The proposed Tollway improvements will improve the LOS percentage for the interstate classification. Also, the transportation model program was not used to determine LOS for the Year 2035 Transportation System. This will be done at a later date and amended into the LRTP. At that point a LOS classification for the Year 2035 will be prepared.

Table 10-5
Year 2025 Level of Service by Roadway Classification

Classification/Level of Service	C or better	D or worse
Interstate Freeway	18%	82%
Principal Arterial	80%	20%
Minor Arterial	81%	19%
Collector	86%	14%

Still, it should be noted that congestion is expected to become more apparent in the Rockford MPA. CMS will become important as a tool to address the future congestion. The Rockford MPO is well into the process of building a CMS and will continue with those efforts. It will be important to continue to monitor trends concerning increases in dwelling units, employment, average daily traffic and other factors. These signs will help to ascertain the rapidity of the growth and congestion.

10.2.1.3 Geographic Information System

GIS provides a means of storing data and making geographic comparisons. Winnebago County is in the process of developing a regional GIS, referred to as the Winnebago County Geographic Information System (WinGIS).[4] WinGIS will be an effective tool for storing and mapping traffic related data. The impact that this tool will have on transportation planning is still in review. The use of the WinGIS system for transportation planning programs should be more fully developed when the next LRTP update occurs.

10.2.1.4 Traffic Data

The traffic data provides a means of looking at present roadway data and comparing it to historic data to determine trends in the use of roadways. Traffic data is also used to calibrate the transportation model, and is collected every five years by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The most recent data collection effort was completed in 2004. Maps are prepared by IDOT and RATS to show the data. The data is also available on IDOT and RATS websites.

10.2.2 Strategy Consideration

Strategy considerations are alternative measures for relieving congestion that provide efficient and effective use of the existing as well as future transportation systems. Strategy considerations in the Rockford MPA are traffic signal timing, truck routing (see **Section 7.3.6**, *Truck Routes*), public transportation (see **Section 8.1**, *Rockford Mass Transit District*), bikeway/pedestrian improvements (see **Section 5**, *Bikeway/Pedestrian*) intelligent transportation (see **Section 10.5**, *Intelligent*

[4]The Winnebago County Geographic Information System effort was established by a formal agreement in May of 2000 between Winnebago County, the City of Rockford, the Rockford Park District, the Rock River Water Reclamation District, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley and the North Park Public Water District.

Transportation Systems), and smart growth (see **Section 10.10**, *Smart Growth*). Improved signalization and signal timing has been and will continue to be the primary means to manage congestion. This is generally the first step taken to reduce any noted congestion.

Another strategy that is not presently utilized, but may be considered, is increasing speed limits on roadways where it could be accomplished within acceptable safety parameters. Occasionally, speed limits are set too low without a full evaluation based on traffic engineering principles. Increased speed limits have the ability to decrease congestion by allowing traffic to move more quickly through a roadway and reducing total travel time. Safe speed design will generally be accomplished along with improved signalization in conjunction with corridor studies performed for individual roadways. Coordinated signal systems can also reduce travel times without increasing speed limits.

10.2.3 Project Selection

The project selection process is intended to ensure that the most efficient the following and effective improvements and measure are applied to reduce congestion. RATS has developed selection criteria for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding:[5]

- Have all the preliminary engineering and engineering design funded from local or state sources. The right-of-way (ROW) acquisition also be funded from local or state sources.
- Are of regional significance and of obvious benefit to more than one community participating in the RATS planning process. This includes all the communities and unincorporated. areas in the Rockford MPA as explained in **Section 2.3**, *The Regional Planning Process*.
- Have one or more of the communities committed as a local sponsor.
- Address some weakness in a major link (arterial level or higher) as identified on the RATS functional classification system maps. Weaknesses will be identified by the use of computerized traffic simulation models and other accepted means. The rehabilitation of bridges on arterial or higher level roadways is considered acceptable.
- Are coordinated with other urban infrastructure improvement such as public sewer and water, and development/redevelopment efforts. Projects that have the potential to greatly improve the economic development potential of lands within one or more of the defined communities should be given special consideration. The ability of a project to aid in implementing adopted development, redevelopment or land use plans of the communities is important.
- Have potential to relieve traffic congestion as well as the mobility of commuters.
- Have the potential to increase the efficiency of long-distance travel throughout the area.
- Complement one or more of the seven Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) factors.

Technical data will be used to further evaluate candidate projects where the projects appear to be equal under the criteria specified above. In addition, Rockford uses a pavement management system, based on a pavement condition index, to select roadway reconstruction projects when federal

[5]The criteria are based on the Rockford Area Transportation Study Resolution 94-2. This resolution was most recently affirmed with Resolution 20-4, which assigned Surface Transportation Program funds to the Harrison Avenue Improvement Project.

funds are used for the projects.

Transit-related projects shall be considered eligible for STP funds if they have obvious regional significance and if the capital needs of the area's public transit systems cannot be adequately met from other more direct or traditional transit funding sources as administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Capital needs for significant transit service expansions that have good potential to reduce low-occupancy vehicular traffic and/or traffic congestion should also be considered eligible for STP funds.

Enhancement projects as defined under ISTEA shall be considered eligible for STP funds when the funding normally reserved for such projects is insufficient and the projects can demonstrate significant regional benefit similar to a highway-related project. Thus, links on the Regional Bikeway and Pedestrian Plan may be considered eligible.

10.2.4 Effectiveness Evaluation

Effectiveness evaluation pertains to measures that are used to determine the effectiveness of the congestion mitigation strategies. The transportation modeling effort and the LOS objectives have been utilized as effectiveness evaluation measures. As congestion increases and the CMS becomes more important, the Rockford MPO will have to consider developing a more formal effectiveness evaluation process. The Rockford MPO has begun the development of monitoring systems that will provide a framework for additional effectiveness evaluation.

10. 3 Context Sensitive Solutions

In 2003, legislation was passed instructing IDOT to adopt the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) in its planning and design of major projects. CSS is an interdisciplinary approach that seeks effective, multimodal transportation solutions by working with stakeholders to develop and build cost-effective transportation facilities that fit into and reflect the project's surrounding. Through early, frequent and meaningful communication with stakeholders, and a flexible and creative approach to design, transportation projects should improve safety and mobility for the traveling public, while seeking to preserve and enhance the scenic, economic, historic and natural qualities of their settings. CSS policy seeks to obtain stockholder's views and ensure that quality of life issues such as neighborhood aesthetics, safety, pedestrian and bicycle use, public transportation access, environmental preservation, and historic preservation are included in all aspects of project planning and design.

Stakeholder involvement is an essential tool of the CSS process and should be initiated in the early planning stages of a project when its feasibility is still uncertain. Stakeholder involvement at this stage can help in forming and obtaining consensus for a project's need and value. It can also give planners a better idea of how much the project is likely to cost, so that they can fit it into the overall programs with greater accuracy.

IDOT is formulating a program to develop a standard process for CSS stakeholder involvement, along with a statement of design flexibility. To date, IDOT has applied CSS principals to only major projects, but will eventually apply the principles on standard and smaller projects, including those

in the Region. In addition, the Tollway has stated that they will establish corridor-planning councils to strengthen the partnership between the Tollway and the communities that it services. It is expected that a regional planning council will be established that will be instrumental in applying the CSS principals to the Tollway projects.

The IDOT and Tollway CSS programs are still in the development stages. The Rockford MPO will continue to monitor the development of both programs. This LRTP recognizes these programs and provides a framework for the advancement of the CSS process and its principles. The Rockford MPO has an established public involvement process that could be used for both the IDOT and Tollway stakeholder process. In addition, the Rockford MPO is working to promote pedestrian and bicycle use, multimodal connectivity, public transportation and smart growth in the Region.

The MPO promotes the concept of Context Sensitive Design (CSD) at the local level. CSD deals with the application of CSS principals to specific roadway design projects. While the Rockford MPO has not developed a formalized CSS process, many of the principals of CSS have been incorporated into this LRTP. It is recognized that every transportation project is unique and must adapt to the particular needs of the community in which it is located. It is important to use a full range of design and other project management tools to respond to the need of stakeholders. The stakeholder involvement process should help the designers to focus on the most critical issues and avert problems that might other arise during construction.

The use of corridor studies provides an important tool for using the principles of CSD/CSS. A corridor study is a means of reviewing roadway improvements along specific length of roadway and pay specific attention to the land use/transportation connection as well as the CSD/CSS principles. The Region has fully embraced the concept of CSD/CSS with recent corridor studies. These corridors have included the Forest Hills Road/Riverside Boulevard/Alpine Road Area, Harrison Avenue from IL-2 to Mulford Road, West State Street from downtown to Meridian Road, and the IL-2 through the Rockford MPA. The more recent studies dealing with West State Street and the IL-2 Corridor have fully embraced the concept of CSS.

10.4 Human Service Transportation

In February 2004, President George W. Bush signed an executive order addressing human service transportation coordination. This executive order recognized that transportation services should be seamless, comprehensive and accessible to those who rely on them for their lives and livelihoods. For persons with mobility limitations related to advanced age, low-incomes and disabilities, transportation should be available and affordable as possible. The strategy is to coordinate human service agencies that support transportation with public and private transit providers. The intent is to coordinate transportation systems and thus increase the ability of government officials, at all levels, to make the most efficient and effective use of limited resources. The Rockford area has a well-established system in place to address human service coordination. The Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) serves as the "Coordinated Service Provider" and has the following responsibilities in this regard:[6]

- Monitor paratransit needs and public and private services provided in the Rockford MPA.

[6]Rockford Area Transportation Study Resolution 2001-7, March 29, 2001.

- Periodically report to RATS, IDOT and other pertinent public agencies or officials regarding paratransit needs and the status of paratransit service delivery.
- To the extent possible, encourage the communication and cooperation between all paratransit service providers in the Rockford MPA, public and private, and encourage these entities to conduct and coordinate their services in a manner that provides the greatest possible level of paratransit service for the public dollars invested.
- On an annual basis, or more often as needed, meet with the Boone County Council on Aging (BCCA) for the purpose of coordinating the transportation services of RMTD and BCCA.
- Meet with persons and agencies seeking new public-assisted paratransit services and, where possible, attempt to service those needs with public-provided resources available to RMTD (or in Boone County, with the services provided by the BCCA).
- Whenever a new and unmet paratransit need is identified and said need cannot be accommodated by RMTD (or BCCA in Boone County), assist area entities, to the extent possible, in developing applications that can qualify them for FTA "5310" and "5311" funds or other applicable funding assistance.

There are various private entities in the Rockford area that provide services to the transportation-disadvantaged. These include churches or religious organizations, hospitals, social service organizations and other not-for-profits. There are three not-for-profit entities that the Rockford MPO has endorsed in application and for IDOT and federal transit assistance in recent history:

- Lifescape Community Services
- The Barbara Olsen Center of Hope
- The Booker Washington Community Center

Before endorsing the award of a paratransit vehicle to any agency the Rockford MPO has studied their situation, verified their needs, and determined that the public mass transit services cannot more cost-effectively provide for their needs. The RMTD is the official "Coordinated Service Provider" for the Winnebago County portion of the Rockford MPA (and BCCA for Boone County), has been charged with addressing all public transportation requests and evaluating needs. RATS, RMTD and BCCA have entered into a formal Cooperative Agreement to jointly consider the transportation needs of all persons in the Rockford MPA, but particularly the transportation-disadvantaged.

The Rockford MPO has, in follow-up observations, determined that the three private agencies are literally driving the wheels off those vehicles and that given timing considerations and other special circumstances, their needs cannot be commingled. The Rockford MPO feels that the transportation system in the Rockford MPA is responsive, comprehensive, coordinated and cost-effective for the transportation-disadvantaged. Additional efforts, beyond the present efforts to coordinate public and private transit providers, are not necessary. The Rockford MPO will apply the principals discussed above in the future.

10.5 Intelligent Transportation Systems

The Rockford MPO is involved with Illinois in coordinating and implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in the Region. In 2004, IDOT began the development of a set of comprehensive plans, strategies, and documents to develop and coordinate the deployment of ITS

around the state. Collectively, these plans, strategies and documents are referred to as ITS Architecture. ITS applies computer, electronic, and communications technologies to improve the safety, reliability, and operation of transportation systems. The ITS Architecture seeks to assure that systems throughout a community, a region, the state, and eventually the nation as a whole, utilize equipment and techniques in a manner that ensures communication, consistency and standardization. The goals are to achieve maximum benefits from the ITS investments and to assure that the motoring public can use these improvements as fully as possible and with a minimum of confusion as they travel from place to place throughout the nation. The ITS Architecture identifies the elements of the system, lays out what each component does, and describes the flows of information between components. Creating an ITS Architecture helps to ensure that current and future systems and components, created through different projects, will operate together through the application of national ITS standards.

Through the development of "intelligent" transportation projects or improvements, deployed under the umbrella of the ITS architecture, the MPO and IDOT hope to improve the movement of goods and people. ITS projects will make the Illinois transportation system safer, better coordinated, and more efficient. They will provide a tool to collect, analyze, act on, and distribute real-time information on the performance of the many parts of the transportation system.

A report on the ITS Architecture for North-Central Illinois (Boone, Winnebago, DeKalb and Ogle Counties) was prepared in a cooperative effort between IDOT and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The report involves regional stakeholders that have roles and responsibilities in traffic management, emergency management, information service provider, transit management, operations and management and parking management.

On March 24, 2005 the MPO adopted the North-Central Illinois Architecture document as the Regional ITS Architecture. The following concepts are candidates for future regional implementation. Decisions on the implementation will be made at a later time.

- Traffic Management and Maintenance Control Center – This center would serve for coordinating interagency activities during traffic incidents. It would also be used to distribute traveler information through the use of dynamic message signs.
- Interstate Traffic Monitoring and Traveler Information – Incidents will be verified through the use of traffic detectors and traffic cameras.
- Advance Signal Operations/Coordination and Surface Street Traffic Monitoring – Will enhance existing signal systems and make them more responsive to actual traffic conditions.
- Agency Data Sharing – This element will implement or enhance traffic data sharing with emergency response agencies.
- Winter Weather Maintenance Enhancement – This element will enhance the ability to better predict, respond to, and minimize winter weather impacts.
- Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and Dynamic Trailblazer Signing – Will assist motorists by providing them with alternative route signing and timely information on planned and unplanned incidents.
- Construction Work Zone Safety, Traffic Monitoring and Traveler Information – This element will monitor and detect fluctuations in traffic conditions influenced by construction activity or unplanned incidents.

- Advance Rail Crossing Notification System – Enhancement to estimate the time of arrival and duration of closing.
- Supplement Emergency Vehicle Traffic Signal Preemption – Improvements to all traffic signals on Illinois State routes that will allow emergency vehicles to preempt a signal or temporarily modify its timing.

An effort that preceded the North-Central ITS Architecture effort was a partnering agreement called the Beloit-Janesville-Rockford (BJR) Arterial Management Workgroup. The group included Boone and Winnebago Counties along with Rock County, Wisconsin. The objective of this group is to provide travelers with safe and efficient transportation facilities, and communicate timely and reliable information in the event of a major incident with the Region. The group has prepared an Interstate Alternative Route Operations Guide. The intent of the guide is to enhance communication between agencies during an incident by providing a common listing of contacts and identified areas of concern. The guide provides a predetermined alternative route to use when an incident occurs on I-90/I-39 between Janesville, Wisconsin and Belvidere, Illinois and it is necessary to divert traffic.

Finally, in Year 2004, IDOT began a project to develop and coordinate development of an ITS around the state. The statewide ITS Architecture provides a framework to coordinate use of various ITS technologies throughout the state to improve operations, to assist travelers and to provide guidance in the development of regional architecture.

