



POLICY COMMITTEE
Mayor Douglas P. Scott, City of Rockford
Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park
District Engineer Gregory Mounts, IDOT District 2
Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County
President Linda M. Vaughn, Village of Machesney Park

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Proposed & Distributed for Public Review: January 17, 2003

Adopted: April 24, 2003

This report describes the efforts and sets forth the policy of RATS to involve public officials, community leaders and area citizens in the transportation planning and improvement programming process.

PRIMARY RATS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

RATS hereby declares that a proactive public involvement process is critical to the transportation planning process and to the development and implementation of the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program. To achieve successful public involvement, RATS will strive toward the following four primary Public Involvement Goals:

- The Public will be involved early and continually in the planning process.
- All citizens and transportation stakeholders will be given opportunities to participate.
- The Public and transportation stakeholders will be provided with clear, timely, and accurate information.
- The public participation process will be flexible. Several techniques will be employed and/or combined to accommodate varying circumstances.

THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED IN
COOPERATION WITH THE FOLLOWING:

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Illinois Department of Transportation

THE CONTENTS, VIEWS, POLICIES AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED
IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT NECESSARILY
THOSE OF THE ABOVE AGENCIES

Table of Contents

RATS RESOLUTION 2003-4	2
RATS RESOLUTION 2003-4 – ADDENDUM A	3
<i>Public Responses and Changes to the January 17, 2003 Draft PIP</i>	3
PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT	4
INTRODUCTION TO THE RATS PLANNING PROCESS	4
THE PLANNING AREA	4
THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF RATS	5
TABLE 1 - Policy Committee	5
TABLE 2 - Technical Committee	6
FEDERAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS	6
<i>PIP Public Comment Period</i>	6
<i>Timely Information</i>	7
<i>Reasonable Public Access</i>	8
<i>Adequate Public Notice</i>	8
<i>Respond to Public Input</i>	8
<i>Needs of the Under-served</i>	8
<i>Include Comments/Responses in TIP and Plan</i>	9
<i>Extending the Comment Period</i>	9
<i>Periodically Update the PIP</i>	9
<i>PIP Available for FHWA/FTA Review</i>	9
<i>Coordinate with Statewide PIP</i>	10
MAILING LIST GENERATION AND MAINTENANCE	10
RESULTS OF RECENT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SURVEY	12
TABLE 3 – Results – RATS Public Involvement Survey	12
RECENT PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES	13
UPDATING THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS	18
TABLE 4 – 2003 PIP Development Schedule	18
UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	19
TABLE 5 – Annual UWP Development Schedule	19
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	20
<i>Early Involvement Encouraged</i>	20
<i>TIP Defined</i>	20
<i>Jurisdictional Timing Considerations</i>	20
TABLE 6 – Fiscal Year Start Dates	20
<i>Opportunities in the TIP Process</i>	20
<i>Who to Contact</i>	21
<i>Timing and Scheduling</i>	21
<i>Making Changes</i>	21
TABLE 7 – Agency Contact Persons	22
TABLE 8 – Annual TIP Development Schedule	24
LONG-RANGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT and MAINTENANCE	25
TABLE 9 – Next LRP UPDATE Schedule	25
ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	26
<i>Triennial Certification Reviews</i>	26
TABLE 10 – Certification Review Contacts	26
<i>Roadway Improvement Bond Referendums</i>	27
MAP: RATS Metropolitan Planning Area	28



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 District Engineer Gregory Mounts, Illinois Department of
 Transportation, District 2

RESOLUTION 2003-4

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

RE: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS UPDATE

WHEREAS the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford Metropolitan Area and the RATS Policy Committee is responsible for transportation planning within the area; and

WHEREAS federal guidelines stemming from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) require a proactive public involvement process for said planning; and

WHEREAS an update to the RATS Public Involvement Process (dated January 17, 2003) was developed, announced and distributed to the public in accordance with federal guidelines, including extending the minimum 45-day public review period to 97 days; and

WHEREAS comments from the public regarding the above draft have been positive and the only changes necessitated have been minor, non-substantive corrections;

WHEREAS the comments from the public and the changes to the draft document are documented in Addendum A to this Resolution;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the Policy Committee adopts the Public Involvement Process, dated January 17, 2003, including the comments and changes documented in Addendum A to this Resolution; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED that RATS staff is directed to codify all changes as noted in Addendum A into a final version of the RATS PIP, said version to be republished and distributed; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

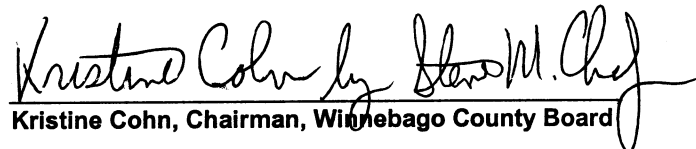
RESOLVED that the RATS Study Director is directed to use and abide by the terms and recommendations of

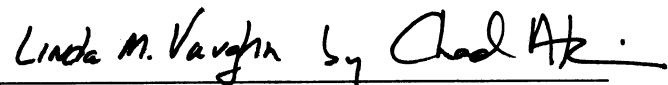
the PIP as a guide for involving the public in the RATS planning process; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

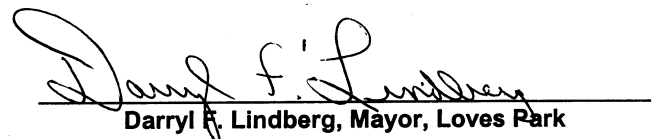
RESOLVED that the Study Director is instructed to monitor the prescribed public involvement efforts and periodically report to the RATS Technical and Policy Committees regarding progress made, new opportunities or obstacles to public involvement, and the need to update all or parts of the Involvement Process in response to changes in local conditions or federal requirements.

DATED THIS 24th DAY OF APRIL, 2003.


 Douglas P. Scott, Mayor, Rockford


 Kristine Cohn, Chairman, Winnebago County Board


 Linda M. Vaughn, President, Machesney Park


 Darryl F. Lindberg, Mayor, Loves Park


 Gregory Mounts, District 2,
 Illinois Department of Transportation

RATS Resolution 2003-4 – ADDENDUM A

PUBLIC RESPONSES AND CHANGES TO THE JANUARY 17, 2003 DRAFT PIP

The following chronologically documents the activities, responses, and comments that were received during the public review period.

1. January 17, 2003. The PIP was mailed to all persons on the RATS mailing list, including the press, media and area libraries.
2. January 22, 2003. The annual Legal Notice announcing all RATS planning activities including the new PIP was published in the Rock River Times. This newspaper is widely distributed throughout the entire RATS area and is available throughout the week of January 22-28, 2003, free of charge.
3. January 21, 2003, E-mail from Scott Capovilla. **“I just received your RATS Public Involvement Process Draft Report. I noticed and was happy to see a couple of my comments were incorporated in the report. I can't remember if I used my name or just sent the document anonymously. Anyway, I wanted to let you know that I think there are some good suggestions in the report. I tried to be as honest as I could when answering the questions. As with my participation on the billboard task force last year, I tried to contribute as a citizen of Rockford and not as a developer or as a representative of the developer for whom I work. Moreover, it is important to note that all developers don't think alike and quite often have differing viewpoints on what is good for the community – just as other citizens do.**

With that said, I want to make another comment regarding the statements made about developers. First, I don't think developers should be on the RATS committees. Whoever said that, spoke before they really thought about the ramifications that could have, as you have stated in your report. On the other hand, however, I also think it is unfair to think that developers influence what roads are built and where they are built. For example, Perryville Road was on the planning map 30 years ago. It would be naive to think that Sunil Puri knew about Perryville Road when he was a twelve-year old child in India. Often times these types of roads (Perryville, Harrison-Springfield) have been on the books for 30 years and one day someone wakes up and says "why do we need to build that?" The Woodruff Expressway has been on the books since it was a part of the Roper Plan in 1918! How could you object to something that has been on the drawing board that long? The lack of planning knowledge is really at fault, but how can we change that. The RATS organization can develop the most efficient network for the future; however, 20 years from now, someone won't like where a new road is planned so they decide to fight against it. Maybe there needs to be a better way of educating the public on the future transportation needs of the Rockford

Area. It is too bad our transportation system has become political.

Thanks for taking the time to read my comments. I feel I have a very unique perspective on many of these issues as I have been on both the government and private sector sides. In addition, my feelings as a citizen should also be taken into consideration. Keep up the good work and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

4. January 23, 2003 – The PIP was presented and discussed at the RATS Technical Committee meeting. Comments were generally positive. Staff asked all present to review the draft and comment as they see fit. A minimum 45-day review period will be afforded.

In addition, representatives from the Greater Rockford Transportation Coalition attended the January 23rd Technical Committee meeting. They offered to assist RATS in developing a WEB page. They also offered to present RATS information on their WEB page. Staff intends to accept both of these offers.

5. January 23, 2003 – Richard Lundin supplied numerous corrections to the list of Township officials in Boone County. These changes have been inserted in TABLE 7 and in the RATS mailing list.
6. During the month of February, two additional responses to the Public Involvement Survey were received. Both responses were positive and reiterated the views of the majority of earlier respondents. Both also voiced support for adding Belvidere and Boone County to the RATS Policy Committee.
7. During the PIP public review period, the RATS Technical Committee met on February 27th and March 20th and the RATS Policy Committee met on March 27th. These meetings were fully announced and the PIP report was listed on the meeting agendas. Opportunities for discussion and comment were afforded at all three of these meetings. No public comments were offered.
8. A map showing the RATS Metropolitan Planning Area, the primary focus area of the RATS planning activities over the next decade will be included with the final adopted version of the PIP.
9. Prior to adoption, two additional opportunities for public comment will be afforded: at the Technical Committee meeting scheduled for April 17, 2003 and at the Policy Committee meeting scheduled for April 24, 2003. The request for adoption of the PIP will be made at the April 24th meeting, contingent upon a lack of adverse comments or proposals to substantively change the document.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to set forth the policies, procedures, methods and details for involving the general public and area transportation stakeholders in the transportation planning and programming activities of the Rockford Area Transportation Study, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford Metropolitan Area.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RATS PLANNING PROCESS

The Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the federally-required Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford Urbanized Area (UA) as defined by the US Bureau of the Census for the Year 2000. Federal law, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and its predecessors require that RATS conduct a continual transportation planning process that coordinates the transportation and related land use and infrastructure decisions of all the State and local governmental jurisdictions in the RATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MA). The MA includes all of the Census-defined UA plus those additional areas in the vicinity that are forecasted by RATS to become urbanized in the next 20-25 years.

