



**Rockford Area Transportation  
Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**Meeting Minutes -- RATS Policy Committee**

**Meeting Date: August 28, 1997 -- Machesney Park Village Hall**

**POLICY COMMITTEE**

*Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford  
Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park  
Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County  
President Stephen Kuhn, Village of Machesney Park  
District Engineer William D. Ost, Illinois Department  
of Transportation, District 2*

**Members Present:** Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford; Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County; President Stephen Kuhn, Village of Machesney Park; District Engineer William D. Ost, Illinois Department of Transportation, District 2; Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park..

**Others Present:** David Dratnol, Winnebago County Highway; Gary McIntyre, RATS; Russ Petrotte, RATS; Bill Smith, IDOT/ Springfield; Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA/ Springfield; Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT Dixon; Scott La Coursiere, IDOT Dixon; Larry Reed, IDOT Dixon; Chad Atkinson, Machesney Park; David Noel, Winnebago County Planning; Rob Olson, Barton-Aschman Assoc., Inc.; Francis Sanders, Scott Township; Charles Bloomingdale, Scott Township.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** With a full quorum, Chairman Stephen Kuhn called the meeting to order at approximately 1:37 PM.

**2. COMMUNICATIONS: None**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Kristine Cohn moved to approved the minutes of the June 26, 1997 Policy Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Darryl Lindberg and approved unanimously with no corrections to the minutes.

**4. RATS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS:** Russ Petrotte said a detailed presentation had been made at the last Policy Committee meeting on this report. The report is an update of a document that was first prepared 3-4 years ago in response to ISTEA requirements. The report discusses the methods and details of involving the general public in the transportation planning activities of RATS.

Mr. Petrotte said no comments had been submitted from the general public on the report. He said minor changes were made in response to Technical Commit-

tee advice. The Township Highway Commissioners from the northern tier of townships in Ogle County were added to the RATS mailing list. These Highway Commissioners and the RATS staff were added to Table 6, the list of Agency Contact Persons. He said the Technical Committee recommended unanimously that the report be adopted with the changes included.

Mr. Petrotte distributed copies of a revised edition of the report, dated August 28th. He said the changes suggested above have been incorporated and the text and table were reformatted to improve the readability of the document.

Kristine Cohn moved that the report be adopted as recommended via Resolution 97-4. The motion was seconded by Charles Box. There was a brief discussion of the value of the report in light of the fact that no public response had come forth. Mr. Petrotte said the report is sometimes useful to persons who are new to the area and totally unfamiliar to the RATS planning process. He said he also hoped that the lack of public comment and participation in this and much of the other work of RATS is due to the fact that the transportation system is functioning reasonably well in the Rockford area. He said public involvement is much greater when we are dealing with specific improvements or with changes to the transit system. The motion to adopt Resolution 97-4 was approved unanimously.

**5. FY98 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:** Russ Petrotte presented the draft FY98 Transportation Improvement Program. He said the draft had been mailed to all persons on the mailing list during the week of August 11th. He said no comments have been received from the general public. He said the first 15 pages of text is largely "boiler plate" material that is included for the benefit of the public and persons unfamiliar with the RATS TIP

development process. Referring to the tables related that federal transit operating subsidies from the "5307" source are being eliminated (forecasted) and this means the loss of over \$400,000 to area transit operators. However, these subsidies are being partially supplanted by increases in State operating subsidies and by broadenings in the federal definitions of capital expenses (under "5307") that are now allowing some bus maintenance expenses to be funded with federal capital subsidies (and these funded are forecasted as increasing). Local support is also being expanded. As a result, RMTD and LPTS are showing balance budgets for FY98 with no significant changes in services levels.

Table 6 of the TIPS shows the major capital projects of RMTD and LPTS that are to be funded with federal "5307" funds. Among the projects in this list are sizeable requests for "Associated Maintenance Costs" and "Operations Planning." Previously work in these two categories had been funded with operating subsidies. Mr. Petrotte said the two operators have work closely together over the last several month and are in agreement that the listed projects are both needed and reasonably cost-forecasted.

