

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
RATS Planner
425 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61104
815/987-5638 (voice number)
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e-mail:
gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

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

Comments will be accepted until July 25, 2005

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Please write your comments below:

Continue on Page 2

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

	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	Linda Stabaush		9708 Grove St. Chelonia	885-3206	mrssabaush@aol.com
5	Linda Labugum		2120 18th Ave	227-5103	Rockford IL 61104
6	ERIE HEUER	Peo Removs Ann	2897 STWARD CR, #114	252-5130	HEUER@NSAHS.COM
7	Jim Considine	TYL &	5980 No. Milwaukee Hwy	775 792900	VCONSIDINE@TYLN.COM
8	Bernie Cornelius				
9	Jerry Paulson		4601 Paulson Rd #1011	885-3090	paulsonjerry@aol.com
10	Fat Stewart	McLure Eng.	7202 Angus Drive	398-2332	psf@mcclureeng.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
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3	Steve Ernst	City of Rockford / RATS	425 East State St., Rockford, IL 61104	815/9676734	steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us
4	DAVID B. TRACY		11544 LOVE RTD	623-3344	MARYA 89330 @SOLARBY
5	MARYA DEWITT	Village of Roscoe	100 STATE ST. GARDEN	608 3646702	SOLTAUB@ci.belleville.wi.us
6	BOB SOSTER	City of Roscoe	P.O. Box 80 Roscoe	885-3485	
7	OLIVE SHERMAN	WINN ZBA	8981 MAIN ST CHESTER	885-3485	
8	MAYUE F. PAUSOR		7108 GREEN ST CHESTER	885-3485	
9	JIM SHERMAN		8106 OREGON DR CHESTER	885-3462	
10	CINDY SPANGLER		12 N HENRI & CALDWELL	885-3723	
11	CINDY WILLIAMS		12885 ARGYLE CALDWELL	601-201-1011	jobarreid@verizon.net
12	JO ANNE REID		6102 ARGYLE RD CALDWELL	610-11	
13	RON MOORE		6358 ARGYLE RD CALDWELL	610-11	MARGO.DLSE
14	DENNIS MARGO OLSON	Village of Roscoe	8642 CANADALE CALDWELL	864-205	KOKO.O15@AOL.COM
15	DAVID NOEL				
16	ANDY SALVENDY				
17	ANDY SALVENDY				
18	MIKE JENKINS		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	Steen Carlson		6951 Redwood Lane Rockford, IL 61107	815-895-2019	
5	El Carlson		1804 Parkview Lane Rockford, IL 61107		
6	Caroline Jones		2412 Springfield Rd Rockford, IL 61109	979-4880	carlinej@johotmail.com
7	APRIL JONES		1892 N. Main Rockford, IL 61109		
8	JOHN MAYER		3995 Eagle Dr, Apt. 6 Rockford, IL 61103		
9	Angelo Coman	CARIANA	4563 Hilltop Drive Rockford, IL 61109	4085 Park Ave Rockford, IL 61109	
10	Brian Kern		1247 Columbus Rockford, IL 61109	LOVES PARK	
11	Robert Sherman		8461 Springfield Rockford, IL 61109	877-0413	
12	John Mays MD		8526 Springfield Rockford, IL 61109	636-8083	John M - 85261@msw.com
13	Kevin Mitchell	Village of LP	300 Madison Rockford, IL 61109	877-5432	Lorim@madnesky.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 Gaange Hill Rd Belvidere, IL	815 547 6735	-	
5 Rich Lundin	BCHD	9759 IL RT 6 Belvidere, IL 61008	815 544 2066		
6 John & Kim Reil		13141 Apple Rd Caledonia, IL 61011	885-3604		
7 Chuck Thompson	William Charles Belvidere Rv	4920 Forest Hills Blvd Belvidere, IL 61111	815-4711	cthompson@williamcharles.com	
8 Brent Andersen	Be Public Workers	2100 Highway 57 Belvidere, IL 61108	815-544-9256		
9 Scott Penick	William Charles Diver	26 W. Waverly St Belvidere, IL 61108	544-5276		
10		4920 Forest Hills Blvd Belvidere, IL 61111	815-9711	spanni@williamcharles.com	
11 Bob Maurer	ITE	P.O. Box 10-144 Main St Belvidere, IL 61111	815-244-9710	bobmaurer@aol.com	
12		2505 Westview Ave #39 Belvidere, IL 61111	227-9998		
13		8680 Reeds Crossing Rd Belvidere, IL 61108		msmac55@msn.com	
14		2057 Valencia Dr Belvidere, IL 61108	229-8681	dkasp@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.

RATS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - DRAFT**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.

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 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.

→ 40 (27 FR, 13 DR)

**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	1,531,870	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

²¹Fiscal Year is from July to June.

RATS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - DRAFT

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 1/4-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.

Match + Lower Pk. have different hours/days

RATS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN – DRAFT

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 ^{Demand Response} Paratransit 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-urbanized 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 ~~to~~ 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.

RATS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - DRAFT

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

*See Study
Said what?*

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 in 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 phrase "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????

Gary McIntyre

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

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

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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)
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e-mail:
steve.ernst@ci.rockford.il.us

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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

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PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

7/6/05-V
at Pascoe Point

ROCKFORD AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE
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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, R

Please write your comments below:

We are hoping to have the village of Argyle left intact. Perryville is extremely close. It's easy to get on and not far away. A 'lane' through Argyle would disrupt many people's 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.

Margy Olson
16358 Argyle Rd
Caledonia MI 49811
885-3620

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
July 6 & 7, 2005

7/6/05-W
at Rockford PIH

ROCKFORD AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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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 conducted ~~in a different way~~ ^{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 committee 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 Natural 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 ill 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 acquire 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 acquired 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 through 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 acquire 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 acquire 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