10.6 Linking Planning and Operations

Federal transportation planning requirements place an emphasis on the role that the Rockford MPO should play in linking transportation system planning and operations. This link is important to improve transportation decision-making and the overall effectiveness of transportation systems. Coordination between planners and operators helps ensure that transportation investment decisions reflect full consideration of all available strategies and approaches to meet regional goal and objectives. Regional transportation planning and investment decision-making requires a great deal of inter-jurisdictional coordination. Similarly, effective regional transportation systems management and operation requires collaboration and coordination among operating agencies across jurisdictions and between transportation and public safety agencies. The focus of linking planning and operations is to provide stronger connections between these two processes and activities.

There is already a fairly strong and informal link between planning and operations agencies in the Rockford MPA. Rockford is the lead agency for the Rockford MPO. The Rockford MPO staff works within the Rockford Public Works Department Division of Traffic and Engineering. The Traffic and Engineering Division is primarily an operations orientated division. This provides close coordination on the planning and operations level within Rockford. In addition, given that the size of the Rockford MPA and the relatively small number of governmental agencies, communication between planning and operations personnel is somewhat streamlined. Finally, the RATS Technical Committee is composed of municipal, county and state officials, some of which have operations as well as planning responsibilities. The Technical Committee provides an important forum for bridging these two systems.
As certain technology advancements are developed in the Region there will be more of a need to

formalize the link between the planning and operations systems. A Regional Concept for Transportation Organizations (RCTO) is a strategy for ensuring that operations activities build toward a common vision and relate to the broader regional planning process. The RCTO is expected to provide a coherent operation strategy towards linking planning and operations. The development of the RCTO should include participation by the Rockford MPO to ensure consistency with the Region's vision and goals. It should also involve stakeholders that depend on regional operations coordination. Greater participation from emergency and safety management personnel are expected in this effort. There are seven linkage mechanisms that should be addressed in the RCTO:

- Performance measurement
- Congestion management systems
- Regional intelligent transportation systems
- Institutional arrangements
- Data collection and arrangements
- Funding and resource sharing
- Regional transportation systems management and operations project.

These seven linkage mechanisms are discussed in more detail below.

10.6.1 Performance Measurement

Performance measures are useful to identify where a transportation improvement is needed. The key performance measurement that is presently used by the Rockford MPO is the LOS as discussed in **Section 10.2.1.1**. The process of developing and implementing additional performance measures can be used to motivate collaboration between transportation operations and planning staffs. Performance measures should focus attention on customer-oriented outcomes that can place an emphasis on the transportation planning process by:

- Framing the attributes of the transportation system that are most important.
- Providing information on current conditions and trends.
- Evaluating the success of implemented and on-going projects.
- Providing a metric for communicating with decision makers and the public about past, current, and expected future conditions.
- Serving as criteria for investment decisions in the transportation planning process.

Performance measures can be grouped into three categories:

- Input measures address the supply of resources (i.e., capital project budget).
- Output measures address the delivery of transportation programs, projects, and services (ex: miles of roadway built).
- Outcome measures address the degree to which the transportation system meets policy goals and objectives (reduced miles of congestion, decreased travel times or reduce air pollution).

The Rockford MPO has been very good at documenting input and output measures, which are provided throughout this plan. The outcome measures are more difficult to develop because they focus on the effects that the traveling public most cares about – issues such as travel time and delay, safety, and reliability. The RATS has established a LOS objective for the Rockford MPA that is the primary performance outcome measure. However, as other refining elements of the LRTP such as

congestion management systems, safety and security, and intelligent transportation systems are developed, the implementation of additional outcome performance measures should be considered. The Rockford MPO should work within the Region to jointly define the most appropriate measures and associated data needs.

10.6.2 Congestion Management Systems

The Rockford MPA does not presently witness significant congestion; however, it is expected to become a problem in the future. Improving the linkage between planning and operations will be part of the overall CMS.

10.6.3 Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture

ITS projects make use of electronics, communications, or information processing to improve the efficiency or safety of the transportation system (see **Section 10.5**). ITS development will present opportunities for improving the linking of planning and operations. The North-Central ITS Architecture was a result of coordination and collaboration between planning and operations practitioners.

10.6.4 Institutional Arrangements

Institutional arrangements refer to agreements and organization structures both within transportation agencies and between agencies. It generally involves forums that regularly bring together transportation planners and operations practitioners. The BJR work group cited in **Section 10.5** is a good example of an Institutional Arrangement. The Rockford MPO Technical Committee brings planning and operations personnel together. As RATS gets more involved in the Regional ITS Architecture there will be a need to involve more safety and emergency management personnel in the planning process. Whether this is done through the Rockford MPO Technical Committee or a separate operations committee will have to be determined as these forums and arrangements develop.

10.6.5 Data Collection and Sharing

Data sharing should be seen as the first step to broader coordination between planning and operations. Sharing data will require establishing new relationships with other agencies and building a mechanism to support sustained data exchange and storage. The Regional ITS Architecture is expected to identify new data sharing opportunities. A central clearinghouse will be needed to facilitate access to the Region's transportation data for both planning and operating agencies. This requires that a regional agency take stock of all transportation data that is available and develop a partnership agreement to make data retrievable from a central access point. It is not clear at this point as to what regional agency will play that role. The WinGIS program has begun the development process of a regional data clearinghouse. Whether WinGIS, the Rockford MPO or some other agency becomes the transportation clearinghouse will be determined at a later date.

10.6.6 Funding and Resource Sharing

Funding and resource sharing refers to the arrangements by which operating agencies collaborate to submit funding requests, develop pooled funding mechanisms, or share equipment and facilities. Efforts should be made to promote new relationships and arrangements that support broad regional systems management perspective and better link operations with regional planning. New funding mechanisms can help to create bridges between planners and operations managers. ITS equipment that enhances corridor management activities would be a good starting point.

10.6.7 Transportation Systems Operations Projects

Regional transportation systems operation means an integrated program to optimize the performance of the existing infrastructure through implementation of multi-modal, cross-jurisdictional systems, services and projects (see **Section 10.5**).

10.7 Planning and the National Environmental Protection Act Process

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FTA have recommended that the transportation planning process and NEPA process be more integrated and work in harmony. Any transportation project that is supported by federal funding is subject to the NEPA process. The FHWA and FTA have the lead federal agency role, respectively, for highway and transit projects and, thus, are responsible for the NEPA process. The FHWA and FTA have stated that the environmental analysis produced during the NEPA process is sometimes disconnected from the transportation planning process. Analysis and decisions occurring during transportation planning are sometimes ignored or redone in the NEPA process, resulting in a duplication of work and delays in the implementation of transportation projects. Recognition of the NEPA process will help prepare transportation plans that are useful for the NEPA process.

The NEPA process is used as an "umbrella" for compliance with over 40 environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders. The required environmental document depends on the degree of impact and will result in one of the following:

- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – Prepared for projects that have a significant impact on the human and natural environment. The EIS provides a full description of the proposed project, the existing environment, and the analysis of the beneficial and adverse impacts of all reasonable alternatives, including input from the public. A Record of Decision presents the selected decision, the basis for that decision, and the environmental commitments to mitigate for project environmental impacts.
- Environmental Assessment (EA) – Prepared for projects where it is not clearly known if there will be significant environmental impacts. If the analysis in the EA indicates the proposed project will have significant environmental impacts, an EIS is prepared. If there is not a significant impact, this conclusion is documented in a separate decision document, called the Finding of No Significant Impact.
- Categorical Exclusions – Prepared for projects that do not have a significant impact on the environment.

There are three parts of an EA or EIS that directly relate to the transportation planning process. They are the parts that deal with purpose and need, alternatives analysis and affected environment. The first stage of the NEPA process is the development of project purpose and need. The

transportation planning process should provide the basis or foundation for the purpose and need statement in a NEPA document. Much of the work that is undertaken in the transportation planning process can be used to explain the purpose and need of a project during NEPA process.

Alternatives analysis is also an important part the NEPA process. A project's alternatives are shaped by the purpose and need for the project. The transportation planning process can be used to provide the initial evaluation of alternatives. Corridor studies are useful tools in the transportation planning process. The LRTP may leave open the possibility of multiple approaches to fulfill a plan objective. Corridor studies can be used to "zoom-in" on a particular area for the purpose of alternatives analysis.

Analysis and information products from transportation planning process can be Inc. into and relied upon for NEPA documentation on the affected environment. Transportation planning products can provide valuable inputs to the discussion of affected environment. These transportation planning process products should be prepared so as to feed into the NEPA process.

Another direct link between NEPA and transportation planning is the requirement that a project must be included in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) before it can be given NEPA approval. Different types of transportation projects will have varying degrees of complexity and potential to affect the environment.

Integration of the transportation planning process can help streamline the environmental process. TEA-21 mandated "Environmental Streamlining" provisions as a means to expedite the provisions of the environmental review process. Environmental Streamlining requires transportation agencies to establish realistic timeframes and then to adhere to those timeframes. The efficient and effective coordination of multiple environmental reviews, analysis, and permitting actions is essential to meeting the Environmental Streamlining mandate for highway and transit projects under TEA-21. A key element of Environmental Streamlining is communication with and the gathering of input from the public and stakeholders.

Projects that may need to be addressed through the NEPA process include the following:

- Capacity Expansion Projects (see **Table 7-3**, *Major Capacity Expansion Projects*)
- Enhancement Projects (see **Table 7-4**, *30-Year Project Cost Summary*)
- East side bus transfer facility (see **Section 8.3**, *Rockford Mass Transit District Capital Improvement Plans*)
- The Commuter Rail Initiative (see **Section 8.6**, *Proposed Commuter Rail*)
- Northwest Chicagoland International Airport at Rockford improvement including proposed Runway 7/25 (see **Section 4.2.1.8**, *Existing and Needed Infrastructure Improvements*)

10.8 Public-Private Partnerships

As transportation needs continue to increase, public funding is expected to fall behind in meeting the investment demand for transportation infrastructure. It is unrealistic to assume that sufficient funding to meet this demand can be realized by increasing taxes. Changes in current practices that could promote greater and more effective private sector involvement in the delivery of transportation projects will need to be considered. Partnerships between private investors and public transportation agencies can bring not only greater funding, but also more intellectual capital and innovation.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) refers to contractual agreements formed between a public agency and a private sector entity that allow for greater private sector participation in the delivery of transportation projects. PPP describes an expansive set of relationships from relatively simple contacts for fee-based service to complex agreements for design-build-finance-operate-maintain. Traditionally, private sector participation has been limited to separate planning, design or construction contracts for a fee based on the public agency specification. For example, the preparation of this LRTP was a result of a public-private partnership between RATS and T.Y. Lin International, Inc. under a fee service agreement.

More recently, PPP has been expanded to involve a government agency contracting with a private company to renovate, construct, operate, maintain, and/or manage a facility or system. While the public sector usually retains ownership in the facility or system, the private party will be given additional decision rights in determining how the project or task will be operated or completed. A recent well-published example is Chicago's leasing the Chicago Skyway Bridge to a private firm to collect tolls and maintain and operate the bridge. Other models are being developed to increase the involvement of the private sector in the finance and operation of surface transportation facilities.[7]

Expanding the private sector role allows the public agencies to tap private sector technical, management and financial resources in new ways to achieve public agency objectives. Some of the primary reasons for public agencies to enter into public-private partnerships include:

- Accelerating the implementation of high priority projects by packaging and procuring services in new ways.
- Turning to the private sector to provide specialized management capacity for large and complex programs.
- Enabling the delivery of new technology developed by private entities.
- Drawing on private sector expertise in accessing and organizing the widest range of private sector financial resources.
- Encouraging private entrepreneurial development, ownership, and operation of highway and/or related assets.
- Allowing for the reduction in the size of the public agencies and the substitution of private sector resources and personnel.

Government procurement laws and regulations can be an impediment. Government has a system of procurement and oversight built on the traditional design-bid-build model. This system has obvious benefits, but, in many cases, stifles innovation. Public agencies spend considerable time and resources developing systems for soliciting projects, ensuring adequate competition, and

[7]United States Department of Transportation, *Report to Congress on Public-Private Partnerships*, December 2004.

allocating the risks associated with designing, constructing, and operating a large transportation facility. These administrative procedures limit private sector flexibility and have deterred many governments from fully exploring PPP. Legal, financial, political, and cultural hurdles are often encountered in the formation of PPP. Public agency management of a PPP requires special expertise at the project development and contract management levels. It is essential to involve personnel that understand agency objectives and regulations, as well as private business and contracting conventions.

Getting the private sector involved will be a challenge. Private sector investment can make up some of the public funding shortfall, but it will require a fair return on investment. Revenue sources will still need to be identified. Tolls and fees certainly represent a major source of funds to support private sector investment, but other potential sources of income such as development fees and tax increment financing may also be needed.

As transportation demands increase and barriers are removed there will be more movement towards the use of PPP. RATS does not recommend any specific public-private partnerships at this time. The purpose of this section is to draw attention to the issue and start the thought process needed to encourage PPP for funding future projects.

10.9 Safety and Security

Federal guidance has recently placed an emphasis on safety in the transportation planning. The transportation planning process provides a means to address safety in the early stages of a project. This concept of safety conscious planning is to place an emphasis on creating a safe roadway environment that is forgiving in the event of a crash. It implies a proactive approach to the prevention of accidents and unsafe transportation conditions by establishing inherently safe transportation networks. RATS endorses its regional planning role to make the transportation system safer.

The human and economic consequences of motor vehicle crashes are unaffordable and unacceptable. Nationally, over 40,000 deaths and three million injuries occur annually. Regional traffic crash statistics for Boone and Winnebago Counties are shown in **Table 10-6**.

Table 10-6
Crash Statistics for Boone and Winnebago Counties[8]

Year	Crashes	Killed	Injury
2003	10,536	49	3,658
2002	10,334	46	3,504
2001	10,840	26	3,481
2000	11,067	46	3,589
Average	**10,694**	**42**	**3,558**

The compilation of data will be key to the initiation and development of safety conscious planning. Crash data can provide an important means to determine specific locations that have safety

[8]Illinois Traffic Crash Facts and Statistics compiled by the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety.

problems. Rockford has a system in place to map traffic-related accidents. The Rockford MPO would like to expand this effort to the Region. The development of a regional information system through the use of WinGIS provides a means to do this.

IDOT will have an important role in the development of safety conscious planning effort. Much of the data needed to identify and define safety problems is compiled and resides at the state level. IDOT has developed a vehicle accident reporting system that could be utilized by the Rockford MPO. In 2005 it was announced that IDOT would develop a Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP). Much of the direction on safety conscious planning is expected to come from the CHSP.

Beyond the data collection effort there are other efforts that the Rockford MPO can undertake. These include outreach, safety criteria, expertise development, road safety audits and alternative modes of transportation. The strategy for implementing these efforts will be formed after the CHSP is developed.

10.9.1 Transportation Security

The events of September 11 were an awakening for metropolitan areas to prepare for and respond to unexpected security incidents. All government agencies need to think about their role in regard to planning and responding to such events. The Rockford MPO has little authority or responsibility beyond that of developing the transportation plan and transportation improvement program. However, the Rockford MPO provides a centralized location of information on the transportation system. This information could be used to help identify vulnerable areas and to help with security disaster planning.

In terms of the Rockford transportation system, it is difficult to foresee a part of the system that would be vulnerable to physical attack. It is a medium-sized urban area and does not seem a likely choice for a terrorist attack. Still, the need to plan for such events is unquestionable. A leading document on this matter suggests that bridges would be the most likely components of the transportation system that would be vulnerable to physical attack.[9] Most of the bridges in the Region are either over the Rock River or are part of the interstate system. Bridge inspection is conducted every two years. However, the bridges are normally inspected for structural reasons and safety has not been considered as part of the process.

Another area of concern is moving large numbers of people escaping the immediate area following a disaster incident. The Rockford MPO could identify the most effective routing for emergency vehicles, as well as for the evacuation of large numbers of people.

10.9.2 Transit Security

In the past, transit security (i.e., protection from crime) has not been a significant problem in the Rockford area. The RMTD Transfer Center includes the presence of a security officer and dispatchers. The bus-loading area is lighted and monitored with security cameras. Also, the Transfer

[9] See National Research Council, *Improving Surface Transportation Security, A Research and Development Strategy*, Washington DC National Academy Press, 1999.

