



**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

POLICY COMMITTEE
Mayor Douglas P. Scott, City of Rockford
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District Engineer Gregory Mounts, Illinois Department
of Transportation, District 2

Meeting Minutes RATS Technical Committee

Machesney Park City Hall – February 27, 2003 and continued on March 13, 2003

Members Present:

Chad Atkinson, Village of Machesney Park;
Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;
Chris Hodges, Village of Roscoe;
Paula Hughes, Rockford Mass Transit;
Craig Lawler, Belvidere Public Works;
Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway;
Robert Martin, Loves Park Public Works;
David Noel, Loves Park Planning;
Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago;
Bob Soltau, IDOT District 2 & Springfield;
Joe Vanderwerff, Winnebago County Highway;
Michael Zonsius, Greater Rockford Airport Authority.

Others Present:

Channel 17 (2 persons);
Robert Bowley, Boone County Council on Ageing;
John Donovan, FHWA Springfield;
Nancy Edwardsen, Concerned citizen, Machesney Park;
Gary McIntyre, RATS staff;
Russ Petrotte, RATS staff;
Robert Spenle, State Line Area Transportation Study;
Pat Wilkins, ATU 1333.

1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES: At 10:19 a.m., with a quorum present, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. Mr. Ernst said that the minutes of the January 23, 2003 meeting have been prepared but staff did not have time to include them in last week's mail out. Therefore he asked that action on the minutes be withheld until the next meeting. The Committee concurred. Because individuals new to the RATS planning process were present, Mr. Ernst asked everyone to introduce themselves and noted that all RATS meetings are open for comments and questions from the public.

2. AGENCY REPORTS: Agencies present reported on the progress of their ongoing highway projects. An updated TIP Status Report, listing highway improvement projects, was presented, discussed and updated at the meeting. Bob Soltau stated that, now and in the future, he will serve as the voting representative for IDOT District 2 whenever District 2 does not have a person present. At this meeting, however, he

was not prepared to give an update on the status of IDOT construction projects.

Bob Martin noted that construction on the Riverside Bridge will resume on Monday. At that time, the south two lanes will be closed to traffic. The estimated completion of the bridge will be sometime in August.

Michael Zonsius reported that the Greater Rockford Airport Authority will hold a public hearing on their Noise Study on March 18th at 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the airport facility. (Call Mr. Zonsius at 815-965-8639 for details.)

Paula Hughes reported that the consultant will present his conclusions and recommendations on the RMTD Route and Schedule Study next week to the study Steering Committee and then to the full RMTD Board. Mr. Ernst asked that RATS be kept informed as to when a presentation might be made to RATS. In response to a question from Nancy Edwardsen, Ms Hughes said the Board meetings are open to the public. (Ms Hughes may be contacted at 815-961-2227 for details.)

Bob Soltau stated that the IDOT Annual Planning Conference will be held on September 11 (afternoon) and 12 (morning), 2003, at the Mt. Vernon Rend Lake Resort. (Contact Mr. Soltau at 217-785-2996 for details). The public is invited.

Mr. Soltau also said that the Federal appropriations bill has been approved at over \$31.8 billion but all details on how this amount can be spent have not been released yet. Consequently, IDOT is not able to issue a planning fund suballocation for RATS at this time. For the purposes of work program development (later in the agenda), he recommended that RATS use the same funding mark issued to RATS last year; although IDOT is still hoping to be able to provide an increase of up to five percent.

Mr. Soltau thanked Mr. Petrotte for assisting IDOT in developing the new Year 2000 urbanized area mapping and urbanized area population statistics for all downstate urbanized areas in Illinois. He said the generalized format that the mapping and statistics had been initially released by the Census Bureau needed further detailed extraction on a

block by block / jurisdiction by jurisdiction basis. He said this data enabled a more accurate tally of urban and rural lands and subsequently, a more accurate suballocation of various

Steve Ernst reported that he and Mr. Spenle attended the Janesville/Beloit/Rockford Arterial Management Meeting last week. He said they were informed that the final draft of the "North-Central Illinois Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture (ITS) document is out. Mr. Ernst downloaded the document from an IDOT "ftp" site. (Persons seeking a copy should contact Mr. Ernst at steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us or 815-967-6734.) The Executive Summary of the document is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Ernst said the Janesville/Rockford/Beloit ITS group is not scheduled to meet again until Wednesday, October 15, 2003 from 1-3 p.m. in the Beloit Public Works Facility. The I-90 alternative routing plan is likely to be finalized at that meeting.

