



**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Meeting Minutes – RATS Technical Committee

Meeting Date: November 16, 2000 – Loves Park City Hall

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 Roger E. Rocke, Illinois Department
of Transportation, District 2

Members Present: Bob Martin, Loves Park Transit/Public Works; Dan Jacobson, Loves Park Planning; Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT District 2; Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works Department; Michael Zonsius, Greater Rockford Airport; Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway; David Noel, Winnebago County Planning; and arriving approximately an hour after the start of the meeting, Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway Department.

Others Present: Janet Anderson, State Line Area Transportation Study; Jim Ryan, Rockford Public Works; Bob Soltau, Illinois Department of Transportation (Springfield); Gary McIntyre, RATS staff; Russ Petrotte, RATS staff; Jennifer Mitchell and John Mick, Clark Dietz, Inc.

1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES: At 10:15 A.M. and with a quorum present, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. Mr. Ernst called attention to the minutes of the last five meetings: June 22 and 29, July 13 and 20, and September 21, 2000. He asked if there were any corrections to these minutes. Hearing no corrections or objections, **Mary Allen Verdun moved to approve all of the above-cited minutes. The motion was seconded by Rich Lundin and approved unanimously without further discussion.**

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. An updated report will be mailed, with these minutes, to all on the RATS mailing list. Janet Anderson reported that data collection for the SLATS portion of the RAT/SLAT Modeling Study is underway and progressing.

3. RATS UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: Russ Petrotte distributed and discussed a draft of proposed Resolution 2000-12. This resolution will amend the FY 2001 Unified Work Program to authorize the West State Street Corridor Study. RATS staff had been authorized to request funds for this study at a meeting earlier this year. IDOT has approved the request and has authorized a grant of

\$150,000 contingent upon Rockford's agreement to act as Lead Agency for the Study and provide a 20% local match (up to \$37,500), and contingent upon incorporation of the proposed study into the RATS FY 2001 UWP. Resolution 2000-12, if approved by the RATS Policy Committee will complete the RATS authorization. The resolution also directs the RATS Study Director to seek and select consultant services for the study and directs the Rockford Public Works Department to periodically report to the Technical and Policy Committees on the progress, findings and recommendations resulting from the study.

David Noel moved to recommend Policy Committee approval of Resolution 2000-12. The motion was seconded by Dan Jacobson. Hearing no objections, the motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

4. HARRISON AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY: Steve Ernst explained that when the City requested and received approval to fund improvements to Harrison Avenue with STP-Urban funds (after the completion of the Springfield/Harrison Connection), the City agreed to conduct a more detailed scoping study of the proposed project. The purpose of the study was to determine, in more detail: (1) the condition of the stretch of Harrison Avenue between IL-2 and Mulford Road, (2) the rough scope of improvements needed considering both current and 20-year traffic projections and (3) a reasonable subdivision of the project into manageable phases that would utilize STP funds in 1-2 year increments. The City hired Clark Dietz, Inc. to conduct the study and work has progressed over the last 11 months. Mr. Ernst introduced Jennifer Mitchell and John Mick of Clark Dietz, Inc. and the two consultants spent roughly 30 minutes presenting the preliminary findings of their work to the Committee.

(Note: Subsequent to the Technical Committee meeting, the consultant completed the study and presented a final version of their report to the City, dated July 2000 but actually completed in December 2000. The Executive Summary of that report is attached to these minutes. Copies of the full 100-plus page final report are available for review at the City of Rockford Public Works Department.)

During their presentations, the consultants stressed the critical importance of this roadway to regional and intra-regional traffic circulation and presented strong arguments that the roadway qualifies as a "Strategic Regional Arterial" under guidelines developed by IDOT, District 1. Acceptance of this significance should aid in qualifying needed improvements for funding from several sources in addition to STP-Urban funds. The roadway was divided into five major segments and the cost of improvements on these segments was estimated to be roughly \$56 million in total with individual segments ranging from slightly less than \$6 million to just over \$19 million.

Members of the Committee commented briefly on several aspects of the study but no disagreement was expressed and no action was taken by the Committee.

5.1. SPRINGFIELD / HARRISON EXTENSION PROJECT:

Carlos Molina reported that this project is on schedule. He noted that there have been some small unanticipated complications. Bedrock was encountered where it was not expected and there have been some other small excavation problems but these are not expected to delay the project.

5.2. BOONE/WINNEBAGO PLANNING STUDY: Gary McIntyre said this study is now progressing rapidly. Some major questions he had regarding employment data have been resolved and the consultants work is proceeding as expected.

8. COMMUNICATIONS: Gary McIntyre reported that he received a communication from the IDOT indicating that significant new awards of enhancement funds are unlikely to continue after the next round of TEA-21 projects are announced. The next deadline for IDOT's Enhancement Program will be announced in 2004 after the next Federal transportation bill is passed (assuming the Federal program continues to include Enhancement funding).

Steve Ernst said he received a communication from the IDOT that documents 1999 travel statistics.

Bob Martin submitted a communication to the Committee asking that the status / name of the Loves Park Transit System, as a member of the Technical Committee, be changed or transferred to the Love Park Public Works Department. (Loves Park will continue to provide transit service via contract with RMTD, but LPTS, per se, no longer exists).

David Noel moved that this request be forwarded to the Policy Committee with the recommendation that the change be accommodated as per the Loves Park request. The motion was seconded by Dick Lundin and approved unanimously (8-0).

Russ Petrotte reported that he received a letter (10/26/2000) from Carol Green of Lifescape Community Services requesting that they be authorized to apply for two medium duty, 14-passenger, lift-equipped vehicles through the IDOT-administered Section 16(b)2 program. The vehicles would be used to transport adult day care clients (approximately 100) throughout the community, both to and from the day care facility and their homes and other locations for special services. Mr. Petrotte explained that he and Rick McVinnie (RMTD) had met with Carol Green recently. He and Mr. McVinnie had come to the conclusion that RMTD could not cost-effectively meet Lifescape's needs and therefore they recommend endorsement of the Lifescape request. By consensus, the Committee recommended that the Lifescape request be included as part of the upcoming FY 2002 TIP. Further discussion and opportunity for public comment could take place between now and that time and during the TIP-development process.

9. OTHER BUSINESS: No further business was brought before the Committee.

10. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Dan Jacobson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mary Allen Verdun and approved unanimously at 11:25 AM.