Center is located across the street from the Public Safety Building (police headquarters).

On the buses themselves, drivers have the authority to expel unruly patrons at any time. RMTD policy prescribes that the bus be stopped in a safe, lighted area and that the dispatcher be notified by radio. Younger school children are not usually expelled from buses. Instead, school principals are notified and children who are frequently or seriously disruptive are prohibited from riding. The school principals are expected to notify parents, but the transit agencies can also contact parents, if needed. At present, the frequency of incidents where patrons need to be expelled has been small.

To minimize the crime problem, all transit vehicles (fixed-route and paratransit) are radio equipped. Some paratransit vehicles are also equipped with cellular phones. The vehicles have constant communication potential with their dispatching centers and, during evening hours, all radio communications are monitored by Rockford's 911 Emergency Center.

10.10 Smart Growth

Smart growth is an emerging urban planning concept that deals with guiding the growth of a community in an effective manner. The smart growth movement promotes an efficient transportation system that will result in cleaner air, reduced travel costs, fewer travel delays, healthier communities and reduced costs for transportation infrastructure. Smart growth is intended to integrate land use and transportation planning and encourage connectivity, accessibility and mobility in the transportation system.

A smart growth initiative was started by Winnebago County in January 2002 through grant assistance from IDOT. Phase I of this effort was completed in Year 2004 and Phase II begun at the end of 2004. This effort is expected to continue throughout the preparation of this Plan and will not be completed until late in the Year 2005. However, it will have an important affect on future transportation and land use practices in the Region. RATS will monitor the Winnebago County Smart Growth effort and the final outcome will be employed in the next LRTP. However, some of the strategies of smart growth are already employed by the MPO and are discussed in this LRTP, such as:

- Development of a cooperative transportation planning process that encourages regional cooperation and participation by all stakeholders affected by the Plan.
- Preservation of transportation resources by applying the majority of public funding to renovate, repair and improve the existing transportation system versus funding new roadways.
- Encouraging alternative modes of transportation: sidewalks, bike paths and bus/rail transit.
- Recognition of the Winnebago County Regional Greenway Plan and the need for transportation improvements to avoid these sensitive areas.
- Achieving maximum effectiveness of transportation investment through the application of congestion management systems.
- Encourage human service transportation.
- The CSS concept discussed in this LRTP is inspired by the smart growth principles.

The Rockford MPO promotes the principles of smart growth and is already well along in working with the concept. The Winnebago County effort provides an exciting opportunity to further advance these principles. It may take some time for the Winnebago County efforts to formulate into policy for the Region; however, the Rockford MPO has a framework in place that will encourage smart growth practices.

10.11 Strategic Regional Arterials

10.11.1 Intent of the Strategic Regional Arterials

The Chicago Area Transportation Study and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission have designated a system of Strategic Regional Arterials (SRA) as part of the development of their LRTP. The SRA system augments the primary expressway system and helps to accommodate long distance, high volume traffic needs of the Region (see **Map 10-3**). From a traffic perspective, the purpose of SRA will vary depending on the attributes of the area in which they are located. The ability to preserve ROW for expansion and to control and consolidate access is important considerations. There is no single design that will be appropriate for all SRA designated routes. In all cases the compatibility of the roadway design with the needs of public transit is considered. As part of a comprehensive approach, the SRA system is intended to:

- Supplement the primary expressway system
- Enhance public transportation
- Accommodate commercial vehicle traffic
- Increase personal mobility and reduce congestion

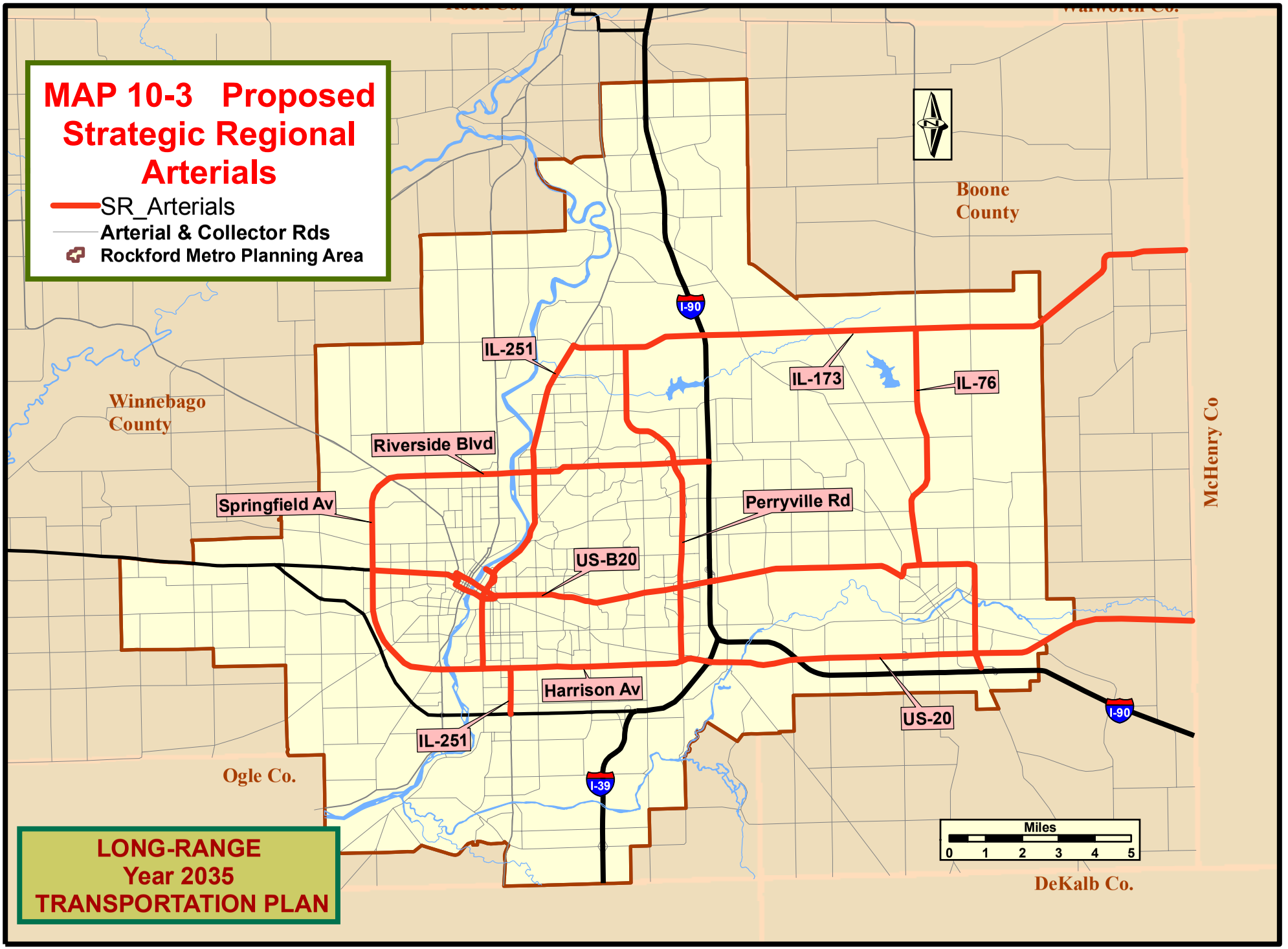
10.11.2 Need for a Strategic Regional Arterial

Historically, the Rockford Region has lacked the roadway investment typical of regions of similar size. At this point in time it is not practical to begin to build an internal freeway or expressway system in the Region.

The Northeast Illinois SRA system concept provides a planning mechanism to guide the modernization of the existing arterial roadway network in the Rockford Region, especially as it relates to the modernization of the entries to the urban core.

This framework is a natural fit for the sweeping changes in transportation planning that were initiated with ISTEA and TEA-21. The national transportation laws shifted the views of transportation professionals by asking for a reconsideration of the way planners and engineers had traditionally approached transportation planning, such as:

- Think intermodal, going beyond traditional modal boundaries.
- Invest strategically, using limited resources wisely on facilities and technology.
- Think of transportation in the greater context of the community, the environment, health, safety and the economy.
- In a broader context, invite more participation in the decision-making.


MAP 10-3 Proposed Strategic Regional Arterials
SR_Arterials
Arterial & Collector Rds
Rockford Metro Planning Area
Boone County
Winnebago County
McHenry Co
Ogle Co.
DeKalb Co.
I-90
IL-251
IL-173
IL-76
Riverside Blvd
Springfield Av
Perryville Rd
US-B20
Harrison Av
US-20
I-39
Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5
LONG-RANGE
Year 2035
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

10.11.3 The Strategic Regional Arterial Planning Process

Development of a comprehensive, long-range plan for an SRA system will be a lengthy process that will span the planning horizon of the LRTP. The process should identify both short and long range improvements. Key objectives to this planning process are as follows:

- Determine the types of roadway improvements needed.
- Examine ways to enhance public transportation.
- Identify and protect needed rights-of-way.
- Manage access to SRA routes to improve through traffic movement and reduce conflicts.
- Coordinate land use and development projects with transportation improvements.
- Identify ways to encourage and accommodate the growth in commercial traffic.
- Accommodate necessary bicycle and pedestrian travel on the SRA route corridors.
- Identify potential environmental concerns.

10.11.4 Strategic Regional Arterial Route Types

Within the overall SRA network, there are significant differences in the roadway environment that determine how routes may function on the system. Three different types of SRA routes have been designated corresponding to the different types of roadway environment: urban, suburban, and rural. The designation of route types within the overall SRA system reflects the density of development within the different portions of the Region. The projected density of dwelling units in 2025 can be used as a criterion for defining route types (see **Map 2-7b**). The suggested densities from Northeast Illinois are:

- Urban – Over 5.0 dwelling units per acre.
- Suburban – Between 0.5 and 5.0 dwelling units per acre.
- Rural – Less than 0.5 dwelling units per acre.

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SECTION 11

REFERENCES

SECTION 11
REFERENCES

Plan Definition

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ADDENDUM

PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESPONSES

RATS

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Public comments and input into the RATS Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is an on-going, continuous process. In other words, the public is always welcome to submit comments to the LRTP (and all other RATS documents) at any time. All RATS Policy Committee and Technical Committee meetings are open to the public and comments are welcome during those meetings.

During the preparation of the draft of the LRTP, regular updates of the process of this document were given at all RATS meetings. As the LRTP was being developed, one of the important steps was to identify the process to inform and involve the public and to follow the RATS Public Involvement Process to seek public input. It was decided that the draft document was to be made widely available to the general public by all means of communication. The draft LRTP:

1. was put on the web site (**http://cityofrockford.net/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=977**)

2. a series of PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSES (PIOH) were held to seek and receive public comments and input. Four PIOH were held on July 6th and 7th, 2005 at four different locations in the Rockford Metro Planning Area. The four locations are listed on the attached PIOH informational sheet (attachment 1).

3. the above-mentioned attachment was mailed out to all persons and organizations on the RATS mailing lists including the media and libraries.

4. a legal notice was published in the April 27, 2005 edition of the Rock River Times announcing the tentative schedule of action by RATS. A copy of this notice is attached (attachment 2).

5. as described in Chapter 5 of the LRTP, a series of three workshops were held to encourage public involvement in the bicycle/pedestrian system planning process. This group represented a cross section of stakeholders from throughout the Rockford MPA who have a special interest in these modes of transportation. To gather interest for the initial meeting, the local daily newspaper (the Rockford Register Star) published an article to inform the general public when the meeting was going to be held and on how to contact the RATS planning staff. As a result of this article, RATS staff received about 50 e-mails and telephone calls. A copy of this article is attached (attachment 3). The League of Illinois Bicyclists (LIB) submitted comments during the process of these meetings (attachment 4). These comments will also be used in the forthcoming RATS Bicycle/Pedestrian Study.

Obviously, the major effort to inform the general public was the four PIOH held in early July 2005. The locations and the facilities that were selected were accessible to the public at two different time periods

(11:00 AM to 2:00 PM and 3:30 PM to 7:00 PM) at public buildings for these two days. The information that was presented was the same for each of the four locations. Also, public comment forms were made available to be filled out at the location or to be mailed by July 25, 2005. A copy of the public form is attached (attachment 5). As a result of these four PIOH, forty-three (43) people signed the attendance lists. Copies of the four sign-in sheets are attached (attachment 6).

During the comment period of the LRTP, thirteen (13) written and e-mail responses were received. Listed below is the name of the person, organization and subject of their comments. Copies of the actual comments are attached (attachment 7).

	Name of Person	***Date***	***Organization***	***Comment Subject***
1	Karen Kjellquist	July 4, 2005		Air Quality
2	Renee' Lee Greco	July 4, 2005		Public Transportation & Bicycle
3	Wayne Paulson	July 6, 2005		East Side Arterial & Willow Creek Bike Path
4	Margo Olson	July 6, 2005		East Side Arterial
5	JoAnne Reed	July 6, 2005		East Side Arterial
6	Bev Moore	July 7, 2005		Final Copy of LRTP
7	Thomas Butler	July 11, 2005		Bicycle Connections
8	Linda Labuguen	July 13, 2005		Public Transportation
9	Linda A. Slabaugh	July 18, 2005		Willow Creek Bike Path
10	Paula Hughes	July 19, 2005	RMTD	Technical Corrections to Chapter 8 – Transit
11	Jerry Paulson	July 22, 2005		Air Quality
12	Stanley Campbell	July 28, 2005	Sierra Club–Blackhawk	Air Quality
13	Ginny Gregory	Sept, 9, 2005	City of Rockford-CD Dept	Technical Corrections to Report

Of the thirteen (13) comments received, the issues/remarks can be divided into the following general categories:

1. Air Quality - 3
2. Public Transportation - 2
3. Bicycle Facilities - 1
4. Willow Creek Bike Path: Connection between Rock Cut State Park the Long Prairie Path - 2
5. East Side Arterial (Project number 32 on Map 7-3) - 3
6. Technical Corrections – 2

1. AIR QUALITY

The first responder on this issue referenced an article written by an "op-ed columnist" from the New York Times regarding the planning and actions undertaken by the Portland, Oregon metro area to improve the region's overall air quality while maintaining a good economic climate. This article suggests that it is possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the air by providing transportation funds to increase the service levels of public transportation and constructing more bicycle facilities to encourage bicycling while, at the same time, maintaining the good economy of the Portland area. The final analysis in this column is that the overall environment can be improved, both from a financial and physical point-of-view.

This is the premise for essentially all transportation plans that are prepared; to maintain and improve the economic, social and physical environment in any urban or metropolitan area. This is the principle for planning and implementing all transportation projects, and at the same time, maintaining an acceptable level-of-service for all modes of transportation. In the RATS 2035 LRTP this objective is the constant theme throughout the entire document. The Rockford Metro area has many advantages for businesses and citizens to locate, live and work in this area. Prime examples are access to interstate travel, an

excellent labor force, close proximately to other urban areas (Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison) and one of the best market-rate housing values in the United States. In the RATS 2035 LRTP, expansion of commuter rail to and from the Chicago region is in the plan, as well as connecting and expanding the bicycle path network to an on-street system of bicycle lanes and routes, and improving the existing street and highway network to accommodate the expected employment and population growth. At the same time, the RATS 2035 LRTP addresses the land uses changes that will be occurring in the area as a result of the housing expansion and employment growth. The employment growth is planned in four primary areas; (1) the area around the Greater Rockford Airport (GRA), (2) the Belvidere Daimler-Chrysler facility and surrounding area, including the Tollway Station Point area, (3) the Interstate 90/39 corridor along the east-side of Rockford-Loves Park-Machesney Park-Roscoe, and (4) the southwest Rockford area (which is in close proximate to the GRA).