Mr. Ernst said the completion of the alternative routing plan is timely because WisDOT has reported that I-90 is going to be reduced to one lane in each direction between Janesville and the State Line for the next two years. WisDOT will be rehabilitating 13 structures in that stretch.

John Donovan reported that the U.S. Department of Transportation's reauthorization proposal is now under review at the Office of Management and Budget. The document is not yet public but FHWA is hopeful that it will be released soon. Some things, such as Amtrak funding will definitely have to be dealt with soon.

3. RATS METRO PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY DESIGNATION:

Russ Petrotte presented Resolution 2003-1 and reiterated the description of the proposed Metro Planning Area Boundary that has been on the table for the last couple of months. He said the map that was mailed out shows the proposed Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary (Metro Area, Metro Boundary, or Planning Area, for short) relative to the Urbanized Area boundary that was defined by the Census Bureau and the Adjusted Urbanized area that was adopted recently by RATS. The area proposed encompasses all lands having a reasonable possibility for urbanization within the next 20-25 years.

There was considerable discussion of the ramifications of the various delineated boundaries on the use of Federal funds. In that regard, the consensus of those present, including Mr. Soltau and Mr. Donovan is summarized as follows:

- A. Federal Urban funds (STP-U funds) can be used on roads anywhere within Census-defined Urbanized Area, the RATS-defined Adjusted Urbanized Area, and/or the RATS-defined Metropolitan Planning Area.
- B. Federal Urban funds cannot be used outside the Metropolitan Planning Area.

Federal funds. Mr. Petrotte was able to accomplish this with ArcVIEW and other software and thereby give a more detailed accounting of what was designated as urbanized.

- C. Federal Rural funds can be used anywhere outside the Adjusted Urbanized Area, including roads that are inside the Metro Planning Area (but still outside the Adjusted Urbanized Area).
- D. Federal Rural funds cannot be used inside the Adjusted Urbanized Area.
- E. Note that road segments that are on the boundary of the Adjusted Urbanized Area are considered inside the Adjusted Urbanized area. Likewise, road segments that are on the boundary of the Metro Planning area are considered inside the Metro Planning Area.
- F. Illinois does not recalculate Urban/Rural fund allotments to the local governments based on the Adjusted Urbanized Area or the Metro Area – i.e., the allotments derived from the Census Urbanized Area are retained. However, the Adjusted Urbanized Area is used to determine which State-controlled roads are classified as urban and rural (and hence what Federal funding is applicable to those State roads) but local roads and urban/rural funding allotments are only affected by the Census Bureau's Urbanized Area.

Mr. Petrotte stated that the Metropolitan Planning Area will be the focus of the next comprehensive update of the Long-Range Transportation Plan, as scheduled for completion in 2005. He said that if urbanization progresses more rapidly in some direction, such as toward Davis Junction to the south, the Metro Planning Area can be amended to include that area. Gary McIntyre noted that all roadway improvement projects within the Metro Planning Area must be included in the Transportation Improvement Program.

David Noel moved to recommend approval of Resolution 2003-1. The motion was seconded by Michael Zonsius and approved unanimously (12-0).

4. RATS UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM FOR FY 2004:

Russ Petrotte stated that he has not yet prepared a draft of the work program. The purpose of this item on the agenda is to allow for and encourage an open discussion on possible work program needs and funding approaches. To begin he distributed three pages that show one possible proposal for the suballocation of Federal planning funds to the various RATS participants for FY 2004.

He explained that column A of the first page (attached to these minutes) shows the suballocation of planning funds that was made for 2003. He said it has been a tradition with RATS to suballocate some of the planning funds to various participants. This suballocation has several purposes: (1) the participants have used some of the funds to compile and analyze various kinds of data for use by the MPO in planning, (2) the participants have used some of the funding for special studies unique to their areas, (3) the participants have used some of the funds to prepare and maintain their comprehensive land use plans, and finally, (4) the funds have been used as a carrot to encourage entities to more actively participate in the RATS Planning process.