The expressed purpose of the transportation planning process is to assure the cooperation of all State and local jurisdictions and other transportation stakeholders so that all governmentally-spirited transportation policies and decisions and publicly-funded transportation projects, improvements and systems are in concert with each other and with all other governmental activities in the Metropolitan Area. No Federal funding can be applied to transportation improvement projects, transportation services, or transportation planning studies in the MA unless the projects, services, or studies are part of one or more of the following three comprehensive, coordinated and cooperative documents that have been developed by RATS and approved by the RATS Policy Committee and, to varying degrees, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

1. **The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP).** The LRP is a comprehensive proposal for the further development, improvement and maintenance of the area's major transportation systems. The LRP has a 20-year (minimum) time horizon and addresses all forms of transportation: highway, transit, pedestrian, public and private. The LRP is comprehensively updated every 4-5 years.
2. **The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** The TIP lists the proposed public expenditures for transportation improvements scheduled over the next three years. The listing includes all major projects proposed by all jurisdictions in the area. The listing establishes priorities and is financially constrained (i.e., a

project can only be included if there is a reasonable expectation of sufficient funding for its completion). The TIP is updated annually.

3. **The Unified Planning Work Program (UWP).** The UWP is prepared annually to direct the day-to-day work of the RATS staff and committees. It outlines the specific planning activities to be accomplished or attempted in the coming fiscal year and it assigns responsibilities to the various RATS participants. The bulk of this work is funded by grants from the Federal Highway and Transit Administrations (FHWA and FTA). The Work Program suballocates this funding among the RATS participants.

THE PLANNING AREA

The full jurisdictional area of RATS is the **Metropolitan Planning Area (MA)**. To understand what land and jurisdictions are included in the MA, two additional designated areas must be explained: the "**Urbanized Area**" and the "**Adjusted Urbanized Area**".

The "Urbanized Area" is defined by the US Census Bureau in accordance with strict population density criteria. Generally speaking, urbanized areas must have a minimum of 50,000 persons living in contiguous dense settlement patterns. From the Census criteria used in 1990, the Rockford Urbanized Area was confined within Winnebago County and consisted primarily of the incorporated areas of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, and immediately surrounding intensely developed lands. Roscoe, Rockton South Beloit, Beloit and the developed lands surrounding those communities were designated in the Beloit Urbanized Area.

For the Year 2000 Census, the urbanized area criteria were altered to become even more strictly dependent on population density and proximity. In general, the core of an urbanized area must be comprised of Census block groups or blocks that have a population of at least 1,000 persons per square mile. Other blocks with a minimum of 500 persons per square mile can be added if they are within precisely defined proximity to the core area. Significantly, incorporated areas are not automatically included in the Year 2000 urbanized areas, as they were in the 1990 urbanized areas. Now, to be included, each census block must meet the density and proximity criteria.

The most significant changes from the 1990 UA to the Year 2000 UA are:

- a. Large parts of Boone County and the City of Belvidere are now in the Rockford Urbanized Area. Also included is part of the Village of Timberlane.
- b. The Village of Winnebago is now included in the Rockford Urbanized Area.

- c. Most of the Village of Roscoe is now in the Rockford Urbanized Area. Roscoe was previously in the Beloit Urbanized Area.
- d. The population of the Rockford Urbanized Area has increased substantially (from 207,826 in 1990 to 270,414 in the Year 2000).

The real importance of the urbanized area is that this area, along with the populations and other statistics computed for this area relative to other such areas throughout the USA, serve as the basis for several Federal funding assistance formulas. Federal transportation funding assistance derived from these statistics for the Rockford area is substantial. In recent years, the Rockford area has annually received Federal transportation planning funds approaching \$400,000 per year, roadway construction funds approaching \$1.5 million per year, and public transit assistance funds close to \$1.0 million per year.

One of the functions of RATS is to determine when, and on what projects the above funds can be spent locally. In making this determination, Federal guidance requires that RATS conduct the “3-C” planning process, mentioned above, and the guidance further allows/requires that RATS adjust the urbanized area for planning purposes and forecast a Metropolitan Planning Area.

For transportation planning purposes, the Adjusted Urbanized Area must include all of the urbanized area, but also includes other small areas as necessary to round-off the jagged or sometime irregular boundaries of the urbanized area. The Adjusted Urbanized Area includes additional lands that are certain or highly likely to be developed within the next 5 years and other abutting or nearby already developed lands. The Adjusted Urbanized Area is used primarily to determine which roadways are eligible for Federal “urban” and “rural” funding assistance (but does not affect the total amount of Federal assistance available). The most recent Adjusted Urbanized Area for RATS was derived through deliberations of the RATS staff and Technical Committee over the last several months of 2002 and adopted by the Policy Committee in December 2002.

The **Metropolitan Planning Area** is similarly determined by RATS. The Metropolitan Planning Area is the area that is expected to be urbanized in the next 20-25 years. It can be as large as the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census.

Maps showing the Rockford Urbanized Area and Adjusted Urbanized Area are included at the end of this report. The RATS Metropolitan Area is being determined at the time of this writing. However, it is likely to include all or most of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, New Millford, Winnebago, Belvidere, Poplar Grove, Timberlane,

and Roscoe and other nearby developed lands in Winnebago and Boone Counties.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF RATS

The authority establishing RATS is derived from State of Illinois law pertaining to interagency agreements and Federal laws that provide transportation assistance to the State and local governments. By an interagency agreement known as the RATS Cooperative Agreement, the State of Illinois and the legislative bodies of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park and Winnebago County have established RATS as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford area.

The governing body of RATS is the **Policy Committee** and the current membership on this Committee is listed in **TABLE 1**. The Policy Committee is responsible for all official activities of RATS as further specified in the Cooperative Agreement.

TABLE 1 - Policy Committee
Mayor, City of Rockford
Mayor, City of Loves Park
President, Village of Machesney Park
Chairman, Winnebago County Board
District Engineer, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT-District 2)

At the time of this writing, five additional general purpose units of local government have requested membership on the Policy Committee: the Villages of Cherry Valley, Roscoe and Winnebago, the City of Belvidere and the County of Boone. The development of an equitable and mutually acceptable voting and decision-making structure for an expanded Policy Committee is currently underway. Complicating this matter are the substantial differences in population and transportation responsibilities of these entities. This matter is further elaborated in other parts of this report. Public input on this topic is being invited.

The Policy Committee obtains input and advice on transportation matters from a wide variety of public and private sources but primarily through the RATS **Technical Committee**. The RATS Technical Committee has recently been expanded and currently consists of one voting representative (unless otherwise noted) from each of the following entities in **TABLE 2**.

also responsible for promoting greater private sector participation in the planning and delivery of transit services.

The Lead Agency for RATS is the City of Rockford. The City initially funds the bulk of all RATS planning activities and subsequently applies for roughly, but always less than, 80% reimbursement through Federal transportation planning grants administered by IDOT. At the beginning of the Year 2000, the specific Lead Agency duties were transferred from the Community Development Department to the Public Works Department. At that time, the RATS Study Director was also changed from the CD Planning Coordinator to the City's Traffic Engineer. In the past, two planners had been consistently assigned, full time, to RATS planning with other staff assigned on a part-time, as needed, basis. Recently a third staff person was assigned on a full- or near-full-time basis – primarily for the purpose of completing and maintaining data for a Pavement Management System for the City of Rockford. As noted above, most work is accomplished with federal funding (usually at 80 percent), passed through from IDOT, with the City of Rockford providing the required local match (20 percent). Federal funds are also allocated to other RATS participants, as needed, to assist in planning, data collection and related activities and as an incentive to participate in RATS planning.

FEDERAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

The guidelines for Metropolitan Planning as published in the October 28, 1993 Federal Register and stemming from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 require an extensive public involvement process in all future transportation planning. Similar Federal guidance was developed following the passage of TEA-21 in the late 1990's, however, that guidance was never formally adopted. Hence, the ISTEA-derived guidance remains in effect and is quoted below.

The law states eleven specific criteria that the metropolitan planning process shall follow, prefaced by the following statement. The planning process must, ***“Include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs. . .”*** In the following section, the eleven criteria are repeated (bold italics), each followed by a brief summary of the general policy, technique, or approach RATS will use to abide by or accomplish the criteria.

- I. ***PIP Public Comment Period. “Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised.”***

To comply with this criteria, RATS will develop/update its PIP whenever there are significant changes to: (1)

TABLE 2 - Technical Committee	
1	Belvidere/Boone Co.Regional Planning Commission
2	Belvidere Public Works Department
3	Boone County Highway Department
4	Cherry Valley, Village
5	Greater Rockford Airport Authority
6	Illinois Department of Transportation - District 2
7	Loves Park Public Works Department
8	Loves Park Community Development Department
9	Machesney Park Planning Department
10	Ogle County Highway Department (non-voting)
11	Rockford Community Development Department
12	Rockford Mass Transit District
13	Rockford Public Works Department
14	Roscoe, Village
15	Winnebago County Planning & Economic Development Department
16	Winnebago County Highway Department
17	Winnebago, Village

The Technical Committee has the authority to establish and appoint members to other temporary or special purpose committees as needed to carry out the duties of the Technical Committee. Membership on these committees may consist of individuals or come from organizations not otherwise represented on the Technical or Policy Committees.

In the past, the Technical Committee has appointed special subcommittees including the following:

- 1. **STP Subcommittee.** This subcommittee was originally created to focus on the selection and prioritization of candidate projects for the use of Federal Aid Urban funds, a special category of funding used primarily for regional highway projects. Under new federal law the FAU category has been replaced with the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the funds can now be used for highway and transit purposes. Roughly 1.5 million dollars is allocated annually to the Rockford Urban Area. The STP Subcommittee continues to meet on an as-needed basis to provide advice on the use of these funds.
- 2. **Transit TIP Subcommittee.** Activated as needed, this subcommittee is comprised of area planners and transit staff and meets for the purpose of studying and making recommendations on complicated local transit programming issues. In the past, this subcommittee was

the planning process, (2) the geographic coverage area of the planning process, and/or (3) the approach of RATS in facilitating and encouraging public involvement. Further, RATS will develop/update the PIP in a timely fashion, distribute it to all persons on the RATS mailing list, including the press, the media and area public libraries. RATS will then publish a notice in an area newspaper of general circulation and will provide a minimum of a 45-day public review and comment period. Subsequently, if significant comments are received, RATS will appropriately modify the PIP and redistribute it for further review and comment. This process will be reiterated until such time as the RATS Policy Committee is satisfied that all comments have been appropriately addressed. A final adopted PIP will be made available to the public.

II. ***Timely Information. "Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to central city and other local jurisdiction concerns)."***

RATS addresses this requirement in several ways. Some efforts involve direct contact with stakeholders and general citizens while other approaches are indirect and/or opportunistic. RATS will continue to employ all of the following under appropriate circumstances.

- A. The primary approach of RATS to comply with this criteria is the maintenance of an extensive mailing list and the use of direct mailings to all persons on this list. As a matter of practice, RATS makes the above mailings in a timely fashion. Mailings are made at least 6-7 days prior to all Committee meetings and, typically 13-14 days prior to all Policy Committee meetings. Details of the mailing list development, expansion, maintenance and use are the subject of a full section of this report, immediately following this section.
- B. In another direct contact technique, RATS periodically conducts comprehensive surveys of its mailing list members. Such surveys request verification of mailing information, desire to continue on the list, suggestions for improving public involvement, and suggestions for additions to the list.
- C. With regard to special transportation studies, extra efforts are made to announce and invite participation. These efforts include expanded mailing lists, press releases, press conferences, and special open meetings on-site or near the subject area of the

special study. Examples of studies where special efforts have been made include: the West State Street Corridor Study; the Riverside/Alpine/Forest Hills Congestion Management Study; the WinGIS Feasibility Study; the ongoing Winnebago/Boone/Rock County Traffic Simulation Modeling Study; the ongoing Winnebago County Smart Growth Study; and the ongoing Rockford Rail Consolidation Study. In total, hundreds if not thousands of persons have been encouraged to participate in these studies.

