle-Turn
	50%	Other Applicable Crashes
	20%	Rear-End Right Turn
Right-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Rear-End Right-Turn
	20%	Applicable Rear-End Crashes, Sideswipe Same Direction
Roundabout	78%	Fatal and A-Injury Reduction
	57%	Minor Crash Reduction
General Intersection Enhancements (Non-Signalized Intersections)		
All-Way Stop Control - <i>New Installation</i>	60%	All Applicable Crashes
Ground Mounted Flashing Beacons (Red)- <i>Install **</i>	30%	All Crashes On Install Approach
Ground Mounted Flashing Beacons(Amber) - <i>Install **</i>	20%	All Crashes On Install Approach
Signing - <i>Improve/Upgrade</i>	30%	Angle, Rear-End Crashes
Pavement Markings - <i>Improve/Upgrade</i>	30%	Angle, Rear-End Crashes
Reflective Sheeting on Sign Posts (<i>lollipops</i>)	15%	All Applicable Crashes

NON-MOTORIZED CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Pedestrian / Bicycle Enhancements		
Pedestrian Refuge Island - Install	50%	Pedestrian Crashes (Review NCHRP Report 841)
Bump Out / Curb Extension - Remove Parking / Install	30%	All Crashes
Bicycle Lanes - Intersections, Install per standards	25%	Bicycle Crashes
Bicycle Lanes - Segments, Install per standards	50%	Bicycle Crashes
Shared Use Path - Install	33%	Bicycle and Pedestrian Related Crashes
Sidewalk for Pedestrians - Construct	85%	Pedestrian Crashes
Intersection Lighting - install	75%	Pedestrian Fatal - Dark Unlighted Crashes
	40%	Pedestrian A-Injury - Dark Unlighted Crashes
	30%	All Applicable Dark Unlighted Crashes
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (HAWK Signals) - Install	55%	Pedestrian Crashes (CMF ID 9020)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons	47%	Pedestrian Crashes
Ped. Countdown Signals - Install new Pedestrian signal	30%	Pedestrian Crashes
Ped. Countdown Signals - Upgrade from existing Pedestrian signal	25%	Pedestrian Crashes

Notes:

* "Other" includes other crash which might be mitigated by the addition of a right-turn lane in the judgment of the crash analyst

** applies to new installation or with removal of existing overhead flashing beacon

*** "Lane departure" crashes include the following types: Fixed Object, Overturn, Sideswipe Opposite, Sideswipe Same and Head-On (Run off Road Right/Left Crashes)

+ All Applicable Crash - Rear End, Angle Crashes, Sideswipe Same. The Crashes should occur at The signal that is being upgraded. Does not include driveway and anima

+++ All Applicable Crash Types - Lane Departure, Fixed Object, Angle Crashes, Sideswipe Opposite, Sideswipe Same. The crashes should occur on or near a vertical curve

REFERENCES:

The references listed below are the sources recognized by MDOT for obtaining crash reduction factors.

- 1) MDOT Safety Programs Unit - Crash Reduction Factors (As recommended by K. Kunde. P.E.); October, 1986
- 2) *Selection Process for Local High Safety Projects*, - Transportation Research Record 847: 1982
- 3) UKTRP - 85-6, University of Kentucky; March, 1985
- 4) *Desktop Reference for Crash Reduction Factor*, Federal Highway Administration. 2007
- 5) NCHRP Report 617: *Accident Modification Factors for Traffic Engineering and ITS Improvements*, TRB 2008
- 6) Crash Modification Factor Clearinghouse, <http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org/index.cfm>, 2009
- 7) Safety Edge - <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/hsis/11025/11025.pdf>
- 8) Removing Night Flash - <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/hsis/13069/index.cfm>
- 9) RRFBs - CMF Clearinghouse ID 9024