Mr. Petrotte noted that in most MPOs the direct suballocation of planning funds to participants is not done. In fact, the reverse is expected in many MPOs (that is, the participants are expected to contribute funds to the MPO for the purpose of providing part of the required Federal match and for the purpose of furthering the comprehensive planning capabilities of the MPO.

Over the years, we have talked about discontinuing the participant suballocations and either (1) giving the Lead Agency (at present, Rockford) more funding to expand its regional transportation planning function, or (2) reserving the excess funding strictly for special studies that are selected by the group based on the merit or agreed-upon need.

Whatever is decided this year, whether to continue to suballocate small portions, jurisdiction by jurisdiction, or to assign the funds strictly by study or project merit, a significant change this year is the fact that there are now considerably more eligible RATS participants. Specifically, five new jurisdictions are now within the core area of RATS, the Census-defined Urbanized Area, that were not in RATS previously. Those are the City of Belvidere, the County of Boone and the Villages of Winnebago, Roscoe and Timberlane.

Mr. Petrotte said that if the policy of passing a portion of the Federal planning allocation to the non-Lead Agency participants is to be continued, then, to be fair, the new entities listed above should also be entitled to a part of the pass through.

To arrive at an estimate of how much would be fair, Mr. Petrotte first explained how the total amount eligible for passthrough has been determined in the past. The first thing that is computed is the minimum amount of funding needed by the Lead Agency to conduct the basic transportation planning process as required by Federal law and as necessary to retain certification status. Over the years, it has been demonstrated that RATS needs a minimum of two full time staff plus 1-3 part time staff. For FY 2004, the estimated total labor cost needs of the Lead Agency were computed to \$212,500. This was computed by summing the total annual loaded wages of himself and Mr. McIntyre, plus 10% of Mr. Ernst's time and 20% of another staff person's time -- and increasing that total by 3% for inflation. In addition, the total non-labor Lead

Agency costs for FY 2004 were estimated to be 25,000. This was computed by summing all of the non-labor Lead Agency expenses for FY 2002 and increasing that amount by 6% for inflation.

Mr. Petrotte noted that there are some costs that the City of Rockford absorbs and does not charge RATS or the other RATS participants. The largest part is the 20% required local match (\$42,000 of the above \$212,500). Also absorbed for 2002, were postage and long distance telephone charges. Mr. Petrotte estimated the latter two at \$500 each and included them in the event Rockford's accounting procedures become more timely and they can be included in the 2004 charges.

Subtracting \$212,500 from the estimated available new planning funds for FY 2004, leaves a balance of \$172,500 for possible distribution to the other RATS participants. (*There is an error in this calculation – see the Transcribers Note at the end of this topic.*) The grey-shaded part of the first table shows a hypothetical distribution of the funds to the participants based on their percent of the Urbanized Area population. In the bottom eight lines of the table a possible suballocation is summarized with the smaller entities share being awarded to the counties.

Mr. Petrotte said the proposal is primarily for discussion purposes. At this point it is unclear whether all of the agencies can actually use the money. Also, it might be that some agencies have a greater need in FY 2004 and larger amounts should be given to some agencies, to be balanced by lesser allocations in later years.

Mr. Petrotte briefly addressed the basic MPO requirements for FY 2004.

- One essential need is to begin gearing up to update the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The update is due in 2005 and unless we want to force a hasty job, we should begin some of the work in 2004. Even if we decide to hire a consultant this time (instead of doing the work in-house, as we have done in the past), we should have all of the preliminary work of selecting, hiring and contracting done by the end of FY 2004.
- Network testing with the new traffic simulation model is another major component that should be part of the 2004 Work Program.

Also part of the Program for the Lead Agency should be:

- Environmental Justice assessments,
- Non-discrimination analysis for both highway and transit,
- UWP development,
- TIP development,
- Further RATS organizational arrangements,
- Land use forecast refinements,
- Normal administration and recordkeeping, and
- Public participation/involvement work.