The other two responders raised the issue of increasing air pollutants (primarily ozone levels) as a result of housing and employment growth in the Interstate 90/39 corridor along the east-side of Winnebago County. One of the major reasons for increasing levels of air pollutants in this corridor is the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA) toll plazas in Belvidere (Plaza 5) and Roscoe (Plaza 1). Recently, the ISTHA started a major improvement and reconstruction plan to 90% of their system mileage which includes reconstruction of their mainline toll collection plazas. The two plazas mentioned above are included in this reconstruction plan and are included in the RATS FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Plaza 1 has experienced congestion and back-up problems at certain times and days during the past several years. At these congestive times, traffic is backing up several miles at this plaza location.

To address these issues, RATS believes that the following initiatives will maintain the overall air quality within the next 30 years:

- reconstruction of the ISTHA plazas to “Open Road Tolling”
- increased usage of the I-PASS pre-paid toll collection system thus reducing the need to stop at the plazas
- elimination of Plaza 3 at the I-90/I-39/US 51 interchange (another congestive toll collection spot that was removed in 2004)
- providing more capacity by adding a third lane, which also relieves problems due to the large volume of trucks
- improved automobile emissions due to manufacturer improvements
- continued monitoring of air quality emissions and data at the two Illinois Environmental Protection Agencies ozone stations in Winnebago County
- increased access to the I-90/I-39 corridor by constructing new interchanges at IL 173 and the future extension of Perry Creek Road
- an expanded public transportation system in the region
- an expanded bicycle network
- ITS initiatives being planned by WisDOT and IDOT

The area east of the I-90/I-39 corridor will be experiencing growth within the next 3 to 30 years. To adequately plan for the growth in this area, the existing rural road system needs to be improved. One of the improvements being planning is the construction of interchanges with the I-90/I-39 corridor (as noted above) and to upgrade the existing rural road system by constructing new highway links. While the LRTP does plan for improvements to other modes of transportation within the RATS planning area and within this specific subarea, the predominant mode of transportation will continue to be the automobile. While the federal, state and local transportation planning processes will include “smart growth” and “balanced growth” principals in this process, the automobile will be the main means of transportation within the next five to ten years. Accordingly, the RATS LRTP identifies the growth subareas and plans for transportation improvements as well as recognizes the possibility that this type of growth might lead to increased air

quality concerns. During 2004 and 2005 the two reporting ozone air quality stations in Winnebago County reported no air quality violations. Accordingly, RATS believes that Winnebago County and the metro planning area will maintain its **Attainment** status from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US-EPA).

2. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The comments RATS received regarding public transportation were directed toward expansion of service, adding amenities and extending connections to other transit systems in the region. Currently, RATS, the Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD), the State Line Area Transportation Study (SLATS), the Beloit Transit System (BTS) and the villages of Roscoe and Rockton have been meeting to determine and analyze the possible connections of RMTD and BTS. As a result of continual growth in the northeast portion of Winnebago County, the issue of providing some type of public transportation service to this area is being studied. Staffs from both RMTD and BTS have projected costs to operate connecting service and researched potential routes to connect the two transit services. The initial discussions and preliminary findings from the MPOs and from Village officials of both Rockton and Roscoe have been encouraging. Before a final proposal can be prepared for public review, several details still need to be finalized. In addition to these discussions, FTA funds have been apportioned to the area to allow for the acquisition of transit vehicles.

Regarding extending service hours, RMTD does offer night service during the week. However, the frequency of service and the number of service miles is lower compared to their daytime service. The amount of funds available to operate this service and the scheduled work-shift times for night-time employment centers essentially determined the type of service that RMTD now offers. Currently, RMTD is working with RATS, the Boone and Winnebago County Workforce Connection Board, and Work, Welfare and Families (WWF) to study several corridors that would extend RMTD service beyond what is currently being provided. As more employment centers expand their hours and as new employment locations are created in the Rockford Urban Area, access to jobs for the transportation disadvantaged will become critical. WWF received a grant from The Grand Victoria Foundation to identify locations to extend transportation services for low wage workers so that they might have easier access to these jobs. As funds becoming available in the future, additional service may be implemented.

The Rockford metro area, through two private providers, does have direct bus service between Rockford and Chicago. One provider, Van Galder Bus Company, provides 18-inbound bus trips to O'Hare Airport and 17-outbound to Rockford every day. This same company also provides 4-inbound trips and 3-outbound trips between Madison, Wisconsin and the Amtrak service in downtown Chicago (with a stop in Rockford) every day. Another provider, Greyhound Bus Lines, provides weekday and Saturday service between Chicago and Madison, with a stopover in Rockford. Both providers have bus terminal facilities on the east side of Rockford, at the I-90/39 and East State Street interchange. RMTD does provide connecting service to these two locations.

3. BICYCLE FACILITIES

The comments RATS received concerning bicycle facilities were directed toward a more comprehensive – connecting bicycle route system. As mentioned in the LRTP, RATS would need to join the "existing paths, especially in an east-west manner…" and "…the use of on-street lanes or routes as a method of connectivity was also highly ranked by a citizens advisory committee". The LRTP further states:
"on-street routes/lanes could provide an important and cost-effective means of connecting the existing bikeway system. However, this issue will need to be addressed by the Rockford MPO Technical and Policy Committees. The use of on-street bikeway facilities would be a major change in the bikeway system in the Rockford MPA."
To undertake this effort, the adopted RATS FY-2006 Unified Work Program has programmed planning funds to begin a study to identify the existing on-street facilities that would be needed to connect with the

off-street shared use paths. As part of the study objectives the possibility of putting bicycle racks on RMTD buses will be explored and locations along the routes where bus stops can safely accommodate bicyclists mounting their bikes will be inventoried. A portion of the study will review the existing street network around these bike-bus safety-loading zones to identify suitable bicycle network links to these locations. Essentially, most of the comments received on this subject will be addressed in the forthcoming RATS Bicycle / Pedestrian Study.

4. WILLOW CREEK BIKE PATH

Both the RATS LRTP and the Boone and Winnebago Regional Greenway Plan contain a bicycle connecting link planned to provide direct access to/from Rock Cut State Park (RCSP) and the Long Prairie Trail/Stone Bridge Nature Trail near Caledonia. As indicated in both planning documents, this connecting link is planned to be located parallel to Willow Creek. The existing path on the west side of RCSP is located along the Willow Creek greenway to Harlem High School. One of the comments RATS received on this issue is from a property owner along the Willow Creek corridor. The other comment expressed an opinion that a bike facility should be placed on or near the north side of RCSP. Both planning documents contain reference to the IL 173 / I-90 interchange construction project, where a separate path is to be constructed on the south side of the IL 173 corridor. The Rockford Urban Area has received High Priority Project funds to start the engineering phase of this project. As this project advances, several corridors will be analyzed for the final alignment and at the appropriate times, the public will be able to review the documents and to submit comments.

5. EAST SIDE ARTERIAL CONNECTOR

During the public comment period and the four public informational open houses, three comments were received on this new highway facility. The East Side Arterial Connector (ESAC) is planned to be constructed on the east side of the I-90/39 corridor between the proposed interchange at Perry Creek Road and the area just north of IL 173. One of the comments stated that traffic movements in this area should use Perryville Road, which is parallel and located directly west of I-90/39, one to three miles from the ESAC proposed route alignments. RATS analyses with the travel demand model as well as professional publications on travel flow theory indicate that very little traffic would use Perryville Road for trip ends along the ESAC corridor due to the following:

- the projected land use and density changes east of the I-90/39 corridor are no longer rural in nature
- the increased distance and travel time for multiple crossings of I90/39 between the ESAC and Perryville Road would be unacceptable
- the planned interchanges with I-90/39 at Perry Creek Road and IL 173 will increase the desirability for regional and local traffic to use the tollway as part of the local transportation network

Another comment was made which suggested that the ESAC be located through or next to Rock Cut State Park (RCSP). Winnebago County Highway Department (WCHD) is the lead agency for the construction of the ESAC. RATS staff, along with staff from the City of Rockford, City of Loves Park and other local agencies have provided assistance and input into an alignment analysis currently being conducted by WCHD. One of the alignments that has been studied is the RCSP corridor. As an agency on the RATS Policy Committee and Technical Committee, Winnebago County will inform RATS as this study progresses.

The last comment received on this issue suggested that different alignments be investigated and a list of “pros & cons” be developed. RATS has forwarded this request on to WCHD for their review and as a possible exhibit to their alignment analysis.

6. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

RATS staff received two technical corrections on the draft LRTP from the Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) and the City of Rockford-Community Development Department (R-CD). The comments submitted by RTMD and R-CD were just minor language and grammatical errors that both agencies found in the draft document. The final document has been corrected with these changes.

7. SUMMARY

RATS has adopted a Public Involvement Progress (PIP) report, which serves as the framework to respond to public comments received during the development of the LRTP. For the comments received during the planning process, including the public comment period and the public informational open houses, all were considered during the preparation of the LRTP and prior to final adoption by the RATS Policy Committee.

The RATS Year 2035 LRTP overall goal "is to promote a safe and efficient transportation system for people and goods in the RATS MPA that provides a balanced multi-modal system that minimizes costs and impacts to the taxpayer, society and the environment." During the past several decades the Rockford urban area has continued to grow beyond the traditional limits of just one urban center. As this growth continues a more diverse and mobile population will be need to be studied as part of the RATS planning process during the next thirty years. Public comments received represent very specific points-of-view, often times opposing other public comments or RATS staff. The RATS MPO is concerned about all comments, and seeks to determine how they impact the overall goals and objectives of RATS, including past and current federal transportation, environmental and public guidelines, while being sensitive to the economic core and future growth of the Rockford MPA and its surrounding environs. Moreover, the LRTP strives to maintain and enhance the quality of life for the greater benefit of the general population and its diverse communities.

RATS

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

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE

*ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (**RATS**)*
YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A public informational open house will be held at four area locations to present the **DRAFT Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS).** The plan covers anticipated transportation needs in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area for the next 30 years. The plan is a co-operative effort of RATS, local governments and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The DRAFT is currently available for public review and downloading at the City of Rockford / RATS web site at http://cityofrockford.net/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=1232#draft_2005-2035 .

This plan is updated every five years. The last time the LRTP was updated and adopted by the RATS Policy Committee was July 27, 2000. It is tentatively schedule for adoption at the July 28, 2005 RATS Policy Committee, 1:15 P.M., at Rockford City Hall, 425 East State Street, Rockford, IL.

Local, state and federal governments have the responsibility for constructing, operating and maintaining most of the transportation systems in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. This LRTP was developed in the interest of promoting, developing and maintaining a safe and efficient transportation system that will meet the needs of the area's citizens, businesses and industries through the Year 2035. This LRTP considered a wide range of citizen, community and technical input as well as the views, priorities and plans expressed in numerous previous plans and documents developed as part the RATS planning process over the last 40 years. This LRTP reflects the goals, priorities and guidance originating from Federal law, specially the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the 1998 Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

The overall goal of the plan is to promote a safe and efficient transportation system for people and goods that provides a balanced multi-modal system that minimizes costs and impacts to the taxpayer, society and the environment. The plan addresses the growth projected for the area's airports, the area's bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rail service to the region, public transportation issues, maintaining and improving the area's highway system and public funding issues.

The format of these open houses is to allow an informal discussion between the public and RATS staff. The times are indicated below.

DATES

July 6, 2005 – Wednesday 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM Rockford Public Library Auditorium 215 N Wyman Street Rockford, IL	July 6, 2005 – Wednesday 3:30 PM to 7:00 PM North Suburban Library Community Room 5562 Clayton Circle Roscoe, IL	July 7, 2005 – Thursday 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM Loves Park City Hall Cafeteria Room 100 Heart Boulevard Loves Park, IL	July 7, 2005 – Thursday 3:30 PM to 7:00 PM Belvidere Community Building – Banquet Room 111 West 1st Street Belvidere, IL

PURPOSE:
View Graphic Displays, Discuss Study Goals and Objectives, Ask Questions and Obtain Public Comments and Input

For further information, contact

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NOTICE OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Notice is hereby given that the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS), the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford Urban and Metropolitan area, is seeking public comment on the transportation planning process and the development of the following documents. RATS coordinates publicly funded transportation planning and improvements among the various jurisdictions in Winnebago and Boone Counties.

1. **RATS FY-2006 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM (UWP).** This document specifies the transportation planning work proposed over the next year (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006). A draft of the FY-2006 UWP is now available and will be considered for adoption on May 26, 2005. Comments will be accepted at the Technical Committee meeting at 10:00 a.m. on May 19th and at the Policy Committee meeting at 1:15 p.m. on May 26th, both in Loves Park City Hall.

2. **RATS FY-2006 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP).** This document will identify and prioritize all major transportation and public transit improvements scheduled for implementation in the RATS Metropolitan Area in the next three years (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2008). The document is now under development and a draft will be available for inspection before the end of July 2005. The target adoption is on or about August 25, 2005. Public comments will be accepted anytime, but should be submitted prior to August 18, 2005.

3. **RATS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRP).** The LRP discusses, plans and assigns priority for all major transportation systems improvements for the Metropolitan Area over the next 20 to 30 years. The existing LRP is available for inspection and can be amended at any time. At this time, the Year 2000-2025 LRP is being comprehensively updated. Public comments and input is encouraged. The target adoption date by the RATS Policy Committee is scheduled July 28, 2005 at Rockford City Hall.

Public comments are welcomed on all the above work and at all RATS meetings or by contact RATS by telephoning, e-mailing or writing. RATS Technical Committee meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of each month and the Policy Committee meetings on the following Thursday. The exact meeting dates, times, and locations are finalized and announced at least a week in advance. Persons seeking to be placed on the RATS mailing list so that they can receive copies of announcements, agendas and other reports should contact RATS Staff by (1) telephoning 815/987-5638 (Gary W. McIntyre), (2) e-mailing gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us, or (3) writing RATS, Rockford City Hall, 425 East State Street, Rockford, IL 61104. Information is also available at the City of Rockford web site cityofrockford.net.

Date of notice: April 27, 2005

Rockford Register Star rrstar.com

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Published: November 15, 2004

Local News: Rockford

Bikers, walkers, runners urged to share ideas on area paths

▪ Officials have eight months to update long-range plans for the region's network of trails.

By MIKE DEDONCKER, *Rockford Register Star*
>> Click here for more about Mike

ROCKFORD -- Bob Sharp is a longtime runner who doesn't recall another time when the local government sought his opinion on the status of bike and pedestrian paths.

A member and former president of the Rockford Road Runners Club, Sharp will lend his voice to leaders who are updating the area's long-range plans for such paths. Other voices are welcome, said Gary McIntyre, planner for the Rockford Area Transportation Study.

The study is a consortium that prioritizes area road projects and other transit projects that rely on federal money. One requirement is that its long-range transportation plan be updated every five years. The current plan expires July 27, and McIntyre said the bike-pedestrian path element needs improvement.

That's where Sharp and anyone else interested in the paths come in.

"We have about eight months until the update is due, and we want to get the public involved in the early stages of planning," said McIntyre, who has contacted running, biking and conservation clubs.

Sharp thinks the area needs more places where people can run or work out and stay away from traffic.

"Not that I'm bad-mouthing it, but even Perryville Path, as big as it is, is tough to use at night or early morning if you're going north," he said. "The lights from oncoming traffic blind you because it has no lights."

Bike-pedestrian paths have not been reviewed since the

How to help

A date for an initial meeting to discuss the Rockford Area Transportation Study plan and the bike-pedestrian path element will be announced before Thanksgiving. A second meeting would be scheduled specifically to discuss bike-pedestrian path planning.

If you are interested in becoming part of the planning process, contact Gary McIntyre at gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us or 815-987-5638.

Rockford Register Star file photo/Eddy Montville

Gary McIntyre (right) of the city of Rockford explains to T.K. Nigam how a new road would help ease Perryville traffic at a public meeting in October at the Indoor Sports Center in Loves Park. McIntyre says the area's bike-pedestrian path system needs improvement and wants to get the public involved in early planning stages..

View full-sized photo

early 1990s.

"At that time, we did look on the east side of Rockford as a response to the Perryville Path," McIntyre said.

