



**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

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of Transportation, District 2

**Meeting Minutes
RATS Technical Committee
Meeting Date: June 20, 2002
Loves Park City Hall**

Members Present:

Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT, District 2;
Chad Atkinson, Machesney Park Planning;
Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;
Elizabeth Kinsinger, Rockford Community Development;
Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway;
Bob Martin, Loves Park Public Works (arrived after start);
Sue McLaughlin, Winnebago County Planning;
Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway;
David Noel, Loves Park Planning;
David Nord, village of Cherry Valley.

Others Present:

Gary McIntyre, RATS staff;
Russ Petrotte, RATS staff;
Bob Soltau, IDOT Springfield;
Bob Spenle, SLATS;
Don Uelmen, Wisconsin DOT.

1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES: At 10:07 A.M. with a quorum present, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. The minutes of the May 23, 2002 meeting were not available for review and approval.

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 announced the IDOT Fall Planning Conference to be held in Peoria, Illinois on September 17 and 18, 2002. He also announced the International Intelligent Transportation Systems Conference to be held in Chicago at McCormick Plan during the week of October 14, 2002.

3. FY 2003 DRAFT TIP: Gary McIntyre and Russ Petrotte presented the first/rough draft of the proposed Year 2003 Transportation Improvement Program for RATS. The June 20, 2002 draft was distributed at the meeting. Projects for

the following agencies are included in this draft: the Rockford Mass Transit District; the Boone County Council on Aging; Lifescape Community Services, Inc.; the Barbara Olsen Center of Hope; the Illinois Department of Transportation; the Winnebago County Highway Department; the Cities of Rockford, Loves Park and Belvidere; the Villages of Machesney Park, Cherry Valley; the Boone County Highway Department; the Greater Rockford Airport Authority; and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority. No projects have been programmed for the Village of New Millford.

Mr. Petrotte asked all to read the document thoroughly for the sake of both proofing the draft and because the issue of restructuring or expanding RATS will be coming up this year. It is important for the Technical Committee members to be up-to-date on the funding that is funneled through RATS so that they can address questions that may be coming from their respective Policy Committee members.

Mr. Petrotte discussed the Transit Element. He also distributed a revision to Table 10 that added a request by RMTD for two FTA Section 5310-funded paratransit vehicles. Mr. McIntyre discussed the Highway Element. He called attention to the balance and assignment of Federal STP-urban funds, the summary tables, the project table, the table that list projects that are being continued from previous years, and the table that list projects completed or underway from last year.

Bob Soltau suggested that the Villages that have been newly added to the Rockford urbanized area as a result of the Year 2000 Census be added to the TIP. Staff will contact representatives from the Villages of Roscoe, Winnebago and Timberlane to determine if they have any projects that should be included in the TIP. Because Roscoe has been shifted from the Beloit urbanized area to the Rockford urbanized area, Roscoe's projects (if any) may need to be listed in both the RATS TIP and the SLATS TIP.

Mr. Soltau suggested that available STP funds and project be reviewed carefully to assure timely use of those funds.

Mr. McIntyre noted that a special effort has been made in this TIP to identify projects that will be important in reducing congestion. These projects are noted in the various tables as "CMS Projects." Note also, that nearly all public transit projects are considered as projects that are aimed at reducing or mitigating congestion. Mr. Soltau noted that a Federal Congestion Management System Review has been scheduled for the Rockford area on Thursday, August 15, 2002. Representatives from IDOT and the FHWA will be coming to Rockford and meeting with RATS staff to determine the status of congestion management efforts in the area. Such reviews will be conducted at three MPOs in the State of Illinois.

Members of the Technical Committee suggested that additional explanation be added to the text of the TIP highlighting Congestion Management and the relation of projects in the TIP to the Congestion Management System and the Long-Range Plan.

Mr. McIntyre said the maps that locate the highway projects will be added at a later date. Staff will make the corrections and changes as suggested at this meeting and will mail out a more complete version to all on the mailing list. We will be asking Policy Committee approval of a final draft at the August Policy Committee meeting, to be scheduled.

RETURN TO AGENCY REPORTS: At this point in the meeting Bob Martin had arrived and Mr. Ernst asked if he had anything to report. Mr. Martin explained an unforeseen complication that had recently occurred on the Riverside Bridge project. The two eastbound lanes had been closed and work was to begin on that half of the bridge just a couple of days ago. Even though JULIE and Ameritech had been consulted, as demolition was about to begin, a workman noticed a previously unaccounted-for cable. Fortunately, work was halted before the cable was cut. It turns out, the cable was an Ameritech cable with 1,700 pairs that they had missed. As a result, the construction sequence will have to be reversed to doing the westbound lanes of the bridge first to give Ameritech time to relocate the cable. Ameritech has agreed to compensate for the extra costs that will be incurred. Mr. Martin said that traffic signalization, speed limits, and turning conditions have been altered in the area to adjust for closing two lanes. At this time it appears that traffic is moving smoothly.

4.1 SPRINGFIELD/HARRISON PROJECT: Carlos Molina said the project is proceeding as scheduled. The intersection of Preston and Harrison was opened last Friday. Utility work is still underway. Several previously unknown, abandoned, private septic systems have been discovered and are adding work to the project, but will not delay completion.

4.2 WEST STATE STREET CORRIDOR STUDY: The City is expecting the final report from the consultant within the next few weeks. A detailed report will be made to the Technical Committee in July or August.

4.3 WINNEBAGO COUNTY SMART GROWTH STUDY: Elizabeth Kinsinger reported that the second of three public meetings for the purpose of discussing Smart Growth issues was held last evening at the Pecatonica Forest Preserve. Attendance has been good at these meetings. The next meeting will be next Wednesday at the Rockford Public Library.

4.4 ROCKFORD AREA RAILROAD CONSOLIDATION STUDY: No report.

4.5 ROSCOE/ROCKTON TRANSIT STUDY: No report.

4.6 WinGIS: Steve Ernst reported that a WinGIS Technical Committee meeting is scheduled this afternoon at 1:30 at the Rock River Water Reclamation District. RFPs are being developed to cleanup the street centerline file and to build a seamless county parcel map. Deliveries on aerial photography have been accelerated. Mr. Soltau noted that IDOT is considering additional support to Illinois counties for GIS-related work.

4.7 RATS / SLATS MODELING STUDY: Gary McIntyre said there is a Steering Committee meeting scheduled immediately following this meeting.

4.8 RMTD ROUTE & SCHEDULE ANALYSIS: Russ Petrotte reported that the RMTD Board selected a consultant. The study will be underway soon and take 4-5 months.

4.9 RMTD EAST SIDE TRANSFER CENTER STUDY: No report.

5. COMMUNICATIONS: None.

6. OTHER BUSINESS: None

7. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Mary Allen Verdun moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Rich Lundin and approved unanimously at 11:04 AM.