Steve Ernst reiterated that the idea of putting the entire "Remaining Available Funds" into a pot for special studies should be considered. Bob Soltau said he thought that might be a good idea, if for no other reason than the danger of Mr. Ernst noted the upcoming expense of doing the next round of 5-year traffic counting. The desired study of passenger rail to Chicago might be another large ticket item where we could pool and use the funds.

Rich Lundin said it appears the State is now paying the whole cost of these 5-year counts. In Boone County, the State has hired a consultant to conduct the counts and is paying the entire bill. Mr. Soltau did not know if that would be done for Winnebago County.

Mr. Petrotte noted that the City of Rockford has two major ongoing projects that it uses its share of the discretionary funds for: Pavement Management and Comprehensive Land Use Plan development and maintenance. He doubted the City would want to discontinue or defer those projects in favor of pooling the money for other large projects.

Craig Lawler said that another example of a "bigger picture" study would be studying the feasibility of Bus Rapid Transit from Elgin to Rockford. He noted that a proposal for this has recently been developed by the City of Rockford and Growth Dimensions. The estimated cost is \$150,000. Other smaller planning needs that Belvidere has identified include (1) approximately \$3,000 for Transportation Studies for Utility Tax CIP Road Projects; (2) \$4,500 for transportation planning related to new development projects; and (3) \$1,500 simply to aid in participating in regional transportation planning in general. Mr. Lawler gave a copy of the bus rapid transit proposal to Mr. Petrotte. Mr. Petrotte noted that there is obviously not enough money via a population-based suballocation for Belvidere to do the Bus Rapid Transit Study via its single allocation. He asked the other members to consider whether they might want to contribute part of their shares to that project or other projects.

Mr. Ernst asked if it would be better to give a single allocation to Winnebago County instead of an allocation to County Highway and an allocation to County Planning and Economic Development.

Paula Hughes asked if the planning funds could be used to provide the local match for the funds earmarked in the past for the RMTD East Side Transfer Feasibility Study. Mr. Petrotte said that is not likely because Federal funds can't normally be used to match other Federal funds, even when the Federal sources are slightly different. A brief discussion ensued regarding Access to Jobs funds, one of the few grant programs where the above statement is not true.

David Noel asked if there would be a need for funding further work that might spin off from some of the Illinois Tomorrow Grant studies that are now being done? Steve Ernst said the one he had heard of might be special transportation planning in conjunction with the new Winnebago County Jail.

inadvertently using the small suballocations on ineligible expenses.

Bob Martin said he thought reserving the money for special studies might be the thing to do because Loves Park does not have a particular use for it this year.

Mr. Ernst noted that we could attempt to do both. That is, give everyone a small suballocation but also reserve an amount in a special account to accumulate for larger more regional special studies.

Joe Vanderwerff asked if the other agencies have, in the past used the suballocations as part of their budgeting and budget forecasting. He said he does not. Steve Ernst said that Russ and Gary are budgeted with the Federal funds in mind. Other staff members in Rockford are not.

Mr. Vanderwerff said that maybe we ought to consider some long-term program or plan that identifies how we are going to use this money. Then maybe we wouldn't have to have this discussion every year. He said he has a project in mind that the funds might be used for.

Chris Hodges said that he initially liked the idea of the money being suballocated by population. But then, seeing the small amount that would go to the Roscoe area, he has some difficulty with the approach. The problem is that the Roscoe area has been one of the fastest growing areas in the State and therefore has more planning issues and growth problems than many of the other RATS participants. Mr. Petrotte concurred that this must be true but also pointed out that RATS has recognized this in the past. In particular, the second phase of the already-funded RATS/SLATS Traffic Simulation Model is aimed at the northeast part of Winnebago County. This is an instance where the need was obvious and Mr. Vanderwerff asked RATS and the State to find additional funding to address that need. The modeling study has been underway for about three years now and the northeast-county phase will begin shortly.