- D. Annually, RATS publishes a public notice in the Rockford Register Star (the area newspaper of widest circulation) announcing the work to be conducted over the coming year. Specific mention is made of the UWP, the TIP and the LRP and the public is invited to solicit additional information, attend RATS meetings, and comment on transportation issues.
- E. Less directly, RATS makes special efforts to participate in public involvement efforts initiated by other planning, visioning, and improvement design efforts sponsored by other entities throughout the community. In the past, RATS has paid special attention to the Blueprint for Rockford planning/visioning effort, the Mayor's Welfare to Work Task Force, the Comprehensive Land Use Planning efforts of all the area's jurisdictions possessing land regulatory and planning authority; Route and Schedule Studies by the Rockford Mass Transit District; and numerous others. RATS will continue to seek out and participate in efforts such as these when opportunities arise.
- F. RATS makes a special effort to maximize the ability of the Policy and Technical Committees to facilitate public involvement. All Policy and Technical Committee meetings are announced ahead of time; first, annually in the Fall, via a tentative list of the next year's meeting dates and times; and second, before each meeting, agendas and documents are disseminated to the entire mailing list. All meetings are open to the public with public comment solicited on all agenda and/or transportation-related topics. As a matter of practice, all agendas and notices are specifically annotated with the phrase, **"Opportunities for public comment will be afforded"**. Following all RATS meetings, detailed minutes are prepared, documenting actions and significant discussions and these minutes are distributed to the full mailing list.
- G. RATS utilizes special sub-committees on an ad hoc, as needed basis. Examples of such committees in the past have been the Transit TIP Subcommittee, the FAU/Project Selection Committee, the Traffic Simulation Modeling Steering Committee, the GIS Feasibility Subcommittee and numerous others.

Citizens who are interested in the specific topics of these committee are invited to attend as voting or non-voting members, depending on their willingness to diligently participate. RATS will continue to utilize such subcommittees in the future when appropriate.

III. ***Reasonable Public Access. "Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered."***

To the extent possible, RATS policy is to put actual copies of all documents and information in the hands of all transportation stakeholders and interested parties. The LRPs, TIPs and UWPs are distributed, in full, to all on the mailing list. More sizable documents that cannot be distributed in mass are either summarized and the summaries distributed and/or the documents are made available for public inspection at the public libraries and other accessible public locations.

All RATS meetings are open to the public and public comment is allowed on all matters. Open discussion, under "Other Business" is permitted on any transportation-related matter at the end of every Technical and Policy Committee meeting.

All RATS meeting locations are selected with appreciation of the need to accommodate persons with disabilities.

IV. ***Adequate Public Notice. "Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs (in nonattainment¹ areas, classified as serious and above, the comment period shall be at least 30 days for the plan, TIP and major amendment(s))."***

Even though the Rockford area is an attainment area, RATS attempts to provide a lengthy review period (30 days or more) for all major RATS documents (LRPs, TIPs, UWPs). For example, the UWP is typically released in draft form in mid-March but not adopted until close to the end of May. Similarly, the TIP is

usually released in draft form in late May or early June, but not adopted until late July or August. The LRP, when updated, typically goes through several draft releases, with several weeks between releases, before adoption. Moreover, any element or project in RATS documents can be reintroduced for further review before the RATS Technical or Policy Committees, at any time, up until the project is actually under construction.

Amendments to RATS documents (plans and programs) are treated on an individual basis but are generally less rigorous than the adoption of the full document, depending on the significance or potential impact of the amendment. More specific statements regarding timing and notice are in the LRP, TIP, and UWP Timetable sections of this report and in the documents themselves.

As previously noted, all RATS meetings are announced well ahead of meeting dates through mailings of meeting agendas to all on the mailing list. In addition, a tentative meeting schedule for the next calendar year is prepared and distributed toward the end of each year.

V. ***Respond to Public Input. "Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes."***

RATS Policy is to explicitly respond to all public input received during the planning and program development process. Specific sections are reserved in both the TIP and LRP for public comments and RATS responses to said comments. These documents are not considered complete and are not adopted until all comments are responded to or changes made to the documents to accommodate the comments.

Verbal comments made at RATS meetings are generally responded to immediately or the topic is continued for later response. Detailed minutes are compiled for all RATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings and public comments and responses are recorded therein. Said minutes are then distributed to all so that further discourse may occur, as needed.

VI. ***Needs of the Under-served. "Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally under served by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households."***

RATS policy to consider the needs of those traditionally under served by existing transportation systems has many facets.

¹ The word "nonattainment" is used here in the context of the Urban Area's status in meeting the air quality standards of the Federal Clean Air Act. Rockford is currently an "attainment" area (i.e., air quality conditions here meet or exceed the federal standards). Therefore, a full 30-day notification period for plan and TIP changes is not required. Reasonable notification is required, as specified in this report.

- A. RATS periodically prepares/updates assessments on Environmental Justice and Title VI (Non-discrimination). These reports document the spatial distribution of the area's low-income and minority populations and compares the distribution of these populations to the distribution of publicly-funded transit services and other transportation improvements. RATS will continue to prepare these assessments with the goal of determining whether transportation decisions adversely-impact or beneficially-neglect low-income and minority persons or groups. With the recent release of the Year 2000 Census data, RATS intends to conduct a new comprehensive assessment of the geographical distribution of the area low income and/or minority persons with respect to transportation.
- B. To the extent financially feasible in a community that is predominantly automobile oriented, RATS will continue to support the development and maintenance of efficient and comprehensive mass transit services as provided publicly and privately.
- C. To the extent financially feasible in a community that is predominantly automobile oriented, RATS will continue to support the development and maintenance of efficient and comprehensive facilities for pedestrian and bicyclists.
- D. RATS supports the development of facilities to provide equal or better service to persons with disabilities and the modification of existing transportation systems to remove barriers to persons with disabilities.
- E. To the extent financially feasible, practical and not unduly disruptive to the general citizenry, RATS supports efforts to improve transportation services to all persons who are disenfranchised from or disenchanted with the predominantly automobile-oriented transportation system in the Rockford Area.

VII. Include Comments/Responses in TIP and Plan. “When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP.”

RATS will continue to explicitly comply with this requirement, as evidenced in all RATS plans and TIPs since the guidelines for ISTEA were enacted into law.

VIII. Extending the Comment Period. “If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly

from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available.”

RATS will continue to explicitly comply with this requirement, as evidenced in all RATS plans and TIP since the guidelines for ISTEA were enacted into law.

IX. Periodically Update the PIP. “Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all.”

This document marks the third time that RATS has comprehensively reviewed and republished its public involvement process since the requirement was first developed in the early 1990s. In preparation for this update, RATS mailed a survey to all on the mailing list. The survey solicited comments and suggestions on the involvement process, and on the representativeness of the RATS Technical and Policy Committees. The results of this survey are discussed in detail in a subsequent section of this report. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the great majority of respondents are satisfied with the way RATS currently involves the public and transportation stakeholders and to the current composition of the Technical and Policy Committees.

X. PIP Available for FHWA/FTA Review. “These procedures will be reviewed by the FHWA and the FTA during certification reviews for TMAs, and as otherwise necessary for all MPOs to assure that full and open access is provided to MPO decision making processes.”

Since the RATS PIP was first developed in 1995, the FHWA and FTA have conducted three certification reviews of RATS: the first in 1995, the second in 1997, and the last in 2000. None of these reviews have cited the RATS public involvement processes as being inadequate or inappropriate. In the 1995 review, RATS was commended for its use of ad hoc committees and its participation in Rockford's Blueprint visioning effort. In the 1997 review, it was suggested that Realtors, as appropriate, be added to the mailing list. An informational/invitational mailer was sent to hundreds of area realtors. Those who responded were added to the mailing list.

It should also be noted that the certification process is itself used as an opportunity for public involvement. Announcement of the certification reviews were disseminated for all three reviews and the public was

invited to attend, participate and comment. RATS will continue this practice.

XI. Coordinate with Statewide PIP. “Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.”

RATS and IDOT have agreed to and will endeavor to coordinate their public involvement efforts as prescribed by this requirement.

MAILING LIST GENERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The primary mailing list of RATS has evolved through years of effort and numerous attempts by RATS to find persons interested in participating in the planning process. The press and media component has been in existence from the beginning and is easily maintained via current telephone directories. Added to this component and also easily maintained are the County, City and Village Clerks of the various general purpose units of government in the area.

Another large component of the mailing list are the Policy and Technical Committee members themselves, along with numerous other members of their respective organizations. This largely governmental component has been a steady source of participants and interested parties. Over the years, the governmental component has been expanded to include other governmental agencies that are not directly involved in transit or road building but are concerned with transportation because of its effect on their plans and programs, its effect on the environment, and/or its effect on its clientele. As a result, agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, area sanitary sewer providers, area public water providers, and social service agencies have been added.

Because the Rockford Metropolitan Area is affected by situations outside the Metropolitan Area and vice-versa, governmental agencies and entities adjacent to or near the RATS MA have been added to the list.

Attracting participants from the private sector has been difficult. In the late 1980s, a list of **private transportation providers** (bus companies, taxi companies, rail providers, etc.) was compiled. These entities were mailed an invitation to be placed on the mailing list. The response was small but some providers did respond and the RATS list includes all of the area private bus companies and rail providers.

Attracting participants from the trucking industry has proved even more difficult. An invitational mailing to the 50-60 odd trucking companies in the area yielded less than 5 to 10 respondents – and most of them subsequently declined additional mailings in later survey questionnaires.

A mailing list of **paratransit providers** was developed as part of the paratransit planning required through the Americans with Disabilities Act. This list included all social service agencies, public transportation providers, ambulance companies, taxis, limo companies, and churches in the area and was over 400 names in length. The list was used to conduct an extensive mail survey of paratransit services offered in the community. Subsequently, many of these entities were added to the mailing list and sent regular mailings. Over the years, a few of these have remained regular participants but several have declined to continue receiving RATS information.

A mailing list of **disadvantaged business enterprises** (DBEs) is maintained by the City of Rockford and the area transit providers and highway implementing agencies.

During the last decade, a number of changes were made to the RATS mailing list and notification process to encourage public involvement in the RATS planning process.

