



**Rockford Area Transportation Study**  
**Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**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*

**Meeting Minutes**  
**RATS Technical Committee**

**Meeting Date: January 21, 1999**  
**Loves Park City Hall**

**Members Present:** Joe Vanderwerff, Winnebago County Highway Dept.; Hong Liu, Rockford Public Works Dept.; Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway Dept.; David Noel, Winnebago County Planning Dept.; David Nord, Village of Cherry Valley; Dennis Hendricks, Rockford Mass Transit District; Chad Atkinson, Village of Machesney Park; Dan Jacobson, City of Loves Park; Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT District 2; Russ Petrotte, RATS, Rockford Community Development Dept.

**Others Present:** Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway Dept.; Bob Soltau IDOT Springfield; Laura Meehan and Anne Brown residents along Sage Drive; Gary McIntyre, RATS staff; Anna Gray, Boone County Council on Aging; Susan Anderson, Boone County Board; Vance Hultgren, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority; Joe Heck, State Line Area Transportation Study; Tom Mathews and R. Todd Weegens, Fehr-Graham & Associates; Lew Moon, Cottonwood Airport.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES :** With a quorum present, Russ Petrotte called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. A motion was made by Joe Vanderwerff to approve the minutes of the April 23, 1998 and July 30, 1998 meetings. The motion was seconded by Rich Lundin and approved unanimously. Gary McIntyre distributed the minutes of the October 22, 1998 meeting. By consensus, the Committee laid these minutes over for further review.

**2. AGENCY REPORTS:** Representatives present reported on the status of their ongoing projects. This information is incorporated into the attached TIP status report.

**3. RIVERSIDE-ALPINE-FOREST HILLS CONGESTION MANAGEMENT STUDY:**

Joe Vanderwerff led a brief discussion on the final version of this study, the January 1999 version. He explained that all aspects of the study have been reviewed and corrected as per comments from his and other participating agencies. He said the only aspect of the situation that he is proposing further work is the northeast quadrant of the Alpine-Riverside intersection where it may be possible to construct a frontage or internal access road similar to what is proposed on the southeast quadrant. He said the County Highway Department and the City of Loves Park are recommending further study for the northeast quadrant and are requesting authorization to use PL funds, as part of the FY99 UWP amendment (later in this meeting's agenda), to accomplish this additional work.

At this time in the meeting a motion was made (Dan Jacobson), seconded (Rich Lundin) and approved to lay this matter over until all aspects of the study were resolved. Later in the meeting, under "Other Business", Mr. Vanderwerff asked the Committee to reconsider the matter. At that time, he asked that the Committee recommend approval of the January version of the study, with the exception of the northeast quadrant of Alpine and Riverside. The Committee was receptive to

this suggestion and by consensus rescinded their earlier decision to lay the matter over.

A motion was made by Joe Vanderwerff to direct staff to prepare a resolution for the Policy Committee. The resolution should state that RATS adopts the Forest Hills-Riverside-Alpine Area Congestion Management Study (January 1999 version) as prepared by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc., with the exception of the northeast quadrant of Riverside and Alpine where additional work is recommended. The study, with the above exception, is recommended as an amendment / refinement to the RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan. This motion was seconded by Dan Jacobson and approved by unanimous vote of the Technical Committee. Staff will prepare and bring this resolution to next week's Policy Committee meeting for recommended adoption.

**4. BOONE COUNTY AND WINNEBAGO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STUDY:**

Mr. Vanderwerff, Mr. Petrotte and Mr. McIntyre related the progress on this proposed study to the Committee. A defacto steering committee for this study has been established consisting of staff representatives from SLATS, RATS, IDOT, WISDOT, Loves Park, the Winnebago County Highway Department, the Boone County Highway Department and other interested officials. This steering committee has agreed to and recommended proceeding with the study in two broad phases. First, the traffic simulation models of SLATS, RATS and Boone County should be expanded and combined to include all of Boone and Winnebago Counties and the Beloit area. Second, this combined model should be used to evaluate the existing traffic situation and future traffic situations / land use scenarios in the northeast area. Staff is now in the process of better defining this study scope and assigning work responsibilities. A consultant will be needed but large parts of the work will have to be conducted in-house, as well. A formal letter of funding request has been sent to IDOT. The amount requested is \$280,000. A local share of \$70,000 will be needed and Mr. Vanderwerff stated that he has received commitments from several local entities (including both counties, Loves Park and some of the townships) to provide this match. Preliminary indications are that IDOT is looking favorably on this request.

**5. FY99 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT:**

**6. GREENWAY PLAN:** Gary McIntyre led the discussion of the Greenway Plan. He distributed

Russ Petrotte discussed proposed Resolution 99-1 which was included in the last mailout. The proposed amendment distributes the additional \$97,128 in PL funds that was recently suballocated to RATS as a result of the passage of TEA-21. The proposed amendment directs the use of these funds for five purposes: comprehensive area-wide traffic counts; continued updating and recalibration of the traffic simulation models; the purchase of 4-6 new tube traffic counters by the Rockford Public Works Department; the follow-up planning on the northeast quadrant of the Riverside-Alpine intersection; and expenses related to initiating the implementation of the regional geographic information system.

Mr. Petrotte called the Committee's attention to the last page of the proposed resolution. The \$97,128 is distributed as follows: \$32,454 to the Rockford Community Development Dept. (for modeling and GIS), \$31,274 to the Rockford Public Works Department (for traffic counts and equipment), \$14,600 to Winnebago County Highway and \$9,600 to the Loves Park Planning Dept. (for the Riverside-Alpine work, other data collection, GIS and other needs) and \$4,600 to both Winnebago County Planning and Machesney Park Planning (for GIS and supplementing other work needs already stated in the work program).

