



**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

POLICY COMMITTEE
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of Transportation, District 2

**Meeting Minutes
RATS Technical Committee
Meeting Date: September 26, 2002
Loves Park City Hall**

Members Present:

Chad Atkinson, Machesney Park Planning;
Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works;
Rick Gualandi, IDOT District 2;
Sue McLaughlin, Winnebago County Planning;
Robert Martin, Loves Park Public Works;
Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway;
David Noel, Loves Park Planning;
David Nord, Village of Cherry Valley;
Michael Zonsius, Greater Rockford Airport.

Others Present:

Susan Anderson, Boone County Board;
John Donovan, FHWA Springfield;
Frank Hodina, representing Roscoe;
Gary McIntyre, RATS staff;
Russ Petrotte, RATS staff;
Bob Soltau, IDOT Springfield;
Bob Spenle, SLATS;
Ken Terrinoni, Boone County.

1. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES: At 1:42 PM, with a quorum present, Steve Ernst called the meeting to order. A motion was made by Michael Zonsius and seconded by Sue McLaughlin to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2002, June 20, 2002, and July 18, 2002 meetings. No corrections or changes to the minutes were proposed and the motion was approved unanimously.

2. AGENCY REPORTS: Agencies present reported on the progress of their ongoing highway projects. Gary McIntyre reported on behalf of the IL Toll Highway Authority. An updated TIP Status Report, listing highway improvement projects, was presented, discussed and updated at the meeting.

Bob Soltau reported the following: (1) IDOT has decided to award an additional \$100,000 for the further development of WinGIS. Similar grants are being offered to other counties throughout the State. (2) The Intelligent Transportation Systems World Conference is scheduled for October 14-18 in Chicago. (3) IDOT Director Kirk Brown has announced his retirement at the end of this year. (4) A brochure explaining the types of work conducted at various stages of transportation engineering studies has been developed by IDOT.

Mr. Soltau also suggested that the FHWA be added to future RATS agendas under "Agency Reports."

3. RATS ADJUSTED URBANIZED AREA AND METRO PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES: Steve Ernst noted that a paper entitled "Issues Related to Changes in the Organization and Structure" (of RATS and SLATS) was included in the last mailout. He asked the Committee members to review the paper. Many of the issues will be considered at future meetings.

Russ Petrotte explained that a number of tasks must be accomplished by RATS over the next few months as a result of the designation by the US Census of new urbanized areas (UAs). First, we must make minor adjustments to the UA boundaries. The purpose is to smooth the boundaries, to pick boundaries that are more easily identifiable, and to slightly expand the boundaries so that adjacent areas urbanized since the Census, or highly likely to be urbanized in the immediate future, are included. Second, this "Adjusted Urbanized Area" (AUA) will be used as the basis for designating the functional classification and federal-aid eligibility of all major roadways. For the most part, but not always, roads inside the AUA will be eligible for "urban funding" programs; those outside will be eligible for "rural funds." Mr. Soltau clarified that within the Census-defined UA, only "urban" funds can be used. In the areas between the Census UA and the AUA boundary, both rural and urban funds can be used. Outside the AUA, only rural funds can be used. Third, the Metropolitan Planning Area will need to be redefined to take into account development documented by the Census and development forecasted over the next 20-25 years. These tasks will have to be accomplished for both the Beloit and Rockford UAs and both the SLATS and RATS planning areas.

Maps were displayed that showed a proposed Adjusted Urbanized Area (based on discussions that had occurred recently with officials from SLATS) and that also showed the distribution of existing population (a dot/density map derived from Census block data). Mr. Petrotte reviewed the proposed AUA boundary segment by segment and stated that as he and Gary McIntyre developed the proposal, they: (1) attempted to include all populated contiguous areas, (2) avoided splitting Census blocks, (3) tried to avoid splitting traffic analysis zones (TAZs), and (4) tried to incorporate all of the proposals and suggestions that had been made by SLATS. Following TAZ boundaries was not always possible because many very large TAZs only have small parts that

are urbanized. Also, not splitting Census blocks inevitably creates some irregularities in the boundary.