Gary McIntyre expressed concern that sufficient funds be reserved for the Long-Range Plan Update. Moreover, he noted that it has been a long time since we have engaged the services of an outside professional consultant to evaluate and develop our Plan. He said this might be the ideal time to bring in a consultant to take a fresh look at the Plan, especially since the model will be available and useful for comprehensive testing of the highway network and alternatives. Mr. Ernst also noted that existing staff may simply not have enough time to do a good job on the Plan, given other aspects of their work load. For example, requests for Gary's time in doing traffic projections have increased substantially as his expertise with the simulation model has grown.

Chad Atkinson stated that although there appear to be advantages to pooling the funds and aiming them at special projects, there are also distinct advantages to the more regular suballocation we have done in the past. Specifically, as he prepares his planning budget and his own work program each year, it is definitely a plus to be able to show his Village officials that RATS is making funds available for specific work items that the Village needs. This year, for instance, he envisions the need for additional corridor planning along IL-173 as well as other comprehensive planning for the Village. Even though the RATS allocation to the Village may not be nearly enough to accomplish all of the Village's planning needs, the RATS contribution often stimulates the Village officials to be more sympathetic with planning needs and to appropriate additional local funds.

As the discussions wound down, Mr. Petrotte encouraged the participants to do some serious thinking over the next couple of weeks regarding these issues and about potential projects or studies.

For the purpose of continuing these discussions and to allow the Technical Committee members to confer with other members of their staff and their respective policy makers members, Mr. Petrotte asked that another meeting be held solely for the purpose of further discussing next year's Work Program.

Bob Martin moved that this Technical Committee meeting and this topic be continued to Thursday, March 13, 2003 at 1:00 p.m. here in the Machesney Park Village Hall. The motion was seconded by Chad Atkinson and approved unanimously.

Transcribers Note: In addition to the actual table Mr. Petrotte distributed at the meeting, a corrected version of the table is also attached. In calculating the "Remaining Funds Available," the Lead Agency's needs were overestimated because they were not reduced by 20% (the required local match to the Federal dollars. However the corrected version also included an additional allocation to Rockford of \$18,944 to compensate for the local match that Rockford provides for the required transportation planning).

5. RATS POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP: Steve Ernst asked that this matter be laid over until next meeting. He said Bill Bittner, the Director of the Public Works Department, had intended to speak to the Committee directly on this matter, but has been prevented from doing so by a death in his family this week. By consensus, the Committee concurred and the matter will be considered at the next meeting.

6. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS: Russ Petrotte said this item is on the agenda to allow further public comment and discussion of the Public Involvement Process update that was mailed out in January. He said a 45-day review period is required by Federal law. A notice of the availability of the document was published in the Rock River Times. No comments have been received on the update since the discussion at the last Technical Committee meeting. No

further comments were offered at this meeting and Mr. Ernst moved onto the next item on the agenda.

7. RATS TIP AMENDMENT: Paula Hughes discussed the proposed amendment to the Transit TIP that was distributed during the meeting. This proposal is slightly different from the proposal that was mailed prior to the meeting. She said many of the transit projects in the TIP, as currently adopted, have to be dropped because IDOT does not have the matching funds in the General Revenue Fund to implement the projects. The projects included in this amendment proposal can be matched with sources of funding that the State does have available (bond funds). Consequently, RMTD is now requesting a total of eight Medium Duty Paratransit Vehicles under the Federal/IDOT 5310 Program. One of these vehicles, the Loaner Vehicle for the Regional Maintenance Program, is singled out because it will serve a unique function. RMTD is also requesting two Super Medium Duty Paratransit Vehicles under the 5310 Program.

In addition, RMTD is requesting 16 replacement fix-route buses instead of the four that are currently in the TIP. The matching funds for these vehicles come from bonds which the State is likely to have available. The increase of 12 additional buses is due to the anticipation that the FTA may soon make the 5307 Program a 50/50 match instead of the current 80/20 match. Although RMTD is not immediately eligible to replace the 12 additional buses, eligibility status (yrs and miles on the existing buses) will be achieved by the time the buses are scheduled for delivery (sometime in 2005).

Other projects that RMTD is retaining/proposing include an enhancement project, the preventive maintenance project, an air quality monitoring system, and nine replacement computers.

David Noel moved to recommend approval of the RMTD TIP amendment request and to instruct staff to prepare the appropriate resolution for Policy Committee action at the next Policy Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Joe Vanderwerff and approved unanimously.