1. Because a large part of Boone County was added to the RATS Metropolitan Area as a result of the 1990 Census, the press/media mailing list was expanded to include entities in Boone County and the City of Belvidere. Of particular importance was the Belvidere Daily Republican, the most widely circulated general purpose newspaper in that city. More recent expansions of the Metropolitan Area as a result of the Year 2000 Census are prompting the further expansion of the mailing list to include the communities of Timberlane, Caledonia, Poplar Grove, Winnebago, Roscoe and possibly Capron and Garden Prairie.
2. The practice of sending copies of the meeting minutes and pertinent reports or report summaries to all press and media was initiated shortly after the first PIP report was adopted in 1994. This practice is being continued. Prior to that time they were sent only agendas.
3. Meeting agenda items have been expanded to provide a broader explanation of what is to be discussed/decided at the meetings.
4. Meeting agendas are now annotated to announce that meetings are open to the public and that opportunities for public comment will be afforded on all agenda items.
5. The general mailing list was expanded to include agencies previously omitted but which have impact on land development and planning. Examples include the Rock River Water Reclamation District, North Park Water District, the Rockford Park District, and WinGIS.
6. As mentioned, the private transportation provider mailing list was expanded to include all private trucking companies and railroads as shown in area telephone directories. These industries were mailed a notification describing the RATS planning process and inviting

involvement. Response to this mailing was not great but those who did respond were added permanently to the mailing list.

7. Several persons with transportation disabilities and several agencies providing paratransit services or other support services for persons with disabilities were added to the mailing list.
8. Social service agencies and groups representing minorities were added to the mailing lists in the interest of stimulating greater participation by persons traditionally under served by existing transportation systems. Unfortunately, most of these entities have not responded and some have even asked to be eliminated from future mailings.
9. Area bicycle clubs, pedestrian/fitness clubs and area groups concerned with environmental protection were added in the interest of stimulating greater participation by person supporting non-motorized travel.

10. Area appointed and elected officials were notified of RATS planning activities on several occasions. As a result, several officials from many of the area special and general purpose units of government requested RATS mailings and have been permanently added to the mailing lists.
11. New public officials are notified following all general elections.
12. Township Road Commissioners throughout Winnebago and Boone Counties have been added.
13. Working through the Rockford Association of Realtors, all area realtors were recently notified, invited to participate and provided with a map depicting the long-range roadway plan.

RESULTS OF RECENT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

In November 2002, RATS conducted a comprehensive mailing list update and survey to help assess the effectiveness of RATS mailing and information dissemination

procedures. The survey was mailed to all 165 persons/entities on the RATS mailing list at that time. Of the 165 surveys mailed out, 73 have been returned, for a 44% return rate. The results, to date are as follows:

TABLE 3 – Results – RATS Public Involvement Survey

#	Question	Number Responding	Yes	% yes	No	% no	N/A or Other	% N/A Other
	Do you wish to continue receiving information regarding the RATS Planning Process?	73	69	95%	4	5%		
3	Is the timing of the mailouts appropriate?	51	45	88%	6	12%		
6	Are the Technical Committee meeting times and locations adequate?	49	47	96%	2	4%		
7	Are the Policy Committee meeting times and locations adequate?	48	42	88%	1	2%	5	10%
8	Is sufficient time devoted to hearing comments and answering questions from the general public?	41	36	88%	2	5%	3	7%
9a	Is there currently adequate representation on the Technical Committee?	44	40	91%	3	7%	1	2%
9b	Is there currently adequate representation on the Policy Committee?	33	21	64%	10	30%	2	6%
4	In what form(s) would you prefer to receive future RATS materials?		1st Choice		2nd Choice		3rd Choice	
		Printed	30	55%	7	22%	9	30%
		E-mail	21	38%	12	38%	6	20%
		Web Site	4	7%	13	41%	15	50%
		55		32		30		
5	If you prefer an electronic form, what format?	39	PDF	Word	Word Perfect	Excel	Quattro	Other
			22	35	5	16	1	
1	Is the information you receive in RATS mailout beneficial?	52	Beneficial		Somewhat		Not Beneficial	
			40	77%	10	19%	2	4%

Survey mailed to full RATS mailing list (165 persons), mid-November, 2002

Survey results nov2602.xls

RECENT PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

1. The November 2002 survey queried: “Do you have any suggestions or general comments regarding the information we send out (formats, organization, length or brevity, thoroughness, relevancy, etc.) that might improve the usefulness of the information?”

- a. Several persons commented positively: **“I find the information timely and informative.”** **“I think a good job is being done to inform people.”** **“The information is well organized, the format being easy to read and understand.”** **“Usually the information is very detailed but also brief and to the point.”** **“Material well organized.”** **“Information is sufficient.”**

Response: RATS staff is grateful for these comments.

- b. Four persons commented on the complexity / volume of the material: **“Too difficult to interpret without general information.”** **“Can you reduce the volume?”** **“I am interested in the highlights / minutes but not too much with the other longer handouts explaining funding appropriations, etc.”** **“At some point in time during the course of the year, a very brief synopsis on major new projects should be included in the packets.”**

Response: We sympathize with these readers, but the complexity of planning issues and related laws makes it very difficult to simplify the documents we must produce. We try to include a section in every RATS document explaining the general purpose and structure of RATS and the document itself. With most of our large documents we try to include a lengthy table of contents and an index so that readers who are only interested in specific topics can find them without reading the entire document. A summary of major new planning projects is included in the annual Unified Work Program (pages 3-4, of the FY 2003 Program). All major new public transit improvement projects are listed in the annual “Program of Projects” (page 25 of the FY 2003 Transportation Improvement Program) and all major new highway projects are listed Table 20 of the TIP. In next year’s TIP, we will attempt to do a summary of “major projects,” as requested, but are skeptical of its impact because what is major to one person may be insignificant to another and vice-versa. Lastly, we want to stress that RATS staff is available to answer questions at anytime and is available and willing to conduct an educational session on the RATS planning process upon request.

- c. A number of persons requested or suggested electronic mail: **“I would prefer to receive the notice via e-mail.”** **“Send in electronic form.”** **“A RATS WEB page would be useful.”**

Response: RATS is developing a WEB page. This process has been slowed somewhat by other priorities in Rockford’s Information Services Division but will be implemented as

soon as possible. However, it should be noted that most of the respondents to Question 4 of the survey did not favor a WEB site as the method of obtaining RATS materials. RATS will attempt to send e-mail meeting announcements and smaller documents to those who requested this format. The larger documents are not transmissible by e-mail at this time.

- d. One person requested **“larger lettering.”**

Response: We will try to accommodate this need for anyone who requests it.

- e. One person requested followup on a specific issue: **“Follow up with specific “concerned citizens” about the status of their project – at least yearly, if the project is long term.”**

Response: Generally, RATS prefers that citizens initiate contact with RATS staff at times convenient for the citizen but Staff will accommodate this request. Staff hours are 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday.

2. The November 2002 survey queried: “Is the timing of the RATS mailout appropriate for your purposes (i.e., one week prior to the Technical Committee meetings and two weeks prior to the Policy Committee meetings)?”

Although nearly 90% of the respondents said the timing was appropriate, over 10% answered no. A number of comments were made, mostly with regard to the timing before the Technical Committee and most indicating that 1.5 - 2 weeks prior to the Technical Committee meeting would be better. However, one person commented that: **“I feel the timing is ideal and would strongly recommend that it remains unchanged.”** Also, one person asked that the larger documents be mailed sooner.

Response: The biggest problem with making the mailouts sooner is simply getting the work done. Most RATS documents require input from a multitude of agencies. RATS tries to give these agencies as much time as possible to provide their material rather than send out a document that is incomplete. Another problem that has been noted over the years is that when mailouts are far ahead of a meeting, many participants tend to misplace them or review the materials so far in advance that the information is no longer fresh in their minds at meeting time. However, staff does appreciate that the delivery of materials can often be slowed by postal difficulties, externally and internally. Therefore, staff will endeavor to make mailouts 2-3 days sooner than past practice and, as noted above, will attempt to provide information via e-mail to those individuals who have requested that method.

3. The November 2002 survey queried: “RATS Technical Committee meetings are generally held on the 3rd Thursday of each month, starting at 10:00 am and are

held in the Loves Park City Hall. Are these locations and times adequate?"

Only two of the over 40 respondents to this question said this meeting time/location was inadequate. Comments on this question were as follows: **"Meetings should strive to be completed in one hour and no more than two hours."** **The 3rd Thursday conflicts with another meeting, but is still fine.** **"Location is OK but 10 am is bad time / wastes the whole AM, so rarely can attend."** **"We're in Belvidere."** **"Why not in Rockford?"** **"With enough notice to get out of work when a key issue is on the agenda."**

Response: The location of the Technical Committee meetings is largely the result of the gracious hospitality of Loves Park and the advantages that location provides: (1) somewhat in the middle of the Metropolitan Planning area, (2) accessible by car or bus, (2) accessible for persons with disabilities, (3) ample free parking, (4) a quiet, comfortable meeting room. The meeting time is set at 10:00 am to allow for travel time for individuals who have to travel long distances such as IDOT and the Toll Highway Authority. The Technical Committee can consider other locations/times and this matter can be discussed under Other Business at any Technical Committee meeting.

4. The November 2002 survey queried: "RATS Policy Committee meetings are generally held on the Thursday following the Technical Committee meeting, starting at 1:30 pm and are rotated between Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park and Winnebago County. Are these locations and times adequate?"

Only one of the 48 respondents to this question said the rotating meeting locations and the meeting time was not adequate. That person is currently on the Illinois Terrorism Task Force which also meets on the 4th Thursday. Four persons noted that this question was not applicable to them because they do not attend Policy Committee meetings. One person said, **"The general public (who is working) cannot take time to attend meetings during the day."** And one person said, **"Add Belvidere to the rotation."**

Response: RATS has occasionally had evening meetings (on the Long-Range Plan and on Certification Review). Attendance by the public was scant to none at those meetings. Anyone having a serious interest in a transportation matter and who cannot attend a day meeting should contact RATS staff or any of the members of the Technical or Policy Committee directly. RATS staff can transmit citizen concerns to the Committees and/or special meetings can be scheduled to accommodate special needs. Adding Belvidere to the rotation will be brought before the Policy Committee. At present, however, RATS Policy Committee meetings are scheduled at the same locations and immediately following the WinGIS meetings. This is

because most RATS Policy Committee members are also members of WinGIS.

5. The November 2002 survey queried: "If you have attended RATS meetings, do you feel sufficient time and opportunity is devoted to hearing comments and answering questions from the general public at RATS meetings?"

a. Nearly 90% of the 41 respondents to this question answered "yes" to this question. One person commented positively: **"When applicable I feel an appropriate amount of time has been devoted to public comment."** Some said they did not know or that they had not attended enough meetings to judge. Some made comments as follows: **"Could use more time for questions and answers."** **"The meeting room at Loves Park City Hall is a little bit too small."** **"Does not happen very often at the Technical Committee. Members do have a desire to get out of the meetings by noon, so I would say it depends on how busy the agenda is."**

Response: The Committee chairman will be informed of the comment that more time for questions and answers has been requested. Also, because the Technical Committee has grown in size by three more members, the meeting room size comment will be brought to the attention of the Committee. Certainly, when agenda topics are of special interest to citizens, a large meeting room would be more appropriate.

b. One respondent questioned: **"How much knowledge does the general public have of these meetings and their opportunities for comment?"**

Response: This is always a concern of RATS and is, in fact, the reason for the survey, this document, and the Federal laws requiring a public involvement process. We try to make the public aware in several direct ways as discussed previously in this document but we also have to rely on the area media. At least 2-3 times every year, the media will attend Committee meetings, particularly when there are controversial items on the agenda. Most often, however, the public becomes deeply involved only on special studies or issues such as the West State Street Corridor Study, the Perryville Road land acquisition issue and similar topics that have the potential to affect a large number of citizens or have significant cost to taxpayers.

c. One respondent commented: **"As a visitor -- I get a sense that the meeting is often very "club-like" and I feel like an outsider."**

Response: The Committee chairmen will be informed of the comment. Staff takes this opportunity to comment that all input is welcomed and if we have in any way made any individual feel uncomfortable at a RATS meeting, we sincerely apologize.

