



Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

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Meeting Minutes RATS Technical Committee Loves Park City Hall – March 18, 2004

Members Present:

Brent Anderson, City of Belvidere;
Chad Atkinson, Village of Machesney Park;
Wayne Dust; Rockford CD department;
Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;
Chris Hodges, Village of Roscoe;
Troy Krupp, Belvidere/Boone County Planning;
Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway;
Bob Martin, Loves Park Public Works;
Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway;
Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago;
Steve Thompson; Loves Park CD Dept;
Kris Tobin, IDOT District 2.

Others Present:

Mary Abernathy, Village of Roscoe;
Jason Dupruis, City of Beloit / SLATS;
Jan Juric, Winnebago County Health Department;
Gary McIntyre, RATS staff;
Russ Petrotte, RATS staff;
Charlie Smith, Hansen Engineering;
Bob Soltau, IDOT - Springfield.

Members Absent:

Greater Rockford Airport Authority;
Village of Cherry Valley.

1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES: At 10:10 am, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. Mark Painter moved to approved the minutes of September 18, 2003. The motion was seconded by Chad Atkinson and approved unanimously. The minutes of the meetings of November 20, 2003 and February 19, 2004 were laid over. Minutes of the Technical Committee member discussions (a quorum was not present) of January 22, 2004, were also laid over.

He called attention to Chart 6, the summary listing of proposed planning activities for FY 2005 and Chart 8, the Federal Suballocations of funding. He noted that in Part 1 of Chart 8, the total funding forecasted available is the same as this year, \$384,771. The precise split between "FHWA PL" funding and

2. AGENCY REPORTS: Several of the members present gave reports on the status of the improvement projects under their respective jurisdictions. The TIP Status Report will be updated to reflect these comments and redistributed with the next mailout. In addition, the following information is noteworthy.

Two new improvement projects are to be added in the Roscoe area: McDonald Road from IL-251, east 2,000 feet; and Main Street from McDonald Road to Bridge Street (as per Chris Hodges). Also, to be added in the Winnebago area: Winnebago Road from US-20 to Cunningham Road (Phase 2 engineering) (as per Mark Painter).

Bob Soltau reminded the Committee of the Intelligent Transportation System meeting scheduled at IDOT in Springfield (9:30 AM to 2:30 PM).

Jason Dupruis reminded the Committee of the WisDOT / MPO Annual Conference scheduled next month, April 1 and 2, to be held in Janesville, WI.

3. IDOT PRESENTATION ON "PROJECT CREATE" AND ON THE ROCHELLE INTER-MODAL CENTER: The presentation to be made on these topics by John Schwalbach, the IDOT Bureau Chief was deferred to the May Technical Committee meeting.

4. RATS UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM FOR (UWP) FOR FY 2005: Russ Petrotte discussed the proposed FY 2005 Unified Work Program (dated March 12, 2004) that had been mailed last week. He said the proposal incorporates the concepts discussed at the last Technical Committee meeting and the funding distributions proposed during the work program development session held on February 26th.

"FTA Section 5303" may change but the total, according to IDOT, will not change. He also noted that most of the participating agencies are not being suballocated any of the funds. This is because, as discussed over the last month, the maximum possible funding will be devoted to the update of the

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP) – which will, for the first time in over 30 years, be out-sourced to a private consultant.

However, Winnebago County will be suballocated \$20,000 to complete its Springfield Avenue Development Study, now underway, and the City of Rockford CD Department will be suballocated similar amounts for comprehensive planning work approved for them and initiated last year.

Part 2 of Chart 8 lists the above mentioned work and also lists other significant planning studies previously approved, underway or to be commenced in FY 2005, but funded with other funding sources.

Mr. Petrotte said that Part 10 of the UWP proposal has not yet been developed. Part 10 is a broader explanation of the items summarized in Chart 6. Part 10 also discusses other planning activities that might be undertaken during the year should time, funding, or emphasis priorities change during the year. This will be developed for the final document.

Mr. Ernst said that staff is requesting RATS approval to submit this UWP proposal to IDOT as a “draft.” Final approval of the Work Program will not be requested until May. This draft proposal will serve to assure IDOT that the RATS MPO intends to apply for and use all potential funding allocated to the area for FY 2005. Details of the scope of work can be changed between now and the final document in May.

Mr. Ernst also discussed the approach intended with the Long-Range Plan update effort as well as some of the topics being emphasized by the US-DOT. Safety Conscious Planning is one such area that we will need to explore as we update the LRP.

Rich Lundin moved to recommend that the March 12, 2004 Draft of the FY 2005 UWP be submitted to IDOT. The motion was seconded by Bob Martin and approved unanimously.

4. RATS TIP AMENDMENT – RESOLUTION 2004-4: Russ Petrotte said that RMTD recently reassessed its paratransit vehicle usage and replacement needs and determined that six more of its paratransit vehicles are in need of and eligible for replacement in accordance with IDOT vehicle mileage and age criteria. The vehicles are all of the “Medium Duty” classification. RMTD also reassessed its vehicle needs from the standpoint of size and passenger capacity. They have decided to replace at least two of the above mentioned “Medium Duty” vehicles with the larger “Super Duty” size. The funding source to be sought for these replacements is FTA 5310 with IDOT providing the 20% local match.

When the US Census Bureau declared part of Boone County to be “urbanized”, a complicated situation was created for the paratransit services provided by the Boone County Council on Ageing throughout Boone County. Previously, transit in Boone

Mr. Petrotte distributed a draft of Resolution 2004-4. The resolution revises Table 9 of the FY 2004 TIP to reflect these changes.