8.1 WEST STATE STREET CORRIDOR STUDY: Steve Ernst reported that the final draft of the report has been printed and will be distributed at the next meeting.

8.2 WINNEBAGO COUNTY SMART GROWTH STUDY: Joe Vanderwerff reported that the Phase 1 report has been completed. For Phase 2, the County hopes to send out an RFP next week and to select a consultant and sign a contract as soon as possible. Although it is possible that a consultant may not be on board until after July 1, things may proceed at a faster pace. Therefore, RATS staff was instructed to prepare an amendment to the FY 2003 UWP that includes Phase 2 and the other Illinois Tomorrow grants recently awarded in the Rockford area. Phase 2 will include an educational component and will focus on areas with high development potential.

8.3 ROCKFORD AREA RAILROAD CONSOLIDATION STUDY: Steve Ernst reported that the consultant has recently

met with the new CNIC & UP RR to discuss consolidation opportunities.

8.4 ROSCOE/ROCKTON TRANSIT STUDY: Chris Hodges reported that a consultant has been hired and a scope of services developed for the study.

T. Measure of incomes of employees who live within each TAZ.

8.5 WinGIS: Steve Ernst said the WinGIS Policy Committee meeting will be held today at 1:30 in this room. The next technical working session is scheduled for one week from today at 1:30 p.m. at the County Administration Building. WinGIS staff have also established a WinGIS Users Group. Users Group meetings will be held immediately following the Technical Committee sessions. The Users Group meeting will be devoted to answering questions and obtaining brief hands-on training from the WinGIS staff for WinGIS/ArcView users. Also, WinGIS has been successful in getting House and Senate bills before the Illinois General Assembly that will change the Illinois Plats Act to require the surveying community to use the WinGIS ground control network. All future plats will be tied to the network and prepared for immediate incorporation into the WinGIS database.

U. Measure of salaries/payrolls of businesses located within each TAZ.

Mr. McIntyre said the meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2003 from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the IDES Springfield Office located at 850 E. Madison Street, 3rd floor. Further information on the project can be obtained from Waleed Almousa at (312) 793-9822 or by E-mail at walmous@ides.state.il.us.

Gary McIntyre cited the communication from Gregory Mounts and Ross Monk authorizing Bob Soltau to represent IDOT District 2 at all RATS Technical Committee meetings whenever District 2 staff are not in attendance at the meetings.

10. OTHER BUSINESS: None

8.6 RATS / SLATS MODELING STUDY: The next Steering Committee meeting will be on March 15th at 9:30 p.m. in the Beloit City Hall (4th Floor Conference Room). The draft report for Phase 1a will be discussed. This is a very technical document that describes the model calibration. Staff is still working on the Boone County dwelling unit and employment forecasts but we are very close to completing the forecasts.

11. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Joe Vanderwerff moved to temporarily adjourn the meeting. The meeting will reconvene on March 13, 2003 at 1:00 p.m. in the Machesney Park Village Hall. The motion was seconded by Bob Martin and approved unanimously at 12:12 p.m.

8.7 RMTD ROUTE & SCHEDULE ANALYSIS: As previously reported, this study is nearing completion. Bob Martin commented that the City of Loves Park is considering reducing its transit service. He asked to see the results of the Route and Schedule Analysis as soon as possible.

8.8 RMTD EAST SIDE TRANSFER CENTER STUDY: This study will commence after the Route and Schedule Analysis is completed.

On March 13, 2003, at 1:17 p.m., in the Machesney Park Village Hall, the Technical Committee meeting was reconvened. The purpose was to continue a discussion of options and considerations for the FY 2004 Unified Planning Work Program.