As the Committee reviewed the proposal, they made a number of suggestions by consensus. In general, they suggested keeping the AUA relatively close to the Census UA by only adding areas that seemed nearly certain to be developed in the near future. Consequently, on the east side of Belvidere, they suggested not expanding beyond the Belvidere city limits. They suggested that all of the incorporated parts of Poplar Grove, Timberlane and Caledonia be included. The area around the proposed I-90/ IL-173 Interchange should be included. In the southwest, US-20 should be used as the boundary. The west extension to the Village of Winnebago should include all the lands between US-20 and Cunningham Road. Also, include Weldon Road, Meridian Road and all lands within the corporate limits of the City of Rockford. And in the northwest, follow Tate Road to Elmwood Road to IL-2.

Mr. Petrotte explained that the Census Bureau made some odd decisions as they defined the northern boundary of the Rockford UA. For one, they switched the Village of Roscoe from the Beloit UA (where it had been designated in 1990) to the Rockford UA. More perplexing, they left one small uninhabited tract (about a quarter square mile) of the Village of Roscoe inside the Beloit UA. These oddities raise questions for RATS and SLATS regarding where Roscoe should be represented (RATS, SLATS, or both), who should do the planning for Roscoe, what boundary should be used and if there should be overlapping planning boundaries.

John Donovan stated that we cannot undue the Census Bureau changes and we have to accommodate the changes as best we can within the transportation planning guidelines. In that regard, as we adjust our UA boundaries (Rockford and Beloit) we cannot switch parts of the Census-defined UAs from one UA to the other. Stated another way, the piece of Roscoe that is in the Beloit UA must remain within the Adjusted Beloit UA and the parts of Roscoe that are in the Rockford UA must remain part of the Adjusted Rockford UA. Other than that, it is a local decision where the Adjusted UA and Metropolitan Planning Boundaries are placed.

As the Committee further reviewed the proposed Adjusted UA boundaries proposed by RATS and SLATS staff, it became apparent that the proposal did not totally agree with Mr. Donovan's statement. Staff was instructed to reevaluate their proposal and prepare a new proposal for the next Technical Committee meeting.

Mr. Petrotte said staff would also attempt to prepare a proposal for the Metropolitan Planning Area boundary and would use the land use forecasts developed for the traffic simulation model as a basis. He noted, however, that the forecasts for the Boone County portion of the study need to be revised because they are forecasting dwelling unit and employment losses in places and in magnitudes that are not likely to occur.

4.1 SPRINGFIELD/HARRISON PROJECT: The project to be proceeding as scheduled and is likely to be open this Fall.

4.2 WEST STATE STREET CORRIDOR STUDY: No report at this time. A detailed report will be made at the next Technical Committee meeting.

4.3 WINNEBAGO COUNTY SMART GROWTH STUDY: The report on the meetings and work accomplished this Summer is still under development.

4.4 ROCKFORD AREA RAILROAD CONSOLIDATION STUDY: No report.

4.5 ROSCOE/ROCKTON TRANSIT STUDY: No report.

4.6 WinGIS: No report.

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: The study is still underway.

4.9 RMTD EAST SIDE TRANSFER CENTER STUDY: No report. This study is not likely to commence until this Fall after the Route and Schedule Analysis is completed.

5. COMMUNICATIONS: None.

6. OTHER BUSINESS: Gary McIntyre distributed a list of next years meeting dates. The meetings are tentatively scheduled as shown in the table below. Technical Committee meetings are normally held at the Loves Park City Hall (100 Heart Boulevard). Policy Committee meetings are rotated between Loves Park, Machesney Park, Rockford and Winnebago County. Agendas for both Technical and Policy Committee meetings are usually mailed out one week prior to the Technical Committee meeting. If you do not receive an agenda, please contact the RATS staff to confirm the exact meeting times and locations as meetings are sometimes cancelled, rescheduled or relocated. **All**

Tentative RATS Meeting Dates in 2003	
Technical Committee	Policy Committee
January 23, 10 AM	January 30, 1:30 PM
February 20, 10 AM	February 27, 1:30 PM
March 20, 10 AM	March 27, 1:30 PM
April 17, 10 AM	April 24, 1:30 PM
May 22, 10 AM	May 29, 1:30 PM
June 19, 10 AM	June 26, 1:30 PM
July 17, 10 AM	July 24, 1:30 PM
August 21, 10 AM	August 28, 1:30 PM
September 18, 10 AM	September 25, 1:30 PM
October 23, 10 AM	October 30, 1:30 PM
November 20, 10 AM	November 27, 1:30 PM
December 18, 10 AM	December 25, 1:30 PM

RATS meetings are open to the public and public comment is invited on all topics.

7. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Sue McLaughlin moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by David Noel and approved unanimously at 3:03 PM.