"Also, since that time, there's been new information that has become available that we need to address. In 1999, they came out with a new guide for the development of bicycle facilities and within the past month they came out with one for pedestrian facilities, which I haven't gotten yet. Our current plan does not include those engineering and planning criteria."

New bike-pedestrian path initiatives include corridor studies on Harrison Avenue, South Main and West State streets, and Illinois 173.

Discussions will include three paths that are nearing construction:

- A path from Davis Park to Central Avenue, for which the city has received about $1.6 million.

"We call that the Davis-Pec Path," McIntyre said. "That will parallel the Canadian National Railroad line from the existing path in Davis Park and then, when it goes out to Central Avenue, it will connect with the Pecatonica Prairie Path."

McIntyre said the Pecatonica Prairie Path has received more than $5 million in federal funds to go from Central Avenue in Rockford to Freeport along the old Illinois Central rail line, which is a ComEd right of way.

- A continuation of the Perryville Path, likely to be built in the next two years, from State Street and Argus Drive near the Saturn of Rockford dealership south to the Swanson Path behind the old Menards south of Harrison Avenue.

Plans call for the path to follow Argus Drive, cross State Street, go through the new Wal-Mart site and then head south on Bell School Road.

- A portion of the Pecatonica Prairie Path from Meridian to Conger roads.

"This is a plan that we want to reach out to the public," McIntyre said, "and, hopefully, have the public get involved in the planning process."

Contact: mdedoncker@rrstar.com; 815-987-1382

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Published: November 17, 2004

Editorial

Get moving so you can get moving

Bikers, runners and walkers should speak now or forever hold their nitpicking about regional recreational paths that are in the planning stages and yet to be built.

Someone is listening. Gary McIntyre, planner for the Rockford Area Transportation Study, is asking for input and ideas on long-term planning for bike-pedestrian paths.

The last time the overall plan for the paths was reviewed was in the early 1990s, and a lot has changed since then, including a tremendous increase in vehicular traffic on Rockford's east side. Safety on the paths is a primary concern.

McIntyre initially reached out to area biking, running and conservation clubs to get feedback on the situation now and future needs.

He's going a step further by soliciting input from the public. Meetings will be scheduled soon to discuss overall transportation plans and how the bike-pedestrian system fits into them.

Specifically, discussions will focus on three paths that are getting close to construction because money has been set aside for them. They are:

- A path from Davis Park to Central Avenue, and then along the old Illinois Central rail line to Freeport.

- A Perryville Path extension, from State Street and Argus Drive south to Harrison Avenue.

- A link between Meridian and Conger roads on the Pecatonica Prairie Path.

Now is the time to be part of the discussion. E-mail McIntyre at gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us, or call him at 815-987-5638.

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Recommendations for RATS' long-range transportation plan

Ed Barsotti, League of Illinois Bicyclists, February 1, 2005

The League of Illinois Bicyclists offers the following suggestions for the bicycle/pedestrian component of its current long-range transportation planning effort.

Recommend that Rockford Area Transportation Study adopts a "Complete Streets" policy, such as the Federal Highway Administration's "Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel" policy statement (attached), as a "performance standard" for all street and highway projects undertaken by member jurisdictions. The FHWA policy states: "Bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist." Cost limits and adequate need are ensured.

Recommend that RATS develops a standard "Project Agreement" form that would be signed by the sponsor or lead agency for every project included in RATS' TIP. This form would become part of the MPO/TIP official record and treated as a pre-condition for any major investment in the project. The form would require a statement of exactly what kind of provision(s) will be included in the project to address the Complete Streets Policy. The Project Agreement would be required to be signed by both the lead agency director (or designee) and the appropriate elected official (or designee) and would be treated as a binding commitment.

To accommodate the need for flexibility related to specific design treatments, recommend that RATS adopts a set of bicycle/pedestrian performance criteria. One set could be the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) and Pedestrian Level of Service (PLOS) measures. Together, these provide a reasonable picture on on-road and off-road conditions for a variety of non-motorized users. Require that BLOS and PLOS values both "before" (existing conditions) and "after" (new design) be reported on the Project Agreement form and in the TIP. The calculation is easily and quickly done at www.bikelib.org/roads/blos/balosform.htm

Recommend that RATS dedicate funding for an in-depth bicycle and pedestrian implementation plan by qualified consultants. The plan would cover the entire RATS planning area, detailing specific on-road retrofit improvements, off-road trails, pedestrian projects, and policy/ordinance changes such as those summarized here.

Recommend that RATS member jurisdictions dedicate annual funds for a non-motorized retrofit fund – separate from major capital improvement projects such as trails. These retrofit funds could be used at prioritized locations around town to fill short trail or sidewalk gaps, to improve dangerous crossings, or to install bike parking.

Recommend that RATS member jurisdictions each appoint a staff member to become familiar with the AASHTO bicycle and pedestrian guides and to do a detailed comparison with their jurisdiction's roadway design, development, and zoning policies. Recommend that the jurisdictions make appropriate policy changes to adhere to AASHTO guidance.

Recommend that RATS member jurisdictions adopt a bike parking ordinance for new commercial development. (Examples are available, from Naperville and elsewhere).

Recommend that an on-going RATS bike/ped committee be established to guide implementation of the non-motorized portion of the long-range plan (and the in-depth implementation plan), to routinely review road project and developments at an early stage, and to help prioritize use of capital improvement and retrofit funds. Membership may include residents from the 2005 RATS bike/ped long-range plan task force and representatives of RATS member jurisdictions.

Federal Highway Administration's "Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel" policy statement

The following is the policy statement section of "Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach – A US DOT Policy Statement Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure". The entire design guidance document is available at

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/design.htm

****

1. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas unless one or more of three conditions are met:

- bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor.
- the cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. Excessively disproportionate is defined as exceeding twenty percent of the cost of the larger transportation project.
- where sparsity of population or other factors indicate an absence of need. For example, the Portland Pedestrian Guide requires "all construction of new public streets" to include sidewalk improvements on both sides, unless the street is a cul-de-sac with four or fewer dwellings or the street has severe topographic or natural resource constraints.

2. In rural areas, paved shoulders should be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day, as in States such as Wisconsin. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians to operate.

Rumble strips are not recommended where shoulders are used by bicyclists unless there is a minimum clear path of four feet in which a bicycle may safely operate.

3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including over- and undercrossings), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops and facilities, and all connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.

4. The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for bicycling and walking through the following additional steps:

- planning projects for the long-term. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities that meet the criteria in item 1) above should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements. For example, a bridge that is likely to remain in place for 50 years, might be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation that facilities will be available at either end of the bridge even if that is not currently the case
- addressing the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.
- getting exceptions approved at a senior level. Exceptions for the non-inclusion of bikeways and walkways shall be approved by a senior manager and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision.
- designing facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets,* and the ITE Recommended Practice "*Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities*"

Design Guidance
Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach

A US DOT Policy Statement
Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure

On this page:

Purpose

Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach is a policy statement adopted by the United States Department of Transportation. USDOT hopes that public agencies, professional associations, advocacy groups, and others adopt this approach as a way of committing themselves to integrating bicycling and walking into the transportation mainstream.

The Design Guidance incorporates three key principles:

a. a policy statement that **bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects** unless exceptional circumstances exist;

b. an approach to achieving this policy that has already worked in State and local agencies; and

c. a series of action items that a public agency, professional association, or advocacy group can take to achieve the overriding goal of improving conditions for bicycling and walking.

The Policy Statement was drafted by the U.S. Department of Transportation in response to Section 1202 (b) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) with the input and assistance of public agencies, professional associations and advocacy groups.

TOP

Introduction

Bicycling and walking issues have grown in significance throughout the 1990s. As the new millennium dawns public agencies and public interest groups alike are striving to define the most appropriate way in which to accommodate the two modes within the overall transportation system so that those who walk or ride bicycles can safely, conveniently, and comfortably access every destination within a community.

Public support and advocacy for improved conditions for bicycling and walking has created a widespread acceptance that more should be done to enhance the safety, comfort, and convenience of the nonmotorized traveler. Public opinion surveys throughout the 1990s have demonstrated strong support for increased planning, funding and implementation of shared use paths, sidewalks and on-street facilities.

At the same time, public agencies have become considerably better equipped to respond to this demand. Research and practical experience in designing facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians has generated numerous national, State and local design manuals and resources. An increasing number of professional planners and engineers are familiar with this material and are applying this knowledge in towns and cities across the country.

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, building on an earlier law requiring curb ramps in new, altered, and existing sidewalks, added impetus to improving conditions for sidewalk users. People with disabilities rely on the pedestrian and transit infrastructure, and the links between them, for access and mobility.

Congress and many State legislatures have made it considerably easier in recent years to fund nonmotorized projects and programs (for example, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century), and a number of laws and regulations now mandate certain planning activities and design standards to guarantee the inclusion of bicyclists and pedestrians.

Despite these many advances, injury and fatality numbers for bicyclists and pedestrians remain stubbornly high, levels of bicycling and walking remain frustratingly low, and most communities continue to grow in ways that make travel by means other than the private automobile quite challenging. Failure to provide an accessible pedestrian network for people with disabilities often requires the provision of costly paratransit service. Ongoing investment in the Nation's transportation infrastructure is still more likely to overlook rather than integrate bicyclists and pedestrians.

In response to demands from user groups that every transportation project include a bicycle and pedestrian element, Congress asked the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to study various approaches to accommodating the two modes. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) instructs the Secretary to work with professional groups such as AASHTO, ITE, and other interested parties to recommend policies and standards that might achieve the overall goal of fully integrating bicyclists and pedestrians into the transportation system.

TEA-21 also says that, "Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation projects, except where bicycle and pedestrian use are not permitted." (Section 1202)

n August 1998, FHWA convened a Task Force comprising epresentatives from FHWA, AASHTO, ITE, bicycle and pedestrian user groups, State and local agencies, the U.S. Access Board and epresentatives of disability organizations to seek advice on how to proceed with developing this guidance. The Task Force reviewed existing and proposed information on the planning and technical design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians and concluded that these made reation of another design manual unnecessary. For example, AASHTO ublished a bicycle design manual in 1999 and is working on a edestrian facility manual.

he area where information and guidance was most lacking was in etermining when to include designated or special facilities for bicyclists nd pedestrians in transportation projects. There can also be uncertainty bout the type of facility to provide, and the design elements that are equired to ensure accessibility.

or example, when a new suburban arterial road is planned and esigned, what facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should be rovided? The task force felt that once the decision to provide a articular facility was made, the specific information on designing that acility is generally available. However, the decision on whether to rovide sidewalks on neither, one or both sides of the road, or a houlder, striped bike lane, wide outside lane or separate trail for cyclists is usually made with little guidance or help.

fter a second meeting with the Task Force in January 1999, FHWA greed to develop a **Policy Statement on Accommodating Bicyclists**

SEC. 1202. BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS.

(b) Design Guidance.-

(1) In general.-In implementing section 217(g) of title 23, United States Code, the Secretary, in cooperation with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and other interested organizations, shall develop guidance on the various approaches to accommodating bicycles and pedestrian travel.

(2) Issues to be addressed. -The guidance shall address issues such as the level and nature of the demand, volume, and speed of motor vehicle traffic, safety, terrain, cost, and sight distance.

(3) Recommendations. -The guidance shall include recommendations on amending and updating the policies of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials relating to highway and street design standards to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

(4) Time period for development. -The guidance shall be developed within 18 months after the date of enactment of

and Pedestrians in Transportation Projects to guide State and local agencies in answering these questions. Task Force members recommended against trying to create specific warrants for different facilities (warrants leave little room for engineering judgement and have often been used to avoid providing facilities for bicycling and walking). Instead, the purpose of the Policy Statement is to provide a recommended approach to the accommodation of bicyclists and pedestrians that can be adopted by State and local agencies (as well as professional societies and associations, advocacy groups, and Federal agencies) as a commitment to developing a transportation infrastructure that is safe, convenient, accessible, and attractive to motorized AND nonmotorized users alike. The Policy Statement has four elements:

this Act.

a. an acknowledgment of the issues associated with balancing the competing interests of motorized and nonmotorized users;

b. a recommended policy approach to accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians (including people with disabilities) that can be adopted by an agency or organizations as a statement of policy to be implemented or a target to be reached in the future;

c. a list of recommended actions that can be taken to implement the solutions and approaches described above; and

d. further information and resources on the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

TOP

The Challenge: Balancing Competing Interests

For most of the second half of the 20th Century, the transportation, traffic engineering and highway professions in the United States were synonymous. They shared a singular purpose: building a transportation system that promoted the safety, convenience and comfort of motor vehicles. The post-war boom in car and home ownership, the growth of suburban America, the challenge of completing the Interstate System, and the continued availability of cheap gasoline all fueled the development of a transportation infrastructure focused almost exclusively on the private motor car and commercial truck.

Initially, there were few constraints on the traffic engineer and highway designer. Starting at the centerline, highways were developed according to the number of motor vehicle travel lanes that were needed well into the future, as well as providing space for breakdowns. Beyond that, facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians, environmental mitigation, accessibility, community preservation, and aesthetics were at best an afterthought, often simply overlooked, and, at worst, rejected as unnecessary, costly, and regressive. Many States passed laws preventing the use of State gas tax funds on anything other than motor vehicle lanes and facilities. The resulting highway environment discourages bicycling and walking and has made the two modes more dangerous. Further, the ability of pedestrians with disabilities to travel independently and safely has been compromised, especially for those with vision impairments.

Over time, the task of designing and building highways has become more complex and challenging. Traffic engineers now have to integrate accessibility, utilities, landscaping, community preservation, wetland mitigation, historic preservation, and a host of other concerns into their plans and designs - and yet they often have less space and resources within which to operate and traffic volumes continue to grow.

The additional "burden" of having to find space for pedestrians and bicyclists was rejected as impossible in many communities because of space and funding constraints and a perceived lack of demand. There was also anxiety about encouraging an activity that many felt to be dangerous and fraught with liability issues. Designers continued to design from the centerline out and often simply ran out of space before bike lanes, paved shoulders, sidewalks and other "amenities" could be included.

By contrast, bicycle and pedestrian user groups argue the roadway designer should design highways from the right-of-way limits in, rather than the centerline out. They advocate beginning the design of a highway with the sidewalk and/or trail, including a buffer before the paved shoulder or bike lane, and then allocating the remaining space for motor vehicles. Through this approach, walking and bicycling are positively encouraged, made safer, and included as a critical element in every transportation project rather than as an afterthought in a handful of unconnected and arbitrary locations within a community.

Retrofitting the built environment often provides even more challenges than building new roads and communities: space is at a premium and there is a perception that providing better conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians will necessarily take away space or convenience from motor vehicles.

During the 1990s, Congress spearheaded a movement towards a transportation system that favors people and goods over motor vehicles with passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (1998). The call for more walkable, liveable, and accessible communities, has seen bicycling and walking emerge as an "indicator species" for the health and well-being of a community. People want to live and work in places where they can safely and conveniently walk and/or bicycle and not always have to deal with worsening traffic congestion, road rage and the fight for a parking

space. Vice President Gore launched a Livability Initiative in 1999 with the ironic statement that "a gallon of gas can be used up just driving to get a gallon of milk."

The challenge for transportation planners, highway engineers and bicycle and pedestrian user groups, therefore, is to balance their competing interest in a limited amount of right-of-way, and to develop a transportation infrastructure that provides access for all, a real choice of modes, and safety in equal measure for each mode of travel.

This task is made more challenging by the widely divergent character of our nation's highways and byways. Traffic speeds and volumes, topography, land use, the mix of road users, and many other factors mean that a four-lane highway in rural North Carolina cannot be designed in the same way as a four-lane highway in New York City, a dirt road in Utah or an Interstate highway in Southern California. In addition, many different agencies are responsible for the development, management, and operation of the transportation system.

