

RATS

Rockford Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Rockford, Public Works Department
425 East State Street, Rockford, IL 61104

www.rockfordil.gov/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=977

POLICY COMMITTEE

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PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

RATS BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN, JUNE 2007: AMENDMENT TO THE YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

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

The RATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) will become an amendment to the LRTP, which was adopted by the RATS Policy Committee on July 28, 2005. For the BPP, the public involvement period actually got started during the preparation of the LRTP in 2004. As documented in that report, RATS held a series of public meetings regarding the planning process to improve the region's bicycle and pedestrian facilities. One of the suggestions that came from this citizen-based planning process was a more thorough "comprehensive evaluation of the bikeway system policy and facilities is warranted" to include in the RATS LRTP. To follow through on this suggestion, RATS programmed a portion of its annual federal planning funds into its Unified Work Program to accomplish this task in 2006 and 2007. The attached diagram displays the time-period and the steps that the public participated in the development of the BPP.

During the preparation of the BPP, the League of Illinois Bicyclists held a workshop on January 18, 2006, of the area's bicyclists (primarily members of the Blackhawk Bike and Ski Club) to develop a citizen-based map to identify the "best available" existing streets to travel throughout the Rockford Urban Area by bicycle. The LIB map was one of the resource documents used in the preparation of the BPP. Another local resource used was the Boone and Winnebago Regional Greenways Plan.

During the preparation of the BPP, regular updates of the process of this plan were given at all RATS meetings. As the BPP 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 would be made widely available to the general public by all means of communication. The draft BPP:

1. Was put on the RATS web site @ <http://www.rockfordil.gov/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=977>

2. Two PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSES (PIOH) were held on May 31, 2007, to seek and receive public comments and input on the draft BPP. The public announcement is attached.
3. For the PIOH, the announcement was also included in the newsletter of the (a) Blackhawk Bike and Ski Club and (b) the Rockford Road Runners. Both of these organizations have been involved in the public review process over the past several years.
4. Also, the Blackhawk–Sierra Club group sent out an e-mail to its members regarding the May 31st PIOHs.
5. In the Illinois Trails Conservancy June 2007 Trail News publication, the PIOHs were mentioned.
6. Prior to the May 31st PIOHs, RATS staff gave a presentation on the BPP to the following organizations:
 - City of Belvidere / Boone County Planning Commission – March 20th
 - Rockford Road Runners monthly meeting – April 4th
 - Blackhawk Sierra Club monthly meeting – April 23rd
 - City of Belvidere Riverfront Committee – April 26th
7. Finally, the Rockford Register Star had several articles pertaining to the BPP and issues identified in the planning document. Copies of these articles and letters to the editor are attached.

Based upon the above-mentioned ways to inform the citizens and community organizations on the draft BPP and the May 31st PIOHs, the public comment period was open until June 21, 2007. At the conclusion of that time period, seven (7) written and e-mail responses were received. Also, attached is a summary sheet of the verbal comments given from the PIOH visitors to RATS staff and the consultants from T Y Lin International. Listed below is the name of the person, organization and subject of their comments. Copies of their actual comments are attached.

	<u>Name of Person</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Comment Subject</u>
1	Russell Branning	May 31, 2007	Citizen	Developing a safe bicycle system
2	Angelo Caruana	May 31, 207	Citizen	Developing a safe bicycle system
3	Cathy Ward	May 31, 2007	Boone County	Developing more bike trails in Boone County
4	Bev Moore	June 1, 2007	Illinois Trails Conservancy	Safe Routes to Schools
5	Russ Milano	June 17, 2007	Citizen	Several questions to specific links in the Plan
6	Paul Mollway	June 20, 2007	Citizen	Safe routes around St. Anthony Hospital & in Boone County
7	Jim Gorzek	July 2, 2007	Citizen	Safe bike lanes in Rockford

The seven (7) comments received are divided into the following general categories. Listed below is the reply to each of these three (3) issues.