Mr. Petrotte said neither RMTD nor LPTS are applying for any funds for vehicle replacement in FY98. In conjunction, the tables of fleet rosters which are often included in the TIP are not being included this year.

With regard to "5310" capital projects, the only request this year is from the School of Hope. The School is requesting a paratransit vehicle to meet special needs that are difficult or expensive for RMTD or LPTS to meet. Mr. Petrotte said he and Rick McVinnie had a lengthy meeting with School officials and concurred that the best way to meet their needs would be for the School to have a vehicle of its own.

Mr. Petrotte said there are no "5309" funding requests in the TIP this year. He said we had been extremely fortunate over the past three years in obtaining "5309" funds for replacement buses.

Gary McIntyre reviewed the Highway Element of the proposed TIP. He said the current balance of STP funds allocated to RATS is nearly \$5 million with approximately another million to be allocated in October. He said these funds are being stockpiled for the long-planned and programmed Harrison Avenue

to transit, he pointed out Extension Project for which ROW acquisition is likely to begin early next year. This project will consume most or all of our STP-Urban funds through the Year 2000. Mr. McIntyre highlighted aspects of the highway projects proposed by IDOT, Winnebago County, Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley and Boone County. He said projects are still coming in from the other agencies but will not involve the use of federal subsidies.

Mr. Petrotte presented a memo from he and Mr. McIntyre, dated August 28, 1997, documenting recent proposed changes to the August 11th TIP draft along with the Technical Committee's recommendations. He said staff and the Technical Committee are recommending immediate Policy Committee action on the August 11th draft with changes as detailed in the memo. Although the public review time for the draft have been short, opportunities for the public to suggest projects or project priorities have been ample. "TIP development" has been an agenda item at all Technical and Policy Committee meetings since early this year. A public notice was published regarding TIP development back in June. Adoption of the TIP at this time will permit those agencies that have submitted their projects to proceed with project planning and grant applications. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that those agencies that have not yet submitted their projects will have any federally-funded projects in their schedules. In addition, further public comment can be afforded after the TIP is adopted and the TIP can be amended, at any time. In fact, it is quite probable that the TIP will have to be amended sometime in October after exact federal transit apportionments are issued.

Along with the projects listed in the August 11th draft, the following additional projects or minor changes are now being proposed. With regard to highway projects:

1. Table 20, page 35-1, IDOT, FY98, 1-95-3: Under the "Improvement" column this project should be describe as "PE Phase 1 for bridge replacement & realignment" (underlined words added).
2. Table 20, page 35-1, IDOT, FY98, 1-95-16: This projects will extend from "North of Harlem Blvd. to King/Myott Ave. (underlined words added).