In a recent memorandum transmitting Program Guidance on bicycle and pedestrian issues to FHWA Division Offices, the Federal Highway Administrator wrote that "We expect every transportation agency to make accommodation for bicycling and walking a routine part of their planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance activities." The Program Guidance itself makes a number of clear statements of intent:

- Congress clearly intends for bicyclists and pedestrians to have safe, convenient access to the transportation system and sees every transportation improvement as an opportunity to enhance the safety and convenience of the two modes.
- "Due consideration" of bicycle and pedestrian needs should include, at a minimum, a presumption that bicyclists and pedestrians will be accommodated in the design of new and improved transportation facilities.
- To varying extents, bicyclists and pedestrians will be present on all highways and transportation facilities where they are permitted and it is clearly the intent of TEA-21 that all new and improved transportation facilities be planned, designed and constructed with this fact in mind.
- The decision not to accommodate [bicyclists and pedestrians] should be the exception rather than the rule. There must be exceptional circumstances for denying bicycle and pedestrian access either by prohibition or by designing highways that are incompatible with safe, convenient walking and bicycling.

The Program Guidance defers a suggested definition of what constitutes "exceptional circumstances" until this Policy Statement is completed. However, it does offer interim guidance that includes controlled access highways and projects where the cost of accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians is high in relation to the overall project costs and likely level of use by nonmotorized travelers.

Providing access for people with disabilities is a civil rights mandate that is not subject to limitation by project costs, levels of use, or exceptional circumstances". While the Americans with Disabillities Act doesn't require pedestrian facilities in the absence of a pedestrian route, it does require that pedestrian facilities, when newly constructed or altered, be accessible.

TOP

Policy Statement

. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas unless one r more of three conditions are met:

- bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor.
- the cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. Excessively disproportionate is defined as exceeding twenty percent of the cost of the larger transportation project.
- where sparsity of population or other factors indicate an absence of need. For example, the Portland Pedestrian Guide requires "all construction of new public streets" to include sidewalk improvements on both sides, unless the street is a cul-de-sac with four or fewer dwellings or the street has severe topographic or natural resource constraints.

In rural areas, paved shoulders should be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more an 1,000 vehicles per day, as in States such as Wisconsin. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road

users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians to operate.

Rumble strips are not recommended where shoulders are used by bicyclists unless there is a minimum clear path of four feet in which a bicycle may safely operate.

3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including over- and undercrossings), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops and facilities, and all connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.

4. The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for bicycling and walking through the following additional steps:

- planning projects for the long-term. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities that meet the criteria in item 1) above should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements. For example, a bridge that is likely to remain in place for 50 years, might be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation that facilities will be available at either end of the bridge even if that is not currently the case

- addressing the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.

- getting exceptions approved at a senior level. Exceptions for the non-inclusion of bikeways and walkways shall be approved by a senior manager and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision.

- designing facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets,* and the ITE Recommended Practice "*Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities*".

Top

Policy Approach

'Rewrite the Manuals" Approach

Manuals that are commonly used by highway designers covering roadway geometrics, roadside safety, and bridges should incorporate design information that integrates safe and convenient facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians -- including people with disabilities - into all new highway construction and reconstruction projects.

In addition to incorporating detailed design information - such as the installation of safe and accessible crossing facilities for pedestrians, or intersections that are safe and convenient for bicyclists - these manuals should also be amended to provide flexibility to the highway designer to develop facilities that are in keeping with transportation needs, accessibility, community values, and aesthetics. For example, the Portland Pedestrian Design Guide (June 1998) applies to every project that is designed and built in the city, but the Guide also notes that:

> "Site conditions and circumstances often make applying a specific solution difficult. The Pedestrian Design Guide should reduce the need for ad hoc decision by providing a published set of guidelines that are applicable to most situations. Throughout the guidelines, however, care has been taken to provide flexibility to the designer so she or he can tailor the standards to unique circumstances. Even when the specific guideline cannot be met, the designer should attempt to find the solution that best meets the pedestrian design principles described [on the previous page]"

In the interim, these manuals may be supplemented by stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facility manuals that provide detailed design information addressing on-street bicycle facilities, fully accessible sidewalks, crosswalks, and shared use paths, and other improvements.

Examples: Florida DOT has integrated bicycle and pedestrian facility design information into its standard highway design manuals and New Jersey DOT is in the process of doing so. Many States and localities have developed their own bicycle and pedestrian facility design manuals, some of which are listed in the final section of this document.

TOP

Applying Engineering Judgement to Roadway Design

In rewriting manuals and developing standards for the accommodation of bicyclists and pedestrians, there is a temptation to adopt "typical sections" that are applied to roadways without regard to travel speeds, lane widths, vehicle mix, adjacent land uses, traffic volumes and other critical factors. This approach can lead to inadequate provision on major roads (e.g. a four foot bike lane or four foot sidewalk on a six lane high-speed urban arterial) and the over-design of local and neighborhood streets (e.g. striping bike lanes on low volume residential roads) , and leaves little room for engineering judgement.

After adopting the policy that bicyclists and pedestrians (including people with disabilities) will be fully integrated into the transportation system, State and local governments should encourage engineering judgement in the application of the range of available treatments.

For example:

- Collector and arterial streets shall typically have a minimum of a four foot wide striped bicycle lane, however wider lanes are often necessary in locations with parking, curb and gutter, heavier and/or faster traffic.
- Collector and arterial streets shall typically have a minimum of a five foot sidewalk on both sides of the street, however wider sidewalks and landscaped buffers are necessary in locations with higher pedestrian or traffic volumes, and/or higher vehicle speeds. At intersections, sidewalks may need to be wider to accommodate accessible curb ramps.
- Rural arterials shall typically have a minimum of a four foot paved shoulder, however wider shoulders (or marked bike lanes) and accessible sidewalks and crosswalks are necessary within rural communities and where traffic volumes and speeds increase.

This approach also allows the highway engineer to achieve the performance goal of providing safe, convenient, and comfortable travel for bicyclists and pedestrians by other means. For example, if it would be inappropriate to add width to an existing roadway to stripe a bike lane or widen a sidewalk, traffic calming measures can be employed to reduce motor vehicle speeds to levels more compatible with bicycling and walking.

TOP

Actions

The United States Department of Transportation encourages States, local governments, professional associations, other government agencies and community organizations to adopt this Policy Statement as an indication of their commitment to accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians as an integral element of the transportation system. By so doing, the organization or agency should explicitly adopt one, all, or a combination of the various approaches described above AND should be committed to taking some or all of the actions listed below as appropriate for their situation.

a. Define the exceptional circumstances in which facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians will NOT be required in all transportation projects.

b. Adopt new manuals, or amend existing manuals, covering the geometric design of streets, the development of roadside safety facilities, and design of bridges and their approaches so that they comprehensively address the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as an integral element of the design of all new and reconstructed roadways.

c. Adopt stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facility design manuals as an interim step towards the adoption of new typical sections or manuals covering the design of streets and highways.

d. Initiate an intensive re-tooling and re-education of transportation planners and engineers to make them conversant with the new information required to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. Training should be made available for, if not required of, agency traffic engineers and consultants who perform work in this field.

TOP

Conclusion

There is no question that conditions for bicycling and walking need to be improved in every community in the United States; it is no longer acceptable that 6,000 bicyclists and pedestrians are killed in traffic every year, that people with disabilities cannot travel without encountering barriers, and that two desirable and efficient modes of travel have been made difficult and uncomfortable.

Every transportation agency has the responsibility and the opportunity to make a difference to the bicycle-friendliness and walkability of our communities. The design information to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians is available, as is the funding. The United States Department of Transportation is committed to doing all it can to improve conditions for bicycling and walking and to make them safer ways to travel.

TOP

Further Information and Resources

General Design Resources

A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 1994 (The Green Book). American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), P.O. Box 96716, Washington, DC, 20090-6716, Phone: (888) 227-4860.

Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, 1994. Transportation Research Board, Box 289, Washington, DC 20055, Phone: (202) 334-3214. Next Edition: FHWA Research Program project has identified changes to HCM related to bicycle and pedestrian design.

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 1988. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Superintendent of Documents. P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Next Edition: 2000, will incorporate changes to Part IX that will soon be subject of Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

Flexibility in Highway Design, 1997. FHWA. HEP 30, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

TOP

Pedestrian Facility Design Resources

Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities, A Recommended Practice, 1998. Institute of Transportation Engineers, 525 School Street, S.W, Suite 410, Washington, DC 20024-2729, Phone: (202) 554-8050.

Pedestrian Compatible Roadways-Planning and Design Guidelines, 1995. Bicycle / Pedestrian Transportation Master Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocate, New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08625, Phone: (609) 530-4578.

Improving Pedestrian Access to Transit: An Advocacy Handbook, 1998. Federal Transit Administration / WalkBoston. NTIS, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

Planning and Implementing Pedestrian Facilities in Suburban and Developing Rural Areas, Report No. 294A, Transportation Research Board, Box 289, Washington, DC 20055, Phone: (202) 334-3214.

Pedestrian Facilities Guidebook, 1997. Washington State Department of Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, P.O. Box 47393, Olympia, WA 98504.

Portland Pedestrian Design Guide, 1998. Portland Pedestrian Program, 1120 SW Fifth Ave, Room 802; Portland, OR 97210. (503) 823-7004.

Implementing Pedestrian Improvements at the Local Level, 1999. FHWA, HSR 20, 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA .

AASHTO *Guide to the Development of Pedestrian Facilities,* 2000. AASHTO. (currently under discussion)

TOP

Bicycle Facility Design Resources

Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 1999., American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO),

P.O. Box 96716, Washington, DC, 20090-6716, Phone: (888) 227-4860.

Implementing Bicycle Improvements at the Local Level, (1998), FHWA, HSR 20, 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA .

Bicycle Facility Design Standards, 1998. City of Philadelphia Streets Department, 1401 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

Selecting Roadway Design Treatments to Accommodate Bicyclists, 1993. FHWA, R&T Report Center, 9701 Philadelphia Ct, Unit Q; Lanham, MD 20706. (301) 577-1421 (fax only)

North Carolina Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Guidelines, 1994. North Carolina DOT, P.O. Box 25201, Raleigh, NC 27611. (919) 733-2804.

Bicycle Facility Planning, 1995. Pinsof & Musser. American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service Report # 459. American Planning Association, 122 S. Michigan Ave, Suite 1600; Chicago, IL 60603.

Florida Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Manual, 1994. Florida DOT, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Office, 605 Suwannee Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399.

Evaluation of Shared-use Facilities for Bicycles and Motor Vehicles, 1996. Florida DOT, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Office, 605 Suwannee Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399.

TOP

Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Resources

Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 1995. Oregon Department of Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Room 210, Transportation Building, Salem, OR 97310, Phone: (503) 986-3555

Improving Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians, A Best Practices Report, 1998. FHWA, HEP 10, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

TOP

Traffic Calming Design Resources

Traffic Calming: State of the Practice. 1999. Institute of Transportation Engineers, 525 School Street, SW, Suite 410; Washington, DC 20024.

Florida Department of Transportation's Roundabout Guide. Florida Department of Transportation, 605 Suwannee St., MS-82, Tallahassee, FL 23299-0450.

National Bicycling and Walking Study. Case Study # 19, Traffic Calming and Auto-Restricted Zones and other Traffic Management Techniques-Their Effects on Bicycling and Pedestrians, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Traffic Calming (1995), American Planning Association, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603

Traditional Neighborhood Development Street Design Guidelines, 1997. Proposed Recommended Practice, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 525 School Street, SW, Suite 410; Washington, DC 20024.

Making Streets that Work, City of Seattle, 600 Fourth Ave., 12th Floor, Seattle, WA 98104-1873, Phone: (206) 684-4000, Fax: (206) 684-5360.

Traffic Control Manual for In-Street Work, 1994. Seattle Engineering Department, City of Seattle, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104-4967, Phone: (206) 684-5108.

TOP

FHWA-related Design Resources

Accessible Pedestrian Signals, 1998. U.S. Access Board 1331 F Street NW, Suite 1000; Washington, DC 20004. (800) 872-2253.

*Accessible Rights of Way: A Design Manual,*1999. U.S. Access Board, 1331 F Street NW, Suite 1000; Washington, DC 20004. (800) 872-2253.

Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access, Part One. 1999. FHWA, HEPH-30, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, 1998 (ADAAG). U.S. Access Board, 1331 F Street NW, Suite 1000; Washington, DC 20004. (800) 872-2253.

Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, 1984 (UFAS), available from the U.S. Access Board, 1331 F Street NW, Suite 1000; Washington, DC 20004. (800) 872-2253

Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide, 1993. PLAE, Inc, MIG Communications, 1802 Fifth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710. (510) 845-0953.

Recommended Street Design Guidelines for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired. American Council of the Blind, 1155 15th Street NW, Suite 720; Washington, DC 20005. (202) 467-5081.

TOP

Trail Design Resources

Trails for the 21st Century, 1993. Rails to Trails Conservancy, 1100 17th Street NW, 10th Floor, Washington DC 20036. (202) 331-9696.

Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993. The Conservation Fund. Island Press, 1718 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 300; Washington, DC 20009.

Trail Intersection Design Guidelines, 1996. Florida Department of Transportation, 605 Suwannee St., MS-82, Tallahassee, FL 23299-0450.

* Indicates publication not yet available

TOP

To provide Feedback, Suggestions or Comments for this page contact John C. Fegan at john.fegan@fhwa.dot.gov.

This page last modified on January 13, 2006

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Please leave your comments with a staff person or mail them to:

City of Rockford / RATS
Mr. Steve Ernst
RATS Study Director
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/967-6734 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
steve.ernst @ci.rockford.il.us

City of Rockford / RATS
Mr. Gary W. McIntyre
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815/967/7058 (fax number)
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City of Rockford / RATS
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hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until July 25, 2005

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Please write your comments below:

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Continue on Page 2

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

MEETING: RATS ~~Technical Committee meeting~~ Long Range Transportation Plan

DATE / TIME: July 6, 2005 11:00 AM

LOCATION: Rockford Public Library

	Name:	Organization	Address:	Phone #	e-mail address:
1	Gary W. McIntyre	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5638	gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us
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4	Linda Stabush		8768 Grove St Cherry Valley	885-3606	mrsslaggy62@aol.com
5	Linda Labuguen		2120 18th Ave	227-5103	Rockford IL 61104
6	ERNIE HEUER	Pec Prairie Path	2897 Cotswold Cir 61114	252-5130	EHEUER@INSIGHT BB.com
7	Jim Considine	TYLIN	5980 No. Milwaukee 60614	773 792 9400	JCONSIDINE@TYLIN.COM
8	Bernie Cornelius				
9	Jerry Paulson		4601 Paulson Rd 61011	885-3090	paulsonjerry@aol.com
10	Pat Stewart	McClure Eng.	7282 Argus Drive	398-2332	p.stewart@mcclureengineering.com
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ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

MEETING: RATS ~~Technical Committee meeting~~ Long Range Transportation Plan

DATE / TIME: July 6, 2005 2:00 PM

LOCATION: Roscoe - North Suburban Library

	Name:	Organization	Address:	Phone #	e-mail address:
1	Gary W. McIntyre	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5638	gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us
2	Hayes Morrison	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5628	hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us
3	Steve Ernst	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/9676734	steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us
4	DAVID BITTNER		11544 LOVE RD	623-3.44	Marya89330@aol.com
5	Mary Abergathy	Village of Roscoe			
6	Bob Soltau	SUATS	100 State St. Beloit	6083646702	soltaub@ci.beloit.wi.us
7	Cline Samuels	Citizen	P.O Box 80 Rockton		
8	WAYNE F. PAULSON	WINN ZBA	8981 MAIN ST CALEDONIA	885-3485	
9	Linda Slabaugh		8768 Grove St Caledonia	885-3026	
10	Cindy Slabaugh		8686 Carradale DR Caledonia	885-3462	
11	Cindy Miller		12 N Heather Ct Caledonia	885-3723	
12	JoAnne Reid		12885 Argyle Caledonia 61011		jobarreid@verizon.net
13	RON MOORE		6102 Argyle Rd Caledonia IL 61011		
14	Dennis & Margo Olson		6358 Argyle Rd Caledonia IL 61011		margo.olson@rps205.com
15	David Noel	Village of Roscoe			koho.015@aol.com
16	Paul Slabaugh		8642 Carradale Caledonia		
17	~~[illegible]~~				
18	[illegible]		12501 Greensview Dr Roscoe	389-8096	
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ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