- d. Another respondent commented: **“Experience showed lack of concern by the committee for individual neighborhood concerns; our points were heard as if “new.” It appeared very little was understood by the committee other than “another project” was up for consideration. No home work had been done by anyone except Gary McIntyre and the project would have had a major impact on our street safety and traffic load. Thankfully, the vote was delayed pending our concerns and we were given the chance to formally present alternatives. The project is still on the list, I see, but I have had no updates.”**

Response: In fact, both the Technical and Policy Committees were very concerned with the situation this respondent was faced with. It is a situation that occurs in many parts of the Metropolitan Area: that of arterial traffic diverting to collector or local streets to avoid congestion, avoid stopping at a traffic signal, or otherwise shorten travel time. Because we lay out local and collector streets with the intent of maximizing access to the homes and businesses along them (for safety and convenience reasons), these streets can also inadvertently function as diversion channels for through traffic. In the situation of this respondent, the City of Rockford and Winnebago County were faced with balancing the need to reduce a safety problem at an intersection with the fact that reducing the safety problem might also allow or encourage more traffic to travel through a residential neighborhood. The situation was further complicated by the sizable traffic generated at one end of the respondent’s street (generated by multi-family dwellings) and the incomplete street network in the vicinity of the multifamily development (thereby limiting travel alternatives and posing congestion at the collector/arterial intersection). Approximately 2-3 years ago, a partial solution to the traffic safety problem was implemented (turn lanes were built on the arterial). Before considering further options, area traffic managers decided to allow the situation to adjust to the partial solution, then gather more data and reevaluate the problem. RATS, the City of Rockford and Winnebago County are aware of the situation and the possible need for further corrective action, but until this survey, was not aware of the respondent’s growing level of concern. City of Rockford staff have agreed to contact the respondent for the purpose of clarifying concerns and weighing options. RATS is appreciative of the respondent’s effort in responding to the survey and raising awareness of situation.

- e. The same person also commented: **“Our Sage Drive neighborhood still does not understand why a “no left turn” sign from “6-9 am & 3-6 pm” has not been added to the northbound Sage Drive & Riverside intersection (and also southbound Rennhart). The Riverside left turn lanes have helped Riverside but not Sage Drive residents wanting to turn right onto Riverside. Sage Drive traffic backs up waiting for the car(s) wanting to turn left during busy periods. Why can't this sign be added ??”**

Response: Given the current geometrics at the Sage Drive

intersection with Riverside, restricting left turns would certainly reduce queues on Sage at those times. Left turns are difficult to make at this unsignalized intersection. Because the intersection has no dedicated left turn lane, cars queuing to make left turns also block cars making right turns. Adding the “no left turn” constraints would reduce queue lengths and make it easier for more cars to make right turns. This, however, would likely create two new problems: travelers originating in the Sage Drive neighborhoods and desiring westbound travel on Riverside would be forced to (1) travel southward, through the Sage Drive neighborhoods to get to Alpine, then to Riverside; or (2) turn right (east) on Riverside and then find ways to reverse direction to become westbound. Both are undesirable. Rockford and Winnebago County will soon be restudying the situation and will look at several options including adding a left turn lane on Sage Drive, adding signals at the Sage/Riverside intersection, adding new road linkages that will connect the multifamily area of Sage Drive more directly with Alpine Road, and adding speed humps to the south sections of Sage Drive to discourage through traffic, as well as combinations of these and other measures. The Sage Drive residents will be notified after further data is collected and as ideas are being developed to improve the situation.

6. The November 2002 survey queried: “Do you feel there is currently adequate representation by area transportation stakeholders on the RATS Technical Committee?”

- a. Most people (91%) responded to this query positively. Of the persons who responded negatively, two suggested the addition of Boone County and the other municipalities in Boone and Winnebago Counties. Even some persons who responded positively suggested that the Committee might need to be expanded. One person asked about air, bus, rail, and taxi representation and one person commented about how well RATS is doing in providing information. One person simply posed a question as to who else might benefit.

Response: Some people who responded to this question were not aware that the Technical Committee had already been expanded to include Belvidere Public Works and the Village of Roscoe and was likely to be expanded to include the Village of Winnebago. Other jurisdictions in Winnebago and Boone County are quite distant from the Rockford urbanized area (Durand, Pecatonica), or are in the State Line Area Transportation Study (Rockton and South Beloit). Others are quite small and may not have an interest in participating. The general aviation airports have not requested membership on the Technical Committee but one, Cottonwood, frequently attends meetings and has served on a Subcommittee of the Technical Committee. Similarly, private bus, taxi and rail companies have not expressed an interest in being on the Committee. Other entities that might benefit from membership is a debatable topic but could include the large special taxing/service districts in the area

such as the Rockford Park District, the Rock River Water Reclamation District and the North Park Public Water District. While most of these special districts do not themselves provide any kind of transportation service, the location of their infrastructure is closely tied to the transportation system and from that standpoint coordination of improvements is a reason for considering them as possible members. In addition, the Rockford Park District does provide and maintain several miles of pedestrian / bicycle pathways.

- b. One person commented that: **“The real estate development community is not represented.”** One other respondent commented: **“Developers and consultants in general might have an interest in RATS and should be on mailing list.”**

Response: RATS staff is sympathetic with the comment to the extent that the views of the real estate development community need to be heard and considered. The problem with putting a developer on the Committee as a voting member is that it has potential for “conflict of interest” objections from several directions. Other developers may object, arguing that they too should be members. Environmentalists, land use reformists, and balanced growth proponents are likely to object that they too are not represented. The general taxpayer could object because a profit-making individual or entity has been given special privileges to influence a public body that has a responsibility to make recommendations on the use of taxpayer dollars.

- c. Related but counter to adding developers, another respondent commented: **“Is public involvement really desired when IDOT makes up its mind to “improve” an area, even when the public doesn't want it? Is public involvement desired when developers have the ear of public officials who vote on crucial decisions.”**

Response: RATS staff maintains that the Technical Committee should be limited to individuals or entities from public agencies and, preferably, from public agencies that have some degree of responsibility for providing transportation to the public. This is not to say that general citizen or special interest group advisory committees cannot be formed that would provide input to the Committee. RATS has always been willing to accommodate this on a standing or ad hoc basis if there is sufficient interest. Again, staff points out that all RATS meetings are open to the public and comments from any interested party will be heard and considered.

We agree wholeheartedly that developers and consultants should be on the mailing list and have endeavored to do so over the years.

7. The November 2002 survey queried: “Do you feel there is currently adequate representation by area transportation stakeholders on the RATS Policy Committee?”

- a. Again, most respondents replied positively to this question but here a sizable minority indicated that they though the Policy Committee should be expanded.

Response: Boone County, the City of Belvidere, and the Villages of Cherry Valley, Roscoe, and Winnebago have requested membership on the Policy Committee. Earlier in 2002, staff prepared an extensive paper discussing the many issues, pros, and cons of adding membership to the Policy Committee as well as the issue of combining RATS and SLATS. This entire matter is still being weighed and discussed. The primary issue holding back adding new members is summed up in two other respondent comments, as follows:

- b. **“The City of Rockford represents over 50 percent of the population of Winnebago County but it does not have the voting power it should have. The smaller surrounding communities have just as much power but represent a smaller population base.” “On the Policy Committee, we need to develop a system to include more, but not to unfairly dilute Rockford's voice.”**

Response: Because the Rockford urbanized area has recently been expanded to include several new governmental entities, the RATS Policy will have to be expanded to provide some degree of representation for all of these entities. But, because the entities vary considerably in size and transportation responsibility and, as the above comment states, the City of Rockford has much larger responsibility than the other entities, expanding the Policy Committee can be viewed as a dilution of Rockford's authority. In fact, developing a structure of representation that gives all entities an “audible voice” but, at the same time provides a voice that is proportionate to the size of each entity is a universal conundrum of democratic government.

For RATS, several approaches have been identified to help resolve this problem: (1) weighted voting (Rockford and the larger communities simply get more votes), (2) stacking the committee (adding members so that the larger communities have more sympathetic members), (3) resolving the main issue, the disbursement of Federal STP-urban funds, on the basis of a formula or set of criteria that assures all jurisdictions of a fair share, (4) requiring consensus or super-majority decision-making, (5) giving the central city or the larger entities veto power, (6) giving all an equal vote and simply counting on the good will and common sense of all parties involved, and (7) some combination of the previous techniques. All of these approaches have pros and cons; none are likely to meet with perfect, mutual satisfaction; in the end, all will likely have to compromise to some degree.

8. The November 2002 survey queried: “Please use the back of this form to comment or make suggestions on how RATS might improve the involvement of the general public or transportation stakeholders in the transportation planning and decision-making process.”

Several comments were received in response to the above query, some of which have been noted with regard to previous queries. One person complimented RATS for “reaching out” with the survey. One person asked for more “general information”. One person asked that staff make a better effort to explain some of the abbreviations on the tables in the TIP. Staff is grateful for the compliment and will certainly try to accommodate the requests for information and clarification.

- a. One person commented: **“If I were the public, I would probably be terribly confused at the RATS Tech Meeting, especially at the beginning when the TIP is being updated. Sometimes it is hard for me to follow along and I have a list to look at!”**

Response: No doubt, the TIP status report on roadway engineering and construction projects, at the start of the Technical Committee meeting, is sometimes difficult to follow. Contributing to this is the large number of projects that must be reviewed in the short time available, the abbreviated way the projects are discussed, and the jargon used. To those attendees not actively involved in roadway improvements, the bulk of the report is likely to be confusing if not wearisome. The status report does, however, provide those 4 or 5 key persons on the Committee who are intimately involved in project implementation with an opportunity to see what is going on in the neighboring communities and thereby avoid or minimize construction scheduling conflicts (i.e., simultaneously closing nearby road segments and leaving travelers no viable alternatives). The reporting procedure also provides RATS staff with a comprehensive information update that, in turn, allows the staff to answer later questions from developers, other public officials, and concerned citizens.

- b. One person commented: **“Please explain once-a-year (or on the forms) the column heading abbreviations (i.e. ROW. . .) on the various forms.”**

Response: This will be done.