Hong Liu questioned why the supplemental planning on the northeast quadrant of Riverside and Alpine had not been accomplished as part of the original study. Mr. Vanderwerff stated that the frontage / access road concept now in question had been briefly considered but rejected by the consultant because property ownership / usage situations were not, at the time, conducive to such a solution. Recent changes in property ownership and a new willingness to cooperate by a major property owner now make the access road concept a possibility and worthy of reconsideration.

A motion was made by David Noel to recommend Policy Committee approval of Resolution 99-1, as written. The motion was seconded by Hong Liu and approved unanimously.

copies of proposed RATS Resolution 99-3 and call the Committee's attention to the last "whereas" which

recommends adoption of the Greenway Plan “as a resource and reference guide in the future development of the RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan and other RATS planning documents.”

He explained that he could not recommend adoption of the Greenway Plan as a full or complete amendment to the RATS Plans because there are a number of minor conflicts, particularly with respect to bikeways and pathways for human use. In some instances, the Greenway wording is more specific than the RATS Bikeway Element of the LRP; in others it is less specific. Some of the Greenway Plan’s definitions or terminology related to bikeways could lead to legal conflicts. He said he wholeheartedly endorses the Greenway Plan with regard to its overall concept of reserving an interconnected network of natural and semi-natural areas for wildlife habitat and migration. In this sense, it should be strongly considered as RATS reevaluates and works to implement its Long-Range Plan and other plans.

There was a lengthy discussion of some of the minor working conflicts in the Greenways Plan. Subsequently, David Noel moved to recommend approval of Resolution 99-3, as written. The motion was seconded by Mary Allen Verdun and approved unanimously.

**7. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR FY 2000:** All area participants were asked to begin developing or formalizing their proposed project lists for the FY 2000 TIP. Staff would like to have a draft of the TIP ready in April or May, with adoption in June.

The Committee briefly discussed the need to determine future Surface Transportation Program Urban (STU) funding candidates. The Springfield/Harrison Project will be completed in 2001 or thereabouts. We need to begin planning soon for the next project to avoid leaving funds idle. Lead time is needed because potential projects should be engineered and ready to go when the funding becomes available. Mr. Petrotte noted that the April 23, 1998 meeting minutes contain a lengthy account of the pros and cons of accumulating STU funds for large projects.

Projects that involve ROW acquisition and land use  
**9.4 TEA-21 ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM:** Mr. McIntyre reported that applications will be submitted directly to IDOT instead of to the MPO as in previous

relocation are the most difficult to implement using Federal funds. If possible we should look for projects that do not require ROW acquisition. As a matter of practice, STU funds have been rotated among the area’s major jurisdictions. Rockford feels it is now their turn to receive an allocation.

Mr. Petrotte asked for suggestions as to how we should proceed to nominate and select candidate projects. He asked if the Committee wanted to approach this as a task of the Committee as a whole or if a subcommittee should be approached.

The consensus of the Committee was to lay any decision on this matter over until the next meeting to give members time to confer with their respective policy makers.

**8. MPO-MASS TRANSIT AGREEMENT:** Mr. Petrotte explained that the latest draft of this necessary agreement between RATS and the area’s public transit providers includes modifications that reference the authorities under which the transit providers operate: the RMTD Board of Trustees for RMTD, the Loves Park City Council for LPTS and the Boone County Board for BCCA. Anna Gray asked that the agreement be laid over for another month to allow the Boone County Board more time to review it. The matter was laid over.

**9.1 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE SPRINGFIELD HARRISON PROJECT:** Mr. Vanderwerff reported that design approval was received on 12/8/98. The County is proceeding with property acquisition.

**9.2 WinGIS:** Mr. Petrotte reported that the proposed implementation plan is being rewritten. Of particular importance is the cost allocation plan. Meetings are scheduled with the consultant to work on revisions and clarifications.

**9.3 NORTHWEST CONNECTION / BYPASS:** Mr. Noel reported that staff has begun work refining land use plan scenarios in the area. He will be scheduling additional meetings of the sub-committee in the near future.

years. The MPO will receive copies and can still make recommendations on proposals but it is not mandatory that they do so unless a proposal is contrary to the

MPO's plans. Also, for those projects that are selected for enhancement funding, the current year's TIP will need to be amended to include those projects.

**9.5 OTHER TEA-21 INFORMATION AND OTHER PROJECTS:** No report.

**10. COMMUNICATIONS:** Dick Lundin noted a letter from the Toll Highway Authority regarding the possible interchange in the vicinity of Irene Road.

**11. OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Petrotte asked the Committee to begin seriously considering next year's planning needs. Bob Soltau said the first draft of the UWP is due in mid-March or early April, at the latest. Mr. Petrotte noted that we will likely receive a small increase in planning funds.

Mary Allen Verdun alerted the Committee that IDOT may soon be asking the Committee to consider an access plan in the vicinity of Town Hall Road in Boone County.

Dan Jacobson said the next Technical Committee meeting may be in the new Planning / Public Works Conference Room in the newly remodeled part of the Loves Park City Hall. Persons should continue to park in the front of City Hall because parking in the rear is limited.

Mr. Petrotte said the Letters of Intent submitted last Fall for TCSP funding were not accepted. An announcement of letters that were accepted was placed on the Internet last week. Over 500 letters were submitted nationwide. Roughly 50 were accepted; none from agencies in the State of Illinois.

**12. ADJOURNMENT:** At 12:10 PM a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.