

# RATS

**Rockford Area Transportation Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
*of Transportation, District 2*

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

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

## **Meeting Minutes RATS Technical Committee Loves Park City Hall – January 23, 2003**

### **Members Present:**

Chad Atkinson, Village of Machesney Park;  
Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;  
Richard Gualandi, IDOT District 2;  
Denny Hendricks, Rockford Mass Transit;  
Chris Hodges, Village of Roscoe  
Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway;  
Robert Martin, Loves Park Public Works;  
Sue McLaughlin, Winnebago County Planning;  
Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway;  
David Noel, Loves Park Planning;  
David Nord, Village of Cherry Valley;  
Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago;  
Michael Zonsius, Greater Rockford Airport Authority.

### **Others Present:**

John Donovan, FHWA Springfield;  
Carrie Houston, Winnebago County Planning;  
Dave Lindberg, Greater Rockford Transportation Coalition  
Russ Petrotte, RATS staff;  
Jim Powers, Greater Rockford Transportation Coalition;  
Bob Soltau, IDOT Springfield  
Ken Terrinoni, Boone County.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

At 10:05 a.m., with a quorum present, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. Mr. Ernst called the Committee's attention to the minutes from the November 21, 2002, meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

**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.

**3. RATS METRO PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY DESIGNATION:** Russ Petrotte presented a map showing a proposed Metro Planning Area for RATS.

The area shown on the map is the same as presented at the last Technical Committee meeting. To the east it includes the primary planned growth area around and north of the City of Belvidere, as depicted on the Boone County Plan, but does not extend east to include the communities of Capron and Garden Prairie. It does include the planned growth areas east of Loves Park and the growth areas in the vicinity of Poplar Grove and Timberlane. To the north the boundary coincides with the Adjusted Urbanized Area boundary recently adopted. The north boundary abuts the southern boundary of SLATS. To the west and to the south the proposed boundary is very similar to the Adjusted Urbanized area boundary. Attached to these minutes is a small scale map of the proposed boundary. The Committee made no suggestions for further changes to the proposal but instructed staff to develop a resolution for action on the proposal to be considered at the next Technical and Policy Committee meetings.

### **4. RAT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS (PIP):**

Russ Petrotte called the Committee's attention to the proposed Public Involvement Process (PIP) update. The document was included with the last mass mailing and is open for public review and comment. Reference to the document is included in the Public Notice of RATS Transportation Planning Activities published in this week's edition of the Rock River Times. In accordance with Federal guidance, a minimum of a 45-day review period will be provided before the document is presented to the Policy Committee for adoption. As part of the effort preparing the document, a survey was mailed to all persons on the RATS mailing list. The survey sought comment on the methods, effectiveness and timeliness of RATS mailings, the timing of meetings, the representativeness of the RATS Committees and other factors related to public involvement. The PIP

contains a lengthy segment discussing the responses to the survey. Mr. Petrotte said that the response was quite high (nearly 50%) and the comments were generally very positive. He asked that Committee member review the document over the coming weeks and comment as they feel appropriate.

Dave Lindberg and Jim Powers comments on the public participation process and asked how the survey respondents felt about receiving information digitally. Mr. Petrotte said most respondents preferred to continue receiving information in hard copy by regular mail but staff will be trying to accommodate those who requested digital information. Staff is trying to develop a WEB page. Mr. Powers noted that substantial numbers of people contact the Coalition's WEB page. He offered to put RATS information on the Coalitions page. Mr. Petrotte said he would be happy to work with the Coalition in this regard. Mr. Ernst thanked Mr. Powers for the offer because the City's Data Processing Division has been overburdened with other tasks and it may be some time before the RATS WEB page can be established.

**5. RATS POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

Steve Ernst informed the Committee the Mayor Lindberg directed staff to begin developing some detailed proposals for expanding the Policy Committee and defining the decision-making structure. Mr. Ernst said that he has conferred with Mayor Scott and other officials in the area and, as a result, is close to formulating a proposal that he feels will be acceptable to all concerned. He explained that the most important issue is assuring an equitable distribution and/or assignment of Federal road improvement and transit funding. Staff is developing a multifaceted approach to this aspect that will include the following principal elements.

1. With regard to Federal transit grants, the Transit TIP Subcommittee will be reactivated. This Subcommittee will annually evaluate transit needs in Winnebago and Boone Counties and assist the Rockford Mass Transit District and the Boone County Council on Ageing in developing an equitable suballocation of transit funding. The goal of the Subcommittee will be to, first, maintain the status quo with regard to transit service in both communities; second, to maximize productive interaction between the two agencies; and third, to expand transit service where needed to the extent financially feasible.
2. With regard to the distribution/suballocation of STP-Urban funds, staff will recommend the continued use of the criteria and application procedures developed and last formalized in the Year 2000 for the evaluation of STP-Urban projects. To that end, staff will recommend the continued emphasis on the use of these funds for projects that have special area-wide or regional significance as opposed to projects that benefit only a

single jurisdiction. While this may not always be possible, this will be the initial goal as candidate projects are evaluated.

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Petrotte said a draft report documenting the first phase of the study, including the model calibration, is under development by the consultant. He said he and Gary McIntyre have been meeting with Troy Krupp and Rich Lundin for the purpose of revising the Boone County land use forecasts.

In response to questions, John Donovan commented that the Federal guidelines prohibit the strict use of fixed formulas to suballocate Federal funds. However, he said that the proposal as described above, does not appear to conflict with the guidelines because a formula is not being used to strictly allocate the funds, only to provide a check to assure that no one is left out and that the central city gets its fair share, over time. The selection process will still be, primarily, a deliberative process that facilitates intergovernmental communication and cooperation.

Several of the Committee members commented that the proposal appeared to have merit. Mr. Ernst said he would attempt to formalize the proposal and develop a write-up prior to the next meeting.

**6.1 WEST STATE STREET CORRIDOR STUDY:** Mr. Ernst reported that copies of the report are now in print and will be made available over the next month. A digital version will also be available.

**6.2 WINNEBAGO COUNTY SMART GROWTH STUDY:**

Sue McLaughlin reported that the County is preparing to initiate the second phase of the study. Among other things this phase will look at way to both encourage smart growth and promote economic development.

**6.3 ROCKFORD AREA RAILROAD CONSOLIDATION STUDY:** Steve Ernst reported that the consultant has contacted the railroads and has scheduled meeting with them. They have also surveyed customers and are documenting needs and usage frequencies. The study is proceeding as planned.

**6.4 ROSCOE/ROCKTON TRANSIT STUDY:** No report.

**6.5 WinGIS:** Steve Ernst noted that a WinGIS Technical Committee meeting is scheduled today: 1:30 p.m. in the County Administration Building.

**6.6 RATS / SLATS MODELING STUDY:** Russ

**6.7 RMTD ROUTE & SCHEDULE ANALYSIS:** Denny Hendricks said the study is nearing completion and a report may be ready sometime in March.

**6.8 RMTD EAST SIDE TRANSFER CENTER STUDY:** No report.

**7. COMMUNICATIONS:**

**8. OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Steve Ernst briefly discussed the one-stop permitting proposal for oversized, overweight loads.

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**9. ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business to conduct, David Noel moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Sue McLaughlin and approved unanimously at 11:30 p.m.