1. Safety – 4
2. Boone County bicycle facilities – 2
3. Connections / linkages on certain routes identified in the Plan – 1

1. SAFETY

Of the seven comments received, four were specific regarding developing a safe bicycle / pedestrian system within the RATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). In the past, present and future planning, design and construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the national standards are the policies that are developed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for all types of surface transportation. The principal source is the **Policy On Geometric of Highways and Streets**. This book is regularly updated by AASHTO. Over the past several years, AASHTO has developed specific “amendments” to the Policy book on topics such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The **Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities** and the **Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities** are two resources that are used by all state and local governments when they develop bicycle and pedestrian systems.

With regards to signage / traffic control procedures, the national standard is the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). This resource is the tool that is used throughout the country to sign / stripe all surface transportation facilities so that there is uniformity throughout the country.

The Illinois Department Of Transportation (IDOT) has developed a Bureau of Design and Environmental Manual (BDE). The purpose of the BDE is to “publish and maintain a manual which establishes uniform policies and procedures for the location, design and environmental evaluation of highway construction projects on the state highway system. The purpose of this policy is to compile the policies and procedures which govern project location, design, and environmental evaluation into one comprehensive manual.” Included in this manual is a chapter specifically for the development standards for pedestrians and bicyclists facilities.

Besides the above-mentioned national and state manuals, several local planning and design guide books were used as resource references in the preparation of the BPP. Specifically, the bicycle and pedestrian documents that have been prepared by City of Chicago, Illinois and the City of Portland, Oregon respectfully show how the AASHTO design facilities and MUTCD signing and striping guidelines are being implemented at the local level. All of the above-mentioned planning, engineering and resource publications were consulted throughout the development of the BPP.

In the development of this Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan for RATS, the principal objective is to promote safe, convenient and well-designed facilities that will encourage greater use. For example, while bicycles can be expected to ride on almost all roads within the RATS area, this plan identifies the steps and process that went into the routes that are being recommended. Specifically, the resource documents listed above are manuals and standards that units of government must follow to accommodate greater bicycle and pedestrian use in urban areas. During the September 2006 Bicycle Ride and Public Workshop, participants observed and discussed some of the transportation issues that urban bicyclists faced. It also allowed the elected/appointed leaders who attended the workshop to participate in the discussions of the tasks involved in selecting on-street bicycle facilities. From a different perspective, attendees at this workshop discovered that considerable planning and engineering goes into the implementation stages of establishing an on-street system of bicycle facilities, especially in older and traditional land use and street-grid patterns.

2. Boone County Shared-Use Path Facilities

Of the two comments received regarding bicycle facilities in Boone County, one of the comments came from the County Board Chairwoman, Cathy Ward. Her comment was just to continue to plan for future development of bike trails in Boone County.

The other comment expressed their concern about (1) improving access between Boone County and Winnebago County, specifically across the Northwest Tollway (Interstate 90 / 39) and (2) improving roadway safety for both bicyclists and motorists along rural cross-section roads in west-central Boone County.

In the recently completed new interchange at IL 173 and the Northwest Tollway (I-90/I-39), a shared use path facility (SUP) was constructed on the south side of the IL 173 on part of this project across the Tollway corridor. To provide access to this SUP at the IL 173 / I-90/I-39 location, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources constructed a shared use path within the northeast area of Rock Cut State Park (RCSP). As a result of this new link, and by using the interior roadway system at RCSP, bicyclists and pedestrians now have connections to the existing Willow Creek Path, which is located along Willow Creek in the western section of RCSP. Additionally, users are also connected to the Perryville Road pathway and other current and planned facilities in the RATS area.

Another planned location to have access between the two counties is a grade-separation bridge over the I-90 corridor to connect the Spring Brook Road bicycle facility to the proposed development on the east-side of the I-90 corridor, just south of East Riverside Boulevard. This bicycle facility would connect to the Northeast Community Park / Sportscore 2 complex and is included in the RATS LRTP and the Boone – Winnebago Regional Greenways Plan.