3. Table 20, page 35-1, IDOT, FY98, 1-98-1: This project will extend from "Wheeler Rd. to Logan Avenue in Belvidere" (underlined words added).
4. Table 20, page 35-1, IDOT, FY98, 1-98-2: This project should be described as "Reconstruction of at grade crossing" (underlined words added) and the \$92,000 federal share will be funded with "RR-Safety" dollars, not "STP-State" dollars. This change also affects the summary funding tables, specifically Table 16, page 31 and Table 19, page 34.
5. Table 20, page 35-1, IDOT, FY98, 1-98-3: this project should be described as PE Phase 2 for bridge replacement (underlined words added).
6. Table 20, page 35-2, ROCKFORD, FY98, 3-98-377: The costs of this city-wide bridge project should be specified at \$600,000 not \$500,000.
7. Table 21, page 36-1, IDOT, FY99, 1-95-13: This improvement should be describe as "PE Phase II for bridge replacement and realignment" (underlined word added).
8. Table 21, page 36-1, IDOT, FY99, 1-97-9a: This project involves acquiring the "ROW for resurfacing" between the "Com Ed RR subway (not ROW) in Byron to Beltline Road" (underlined words added).
9. Table 21, page 36-1, IDOT, FY99, 1-95-13: This project is 9.2 miles in length and is the acquisition of "ROW for resurfacing" (underlined words/numbers added).
10. Table 21, page 36-1, IDOT, FY99, 1-95-14: This project is at "Wilson Ave. in Machesney Park" and should be described as "ROW for intersection improvements" (underlined words added).
11. Table 21, page 36-1, IDOT, FY99, 1-95-20: This project extends between "Elmwood Road to Rockton ByPass" (not Latham Road) and is the "PE Phase II for future four lanes" (underlined words added).
12. Table 22, page 37-1, IDOT, FY00, 1-98-7: This project is at "Wilson Ave. in Machesney Park" (underlined words added).
13. Tables 20 through 22: Several projects throughout these tables were entered in the August 11th draft without project numbers assigned to them in column 3. These projects have now been assigned unique project numbers to aid in tracking the progress of these projects in the future.
14. Subsequent to the August 11th TIP draft a list of projects was submitted to RATS staff by the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority. These projects were submitted as excerpts from the Authority's "**1997 Annual Element & Multi-Year Program**" (specifically, pages 8, 14, 31, 42 and 53). These projects do not involve the use of federal funds, but will be included in the final draft of the TIP and identified by the proposed fiscal year of implementation.
15. Projects from the City of Belvidere and the Village of New Millford have not been submitted but staff has been informed that no projects are being proposed by these entities that will involve federal funding. Staff will make a further attempt to obtain listings from these entities and include their projects in the final draft of the TIP but adoption of the TIP should not be delayed by the absence of these projects.

With regard to transit projects, RMTD has submitted a list of seven additional projects and requested that they be added to Tables 6 and 7 of the FY98 TIP. These projects are to be funded with Federal "5307" dollars (at 80 percent) and IDOT or local dollars (at 20 percent). The Technical Committee concurs that the projects should be added as follows:

1. COMPUTER SOFTWARE (replace/update), \$75,000 (Update/replace software for finance & admin and improve efficiency).
2. PROJECTION PRESENTATION PACKAGE, \$20,000 (Marketing tool to promote ridership and do better training).
3. ELECTRONIC DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM, \$50,000, (Improve efficiency in gathering/analyzing fuel, mileage & farebox data -- improve system planning).

4. P.A. SYSTEM FOR TRANSFER SYSTEM, \$5,000 (Better comply with ADA in announcing departures & arrivals).
5. TELEPHONE RECORDING SYSTEM, \$15,000 (Replace worn out system).
7. WATER SOFTENER, \$2,500 (Prolong water heater life, reduce need for frequent water heater replacement).
6. ENGINE OVERHAUL / TUNE-UP TOOLS, \$4,000 (Improve in-house maintenance capabilities and efficiency -- extend bus life).

Finally, three suggested changes to the August 11st TIP draft were forwarded to the Technical Committee from the Public Transportation Division of IDOT. The Technical Committee concurred with these suggested changes as listed below.

1. Table 2 -- include the RATS staff as contacts in this table of Agency Contact Persons.
2. Page 6, column 2, 2nd to last paragraph -- Remove the word "operating" in the first underlined sentence. In the context of the sentence, the word is redundant and confusing.
3. Page 13, column 2, 2nd to the last paragraph -- Remove the parenthetical statement. Add the statement: "**RATS approves this request/award contingent on the development of a mutually acceptable agreement between the School of Hope and RMTD whereby RMTD inspects and/or maintains the vehicle on a regular basis. This agreement should be included as part of the application submitted to IDOT by the School of Hope.**" The chances of obtaining a vehicle may be better if the School of Hope itself applies.

Lastly, Mr. Petrotte noted a typo error on page 20 of the draft. In the last sentence, Table 23 was mistyped as Table 20.