MEETING: RATS Long Range Transportation Plan - 2035

DATE / TIME: July 7, 2005 11:00 AM

LOCATION: City of Loves Park

	Name:	Organization	Address:	Phone #	e-mail address:
1	Gary W. McIntyre	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5638	gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us
2	Hayes Morrison	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5628	hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us
3	Steve Ernst	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/9676734	steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us
4	Ellen Carlson		6951 Belvidere Rd California 61011	815-895-2019	
5	Ed Carlson		1804 Parkview Ave 61107	—	
6	MARK HARRISON II		2912 Springcreek Rd	9794880	carlme@hotmail.com
7	MARIA JONES		1832 N. Main 204 61103	—	
8	JOHN MAHER		3995 EAGLE DR., APT. 6	ROCKFORD 61103	
9	Angelo Carmona	CARMANA	45634 HILLTOP DRIVE	LOVES PARK	A.MCARMONA@AOL.COM
10	BRIAN KERN		12347 CHURNISH	LOVES PARK	
11	Robert Shumway		8461 Spring brook	877-0413	
12	JOHN MYERS MD.		8526 Springbrook Rd	636-8683	JOHNM_85261@MSN.com
13	Lori Mitchell	Village of MP	300 Machesney Rd	877-5432	lorim@machesneypark.org
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ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

MEETING: RATS Long Range Transportation Plan - 2035

DATE / TIME: July 7, 2005 2:00 PM

LOCATION: City of Belvidere - Boone County

	Name:	Organization	Address:	Phone #	e-mail address:
1	Gary W. McIntyre	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5638	gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us
2	Hayes Morrison	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/987-5628	hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us
3	Steve Ernst	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/9676734	steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us
4	Lynne Emling	—	8449 Grange Hall Rd Garden Prairie IL	815 547 6703	—
5	Rich Lundin	BCHD	9759 IL. RTE 76 61008	815 544-2066	
6	John & Kim Reid		13141 Argyle Rd Caledonia 61011	885-3604	
7	Chuck Thompson	William Charles	4920 East Hills Rd 61111	654-4711	cthompson@williamcharles.co
8	Craig Lawler	Belvidere Rec	210 Whitney St Belvidere	815-544-9256	
9	Brent Anderson	Be Public Works	26 Whitney St Be	544-5276	
10	Scott Perrin	William Charles Invest.	4920 Forest Hills Rd. 61111	654-4711	sperrin @ williamcharles.com.
11	Bev Moore	ITC	P.O. Box 10-1446 W. Main St	964-2470	bebomoore@aol.com
12	GERALD KINCH		2505 WESLEYAN AV #39	227-9998	
13	Cindy McAllister		8686 Reeds Crossing Rd. Belvidere 61008		MSMAC55@msn.com
14	Dustin Kaap		2057 Valencia Dr Rockford 61108	229-8681	dkaap@hotmail.com
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Fax

Organization:	City of Rockford
Contact:	Gary McIntyre
Fax:	**967-7058**
From:	Paula S. Hughes, Rockford Mass Transit District
Date:	July 19, 2005
Subject:	LRTP corrections
Pages:	5 (including this cover page)

Comments:

Here are some corrections I believe are needed for the LRTP. The part about the Roscoe/Rockton study and it's conclusions need to be looked at.

If you need any other info, please contact me.

Contact info: phone (815) 961-2227, e-mail: Phughes@RMTD.org or fax (815)961-9892.

THANKS.

SECTION 8
TRANSIT

8.1 Rockford Mass Transit District

The Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) provides public bus service to the Rockford MPA. This includes weekday, Saturday and Sunday fixed route and paratransit service to the cities of Rockford (City) and Loves Park, and the Village of Machesney Park. Weekday and Saturday buses operate along 17 fixed routes at 30-60 minute intervals. between the hours of 5:15 AM-5:45 PM. Weekday routes are illustrated on **Map 8-1**. Weekday evening service is provided within the City of Rockford along 6 fixed routes operating at 60 minute intervals between the hours of 5:45 PM-10:45 PM. Sunday service is provided along five fixed routes operating on 60-minute intervals between the hours of 9:15 AM and 4:15 PM. RMTD also operates a trolley bus on a seasonal basis in the Rockford downtown area. in the city of Rockford

A three-person board appointed by the City oversees RMTD. The board is empowered through a charter under the laws of the State of Illinois (State). RMTD is funded through a combination of federal, State and local subsidies or contractual payments as explained in **Section 3**, *Public Funding*.

RMTD maintains a fleet of 39 full-sized buses and 26 paratransit vehicles. The combined peak vehicle requirement to operate the system under current schedules is ~~24~~ 40 (27 FR, 13 DR) vehicles. The RMTD annual ridership for the past ten years is shown in **Table 8-1**. The RMTD ridership has stayed fairly even over the years. Some decline in ridership was witnessed in 2003. In that year, RMTD implemented a route and schedule analysis that resulted in a significant restructuring of its fixed route service. The restructuring included the provision of Sunday service funded through the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) funded Access to Jobs Program. It is fairly common for bus ridership to decline after a route restructuring occurs, but should return to the previous numbers as people get used to the new routes.

Sunday service began Sept. 2003 but was not changed by the route analysis.

Table 8-1
Rockford Mass Transit District Ridership

Fiscal Year[21]	Bus	Paratransit
1995	1,541,119	76,418
1996	1,668,301	42,339
1997	1,531870	43,943
1998	1,444,265	45,392
1999	1,496,579	41,297
2000	1,486,587	39,938
2001	1,533,123	50,051
2002	1,521,455	71,023
2003	1,390,429	100,921
2004	1,296,876	100,331

[21]Fiscal Year is from July to June.

Paratransit service is growing rapidly. Reportedly, some of the non-profit service providers have been providing less service and encouraging people to use the RMTD paratransit service. The numbers in **Table 8-1** do not include the paratransit service operated by the Boone County Council on Aging (BCCA), which is discussed below. Use of the paratransit service is expected to grow, as the population gets older. RMTD will address this increase with newer and larger paratransit vehicles as discussed later.

As discussed in other parts of this Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Region has been growing at annual rate of 1.1% since 1990. The population growth does not seem to have an affect on RMTD bus ridership. Intuitively, this makes sense since most of the new growth has occurred on the urban edge outside of the service routes of the RMTD. It is expected that the RMTD ridership levels will maintain the present levels with minor fluctuations in the near term future.

Elsewhere in this LRTP there is discussion about encouraging more growth in the urban core. Additional residential development in the urban core could cause RMTD ridership to increase. These urban redevelopment practices could take years to materialize and implement before enough growth would occur to have a significant impact on RMTD ridership. In five years, the LRTP will be prepared again. At that time, the LRTP update can be used to determine if the urban redevelopment practices are beginning to take hold and if they could have an affect on the urban area.

Map 8-2 illustrates where most of the RMTD ridership originates. The map also shows that there are public transportation users in north Boone County. Most likely these residents are using the Metra Union Pacific Northwest line Station at Harvard, Illinois.

The bus service provided by the RMTD is an important means of transportation for minorities and low-income people. **Maps 2-3** through **2-5** illustrate the location of the RMTD routes in relation to minority population. These maps show that the minority population is well served by the RMTD bus routes. The maps illustrate that there is a minority population near Belvidere that does not seem to be served by bus routes. However, the residents of Belvidere have ~~paratransit service~~ available to them as discussed below. Also, as explained below, there is ongoing discussion about how the RMTD should best serve that area.

demand response service

fixed

All fixed-route buses are wheel chair accessible as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Efforts to aid persons with disabilities (and the general public) in how to read transit schedules and use the transit system are conducted on a regular basis. Paratransit service is provided in accordance with ADA guidelines in the RMTD service area.

RMTD also provides fully accessible paratransit service within a ¾-mile corridor of the fixed route system for pre-certified persons with disabilities that limit their ability to ride the fixed route service and who meet the criteria established by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) under the ADA. Service is provided Monday-Friday between 5:15 AM-11:45 PM, Saturday between 5:00 AM-7:00 PM and Sunday between 9:15 AM-5:15 PM.

~~Rockford~~ Machesney Park + Loves Pk. have different hours/days

RMTD has been designated the coordinated service provider for the Rockford MPA by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). This requires that the RMTD monitor the paratransit needs and services provided in the metropolitan area, both public and private. RMTD has the responsibility of improving coordination among paratransit service providers, identifying unmet needs, and maintaining and improving paratransit service in the Rockford MPA. Private agency providers of paratransit service that have also been recipients of federal subsidies include Icescape Community Services, Barbara Olsen Center of Hope, Booker Washington Community Center.

RMTD is also the Regional Maintenance Center for publicly funded paratransit vehicles operating throughout the North Central Illinois Area.

8.2 Belvidere/Boone ~~Paratransit~~ Demand Response Bus Service

The BCCA offers public transportation service, equipped with wheel-chair lifts, to all residents of Boone County, regardless of age. Priority is given to the medical and nutritional needs of older persons and persons with disabilities. Door-to-door services are provided on a demand-response basis. The service is provided Monday through Friday between 7:00 AM-6:00 PM. Reservations are required at least one day in advance. BCCA operates a fleet of five minibuses and offers fully accessible paratransit service as part of their demand response service.

A large part of Boone County including the City of Belvidere was classified as "urbanized" as a result of the 2000 Census. This had an impact on federal and State funding sources for paratransit service and how the funds are disbursed. The RMTD now receives FTA funding for the urbanized part of Boone County. It was decided that for the short term Boone County would best be served by the existing BCCA paratransit service. A Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations allows BCCA to continue to provide the paratransit service under contract to RMTD. This agreement was initially executed in 2004, and has been extended through 2009. RMTD will continue to work with BCCA to determine how transit service will be provided in the future.

Finally, BCCA still receives federal and state funding to provide paratransit service to the non-urbanizes parts of Boone County. BCCA will continue to provide these services.

8.3 Rockford Mass Transit District Capital Improvement Plans

RMTD is in the process of constructing a new facility to house their paratransit fleet and related equipment. This paratransit vehicle storage building in downtown Rockford will provide adequate storage and maintenance facilities for the paratransit fleet, and enhance RMTDs regional maintenance role. This project is funded.

RMTD has been investigating the feasibility of a bus transfer center on the east side of the City. The purpose of this facility would be to increase operating flexibility to the employment and commerce centers along the East State Street commerce corridor, position the RMTD to provide fixed route transit to the City of Belvidere, and accommodate transfer connections with BCCA flexible services and intercity through routes.

RMTD will need to make some improvements to the existing bus transfer facility in downtown Rockford during the life of this LRTP. The improvements will include a redesign of the facility so buses do not have to back out of stalls. Also, as part of this effort, the RMTD will investigate making accommodation for bikes on buses to improve intermodal connectivity.

The life of the RMTD buses is approximately 12 years. It is expected that the buses will have to be replaced twice during the course of this 30-year LRTP. The paratransit vehicles will be replaced with vehicles that have a life expectancy of approximately eight years. Some of the paratransit fleet would be replaced with super duty vehicles that have a life expectancy of 10 years. For planning purposes, it is expected that the paratransit vehicles will have to be replaced three times during the course of the LRTP. **Table 8-2** illustrates the capital needs of the RMTD over the life of the LRTP.

Table 8-2
Forecast of Rockford Mass Transit District Plans Capital Needs

Description	Units	Unit Cost	Subtotal
East Side Transfer Facility	1	2,100,000	2,100,000
Downtown Transfer Facility	1	1,100,000	1,100,000
Buses	78	330,000	25,740,000
Paratransit	60	65,000	3,900,000
Paratransit Super Duty	18	98,000	1,730,000
Miscellaneous/Contingency	10%		3,457,000
Total			**38,027,000**

8.4 Other Transit Plans

In December 2003, a transit feasibility study was completed for the Villages of Roscoe and Rockton in Winnebago County. This study concluded that these communities could best be served by developing a combination of local demand-responsive services that link with a limited bus stop service connecting Beloit to Rockford. It was also recommended that the villages join with the City of South Beloit to create a Mass Transit District for purposes of funding and providing bus service. RMTD is currently involved in discussions with the City of Beloit to explore the potential for intercity bus transit express service along the I-90 corridor. This service would link the metropolitan areas and provide expanded mobility options to residents of each, as well as efficient transfer connections between the existing systems. This plan is still is the feasibility stage and funding to implement the plan has not been identified.

8.5 Intercity Private Bus Service

Greyhound Bus Lines and the Van Galder Bus Company provide fixed-route intercity bus service to the Rockford MPA. Greyhound provides weekday and Saturday service from the Greyhound Terminal at 542 North Lyford Road. Two or three buses travel daily to and from Chicago and Madison, Wisconsin. A Greyhound affiliated carrier provides service to Dubuque Iowa.

The Van Galder Bus Company, which is owned by Coach USA, provides regularly scheduled daily service to the Rockford MPA and Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), Midway

Gary McIntyre

From: Ginny Gregory
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2005 10:36 AM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: LRP

Found a minor error in the LRP. In Table 7-3, first item, it refers to Airport Dr from Kishwaukee Av to Beltline Rd. Ain't no Kishwaukee Ave, it's Street.

done

Gary McIntyre

From: Ginny Gregory
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2005 11:57 AM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: LRP

Another minor oops. On page 57 it refers to the Greenway Plan as being Map 2-15. It's actually 2-14.

done

Gary McIntyre

From: Ginny Gregory
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2005 1:12 PM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: RE: LRP

Roundabout was "the" choice after a lengthy planning process in which DPW was involved. The whole idea was to come up with a single proposal to take to IDOT that the City and local residents and owners support since we'd been told that IDOT had no intentions of doing anything with the intersection until the locals agreed on a single approach. This was it. I'd hate to see us muddy the waters once again by leaving anyone with the impression that other options are still on the table.

FYI: Steve's response was a message saying he will tell Hayes to make the change. He went through the planning process with us and Teska and I daresay would not want to repeat the experience.

-----Original Message-----
From: Gary McIntyre
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2005 12:49 PM
To: Ginny Gregory
Subject: RE: LRP

The term "reconstruct and improve" does imply that a roundabout can be constructed. It opens the up the options to a wide variety of alternatives, roundabouts is just one of the choices.

The phase "there is no other alternative" implies that in order to improve the level-of-service at this intersection an alternative must be found and constructed. I believe the general opinion is that the "do nothing" approach is not the way to go. A reconstruction and improvement intersection option must be reached for programming into the RATS TIP.

-----Original Message-----
From: Ginny Gregory
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2005 10:43 AM
To: Gary McIntyre
Cc: Steve Ernst
Subject: LRP

BIG question about the LRP. Table 7-3 indicates "reconstruct and improve" for Main & Auburn, with the notation that "there is no other alternative." What happened to the roundabout????

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PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

received 7/6/05

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Please leave your comments with a staff person or mail them to:

City of Rockford / RATS
Mr. Steve Ernst
RATS Study Director
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/967-6734 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
steve.ernst @ci.rockford.il.us

City of Rockford / RATS
Mr. Gary W. McIntyre
RATS Planner
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/987-5638 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

City of Rockford / RATS
Ms. Hayes Morrison
RATS Planner
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/987-5628 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until July 25, 2005

Your Name: WAYNE F. PAULSON

Address: 8981 MAIN ST CALEDONIA, IL 61011

Please write your comments below:

REALIGNMENT FOR PAULSON-ARGYLE ROAD - CONSTRUCTION THRU THE STATE PARK WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER ROUTE. LOBBY THE STATE TO RELEASE 150' MORE OR LESS ON EAST BOUNDARY FOR RIGHT OF WAY TO CONNECT PAULSON RD TO IL. 173.

