



Rockford Metropolitan Agency For Planning

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, February 18, 2010

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dan Long, IDOT; Wayne Vlk, Winnebago County Highway; Patrick Zuroske, Rockford Public Works; Jonah Katz, Rockford Community Development; Craig Lawler, Belvidere Public Works; Adam Tegen, Boone County Planning; Jim Johnson, RMTD; Patricia Diduch, Machesney Park Planning; Marge Bevers, Chicago/Rockford International Airport; Nathan Bruck, Loves Park Planning; Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago; David Nord, Village of Cherry Valley.

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:** Winnebago County Planning; Village of Roscoe; Loves Park Public Works.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Steve Ernst, Michael Maddox, Jon Paul Diipla, Michael Hren, RMAP Staff; Jeremy Carter, City of Rockford; Curtis Jones, IDOT; John Donovan, Federal Highway Administration; Bunny Anderson, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority; Bob Soltau, SLATS; Gary Camling, McClure Engineering; Steve Frerichs, Chastain & Associates; Thomas Bona, Rockford Register Star.

With a quorum present Mr. Ernst called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 21, 2010 RMAP TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the minutes by the Village of Winnebago, seconded by Belvidere Public Works. Motion carried.

**2. AGENCY REPORTS:**

**2.1 Illinois Department of Transportation, District 2:** Mr. Long reported that IDOT is continuing on the Phase I and Phase II Engineering portions of various projects for the 2010 construction season.

**2.2 Winnebago County Highway:** Mr. Vlk reported that there was a pre-construction meeting held for the South Bend Road bridge project. The bridge project will begin on March 15th. Mr. Vlk also noted that the Beltline Road bridges would be closed through June 2010, and that the South Bend Road bridge closing would overlap that time.

**2.3 Rockford Public Works:** Mr. Zuroske reported that the City is in the midst of its pothole patching program. He noted that the amount of reported potholes has decreased by approximately 75%, and that there is also a drop-off in the volume of the potholes needing to be patched. Mr. Zuroske also reported that a number of small reconstruction projects have been recently bid, and that the neighborhood resurfacing program bid specifications have been completed and that they expect a bid letting in the next week.

**2.4 Loves Park Public Works:** No report.

**2.5 Village of Machesney Park:** Ms. Diduch reported that the Village is in the midst of meeting with IDOT regarding the 173 widening project and hope to reduce the timeframe of the project to a season and a half.

**2.6 Chicago/Rockford International Airport:** Ms. Bevers reported that cargo discussions continue, and that a third carrier has joined the conversation. Price increases at ORD have made the discussions more interesting. Ms. Bevers also noted the “Go Global” conference would be occurring on April 21-22, and that early registration for \$100 ends at the end of February. Thereafter, registration fees are \$125.

**2.7 Rockford Mass Transit District:** No report.

**2.8 Loves Park Community Development:** No report.

**2.9 Village of Cherry Valley:** No report.

**2.10 Rockford Community Development:** No report.

**2.11 Winnebago County Planning and Economic Development:** No report.

**2.12 Belvidere/Boone County Regional Planning:** Mr. Tegen reported that the Hanson study for the Irene Road interchange continues. They are expecting the preliminary economic impact numbers on the low-end land use scenario by the end of February. They will then begin work on the high-end land use scenario. Mr. Tegen also noted that their FEMA/FIRM maps are now in the 30-day public comment period.

**2.13 Boone County Highway Dept:** No report.

**2.14 Belvidere Public Works Department:** Mr. Lawler reported that they opened bids this past Tuesday for rehabilitation on their treatment plant, and that those bids were approximately 35% under the original estimate.

**2.15 Village of Roscoe:** No report.

**2.16 Village of Winnebago:** Mr. Painter reported that the Westfield Road ARRA project is complete with reimbursement to follow upon project closeout.

**2.17 Illinois Environmental Protection Agency:** Not present.

**2.18 Illinois State Toll Highway Authority:** Ms. Anderson reported that the main projects on the tollway system this year are bridge repairs. There will be repairs on both the I-90 and I-88 bridges over the Fox River, and resurfacing of the Edens Spur. Ms. Anderson also noted that there are new Tollway maps available and that the mile markers on the Tollway have been changed and are now in quarter-mile increments.

**2.19 IDOT Division of Public Transportation:** Not present.

**2.20 IDOT Division of Urban Program Planning:** No report.

**2.21 Ogle County Highway Department:** Not present.

**2.22 Boone County Council on Aging:** No report.

**2.23 State Line Area Transportation Study:** Mr. Soltau reported that SLATS will have a March 18th public hearing from 3 PM to 6 PM at the Rotary Center regarding TIP projects and illustrative projects in anticipation of the next round of stimulus. There will also be a SLATS meeting on April 12th.

**2.24 Federal Highway Administration, IL Division:** Mr. Donovan reported that the House passed a measure regarding the Jobs Bill a few weeks back, and that the Senate has yet to act. He added that the longer things go without action, the worse the chances become. Congressional staff's inability to meet because of snow has pushed back some of this discussion until March or April. Timing is a critical factor due to the construction season. Mr. Donovan suggested that if something does occur, it will likely be similar to the first stimulus bill. He added that getting projects ready for participation in a potential bill is a good idea, but that FHWA cannot approve TIP amendments that refer to such a bill as funding, because they lack fiscal constraint. In the event that there is a 90-day limit to the new bill, it is likely that IDOT will take the first portion of funding in the shorter timeframe. It appears that the region would receive a similar amount of funding to the first stimulus bill.