- c. One person commented: **“RATS needs to develop a transportation plan that coincides with the long range planning of all surrounding communities that are a part of**

RATS. The RATS organization is one of the only true regional planning bodies in the area. The public needs to know of the plans and the vocal minority needs to accept what is good transportation for (everyone) the majority. Communities that do not follow those plans and try to stop what is good for the majority, should not have a vote in the future. The area can only achieve a good well-rounded transportation system by working together. RATS also needs to recognize the significant role the City of Rockford has in this area and its power should not be diluted.”

Response: RATS does attempt to develop its plan to coincide with the plans of surrounding communities. Sometimes, however, the plans of various communities are in conflict with each other or not in concert with regional transportation planning goals and/or with Federal planning guidance. In those cases, the best RATS can sometimes do is point out the conflicts and develop a plan that does comply with the regional goals, the Federal guidance and the directions from the RATS Policy Committee.

- d. One person commented: **“Add more media advertising.”**

Response: This will probably be done as part of the next Long-Range Plan Update but it is expensive and has not encouraged much attendance when it was done in the past unless the meetings were focused on very specific problems, corridors, intersections, or safety situations.

9. The November 2002 survey queried: “If there are individuals you feel would benefit from being placed on the RATS mailing list, please provide their names and addresses.”

As a result of this request, nine persons were added to the mailing list. A simultaneous mailing to all newly elected officials yielded two additional persons. However, four persons responded to the survey by asking to be removed from the mailing list. The survey was also productive in that nearly 50 of the respondents provided changes or additions to their particulars (names, titles, addresses, e-mail address and other contact numbers).

UPDATING THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Following is the schedule for the development and adoption of this PIP update. This schedule will be extended to allow further public review if significant changes are made to the draft.

Subsequent updates will be repeated every 4-5 years or whenever a significant change to the process is contemplated, in accordance with a similar notification procedure and schedule.

TABLE 4 – 2003 PIP Development Schedule		
#	Date	Activity
1	Nov 02	Develop & distribute public involvement survey.
2	Dec 02	Tabulate and analyze survey results.
3	Dec 1- Jan 17	Develop draft update report.
4	Jan 17	Distribute draft to all on the mailing list.
5	Jan 26	Publish public notice in Register Star, begin 45 day public review period.
6	Feb 20	Discuss draft and comments received at Technical Committee meeting, invite further public comment.
7	Feb 27	Discuss draft and comments at Policy Committee meeting (if held), invite further public comment.
8	Feb 28 - Mar 12	Incorporate suggested changes, if any, and allow extended opportunity for public comment.
9	Mar 12	If changes have been significant redistribute 2 nd Draft.
10	Mar 20	Discuss 2 nd Draft at Technical Committee meeting, invite further public comment. If document has changed significantly or significant new comments received, extent public review period. If not, recommend for Policy Committee approval.
11	Mar 27	Discuss 2 nd Draft at Policy Committee meeting, invite further public comment. If document has changed significantly or significant new comments received, extent public review period. If not, adopt document.
12	Repeat milestones 8 -12 until adopted.	

UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Unified Work Program (UWP) is prepared annually. It describes, prioritizes and assigns responsibility and allocates funds for planning among RATS participants. The RATS fiscal year corresponds with the IDOT fiscal year and runs from July 1st through June 30th. Even though formal work on the UWP does not normally begin until the January or February months, staff begins consideration of items to be included in the next year's UWP as early as September or

October. For this reason, persons seeking planning work on a special topic should approach RATS as early as possible. The following schedule of activities related to the development of the UWP is proposed as an annually recurring process. Various parts of this schedule may have to be compressed or expanded to accommodate unforeseen conditions but every effort will be made to allow reasonable amounts of time and opportunities for public input.

TABLE 5 – Annual UWP Development Schedule	
Date	Activity
Oct-Dec	Initial considerations for the next year's work program.
Jan	Publish notice in newspaper announcing RATS planning activities, including UWP development. Rough time tables for public input and opportunities noted.
Jan-Feb	IDOT issues funding marks for coming years. Open discussion of UWP issues at regular meetings.
Mar	Open discussion of UWP issues at regular meetings.
Mar	1 st Draft of UWP prepared by staff and mailed to all on the mailing list.
Mid Mar	Draft presented at Technical Committee meeting, public comment invited.
End Mar	Draft presented at Policy Committee meeting, public comment invited.
End Mar	Draft submitted to IDOT for review and comment.
Apr- Mid May	Public comments accepted throughout this time. Local match (20%) assurance sought from lead agency (City of Rockford) and any other agencies involved.
Mid May	Final draft prepared, presented at Technical Committee meeting for public review and comment, Technical Committee makes recommendation to Policy Committee.
End May	Final Draft presented to Policy Committee for adoption. Additional public comment allowed.
Amendments to the UWP are possible at any time. The public review period for amendments need not be more than the approximate 2 week time period between when proposed amendments are prepared and mailed out to the time of the Policy Committee meeting. The review period may be shortened or extended by the Policy Committee depending on the significance of the amendment. Public comment will be accepted at any time.	

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Early Involvement Encouraged – The implementation of a transportation improvement, whether it be as simple, seemingly, as the purchase of a new transit bus or as complex as the construction of a new freeway, can be a lengthy process. A large complicated project can take several years from the time it is conceived to the time it is actually implemented. Federally-funded projects or projects involving multiple jurisdictions may take even longer.

From the opposite viewpoint, projects that have been planned for a long time and have already been engineered or have right-of-way purchased or reserved are not easily stopped or changed. Agencies are reluctant to abandon or alter projects in which they have already made sizable investments in time and public funds.

Therefore, whether a citizen is seeking to encourage or discourage a particular project, it is best that they become involved in the planning process as early as possible.

TIP Defined – The RATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is prepared annually to coordinate major improvements among the many jurisdictions in the Rockford Metropolitan Area and to encourage greater citizen knowledge and involvement in selecting and assigning priority to transportation improvements. The TIP is a detailed list of the transportation projects to be implemented in each of the next three years. The first year is the implementation year and the second and third years are referred to as the "out years". Ideally, a project will first be seen in the TIP in the third year and will, over the next two TIP updates, advance to the first or implementation year. Sometimes, projects are advanced faster or may even enter the TIP for the first time in the implementation year. Conversely, some projects may stay in the out years for several years before reaching the implementation year or may be dropped entirely, as community priorities change. Large complicated projects are often phased or spread over several years. For such projects, the initial project planning, conceptualization and feasibility analysis and alternatives analysis will take place well before the project reaches the TIP. The efforts are part of the Long-Range Planning process, part of which will show up, first, in the annual Unified Planning Work Programs (UWP). Projects/proposals that pass muster through these preliminary studies then, typically, proceed to the engineering stages where the project is actually designed and where the project will first show up in a TIP. If a project is especially large or complex, actual construction may be divided into several phases, spread over several years and hence various parts of a major project may appear in all years of the 3-year TIP, advancing through the TIP for several years in succession.

Jurisdictional Timing Considerations -- The TIP is generally prepared to coincide with IDOT's fiscal year which is the same as RATS, from July 1st through June 30th. For example, the FY 2004 TIP will program projects to be implemented between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. It will also list projects proposed for FY 2005 and FY2006 (7/1/2004 - 6/30/2006).

RATS staff work on the TIP begins approximately six months prior to the start of the fiscal year, in January and February of each year. However, input for the TIP from the various jurisdictions begins sooner in many cases and is complicated by the differing fiscal years of the various Federal, State and local jurisdictions. Citizens seeking to influence project selection are urged to begin making contact with the officials in the various jurisdictions no later than six months before the start of the jurisdiction's fiscal year. In addition, some jurisdictions, such as IDOT, internally prepare improvement programs covering longer time spans.

<i>TABLE 6 – Fiscal Year Start Dates</i>	
DATES	JURISDICTION
Jan 1	Rockford
May 1	Loves Park, Machesney Park, Belvidere, Cherry Valley, Poplar Grove
April 1	Village of Winnebago
June 1	Village of New Millford
July 1	IDOT, RATS, Rockford Mass Transit District, Roscoe
Oct 1	Winnebago County, Federal government
Dec 1	Boone County

Each of the above jurisdictions determine the extent and priorities of their proposed capital improvements through their own respective public involvement processes. The general purpose units of government, such as Rockford, Loves Park and Machesney Park, have elaborate committee structures and routinely scheduled meetings for making these decisions. These meeting are announced to the press and media and are open to the public. The special districts such as Rockford Mass Transit have less elaborate committee structures but programming issues are discussed at various announced meetings throughout the year. These meetings are also open to the public. Special formal public hearings are also conducted for major decisions or whenever State or federal funds are involved.

Opportunities in the TIP Process – The TIP process encourages public involvement. Citizens can influence project selection and priority setting in two ways. By scrutinizing the "out year" projects, the public can determine if the projects they believe to be important are included. Although, by federal law, a project cannot be included in the TIP unless funding is likely to be available, citizens can

question why some projects are included and others not. Second, citizens can influence the priority setting (i.e., which projects are advanced to the implementation year). Sometimes a project cannot be hastened because engineering, ROW acquisition, funding and/or various components have not been accomplished. But many times, all of these aspects can be adjusted and the time for implementation can be lessened.

Who to Contact – Whenever citizens are concerned about the inclusion and/or priority of a project, they should first contact the specific jurisdiction responsible for the project.

TABLE 7 lists the various agencies involved in programming transportation improvements and contact persons for those agencies. If they are not satisfied with answers from the jurisdictional level, they can bring their concerns before the RATS Technical and Policy Committees. Of course, if they are unsure what jurisdiction is responsible or if the project is of a multi-jurisdictional nature, RATS would be the place to start.

Timing and Scheduling – **TABLE 8** outlines the typical schedule for the annual TIP development. Various parts of this schedule may have to be compressed or expanded to accommodate unforeseen conditions but every effort will be made to allow reasonable amounts of time and opportunities for public input.

Making Changes – As **TABLE 8** shows, the TIP development process takes place over several months and there are numerous opportunities for citizens to voice their concerns about project selection or priority.

Sometimes, however, proposals for **significant changes** to the draft TIP are made late in the TIP development process. In these instances, the Policy Committee will weigh a variety of factors in determining if an extended public review period is warranted. Such factors include: the nature or degree of the change, the cost of the change, the advice of the Technical Committee, the likelihood that the change will be opposed by citizens or other entities and the need for action on the TIP to meet time lines or deadlines on other projects in the TIP. Changes likely to be significant include the

addition of a completely new project, the deletion of a project, major cost or funding changes or changes of priority that bump other projects from the implementation year or from the TIP entirely.

Further, any change in a project priority or project scope which meets the objection of a member of the RATS Policy Committee would be considered a significant change. In rare situations, it may be necessary to take action on the TIP because of deadlines on projects unrelated to a proposed change. In these instances, the Policy Committee may elect to adopt the TIP with the change included but provide for further post-adoption public review and comment.

