

RATS

**Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization**
City of Rockford, Public Works Department
425 East State Street, Rockford, IL 61104

POLICY COMMITTEE

*Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey, City of Rockford
Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park
Board Chairman Scott H. Christiansen, Winnebago County
President Linda M. Vaughn, Village of Machesney Park
Mayor Frederic C. Brereton, City of Belvidere
Board Chairman Catherine H. Ward, Boone County
Deputy Director George F. Ryan, Illinois Department of
Transportation, Region 2*

RATS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Thursday, September 20th, 2007

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Long, IDOT Region 2; David Townsend, Wayne Vik, Winnebago County Highway Department; James A. Johnson, Rockford Mass Transit District; Nathan Bruck, City of Loves Park, Community Development Department; David Noel, Village of Roscoe; Mark Painter, Village of Winnebago; Jonah Katz, City of Rockford, Community Development Department; Marge Bevers, Chicago/Rockford International Airport; Dan Jacobson, City of Loves Park, Community Development Department; Adam Tegen, Belvidere/Boone County Regional Planning; Robert Soltau, Stateline Area Transportation Study; Sue Mroz, Winnebago County Planning and Econ. Development Department; John Donovan, FHWA.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Village of Machesney Park; Village of Cherry Valley; Boone County Highway Department; City of Belvidere, Public Works Department; Rock River Water Reclamation District; Growth Dimensions, RAEDC.

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Ernst, RATS Study Director; Gary McIntyre, RATS Staff; Jon Paul Dipla, RATS Staff; Tonia Vrolyk, Rockford Public Works Department; Brad Holmberg, Baxter & Woodman; Terry Pitkus, Winnebago County Rail Advisory Council; Clarence H. Welte, Winnebago County Rail Advisory Committee; Reginald Arkell, FTA; Janice Osadcak, FHWA; Stewart McKenzie, FTA, Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Ernst at 10:20 a.m. with a quorum present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2007 & JULY 19, 2007 RATS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

No action at this time

2. AGENCY REPORTS

2.1 Illinois Department of Transportation, District 2 – Harrison Avenue Project is near completion. Downtown Rockford resurfacing is near completion (stripping is still needed). I-39 Kishwaukee Bridge is still being worked on, anticipated to be complete in Spring of 2008. US-20 resurfacing from Cunningham to I-39 is near completion. Business-20 from New Towne Road to Arlen still has verification pending. IL-75 at Timothy Creek, Stage 1 is complete with Stage 2 being initiated. IL-70 (south of Pecatonica River) support beams 95% complete. IL-39 – Business 20 Bridge painting at Blackhawk and Yellow Creek has been pushed back to FY 2008. IL-75 resurfacing of Meridian Rd (westerly) will begin. IL-251 Forrest Hills Road signal modernization to start October 10th, 2007. IL-76 turn lanes have operational signals. IL-73 Beaver Creek project is behind schedule. IL-251 Harrison Ave and 15th - Land acquisition has cleared and letter is in the mail from Springfield, IL.

2.2 Winnebago County Highway Department – All projects are underway and on schedule except for the Old River/Latham project. There will be a pre-construction phase meeting held. There are delays from Perryville to Swanson and Completion date may be delayed to FY 2008. Baxter Rd. completion is tentatively scheduled for

November 2007. Underwater inspections will be undertaken for Kishwaukee Bridge structures as well as for bridges on the Rock River.

2.3 City of Rockford, Public Works Department – No Report

2.4 City of Loves Park, Public Works Department – Resurfacing program is complete for the year. Traffic enforcement on Riverside Blvd. Has increase since the removal of parking. Tollway/County agreement was passed for bridge over I-90 (3 alternatives will be presented for modifying the bridge).

2.5 Village of Machesney Park – No report

2.6 Chicago/Rockford International Airport – New service to Phoenix and Ft. Lauderdale. Seasonal service to Cancun will begin shortly. The goal of having 200,000 passengers use the airport will be surpassed. There has been work on the International Terminal. Widening of the upper level concourse is complete. Phase 1 of the pavement, lighting and cable rehab is complete. Second half of Phase 1 should be done by the end of the year. Phase 2 is in pre-design. Application for foreign trade zone has been submitted. There will be addition of new cargo storage on the airport property.

Mr. Ernst thanked the airport and UPS staff for their assistance and efforts during the Fall Planning Conference. Mr. McIntyre also thanked RMTD for providing bus to transport person to the airport/UPS facility.

2.7 Rockford Mass Transit District – Closing for property on Lyford Road for the East Side Transfer center will take place later today. Work has begun on the RMTD Paratransit Center. The completion date for the Paratransit Center is March 28th, 2008.

2.8 City of Loves Park, Community Development Department – No Report

2.9 Village of Cherry Valley – Not Present

2.10 City of Rockford, Community Development Department – Proposals for the RFP sent out regarding the Kishwaukee Corridor Project are due on September 21st, 2007.

2.11 Winnebago County Regional Planning and Economic Development Dept – Long Range Plan is progressing. Also, Natural Resources Inventory will be undertaken for Winnebago County/City of Rockford. It was stated that 10 proposals were received for consideration for the Natural Resources Inventory. Long Range Plan should be complete by the Spring of 2008, however, completion may depend on the Natural Resources Inventory.