9. COMMUNICATIONS: Gary McIntyre reported that he has been asked to attend a meeting of the State's MPOs with the Illinois Bureau of Employment Securities. The U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of the Census have engaged the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) in a project to geographically code all firms within Illinois. The anticipated results of this project include:

The following voting members (*) and other persons were present:

- *Chad Atkinson, Machesney Park Planning;
- *Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;
- *Chris Hodges, Village of Roscoe;
- *Elizabeth Kinsinger, Rockford Community Development;
- *Craig Lawler, City of Belvidere;
- *Rich Lundin, Boone county Highway;
- *Bob Martin, Loves Park Public Works ;
- Gary McIntyre, RATS Staff;
- Dan Moeller, Editor, Post-Journal;
- *David Noel, Loves Park Planning;
- *Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago;
- Russ Petrotte, RATS Staff
- *Bob Soltau, IDOT;
- *Joe Vanderwerff, Winnebago County Highway.

Q. Origin/Destination tables of employee count from residence to place of work.

R. Number of employers/businesses within each Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) and/or Census Block.

S. Types of businesses within each TAZ and/or Census Block.

With a quorum present, Steve Ernst officially reconvened the meeting and asked the members to report on any input they may have received from their respective policy-makers and staff.

Mark Painter stated that he discussed the Work Program options with the Mayor of Winnebago and some of the Board Members. He said their feeling is that pooling the available planning funds might be a good idea. Under a suballocation method based on population, Winnebago could not be allocated sufficient funds to do much with. At some time in the future, however, they may have a special need and by that time, there may have accumulated enough funds to do something.

David Noel explained that, historically, funds were suballocated to participating agencies primarily for the purpose of maintaining their land use plans and monitoring the plans to assure that they were in concert with the RATS transportation plans. He said this remains a vital function and is a good reason to continue some type of suballocation. However, he could also see reasons for pooling the funds and suggested that some combination of pooling and suballocating be explored.

Bob Martin said the Mayor of Loves Park would support a pooling of the funds provided there was a thorough and equitable process for evaluating and selecting projects for the use of the pooled funds.

In response to questions from Joe Vanderwerff, there was a discussion including Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Soltau and Mr. Petrotte explaining what funds were available and under what circumstances they could be carried to future years. Generally, it was explained, that the funding type we are most concerned with at this time comes initially to IDOT from two sources: PL funds from the Federal Highway Administration and 5303 funds from the Federal Transit Administration. Annually, IDOT awards an allotment of these funds to every MPO throughout the State, based on the population of the MPO. These funds can be used only for transportation planning purposes and must be used during the fiscal year (between July 1 to the following June 30th). There are however, two situations that allow the funds to be carried over into another year. One, a portion of the funds can be withheld from the Work Program and the MPO asks IDOT to hold that portion in reserve for future years. Two, the funds are put into the Work Program but are not spent during the year. In the latter case, the funds cannot be accessed again until the fiscal year is fully audited. For example, unspent funds that were originally in the FY03 Program could not be reaccessed until FY05.

Funding from other sources (SPR, 5309, 5307, and Illinois Tomorrow) are accessed or awarded differently. Those funding sources are typically targeted on specific studies and are administered via individual contracts that have lengthier use periods – typically 1-3 years. While the use of those funds must be noted in the Work Program, the MPO does not have the discretion to use these funds for anything else than what they were originally awarded for and they cannot be pooled or reaccessed if they are not used.

Also, the 5-year Traffic Counts should be mentioned in Element 5. These counts will be done for Boone County in

Russ Petrotte distributed an update of one of the tables he had handed out last month. The table (Chart 7, Version 3/13/03 details a possible suballocation of the likely IDOT award of PL and 5303 funds for FY 2004. He explained how the new version more precisely suballocates the funding necessary for the Lead Agency to conduct the basic minimum planning and administrative needs of RATS. The new version corrects a mistake in the original and also suballocates another \$18,944 to Rockford to compensate for the fact that Rockford provides all of the local match for the minimum basic planning.

He said the remaining funds, \$196,056, can either be pooled for special projects or divided among the jurisdictions for elective eligible planning work more-or-less at the discretion of the members of the Rockford urbanized area. A suballocation of these funds is shown based on the proportionate population. In the bottom part of the table, some of the smaller amounts are reallocated to the Counties. Mr. Petrotte said this approach follows the method we have used in all past work programs and he developed it in the event the agencies could not agree on a method of pooling the funds or could not decide on special projects.

Steve Ernst asked the members to discuss possible studies that need to be done.