When significant changes are proposed, after a TIP has already been adopted, an additional public review period will be provided. Significant changes to the TIP will require formal amendment by the Policy Committee. Normally, notification of the public via the RATS meeting notice/agenda mail outs (these occur 1-2 weeks before meetings and are sent to all on the RATS mailing lists including the media) will be considered sufficient notice. Objections from citizens or Policy Committee members may warrant more lengthy comment periods. Similar factors, as described above, will be weighed in defining a "significant change" and the need for formal amendment.

However, it is recognized that special circumstances may arise necessitating a project be moved forward (project advancement) from the "out years" to the implementation year. Project advancement (or deferral) is allowed without formal amendment to an adopted TIP under the judgement of the implementing agency or agencies. However, the implementing agency and/or the RATS staff are required to inform the Technical and Policy Committees of the project advancement/deferral at the next regularly scheduled committee meetings. Also, if there is doubt about whether a proposed TIP change, project advancement or deferral should be considered significant, RATS staff or staff of the implementing agency will poll Policy Committee members for advice.

TABLE 7 – Agency Contact Persons

Jurisdiction	Contact	Title or Department	Phone #	Address
Incorporated Cities and Villages				
Belvidere, City	Troy Krupp Craig Lawler	City/County Planner Director of Public Works	544-5271 544-9256	601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008-2609 210 Whitney Blvd., Belvidere, IL 61008
Cherry Valley, Village	David Nord Joe Caveny	Village Administrator Public Works Director	332-3441 332-3441	806 E. State St., Cherry Valley, IL 61016 806 E. State St., Cherry Valley, IL 61016
Loves Park, City	Dan Jacobson David Noel Robert Martin Steve Thompson	Mayor's Office Director of Community Development Director of Public Works Community Development Department	654-5030 654-5029 639-2510 654-5029	100 Heart Blvd., Loves Park, IL 61111 100 Heart Blvd., Loves Park, IL 61111 100 Heart Blvd., Loves Park, IL 61111 100 Heart Blvd., Loves Park, IL 61111
Machesney Park, Village	Chad Atkinson Chad Hunter Paul Sheppard	Director of Planning & Zoning Zoning Officer Public Works	877-5432 877-5432 877-5432	300 Machesney Rd., Machesney Park, IL 61111 300 Machesney Rd., Machesney Park, IL 61111 300 Machesney Rd., Machesney Park, IL 61115
New Millford, Village	Bonnie Beard Dale Johnson Dennis McMullen	Village President Streets Village Engineer (Infratek Engineers, Inc)	874-7271 874-5359 395-3700	6771 11 th St, New Millford, IL 61109 206 Manderia Dr, New Millford, IL 61109 433 S. Phelps Av, Rockford, IL 61128
Poplar Grove, Village	Martha Suhr	Village Clerk	765-3201	PO Box 1, 100 S State St., Poplar Grove, IL 61065
Rockford, City and RATS Staff	Steve Ernst Hong Liu Wayne Dust Gary McIntyre Russ Petrotte	RATS Study Director & City Traffic Eng. Assistant Traffic Engineer Planning Coordinator RATS Transportation Planner RATS Transportation Planner	987-5571 987-5571 987-5624 987-5638 987-5628	425 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61104 425 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61104 425 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61104 425 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61104 425 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61104
Roscoe, Village	Lowell Smith Bonnie Miles Christopher Hodges	Village President Village Clerk Village Engineer	623-2829 623-2829 623-3636	10631 Main St, Roscoe, IL 61073 10631 Main St, Roscoe, IL 61073 10923 Oconto Rd, Roscoe, IL 61073
Timberlane, Village	Steve Rapp	Village President	547-4275	PO Box 56, Caledonia, IL 61011
Winnebago, Village	David Hassell Mark Painter	Village President Village Engineer (Fehr-Graham & Assoc.)	335-2020 394-4700	505 S. Church St., Winnebago, IL 61088 1920 Daimler Rd, Rockford, IL 61112
County Governments				
County of Boone	Richard Lundin Ken Terrinoni	County Engineer County Administrator	544-2066 547-4770	9759 IL Route 76, Belvidere, IL 61008-9599 601 N. Main / Suite 201, Belvidere, IL 61008
County of Ogle	Curtis D. Cook	County Engineer	732-2851	1989 Illinois Route 2 South, Oregon, IL 61061
County of Winnebago	Joe Vanderwerff Carlos Molina Sue McLaughlin	County Engineer Assistant County Engineer Planning & Zoning Officer	987-3113 987-3113 987-2563	424 N. Springfield Av., Rockford, IL 61101 424 N. Springfield Av., Rockford, IL 61101 404 Elm St., Rockford, IL 61101-1221

Special Districts and Authorities

Greater Rockford Airport Authority	Michael Zonsius	Deputy Director / Finance & Admin.	965-8639	60 Airport Dr., Rockford, IL 61109
Illinois Dept of Transportation, District 2	Greg Mounts Rick Gualandi	District Engineer Systems Planning & Services Eng.	284-5301 284-5445	819 Depot Av., Dixon, IL 61021-3546 819 Depot Av., Dixon, IL 61021-3546
Illinois Toll Highway Authority	Bunny Andereson Vance Hultgren	Community Relations Coordinator MIP-CIP Programmer	630-241-6800 630-241-6800	2700 Ogden Av., Downers Grove, IL 60515 2700 Ogden Av., Downers Grove, IL 60515
North Park Public Water Dist.	Dennis Leslie	General Manager	633-5461	1350 Turret Dr., Machesney Park, IL 61115
Rockford Mass Transit District	Rick McVinnie Dennis Hendricks Paula Huges Lisa Brown Terry Houghton	Executive Director Maintenance Manager Grant Specialist Marketing & PR Specialist Paratransit Supervisor	961-2230 961-2240 961-2227 961-2226 961-2237	520 Mulberry St, Rockford, IL 61101-1016 520 Mulberry St, Rockford, IL 61101-1016 520 Mulberry St, Rockford, IL 61101-1016 520 Mulberry St, Rockford, IL 61101-1016 520 Mulberry St, Rockford, IL 61101-1016
Rockford Park District	Rick Strader	Manager, Capital Planning	987-8865	1401 N 2 nd St, Rockford, IL 61107-1068
Rock River Water Reclamation District	Mike Olson	Engineering Manager	387-7660	PO Box 7480, Rockford, IL 61126-7480

Township Governments

Belvidere Twp. / Boone Co.	Richard E. Lee Robert Turner	Road Commissioner Township Supervisor	544-2029 544-2027	8200 Fairgrounds Rd., Belvidere, IL 61008 251 W. Locust St, Belvidere, IL 61008
Bonus Twp. / Boone Co.	Donald Gustafson	Road Commissioner	547-1120	9669 Lawrenceville Rd., Garden Prairie, IL 61038
Boone Twp. / Boone Co.	Tom Anderson	Road Commissioner	569-2689	15132 Russellville Rd., Capron, IL 61012
Byron Twp. / Ogle Co.	Ronald Gibson	Highway Commissioner	234-8438	Box 712 / 507 Colfax St., Byron, IL 61010
Caledonia Twp. / Boone Co.	Norm Pierce	Road Commissioner	765-0345	2430 Main St., Caledonia, IL 61016
Cherry Valley Twp./Winn. Co.	Gordy Baggio Pat O'Donnell	Township Supervisor Road Commissioner	874-5785 874-5785	4875 Blackhawk Rd., Rockford, IL 61109 4875 Blackhawk Rd., Rockford, IL 61109
Flora Twp. / Boone Co.	Michael A. Frank	Road Commissioner	332-4853	77 Poole Rd., Cherry Valley, IL 61016
Harlem Twp. / Winn. Co.	Rob Humphries Bob McDonald	Road Commissioner Assistant Road Commissioner	673-2671 673-2671	819 Melbourne Av., Loves Park, IL 61115 819 Melbourne Av., Loves Park, IL 61115
Leroy Twp. / Boone Co.	Paul Donley, Jr.	Road Commissioner	737-8749	8708 Coon Trail Rd., Capron, IL 61012
Manchester Twp. / Boone Co.	Mathew Christiansen	Road Commissioner	765-2008	20080 Grade School Rd., Caledonia, IL 61011
Marion Twp. / Ogle Co.	Brian Johnson	Highway Commissioner	645-8138	PO Box 307, Stillman Valley, IL 61084
Monroe Twp. / Ogle Co.	Hiram Rust	Highway Commissioner	393-3873	Box 93, 202 West St., Monroe Center, IL 61052
Owen Twp. / Winn. Co.	Bob McWilliams	Road Commissioner	633-1642	1048 Luana Dr., Rockford, IL 61103
Poplar Grove Twp. / Boone Co.	Wayne wares	Road Commissioner	765-3603	12922 Parkway Ct., Poplar Grove, IL 61065
Rockford Twp. / Winn. Co.	Pete McKay	Highway Commissioner	962-7313	404 N. Springfield Av., Rockford, IL 61101
Rockton Twp. / Winn. Co.	Dick Thorson	Road Commissioner	624-7177	1301 N. Blackhawk, Rockton, IL 61109
Roscoe Twp. / Winn. Co.	Mat Servant	Road Commissioner	623-7323	5792 Elevator Rd., PO Box 49, Roscoe, IL 61073
Scott Twp. / Ogle Co.	Charles Bloomingdale	Road Commissioner	654-2679	Box 91, 4998 N. Junction Rd., Davis Junction, IL
Spring Twp. / Boone Co.	Dennis Dovenmuehle	Road Commissioner	544-0139	3673 Shattuck Rd., Garden Prairie, IL 61038
Winnebago Twp. / Winn. Co.	Jack Rowley	Road Commissioner	335-2340	8834 Cunningham Rd, Winnebago, IL 61088

TABLE 8 – Annual TIP Development Schedule

Dates	Activities
Jan-Feb	Deliberations on the next year's TIP begin. The TIP is placed on the agendas of the Technical and Policy Committee meetings. Persons on the RATS mailing lists, including the private providers and paratransit providers, are mailed agendas and public comment is invited. In addition:
	(a) Staff reviews progress reports on projects in the current TIP. Documents projects implemented and remaining to be implemented. Public comment is accepted on priorities of remaining projects and addition of new projects.
	(b) Staff reviews and reports on federal funding recently spent, available or forecasted, and allocated to specific projects or unallocated. Special attention given to federal sources.
	(c) RATS accepts comments or proposals regarding the project selection criteria or priorities for the use of federal STP funds and the methodology for sub-allocating federal transit subsidies.
	(d) RATS accepts new proposals or requests for the use of special federal/State funds for paratransit.
	(e) Input from RMTD, Boone County Council on Ageing and other paratransit providers considered.
	(f) Staff considers and presents pertinent material related to recent Transportation Plan changes or other special technical studies conducted the previous year.
	(g) Publish public notice in newspaper announcing RATS planning activities, including TIP development. Rough time tables for public input and opportunities noted.
Mar - May	Staff prepares preliminary draft(s) of the next year's TIP (July - June). Drafts based on information assembled above. Public comment again encouraged at the Technical/Policy Committee meetings. (May only be one preliminary draft prepared if significant comments are not made, significant changes not needed, and all participant report proposed projects in timely manner.)
Apr-Jun	Staff prepares final proposed draft(s) of the TIP for the May Technical and Policy Committee meetings. Draft includes summary of the public comments received. (May only be one final draft prepared if significant comments are not made or significant changes not needed.)
Jun-Aug	Proposed TIP presented to the Technical and Policy Committee for adoption. New public comments are addressed. If changes to the TIP are needed as a result of the comments, the changes are duly noted. The Policy Committee determines if changes are significant enough to delay adoption and extend the public comment period. If changes are significant, adoption is delayed a minimum of a week. If quick adoption is not needed to allow a project bid letting, adoption may be delayed until the following regular meeting in July.
Throughout the remainder of the year	Progress on the implementation of the projects in the TIP is reported at the RATS Technical and Policy meetings and is documented as part of the meeting minutes.
	Significant changes (see text) to the TIP will require a formal amendment and the public will be afforded a review/comment period. Length of the review comment period will be based on the nature and significance of the change. Simply moving a project from the out years to the implementation year or minor changes to the project scope, costs, and funding sources are not normally considered significant changes that will necessitate a lengthy review period. Typically, non-significant changes can be made by placing the proposal on the Technical and Policy Committee agendas, distributing the agenda in the normal fashion, and allowing opportunity for comment on the change at the Technical and Policy Committee meetings.

