

RATS

**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**
City of Rockford, Public Works Department
425 East State Street, Rockford, IL 61104

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RATS MOBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES April 8th, 2008

Attending: Steve Haight, Careers Etc.; Becky Tobin, Boone County; Lisa Brown, RMTD; Jon Paul Diipla, RATS; Denny Hendricks, RMTD; Rick McVinnie, RMTD; Paula Hughes, RMTD; Melinda Trier, NICAA; Rich Hunt, RAMP; John Strandin, The Workforce Connection; John Slattengren, BCCA; Curtis Jones, IDOT; Jeff Niman, Coach USA; Patricia Jones, Lifescape; John Donovan FHWA; Roger Christin, Winnebago County Farm Bureau; Robert Soltau, SLATS.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The 4/8/2008 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Mr. Haight at 10:05am.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were given by those present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The 4/8/2008 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting agenda was unanimously approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 3/11/08 RATS MOBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The 3/11/08 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

5. RATS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP):

Mr. Diipla stated that when he e-mailed out materials for the meeting a link was included to the RATS Public Involvement Plan. He also stated that with the passage of SAFETEA-LU an update to the Public Involvement Plan was necessary and that the update would be the *Public Participation Plan (PPP)*. Mr. Diipla also mentioned that RATS received the finalized version of their Federal Certification Review and briefly presented the Mobility Subcommittee with the findings. Mr. Diipla stated that RATS and the Mobility Subcommittee will work on the PPP. He also mentioned that a notice for planning activities would be published in the Rock River Times (April 9, 2008) and handed out the notice to members. It will also be sent to all on the mailing list

Mr. Diipla briefly discussed the intent and purpose of the PPP. He mentioned that a 45-day comment period had to be held on the PPP. Any comments or suggestions that would be received by RATS would be responded to and included in the plan. He also mentioned that four public open houses would be held regarding RATS documents. He encouraged the Mobility Subcommittee to review the current Public Involvement Plan and provide suggestions as to

how to better involve the public. The public comment currently being held would be to gain comments on the PIP so as to help draft the PPP.

Ms. Trier brought up the idea of developing an executive summary document that explains the plan. Mr. Diipla stated that he was working on a brochure that outlines the key points of the plan. Mr. Slattengren stated that he could distribute the one-page fliers for the open house to riders of BBKA. A draft of the PPP would be available to the subcommittee in June. Mr. Haight recommended that the public brochures should be written at an 8th grade level so that all the public could comprehend it.

Mr. Donovan stated that the actual document is to include all of the technical information but that the public brochures should be aimed at gaining the public's interest in the plan(s). Mr. Jones stated that he would be assisting Mr. Diipla and RATS with the creation of the document.

6. DISCUSSION:

Mr. Diipla stated that the draft FY 2009 UWP was available and that comments were welcome. Ms. Trier asked whether or not verbal comments were recorded at open houses. Mr. Diipla stated that notes are taken and that comment sheets are available at open houses for members of the public to provide comment on.

Ms. Brown briefly discussed the RMTD Bus Tour. The tour would be used to heighten awareness of public transit. It was not certain whether or not elected officials would be able to participate due to schedules, etc. There was also discussions about the intent of the trip. It may be spun by some as RMTD having less than adequate transportation than the intent to show and determine what transit needs are.

There was also discussion of the full impact of the trip due to the fact that the Mobility Subcommittee would only take half of the route.

Mr. Haight stated that this event would help to raise awareness of the transit system and that he would like the event to go forward.

Mr. Niman brought up the idea of asking bus riders what some of the issues they face on a daily basis are. Ms. Brown stated the RATS Mobility Subcommittee would be taking a regular transit route with riders and that the opportunity to ask riders what their concerns are might arise.

Mr. Strandin then asked if scheduling the bus trip earlier in the day might help to get some of the elected officials involved. Ms. Trier also stated that the different aldermen in the city could be approached and have transit issues explained to them. Mr. Slattengren posed the idea of having members take the bus to the RMTD transfer center the morning of the event so that members could have the experience of taking the bus to get to the meeting.

Mr. Niman stated that this event would be helpful for committee members to understand the issues that transit dependent riders face and that it would be an important event. Ms. Brown also stated the event would also help committee members understand the decisions that would be made in the selection of projects for JARC funding in FY 09. The event will be held in conjunction with National Transportation Week.

Ms. Brown stated that once the Subcommittee reached Career's Etc., members would discuss the experience and a presentation would be given regarding transit funding. Ms. Brown and Ms. Hughes then briefly discussed previous similar RMTD events. Ms. Brown also stated that RMTD will be at Rockford City Council the week of National Transportation Week and will remind elected officials of the event.

Ms. Brown then discussed free rides for seniors. There was an 800-person increase in senior riders within the first 3 days of the program. Due to large demand, senior bus IDs are being issued by RMTD on a daily basis as opposed to weekly distribution. Ms. Hughes mentioned that 500 IDs have been issued thus far. It was also stated that each transit district in the State is handling the free senior rides in their own manor and that IDs had to be received in each district.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Diipla again mentioned that the Federal Certification Review was available and to contact him if anyone would like a copy. Mr. Diipla mentioned the Program Management Plan and stated that the plan explains how the designated

recipient would use the JARC and New Freedom funds to make sure that the project goals in the HSTP were met. The document is drafted by the designated recipient of the funds. Ms. Hughes stated that a draft was in progress. It was also mentioned that RMTD is the only designated recipient for those funds in the area.

Mr. Soltau inquired about the LRTP amendments. Brief conversation followed.

Mr. Donovan encouraged the Subcommittee to review the PIP and provide comment.

Mr. Niman reiterated the importance of elected officials understanding what transit riders encounter on a daily basis.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00am