Darryl Lindberg asked if the allocation of a paratransit vehicle to the School of Hope would eliminate or reduce the need for the service LPTS and RMTD now provide to the School. Mr. Petrotte said it would not. He said the vehicle would help them with needs they now have but are not currently being met.

Darryl Lindberg moved to approve Resolution 97-5 and thereby adopt the August 11th TIP draft with the

changes suggested above. The motion was seconded by Charles Box and approved unanimously. Staff will prepare a final draft incorporating all approved changes, date it August 28th and distribute it to appropriate agencies and the general public, as needed.

**6. PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT PRO-**

**JECTS:** Dave Dratnol said a schedule for the implementation of the Springfield Avenue/Harrison Avenue extension project has been prepared and approved by the County Board. Gary McIntyre distributed copies and the schedule is reformatted and included at the end of these minutes. Russ Petrotte reported that several agencies have approved the Interagency Agreement on the regional GIS project. He said staff hoped to get the RFQ out before the end of September. Darryl Lindberg and Stephen Kuhn commended RATS work on this project. Gary McIntyre distributed copies of the draft Congestion Management plan. He explained that this report had been prepared by a consultant under a contract directly with the State of Illinois. He said staff and the Technical Committee will be reviewing the report over the next several months but the draft needs to be released to satisfy federal guidelines. He said the report summarizes congestion management activities now underway throughout the Rockford area and makes several suggestions for further work but stops short of mandating any additional work. Staff and the Technical Committee will report greater details after they have had time to review the document.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS:** Gary McIntyre reminded the Committee that the federal Certification Review will be conducted on September 24-25, 1997. He distributed a draft of a letter inviting the public to comment during this process. The letter will be sent to all on the RATS mailing list. By consensus, the Committee agreed that the letter should be prepared for Chairman Kuhn's signature. Bill Smith and Jon Paul noted that recent proposals have been made at Congressional levels to free some of the funding accumulating in the federal Highway Trust fund. If acted upon in both authorization and appropriation stages, these changes could make significant amounts of funding available for transportation.

**8. ADJOURNMENT:** At 2:31 PM a motion was made by Bill Ost to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Darryl Lindberg and approved unanimously.

<b>Project Schedule -- Springfield / Harrison Extension (90-00250-00RP)</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Report or Work Type</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Finding of NO Significant Impact	Approval	May 97
2	Specification for RR Bridge	Resubmit	July 97
3	IDSs	Resubmit	July 97
4	Relocation Plan Consultant	Select/approve	July 97
5	IDS	Approval	Aug 97
6	ROW Plans and cost estimates	Submit/approve	Aug 97
7	County Access Ordinance	Prepare	Aug 97
8	TS & L	Approval	Aug 97
9	404 Permit Application	Submit	Aug 97
10	RR funds request	File with ICC	Aug 97
11	County-State Agreement for ROW funds	Prepare	Aug 97
12	ROW Appraisers and Reviewers	Select/approve	Aug 97 *
13	Wetland Mitigation Plan	Submit	Sept 97
14	Relocation Coordinator	Select	Oct 97 *
15	ROW Plan	Approval	Oct 97
16	Preliminary Plans and Design Report	Submit	Oct 97
17	ROW Appraisals	Start	Nov 97
18	ROW Negotiators	Select/approve	Nov 97 *
19	Relocation Plan	Submit for IDOT/County approval	Nov 97
20	Relocation Plan	Transmit to FHWA (County request)	Nov 97
21	Design Report & Preliminary Plans	Approval	Jan 98
22	ROW Negotiations	Start after Design Report approved	Jan 98
23	ROW Acquisition / Relocation	Complete	98
24	Final PS & E	Approval	Oct 98
25	County-State Agreement for Const.	Prepare	Nov 98
26	ROW Certification	Certified by IDOT	Jan 99
27	Bid	Letting	Feb 99
28	Construction Contract	Award	Mar 99

\* Task can be done at any time.  
Note: This schedule does not anticipate condemnation proceedings.