LONG-RANGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT and MAINTENANCE

The RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP) is developed in the interest of promoting, developing and maintaining a safe and efficient multi modal transportation system that will meet the needs of the area's citizens, businesses and industries over a much longer time span than planned in the TIP. By federal law, the LRP considers a time span of 20-25 years and, like the TIP, can only include those projects or improvements for which there is sufficient funding based on reasonable forecasts. (The RATS LRP includes some projects that appear to be needed some time in the future but do not have a reasonably assured potential funding source. These projects are programmed beyond the 20-year time span.)

The first comprehensive long-range transportation plan (LRP) developed by RATS was adopted in the late 1960s. Although the plan was updated several times over the last

four decades, the basic foundations of that plan remain valid and accepted today. The LRP was last comprehensively updated and adopted in July of the Year 2000; it prescribes improvements through the Year 2025. Copies of the plan are available in the public libraries, at the RATS offices and at the offices of the RATS participants.

The LRP can be amended or updated for reasonable cause at any time. Persons seeking to amend or refine the Plan can initiate the process by contacting the RATS staff or any member of the RATS Technical or Policy Committees. By law, the Plan must be comprehensively updated, adopted and republished every five years, at a minimum. In accordance, the LRP is scheduled for its next comprehensive update in Year 2005 and will be a major component of the Year 2004 Unified Planning Work Program (July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005). Assuming roughly 10-12 months to accomplish the process, **TABLE 9**, specifies a probable update/adoption schedule.

TABLE 9 – Next LRP UPDATE Schedule

Dates	Activities
Jan 04	As part of the annual public notice of RATS planning activities, RATS announces that the LRP is scheduled for update in the following fiscal year, starting July 1, 2004. Public participation in the update is encouraged.
Jan-Jun 04	As part of the development of the FY 2005 UWP, all RATS participants and persons on the mailing list are notified that the LRP will be update in FY 2005.
May 04	Technical Committee forms an LRP Subcommittee for the purpose of providing direction to staff and encouraging and hearing public input on the LRP.
May - Jul	LRP Subcommittee determines if work is to be done in-house or with consultant assistance. If by consultant, RFQs/RFPs are issued, consultant selected, and scope and contract negotiated.
Jul-Sep 04	Staff and/or consultant: Assembles documents, reports, resolutions and other work pertinent to the update and prepares list/summary of these materials; copies are provided to the Subcommittee and made available to the public.
	Prepares a more detailed updated schedule, if needed, and a schedule of meetings and locations.
	Investigates/summarizes new State/Federal requirements and reports to Committees.
	Advises Policy Committee of above work and seeks input/direction.
Oct 04	Open meeting(s) / invite preliminary public comment on state of the transportation system
Nov 04 - Feb 05	Staff and/or consultant develops 1st draft of the LRP update.
	Draft distributed to all on mailing list for February or March meetings.
Jan 05	Annual Public Notice in newspaper further announces Plan development. Other press releases developed as needed and deemed appropriate by the Study Director or the RATS Committees.
Feb or Mar 05	Open meeting(s) / invite comments on LRP update draft.
Mar or Apr	Staff and/or consultant develops 2nd draft of LRP update.
	Draft distributed to all on mailing list.
Apr or May	Further comment invited at regular meetings.
May or Jun	Final draft developed / distributed for June meetings.
Jun 05	Final draft adopted.
After Jun 05	Possible refinement of elements or portions of the Plan, as per comments, instructions from the Policy Committee, or recommendations within the Plan.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Triennial Certification Reviews – Federal guidelines require the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to jointly review the transportation planning process on a periodic basis (no less than every three years) to determine compliance with federal laws and guidelines. As a matter of practice, area officials, community leaders and the general public are afforded opportunities during these reviews to comment on the planning process.

The last Certification Review was initiated in July of 2000 and completed in January of 2001. During this period, officials from the FHWA and the FTA examined all aspects of the RATS planning process. Over a 2-day period in September 2000, FHWA and FTA official met with RATS staff and participants and conducted an on-site review. Prior to this on-site meeting, comments were solicited from the general public through an announcement of the review via the RATS

mailing list. No comments were subsequently received from the general public. Overall, the RATS planning process was certified to be in compliance. A document detailing the findings, comments and recommendations of the FHWA and FTA is on file in the RATS offices and is available for public review at any time. That document was also distributed at RATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings.

The FHWA/FTA will conduct the next certification review of the RATS planning process sometime in mid to late 2003. Opportunities for public comment will be afforded again at that time. Contact RATS staff for meeting times and locations. Written comments regarding the planning process can be submitted at any time. Comments may be addressed to the RATS staff or submitted directly to the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, or Illinois Department of Transportation staff (see **Table 10**, below, for contact specifics).

TABLE 10 – Certification Review Contacts

Agency	Contact	Address	City	Phone	E-Mail
FHWA	John Donovan	3250 Executive Pkwy.	Springfield IL 62703	217-492-4625	john.donovan@fhwa.dot.gov
FTA	Linda Glover	200 W. Adams, Suite 2410	Chicago IL 60606	312-353-2865	linda.glover@fta.dot.gov
IDOT	Bob Soltau	2300 S. Dirksen Pkwy	Springfield IL 62764	217-785-2995	soltaurl@nt.dot.state.il.us
RATS	Steve Ernst	425 E. State St	Rockford IL 61104	815-967-6734	steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us
	Russ Petrotte	425 E. State St.	Rockford IL 61104	815-987-5628	russ.petrotte@ci.rockford.il.us
	Gary McIntyre	425 E. State St.	Rockford IL 61104	815-987-5638	gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

Roadway Improvement Bond Referendums – In 1982, the City of Rockford began a program to repair and rebuild the City's streets, bridges, drainageways and water system. That program continues through the present. Throughout most of that time period the program was funded with annual voter-approved bond issues.

Each year, when bond issues were sought, Rockford voters were presented with a complete list of proposed improvements, the costs of those improvements, and the impact the expenditures would place on property taxes.

Since the program was initiated in 1982, Rockford voters have never failed to pass a road improvement referendum. Moreover, since 1988, Rockford voters have approved \$65.2 million for the repair and rebuild program including \$8 million, just last year. This response of the voters speaks emphatically for the public involvement efforts of Rockford officials and staff and demonstrates that Rockford citizens are thoroughly involved in transportation infrastructure improvement decisions.

The area highlighted on this Exhibit A (the area within the thick outline) is the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) for the Rockford Area Transportation Study, the Federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford, IL area. For the next 5-10 years, RATS will focus its transportation planning activities in this area.

The MPA includes all lands within the Rockford Urbanized Area (UA), as so designated by the U.S. Census 2000. The UA is the more darkly shaded area within the MPA.

Also outlined on the Exhibit (the thinner outline within the MPA) is an area slightly larger than the UA. This area, the Adjusted Urbanized Area, includes lands that are expected to be urbanized (converted from agricultural to urban uses) in the next 5-10 years.

Beyond the Adjusted UA, and within the MPA boundary, are additional lands deemed to have a high potential for urbanization between the present and the year 2025.

The boundaries shown on this Exhibit A are subject to revision whenever new data or information shows that urbanization is likely to progress at different paces or in different directions.

RATS Metropolitan Planning Area

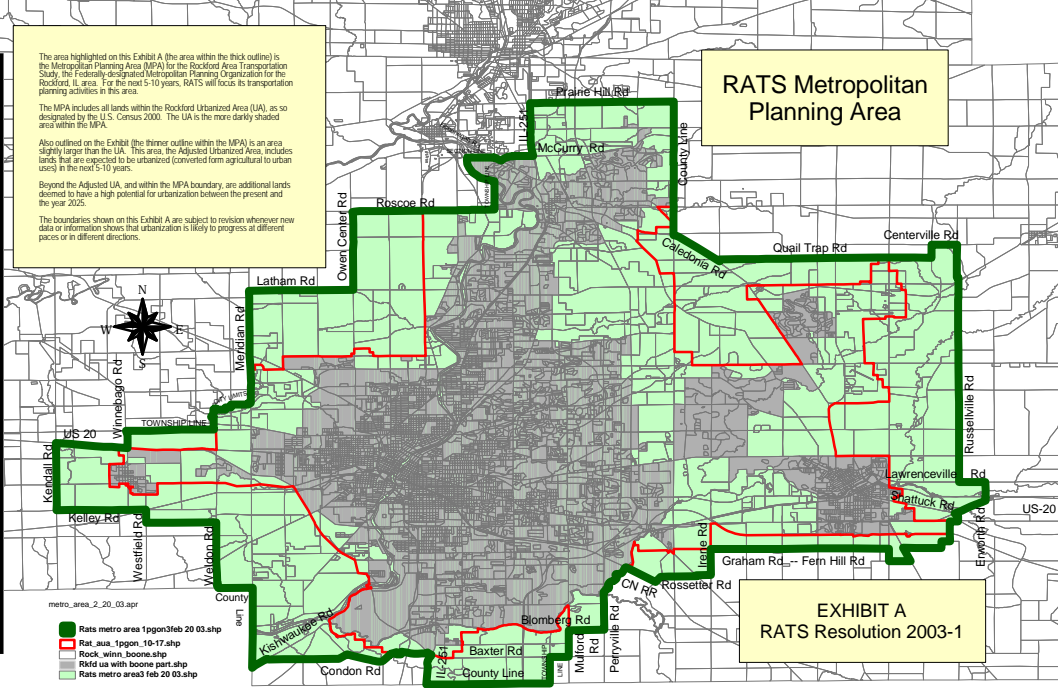


EXHIBIT A RATS Resolution 2003-1

- Rats metro area 1pgon3feb 20 03.shp
- Rat_aua_1pgon_10-17.shp
- Rock_winn_boone.shp
- Rkfd ua with boone part.shp
- Rats metro area3 feb 20 03.shp