Chris Hodges cited a traffic circulation/flow problem that has developed on Roscoe Road in the vicinity of Meadow Lane and the Hickory Ridge subdivision. He asked if funding could be dedicated to look at the situation. Mr. McIntyre stated that Roscoe Road will be studied as part of Phase 2 of the Traffic Simulation Model Study but that the local subdivision roads are not being modeled.

Russ Petrotte distributed a new chart that lists possible work that might be done as part of the FY04 Program and asked for comments on the specific items.

Steve Ernst said that planning work on the State and Alpine Intersection is largely done and that project could be left out. Also, he doubted that much additional work would be done next year on the East State Street Corridor, the IL-2 Corridor, the IL-251 Interchange, and the Harrison Avenue Project. Also, while work does need to be done on the proposed Northwest ByPass, it is not likely to commence until FY05, at the earliest.

Elizabeth Kinsinger noted that the Barber Coleman redevelopment project should be mentioned in conjunction with the Morgan Street Bridge item.

Gary McIntyre said that instead of referring to "Area Pedestrian Plans," in general, the more likely work next year would be specific to the needed updates of the Greenways Plan and the Bikeway Plan.

the Summer of 2003 and for Winnebago County in the Summer of 2004. Bob Soltau was asked to determine if the

State would be subcontracting and paying the full cost of the counts for Winnebago County, as the State is doing for Boone County.

Mr. Ernst noted that the City is proposing to update the Downtown Traffic Circulation Study and asked that that be listed. Mr. Ernst and Ms Kinsinger also suggested that the general topic of "Downtown Entry Corridor Planning" be included in the Program.

Mr. Petrotte agreed to make the suggested changes to Chart E.

Returning to the subject of pooling possible funding, Mr. Ernst noted that the City of Rockford is still working on a major, previously approved, planning item that needs to be continued. Specifically, the City's Pavement Management Project needs sufficient funding reserved to fund the two full-time staff assigned to it. That project alone takes a considerable bite out of the possible funds that could be pooled for other discretionary projects.

Chad Atkins stated that the annual allocation to the Village of Machesney Park is a valuable part of the Village's planning activity. He said his budget is always tight, particularly this year. While pooling might be an option at some other time this is not a good time for the Village to consider it. He said he has eligible transportation planning work to use the funds on next year.

Mr. Petrotte again noted that his possible suballocation chart shifts the suballocatons of the five smallest communities to the respective counties. This was done primarily because the suballocations were so small that it seem doubtful the communities could beneficially use the funds. This was not meant to ignore their needs. If a specific need is identified, RATS will try to find the funding for it. At this time, however, not having heard a specific request, it would seem best to allocate the Winnebago, Cherry Valley, New Millford and Timberlane amounts to the Counties. In a future year's Program these communities may identify a need and, at that time, funding will be adjusted in their favor. Mr. Hodges' request on behalf of Roscoe can be explored further.

Mr. Soltau noted that IDOT needs to have a draft of the proposed Work Program delivered to them as soon as possible. This is necessary to assure IDOT that the MPO intends to apply for the available funding and to initiate the process of preparing contracts and securing actual award approvals. Mr. Soltau also mentioned that it is possible, IDOT will award an amount that is 5% higher than last year.

Considering the IDOT deadlines and given what he had heard, Mr. Petrotte requested that he be authorize to develop a draft program for submittal to IDOT. He proposed to distribute the funds as suggested in the chart distributed earlier. Pooling funds for other special projects may be a possibility for future programs, but for this year, the suballocation proposed appears to be an acceptable and equitable distribution of the funds. Also, it appears the entities

to be funded certainly have enough eligible work to utilize the funding.

Hearing no objection, Mr Petrotte said that he would proceed to develop a draft Program as described. He also called attention to Chart 8, the suballocation by Work Element. He asked the representatives from Winnebago County, Machesney Park, Belvidere, Loves Park, and Boone County to review the division of funds among the various Work Elements and determine if the funds should be spread differently.

With no further business to conduct, Ms Kinsinger moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by David Noel and approved unanimously at 2:50 p.m.

The RATS Technical Committee will meet again on Thursday, March 20, 2003, at 10 a.m. in the Loves Park City Hall.

RP