2.12 Belvidere / Boone County Regional Planning Department – Working on GIS website for the public to access GIS information. There will be eventually three tiers to the website: A general public accesses section, a paid members section and a government only section.

2.13 Boone County Highway Department – Not Present

2.14 City of Belvidere, Public Works Department – Not Present

2.15 Village of Roscoe – McDonald Rd. resurfacing project has been awarded to contractor

2.16 Village of Winnebago – No Report

2.17 Illinois Environmental Protection Agency – Not Present

2.18 Illinois State Toll Highway Authority – Representative not present. Update provided by Mr. Ernst. 2006 Annual Reports are available. Northwest Tollway has been renamed the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway. Construction on I-90 /I-39 to Boone/Winnebago County line still continues. Preliminary plans for the new tollway design have been received by the City of Rockford/RATS for the Cherry Valley interchanged. Plans need to be reviewed.

2.19 IDOT, Division of Public Transportation – Not Present

2.20 IDOT, Division of Urban Program Planning – Not Present

2.21 Ogle County Highway Department – Not Present

2.22 Boone County Council of Aging – Not Present

2.23 State Line Area Transportation Study – SLATS will hold a public open house from 4pm-7pm on October 25th, 2007 for their draft TIP and UWP. There will be a SLATS Technical and Policy Committee meeting on October 29th, 2007 for the recommendation and approval. Stateline Mass Transit District (SMTD) study is complete.

2.24 Federal Highway Administration, Illinois Division – Will be covered in Agenda Item #3

2.25 Rockford Area Economic Development Council – Brief overview of trade delegation trip to Sweden and delegation members from China. Conversation on the overload at Chicago hubs and the potential for Rockford to grow economically from this.

2.26 Rock River Water Reclamation District – No Report

2.27 Growth Dimensions – No Report

3. FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA) & FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) CERTIFICATION REVIEW OF RATS– Mr. Ernst opened the floor for the Federal Certification Review Team to address the RATS Technical Committee. The Federal Review team then provided introductions. Mr. Donovan explained the Certification Review Process to the Technical Committee and stated that it takes place every four years and examines the transportation planning process. Stated that MPO consists of all member agencies and the MPO is just not the RATS staff.

Conversation on the phases of the Certification Review Process. The first phase consisted of a questionnaire that was sent to the MPO staff. Second phase was to initiate the on-site visit that began with a public open house/meeting on September 17th, 2007. Federal Representatives received a good amount of feedback from members of the public on transit/land use and economic development issues. It was then stated that preliminary findings would be presented at the RATS Policy Committee meeting on September 27th, 2007. Final step in the Certification Review Process is the final report issued. Final Report should be issued to the MPO sometime in January of 2008. Mr. Donovan then briefly discussed the four potential outcomes, which are de-certification, partial certification, conditional certification or full certification. Also stated that the role of the MPO has been a topic for discussion (possible expansion, etc.).

The floor was then open to the RATS Technical Committee to provide comments to the Federal Certification Review Team. Mr. Ernst briefly went over the Certification Review agenda with the Technical Committee to give them a better understanding of all the topics discussed. It was also stated that the certification questionnaire would be made available to the Technical Committee as well as the full Certification Report once it has been released. Pertaining to the size of the MPA, RATS being over 200, 000, it was noted that some of the issues that Chicago may face are not necessarily the same that Rockford face. However, RATS is placed into the same category as Chicago due to its population.

Mr. Soltau commented that RATS has, in the past as well as the present, provided quality documents.

Mr. Ernst thanked the review team for returning for the RATS Technical Committee meeting and encouraged member agencies to provide comment to the review team wither at the meeting or afterwards.

4. PROGRESS REPORTS –

4.1 NICTI Alternative Analysis: Executive Committee will have a meeting on September 29th, 2007 at RMTD at 9am. It was also noted that IDOT-DPIT was able to find funding for the analysis so that the consultant firm could continue their work.

4.2 Amtrak Service to Rockford Metro Area: More in depth update would be provided when more information was available.

4.3 RMTD East Side Transfer Center: Update given in agency reports. It was added that RMTD had just completed their Triennial Review with the FTA and that the transit district had no findings (in other words, perfect score).

4.4 IL 173 Corridor Planning Study (by Machesney Park): No report

4.5 Boone County IL 173 Corridor Study: Study slightly behind schedule. Next steering committee meeting will be held on October 5th, 2007 at the Boone County Court House.

4.6 RATS & Regional Planning: Will be further discussed once Federal Certification Review final report is released.

4.7 RATS Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan: Public comments section needs to be finished and is in progress. Illinois chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) will be presenting Mr. McIntyre with an award for the plan on October 12, 2007.

4.8 RATS Mobility Subcommittee: First meeting was held on September 11, 2007. There was a good turn out for the first meeting. Agencies present were interested in the plan and process. Next meeting is scheduled for October 9th, 2007.

5. COMMUNICATIONS: None

6. OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Ernst thanked all parties who assisted in setting up the Fall Planning conference

7. ADJOURNMENT:

At 11:57a.m. Mr. Ernst entertained a motion to adjourn. It was moved and seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.