KEEP BIKE PATH ON OR NEAR NORTH ENTRANCE OF ROCK CUT STATE PARK (173) WOULD BE MUCH BETTER PLAN.

Continue on Page 2

7/6/05-C
at Roscoe Post

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

City of Rockford / RATS
Ms. Hayes Morrison
RATS Planner
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/987-5628 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until July 25, 2005

Your Name: Margo Okon

Address: 6358 Argyle Rd, Caledonia, IL

Please write your comments below:

We are hoping to have the village of Argyle left intact. Perryville is extremly close. It's easy to get on and not far away a 4 lane through Argyle would disrupt many peoples lives and change the entire atmosphere

Continue on Page 2

of the village - As a taxpayer, I would prefer that Argyle Road be left as is.

Margo Olson
1635 Argyle Rd
Caledonia ON L8W
885-3620

7/6/05-W
at Rock Pt

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Please leave your comments with a staff person or mail them to:

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Ms. Hayes Morrison
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425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/987-5628 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail:
hayes.morrison@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until July 25, 2005

Your Name: JoAnne Reed

Address: 12885 Argyle Rd

Please write your comments below:

I feel that the open house for the East side Corridor ~~should~~ could have been (or dated ~~differently~~ which could have been more helpful. ~~A presentation should have been~~ given on the pros, cons, ~~and~~ alternatives and schedule. Hopefully discussion could be part of the time together with alternate questions/comment pro & con to a specific plan.

Continue on Page 2

Gary McIntyre

From: Mrsslagrub@aol.com
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2005 11:11 AM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: Proposed Bikepath in Argyle

Hi Gary,
I met you at the Open house that your comittee hosted. I want to comment on the proposed Bike path that will follow the Railway line from Rockcut along the creek way. I am of course opposed to this Bike path extension as it will cut our pasture in half, cross and block access to our driveway and have to go through a portion of an existing barn on our land. Since meeting with you I have walked out the proposed area and I am fairly certain that the Saw Mill in Argyle also has a building that is infringing on the proposed path.
Please except this E-mail as a formal letter of protest to this bike extension.

Sincerely,
Linda Alexander Slabaugh

Gary McIntyre

From: Butler, Thomas [twbutler@essvote.com]
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2005 1:10 PM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: public comment on transportation plans -- bicycle routes

bikes.doc

Gary:

Attached are my comments on bicycle trails/routes in the Rockford area.

<<bikes.doc>>

Thomas W. Butler (Tom)
Election Systems & Software
929 S. Alpine, Suite 301, Rockford, Il. 61108
815/397-8144

TO: Gary Mcintyre
City of Rockford, Illinois

FROM: Thomas W. Butler
223 S. Rockford Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61104

SUBJECT: Bicycle pathways in Rockford

Dear Mr. Mcintyre:

I would like to see a series of bicycle routes created that intersect the city.

I was at the meeting you held at Rockford Bicycle on Perryville Road recently. Sometime last year I wrote a letter to Gerry Paulson at the Natual Land Institute regarding bicycle paths in the City of Rockford, and I asked if he knew what agency was involved with bike path development. I wanted to suggest a route from 20th Street to Alpine Park. I saw on a map at the meeting that my suggestions for a pathway from 20th street to Alpine Park were on the map; perhaps by coincidence, or perhaps you got my suggestions. Additionally, there is a foot path that goes through the park and comes out on Easton Parkway. This could be made part of a trail from 20th Street to Alpine Park and following the creek on out to Guilford and Perryville.

In any case, I'd like to be involved in the working groups for suggesting bike routes in the Rockford area. I've lived in Rockford for many years and am pretty much fed up with no action on bicycle routes other than a few "pretty paths" for Sunday strolls along the river and a weekend trails for elitist weekend cyclists.

I'm a long time resident and taxpayer of Rockford. My family's roots go back to the early 1900s when my great grand parents bought a house overlooking the river on Penfield Place. Across the river from the old Barber Coleman plant; my grandmother still lives in and owns that house.

I attended West High School and graduated from Rock Valey College. Own a house on Rockford Avenue which I pay property taxes on. As a taxpayer I'm dismayed at the awful livability of this city. I've traveled quite a bit in my life, and I have seen many cities which cater to cyclists at minimal expense; Portland and Seattle to name a few.

Unfortunately, at the meeting you held on Perryville, I got the impression that the attendees were mostly elitist bicyclists looking to connect their weekend trails. While this is not so bad, the reality is there is a greater need for an interconnected series of routes within the city.

It is not even possible to travel the main streets of Rockford without obstacles. A large percentage of sidewalks are decrepit and lack curb cuts. I've seen some intersections get new curb cuts due to the ADA, but this seems to have been an il conceived effort; take a walk down Charles Street between 31st Street/Fairview and Alpine Road. Half the corners don't have cuts.

The majority of State Street does not even have sidewalks from the river all the way to Perryville. This shows a total lack of concern for the safety of children and pedestrians in the city. This is a good example of lousy planning, and there was no excuse for no building sidewalks when we had the explosive "big box" store growth from Mulford to I90.

The main reason I contacted the Natural Land Institute was I knew of their mission to aquire land that comes on the market, and hold it until the State of Illinois could purchase it for a reserve or park land. My bike route suggestions go over some property that should be aquired today and held onto until the rest becomes available or eminent domain has to be used.

An example is a route from Rockford Avenue (aka 20th Street) to Fairview to Alpine Park following the creek though Twin Sisters Park, Dahlquist Park and along State Street. Only about four years ago a parcel of land across from Alpine Park went up for sale. This parcel follows the creek and the land would have been ideal for the bike path to parallel the creek. Unfortunately, a golf concern bought the land and put in a tiny three hole golf course. The City of Rockford missed a golden opportunity to expand green space and Alpine Park. When the creek gets to the old Jewel grocery store, it runs under the old store's nearly vacant parking lot for about 1000 feet. My suggestion would be to aquire the lot, rip out the concrete, restore the creek, and route a bike path parallel to it.

As I write this letter, Valley View apartments is undergoing a renovation; including the grounds. This would be a golden opportunity to route a bike path along the creek that traverses their property. Many of their tenants utilize the bike path in Dahlquist park for morning and afternoon walks.

Perhaps we need an agency or organization that can aquire properties and hold them for future bike path use.

I realize some projects are a bit ambitious, but there are some that could be done now at minimal expense. As an example, a more strict ordinance to property owners about keeping their sidewalks free of overgrown branches and trash, or perhaps creating designated routes on streets with signs to signify bike routes.

If not already being done, perhaps we need someone mapping trails and routes who is actually going out on a bike and experiencing the terrain and what obstacles are in a potential trails way.

Once again, I'd like to be involved in the working groups for suggesting bike routes in the Rockford area. Please contact me in the future about my getting involved.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Butler
223 S. Rockford Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61104

Gary McIntyre

From: renee' lee greco [rlgreco@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2005 9:10 PM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: transportation comments

I am willing to PAY to have public transportation take me to the Elgin area, where I can get a GOOD JOB.

Since moving here, I've had offers for jobs in that area paying $18-20 an hour. Better than the $8/hr I'm earning here. There are no white collar jobs here, hence the reason young people move out of this area.

Yesterday I bicycled from NW Rockford out to 251/Elevator Road to take the bicycle trails all the way out to McHenry County. The trail ends at the Boone County/McHenry County border. I was ready to hop on the railroad tracks just to get to Cook County, where I originally grew up.

I'm really kicking myself for moving here.

There is no public transportation that runs nights, no bicycle racks on buses, no buses to get to other connecting counties (to the Beloit, WI bus system....Poplar Creek, Belvidere, etc.) and absolutely nothing to get into Chicago.

It's no wonder people here turn to crime or having kids and go on public aid because there are no other options here.

I sure hope you can do something to improve this area.

Because I am so frustrated that I want to move from here and kick myself for even coming here.

renee' lee greco

Gary McIntyre

From: KGutier509@aol.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2005 8:00 AM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: RE: Transportation Plan

Many good ideas here. Rockford should incorporate as many of them as possible.

Karen Kjellquist-Gutierrez

A Livable Shade of Green

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/opinion/editorialsandoped/oped/columnists/nicholasdkristof/index.html?inline=nyt-per>

PORTLAND, Ore.

When President Bush travels to the Group of 8 summit meeting this week, he'll stiff Tony Blair and other leaders who are appealing for firm action on global warming.

"Kyoto would have wrecked our economy," Mr. Bush told a Danish interviewer recently, referring to the accord to curb carbon emissions. Maybe that was a plausible

argument a few years ago, but now the city of Portland is proving it flat wrong.

Newly released data show that Portland, America's environmental laboratory, has achieved stunning reductions in carbon emissions. It has reduced emissions below the levels of 1990, the benchmark for the Kyoto accord, while booming economically.

What's more, officials in Portland insist that the campaign to cut carbon emissions has entailed no significant economic price, and on the contrary has brought the city huge benefits: less tax money spent on energy, more convenient transportation, a greener city, and expertise in energy efficiency that is helping local businesses win contracts worldwide.

"People have looked at it the wrong way, as a drain," said Mayor Tom Potter, who himself drives a Prius hybrid. "Actually it's something that attracts people. ... It's economical; it makes sense in dollars."

I've been torn about what to do about global warming. But the evidence is growing that climate change is a real threat: I was bowled over when I visited the Arctic and talked to Eskimos who described sea ice disappearing, permafrost melting and visits by robins, for which they have no word in the local language.

In the past, economic models tended to discourage aggressive action on greenhouse gases, because they indicated that the cost of curbing carbon emissions could be extraordinarily high, amounting to perhaps 3 percent of G.N.P.

That's where Portland's experience is so crucial. It confirms the suggestions of some economists that we can take initial steps against global warming without economic disruptions. Then in a decade or two, we can decide whether to proceed with other, costlier steps.

In 1993, Portland became the first local

government in the United States to adopt a strategy to deal with climate change. The latest data, released a few weeks ago, show the results: Greenhouse gas emissions last year in Multnomah County, which includes Portland, dropped below the level of 1990, and per capita emissions were down 13 percent.

This was achieved partly by a major increase in public transit, including two light rail lines and a streetcar system. The city has also built 750 miles of bicycle paths, and the number of people commuting by foot or on bicycle has increased 10 percent.

Portland offers all city employees either a $25-per-month bus pass or car pool parking. Private businesses are told that if they provide employees with subsidized parking, they should also subsidize bus commutes.

The city has also offered financial incentives and technical assistance to anyone constructing a "green building" with built-in energy efficiency.

Then there are innumerable little steps, such as encouraging people to weatherize their homes. Portland also replaced the bulbs in the city's traffic lights with light-emitting diodes, which reduce electricity use by 80 percent and save the city almost $500,000 a year.

"Portland's efforts refute the thesis that you can't make progress without huge economic harm," says Erik Sten, a city commissioner. "It actually goes all the other way - to the extent Portland has been successful, the things that we were doing that happened to reduce emissions were the things that made our city livable and hence desirable."

Mr. Sten added that Portland's officials were able to curb carbon emissions only because the steps they took were intrinsically popular and cheap, serving other purposes like reducing traffic congestion or saving on electrical costs. "I haven't seen that much willingness even among our environmentalists," he said, "to do huge

masochistic things to save the planet."

So as he heads to the summit meeting, Mr. Bush should get a briefing on Portland's experience (a full report is at www.sustainableportland.org <http://www.sustainableportland.org/>) and accept that we don't need to surrender to global warming.

Perhaps eventually we will face hard trade-offs. But for now Portland shows that we can help our planet without "wrecking" our economy - indeed, at no significant cost at all. At the Group of 8, that should be a no-brainer.

E-mail: nicholas@nytimes.com <mailto:nicholas@nytimes.com>

<javascript:document.emailThis.submit();>

OP-ED COLUMNIST

A Livable Shade of Green

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF
Published: July 3, 2005

E-Mail This
Printer-Friendly

PORTLAND, Ore.

When President Bush travels to the Group of 8 summit meeting this week, he'll stiff Tony Blair and other leaders who are appealing for firm action on global warming.

"Kyoto would have wrecked our economy," Mr. Bush told a Danish interviewer recently, referring to the accord to curb carbon emissions. Maybe that was a plausible argument a few years ago, but now the city of Portland is proving it flat wrong.

Newly released data show that Portland, America's environmental laboratory, has achieved stunning reductions in carbon emissions. It has reduced emissions below the levels of 1990, the benchmark for the Kyoto accord, while booming economically.

What's more, officials in Portland insist that the campaign to cut carbon emissions

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has entailed no significant economic price, and on the contrary has brought the city huge benefits: less tax money spent on energy, more convenient transportation, a greener city, and expertise in energy efficiency that is helping local businesses win contracts worldwide.

"People have looked at it the wrong way, as a drain," said Mayor Tom Potter, who himself drives a Prius hybrid. "Actually it's something that attracts people. ... It's economical; it makes sense in dollars."

I've been torn about what to do about global warming. But the evidence is growing that climate change is a real threat: I was bowled over when I visited the Arctic and talked to Eskimos who described sea ice disappearing, permafrost melting and visits by robins, for which they have no word in the local language.

In the past, economic models tended to discourage aggressive action on greenhouse gases, because they indicated that the cost of curbing carbon emissions could be extraordinarily high, amounting to perhaps 3 percent of G.N.P.

That's where Portland's experience is so crucial. It confirms the suggestions of some economists that we can take initial steps against global warming without economic disruptions. Then in a decade or two, we can decide whether to proceed with other, costlier steps.

In 1993, Portland became the first local government in the United States to adopt a strategy to deal with climate change. The latest data, released a few weeks ago, show the results: Greenhouse gas emissions last year in Multnomah County, which includes Portland, dropped below the level of 1990, and per capita emissions were down 13 percent.

This was achieved partly by a major increase in public transit, including two light rail lines and a streetcar system. The city has also built 750 miles of bicycle paths, and the number of people commuting by foot or on bicycle has increased 10 percent.

Portland offers all city employees either a $25-per-month bus pass or car pool parking. Private businesses are told that if they provide employees with subsidized parking, they should also subsidize bus commutes.

The city has also offered financial incentives and technical assistance to anyone constructing a "green building" with built-in energy efficiency.

Then there are innumerable little steps, such as encouraging people to weatherize their homes. Portland also replaced the bulbs in the city's traffic lights with light-emitting diodes, which reduce electricity use by 80 percent and save the city almost $500,000 a year.

"Portland's efforts refute the thesis that you can't make progress without huge economic harm," says Erik Sten, a city commissioner. "It actually goes all the other way - to the extent Portland has been successful, the things that we were doing that happened to reduce emissions were the things that made our city livable and hence desirable."

Mr. Sten added that Portland's officials were able to curb carbon emissions only because the steps they took were intrinsically popular and cheap, serving other purposes like reducing traffic congestion or saving on electrical costs. "I haven't seen that much willingness even among our environmentalists," he said, "to do huge masochistic things to save the planet."

So as he heads to the summit meeting, Mr. Bush should get a briefing on Portland's experience (a full report is at www.sustainableportland.org) and accept that we don't need to surrender to global warming.

Perhaps eventually we will face hard trade-offs. But for now Portland shows that we can help our planet without "wrecking" our economy - indeed, at no significant cost at all. At the Group of 8, that should be a no-brainer.

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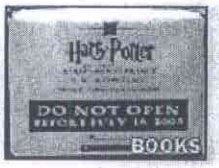

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East state bus go back to every 30 minutes on saturday.

Bring back circulator to save time and only go as far as clocktower and greyhound.

Have buses run on saturday evenings.

Build a new but smaller transfer station on East side.

(over)

Continue on Page 2

Put drink vending machines in bus terminal, cold drinks + coffee + hot chocolate, Keep bus terminal heat and cleaht odor free + add A.C. in summer.

Have drivers take a congeniality class.

Big Loop North + south run very good routes. It's easy to get to places on these 2 routes.