Mr. Ernst added that the current extension of SAFETEA-LU expires at the end of February. Mr. Donovan noted that whereas they have the full year's appropriation for USDOT, they only have the authorizing authority until the end of February. Mr. Donovan added that without a full year's authorizing authority the MPO's PL funds are based upon the 2009 numbers at this time, which had the rescission provisions. Mr. Donovan went on to discuss legislative action attempting to restore the money lost due to working under the 2009 numbers.

**2.25 Rockford Area Economic Development Council:** No report.

**2.26 Rock River Water Reclamation District:** No report.

**2.27 Growth Dimensions:** No report.

**2.28 Stateline Mass Transit District:** No report.

**2.29 Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning:** Mr. Ernst noted that the discretionary awards out of the Recovery Act have not been kind to our region. He informed the committee of a federal website describing the projects awarded funds from the TIGER program. The submission from the Rockford region was not among those selected. The application is being reformatted and reviewed to improve it in the event that another round of funding becomes available. Mr. Ernst noted that many of the projects that did receive funding in the Midwest were complimentary to the high speed rail implementation. Mr. Ernst also noted that the Region's broadband application was not selected for funding in the first round and second round applications are due in March, and that the region is restructuring its application and cutting it back somewhat to make it more competitive.

IDOT has told RMAP that the PL funding is not known at this time, but to expect that the numbers will be similar to those of 2009.

RMAP's current major work effort is the 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan update. RMAP has scheduled open houses for public comment on March 10-11th in Machesney Park Village Hall, Belvidere City Hall and the RMAP offices. Mr. Ernst handed out a notification of said meetings. Mr. Ernst explained that at these meetings RMAP will be showcasing the mapping that embodies the document. Additionally, RMAP will have guiding principles or policy statements for review as opposed to a full text document for feedback. A copy of the draft will be available, but it will not be the focus of the meeting. Mr. Ernst thanked the members for attending the mapping workshop held at RMAP recently.

Mr. Hren noted that the website is undergoing some maintenance, but that it should not interfere with the functionality of the site.

Mr. Ernst passed out a handout on the revised draft of a resolution in support of the economic development district creation.

Mr. Hren asked for information from the members regarding air quality and green initiatives.

**3. RMAP FY 2010 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT:** Resolution 2010-2:

An amendment to the TIP is needed for IDOT and RMTD. The RMTD portion of the amendment seeks to clarify TIGGER grant monies' allocation and monies for the East Side Transfer Center. The amendment also has funding apportionments for Fiscal Year 2010 for transit funding: 5316 (JARC), 5317 (New Freedom) and 5307. The IDOT amendment provides for potential "Jobs for Main Street" bill projects.

Mr. Donovan stated that a regular funding source should be shown on this amendment. FHWA cannot approve an amendment if it refers to legislation that has not passed as a funding source. Mr. Long noted that the amendment presently shows the funding source as STP funding. Pending more guidance, RMAP may process a subsequent amendment for local projects next month. Mr. Maddox noted that the projects are both on US 20; the US 20 westbound ramp to I-90 at Harrison Avenue and US 20 from I-90 to east of Farmington Way in Belvidere.

Motion to approve by Rockford Public Works, seconded by Boone County Highway. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. FEDERAL FUNDING DISCUSSION:** Mr. Ernst reminded the committee that he had requested project lists in the event of a new stimulus. Mr. Ernst noted that he will be attending a meeting on the first of March in Chicago to discuss funding to locals from SAFETEA-LU and any future reauthorization of the transportation bill. Future discussions at RMAP meetings will focus on a set of ready-to-go projects.

**5. PROGRESS REPORTS:**

**5.1 NICTI Alternative Analysis:** There was a press conference with the governor and Secretary Hannig to announce \$60 million from Illinois' capital program for intercity passenger rail service between Chicago and Dubuque. The project submitted for recovery act dollars through the HSIPR program was not funded. Mr. Ernst hopes to meet with IDOT Bureau of Railroads soon to discuss how the process.

Mr. Zuroske asked if there was any discussion at the Policy level how to address why we have not been receiving discretionary dollars even though one of the main criteria is "economically disadvantaged" areas, which the Region qualifies as. Mr. Ernst stated that USDOT reported that 60% of TIGER awards went to communities in economic distress. Additionally, TIGER awards represented about 18% of the total project costs. Only a few project awards provided 100% financing. Mr. Ernst noted that Illinois did not receive the full amount possible from the TIGER program, and that to his knowledge no state did. Mr. Hren added that Illinois received the 2nd most total dollars from TIGER behind California.

**5.2 Amtrak Service to Rockford Metro Area:** This matter was discussed in earlier portions of the meeting.

**5.3 RMTD East Side Transfer Center:** Mr. Johnson reported that they are continuing to work to identify partners for the facility and preliminary design concurrence at IDOT is underway.

**5.4 Regional Fiber Optic and Broadband:** Mr. Ernst noted that the initial application was not selected for funding, and that the application is being restructured for the next round of funding.

**5.5 RMAP Regional Freight Study:** Mr. Ernst reported that the study should be completed by the end of the year, with a consultant presentation to the RMAP committees in addition to the printed report.

**5.6 RMAP Mobility Subcommittee:** Mr. Diipla stated that the next meeting is scheduled for March 9th at the YWCA at 10:00 a.m. The committee is addressing some issues with the selected projects for JARC/New Freedom. Mr. Ernst added that he would like to see the Mobility Subcommittee look at urban circulator projects as part of the new sustainable communities partnership of USDOT, HUD and EPA.

**5.7 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs):** There was some brief discussion concerning the funding required to operate the EDD and that discussions with Winnebago and Boone County government are occurring.

**5.8 Housing, Human Services & Workforce Development Subcommittee:** No report.

**5.9 Stormwater/Drainage Subcommittee:** No report.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**8. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn by Boone County Highway, seconded by Rockford Public Works. Meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.