Mark Painter moved to recommend Policy Committee approval of Resolution 2004-4. The motion was seconded by Kris Tobin and approved unanimously.

5. RATS HIGHWAY TIP AMENDMENT – RESOLUTION 2004-3: Gary McIntyre distributed copies of proposed Resolution 2004-3 and explained that the Winnebago County Highway Department has two projects that need to be added to the first year of the FY 2004 TIP. Both projects involve the use of Federal funding.

The first is a signal modernization at the intersection of Riverside Boulevard and Mulford Roads. Two right turn lanes will also be added at this intersection. The project will be funded with \$225,000 in STP Hazard Elimination and Safety funds and \$25,000 in local funds.

The second project to be added is the resurfacing of Meridian Road from IL-2 to Cunningham Road. This project will be funded with \$720,000 in STP-Rural funds and \$180,000 in local funds.

Carlos Molina moved to recommend Policy Committee approval of Resolution 2004-3. The motion was seconded by Bob Martin and approved unanimously.

Next, Gary McIntyre distributed a revision to Table 20 of the FY 2004 TIP. This Table is Year 1 of the TIP and has been modified to now include two IDOT projects that were previously listed in Year 2 (FY 2005). IDOT has determined that these two projects need to be implemented sooner and has secured funding for the projects. The projects are: 1-04-13, the reconstruction of US Business 20 between Fairview Boulevard and Alpine Road; and 1-04-19, the reconstruction of IL-251 from Whitman Street to just north of Forest Hills Road. The first project will be funded with \$1,520,000 in Federal STP funds and \$480,000 in IDOT funds. The second project will be funded with \$1,232,000 in National Highway System funds and \$308,000 in IDOT funds. Advancing projects from one of the “out years” of the TIP to the “first or implementation year” is allowable without formal TIP amendment contingent upon timely notification of the RATS Committees.

7. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT – RMTD, BELVIDERE, BOONE, RATS: Russ Petrotte explained that he had alerted the Policy Committee, at a previous meeting, that RATS was going to be asked to participate in an agreement between RMTD, Boone County and Belvidere for the purpose of funding transit services in Boone County.

County was funded through a combination of FTA 5311 funds, FTA 5310 funds, IDOT funds for rural areas, and local funds. Currently, the newly “urbanized” parts of Boone County no

longer qualify to receive 5311 funds – these funds are for rural areas only.

However, the urbanized parts can be made eligible to receive FTA 5307 funds and the State Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP funds). To become eligible for 5307, RATS would have to declare Boone County as a “designated recipient.” To become eligible for DOAP funds the State General Assembly would have to designate Boone County and/or Belvidere as a “downstate transit operator.”

Because there is insufficient time (between now and the start of the fiscal year – July 1) to get General Assembly action and file all necessary grant papers, an interim solution is needed if transit services are to be continued, uninterrupted, in Boone County.

The solution proposed is to temporarily annex the urbanized parts of Boone County into the Rockford Mass Transit District. RMTD can then draw down DOAP funds for the service in those areas. Further, instead of actually providing the service themselves, RMTD will subcontract with BCCA to provide the service. This will allow the transit section of BCCA to remain intact and will allow time to study more elaborate and permanent options for future years. In regard to the latter, IDOT has agreed to fund a study of the Boone County transit situation.

Mr. Petrotte said a formal agreement stating the above is being drafted and will be presented to the Policy Committee at the next meeting. He asked the Technical Committee to endorse the concept. Bob Martin so moved and the motion was seconded by Rich Lundin. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. PROGRESS REPORTS

8.1 Winnebago County Smart Growth (Phase 2) – An RFP is currently being drafted.

8.2 Roscoe-Rockton Public Transit Study – A presentation on this study will be made to the Roscoe Village Board next Monday, the 22nd of March at 7:00 PM in the Roscoe Village Hall.

8.3 WinGIS – A WinGIS meeting is scheduled for this afternoon.

8.4 Commuter Rail Study – A contract has been successfully negotiated with TransSystems Corporation and the kickoff meeting will be held this afternoon in Belvidere.

8.5 Springfield Corridor Planning Study – The study is still in the data gathering stage.

8.6 Boone/Winnebago/Rock Counties Transportation Modeling Study – The study is now focusing on the traffic situations in northeastern Winnebago County and the eastern parts of the City of Loves Park.

8.7 RMTD East Side Transfer Study – Route and schedule changes were implemented the first week in March. The study is on hold until these changes are fine-tuned and their full impact assessed.

8.8 IL-173 Corridor Planning Study – The study is proceeding as expected.

9. COMMUNICATIONS:

The Federal Certification Review Report was briefly discussed.

The WisDOT I-90 corridor study was briefly discussed.

Staff attended a educational session sponsored by the Metro Transportation Group on the development of modern roundabouts as an alternative to signalized at-grade intersections. Roundabouts are being used successfully in many other areas and may have applications here in the Rockford area.

The area's air quality situation was discussed. The Rockford and Beloit area will remain as an attainment area. This summer's ozone conditions in Rock and Winnebago Counties should be closely monitored.

A study is being considered to look at the feasibility of removing the tolls on the section of I-90 in the Rockford area. IDOT may devote funds to this study.

10. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

Carlos Molina asked that the following project be added to the TIP: the reconstruction and widening of Hononegah Road in the stretch roughly between IL-251 and Straw Lane/ Checkerberry. The project will be funded with Winnebago County funds.

11. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Rich Lundin moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bob Martin and approved unanimously at approximately 11:30 AM.