

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 May 13th, 2008

Attending: Steve Haight, Careers Etc.; Lisa Brown, RMTD; Jon Paul Dipla, RATS; Denny Hendricks, RMTD; Rick McVinnie, RMTD; Paula Hughes, RMTD; Ron Schoepfer, RMTD; Melinda Trier, NICAA; John Strandin, The Workforce Connection; John Slattengren, BCCA; Curtis Jones, IDOT; Robert Soltau, SLATS; Dyanna Chandler, Council of Neighborhood Organizations; Leonard Mabry; Citizen, Milestone.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The 5/13/2008 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Mr. Haight at 11:05am.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were given by those present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The 5/13/2008 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting agenda was unanimously approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 4/8/08 RATS MOBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The 4/8/08 RATS Mobility Subcommittee meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

5. RMTD BUS RIDE:

Reflections were given regarding the event. Ms. Chandler shared some views regarding transit in the Rockford area. Generally, it is time consuming and could be an all day event to take public transportation. Ms. Chandler also had the idea of surveying riders to see what could be improved and what is still needed. Mr. Mabry also addressed some scheduling concerns regarding paratransit service. Mr. McVinnie stated that he would check into the concern. Mr. Schoepfer also mentioned that while on the trip that he spoke to an individual who was appreciative of the CherryVale service.

Mr. McVinnie asked those present what would need to be improved on fixed routes to provide better service. Shorter headways were one of the ideas that was mentioned. There was some discussion regarding RMTD routes and an explanation of the City Loop Routes.

Ms. Trier also commented on there being signs with bus times at certain bus stops as well as maps to assist transit riders.

Ms. Brown stated that educating the public better regarding routes, maps, etc. would help citizens to better understand the system as well as making it easier to use. Ms. Brown then showed the committee an example of how a route would work with using a guidebook.

Ms. Chandler briefly told the Mobility Subcommittee that she has always received professional service when she has called RMTD regarding directions.

Mr. Haight posed the question of whether or not schedule books were available on RMTD buses. Ms. Brown stated that bus drivers have extra schedule books and that they distribute them upon request. With that being stated, a suggestion was made to possibly put schedule book holders on the buses.

Ms. Trier commented on the professional and helpful manner that RMTD bus operators conducted themselves in assisting passengers.

Ms. Brown then gave a brief presentation regarding transit funding. Mr. Haight mentioned that in order to receive Federal money, local matches are necessary. Ms. Brown mentioned that there are Federal, State, Local and district revenues that go into funding transit. A brief description of the Federal Highway Fund was given. Capital dollars are 80/20 match. Operating funds are 50/50 match. Ms. Brown briefly discussed how downstate funding comes to be. It was also mentioned that local funding can be an issue when federal monies are to be accessed.

Ms. Chandler asked if from the total funding pool, does the allocated amount given to Chicago affect what is distributed to the rest of the state. The answer to that question was yes. Ms. Chandler then asked if local match also comes from other areas serviced, aside for Rockford, by RMTD (i.e. Machesney Park, Loves Park). The answer was again yes.

Ms. Brown stated that the service that is provided in each locality is the result of what each locality is able to fund for transit.

Mr. Schoepfer then briefly described the current RMTD operating situation with the Mobility Subcommittee. The notion of "how can we fill the buses?" was mentioned and "what strategies can be provided to increase ridership even more?"

6. COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. Haight asked about the status of the name change for RATS. Mr. Diipla stated that the new name would be "RMAP-Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning". Mr. Diipla stated that the earliest any changes could be taken is July 1, 2008. It was also stated the FY 2009 UWP was out for review and would be brought forward to the Technical Committee in May to recommend that it be adopted by the Policy Committee at their May meeting.

Mr. Strandin then asked if anything would be changed structurally with the Mobility Subcommittee once the MPO changes were to take effect. Mr. Diipla stated that his understanding was that there would be no significant changes.

Mr. McVinnie then asked about the federal certification compliance. Mr. Diipla stated that RATS was in the process of producing the necessary documents and that a notice would be placed in the Rock River Times on May 14, 2008 regarding the RATS PPP. The draft will be available from May 19, 2008 until July 2, 2008 which fulfills the 45-day federal review period. Mr. Diipla also asked the Subcommittee to review, by May 29th, 2008, the current PIP document and to submit comments on what should be considered for the PPP. Mr. Diipla stated the PPP is one of the certification requirements. Mr. Diipla also mentioned that there would be open houses regarding the PPP as well as the LRTP amendments (Transit Forecast *and* Environmental Mitigation) and listed the dates and times of the meetings for the Mobility Subcommittee.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.