As other road improvements are added to the RATS Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) over the next several years, RATS staff will monitor and review any project that might provide a safe route over the Tollway corridor.

Regarding measures to improve safety along existing rural cross-section roadways in Boone County, there are several educational programs that could promote enhanced bicyclists and motorists awareness of each other's rights under the State of Illinois statutes. Most of these programs are included in the League of Illinois Bicyclists, the Chicago Bicycle Federation and the American League of Bicyclists websites.

The concern that is expressed in this comment is a common and increasing topic as rural-agriculture areas go through a land-use conversion toward low- to median-density residential development configurations. As these areas start to become more developed with housing developments and some adjacent neighborhood commercial centers, population and vehicle traffic will result in increased travel on the 2-lane rural highway system that has been in place for several decades. Because of the type of density development that is occurring and the low existing traffic volumes, the current highway system can have the capacity for the slow and gradual increase in vehicular traffic that has occurred over the past ten- to twenty-years. In other words, the increases in the average daily traffic over the past several years has not warranted an increase in the number of traffic lanes because the growth in traffic still can operate on the existing highways within an acceptable level-of-service and safety guidelines. One of the conflicting issues is citizens who live in this area use the highway network to go about their daily functions are gradually increasing the traffic interactions between motorists and bicyclists. Hence, this area is now and will be experiencing more vehicles and bicyclists interaction with each other as compared to the past twenty to thirty-years. During this past time, this section of Boone County has and continues to be one of the favorite locations for bicyclists to ride in rural areas because of the rolling – picturesque landscape. Thus, the same reason for the type of residential development that is occurring, it is a very attractive area to live-in / travel-through. The potential conflicts between motorists and bicyclists are and will continue to increase as this area of Boone County and eastern Winnebago County continue to develop and population and vehicle traffic grow. Two of the several programs that could be tried are an informational signage program to inform both users of the presence of bicyclists along certain roads and to have the bicyclists switch their routes to more “bicycling-friendly” roads.

3. Connections / linkages on certain routes identified in the Plan

In one of the comments we received on the draft version of this plan, the commenter had several questions/issues that were raised. Listed below is a summary response to each of these issues that were mentioned.

This first comment was on the planned Pecatonica Prairie Path (PPP) from southwest Rockford to Freeport. The PPP is part of the Grand Illinois Trail (GIT). One of the principal reasons for the GIT is to provide the bicyclists a safe and pleasurable journey across some of Illinois's finest rural countryside in northern Illinois. This facility is a project that is being promoted by the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Department of Transportation (IDOT). Along its 500-mile route, the GIT will be routed through urban areas like Rockford. Accordingly, to address the IDNR planned GIT route, this study is planning to provide a route through the Rockford urban area to connect to the PPP, which is the preferred route selected by the IDNR and IDOT.

Another question was the route of crossing North Second Street (IL 251) at the grade separation crossing of Spring Creek Road, just east of the shared use path facility along the Rock River. The main route will be on the south side of Spring Creek Road that exists underneath IL 251. The existing

sidewalk is planned to be widened to either 8 feet or 10 feet for a shared use path facility to connect to the neighborhood streets just east of this interchange. At the crossings for the two ramps, the bicyclists / pedestrians would require to stop or yield for all traffic that is in the roadway, in accordance with City of Rockford and State of Illinois statutes.

For the bikeway system to be connected between the Village of Roscoe and the Village of Machesney Park, the existing frontage road system along IL 251 is being planned to provide a bicycle route along this corridor. The route would probably utilize both the east and west side frontage roads to provide for a continuous bicycle facility along this corridor. Since the east side frontage road does not cross McDonald Creek, the route would probably cross at the IL 251 / Forest Hills Road intersection (north of IL 173) to the west side, then cross at the IL 251 / Swanson Road intersection to continue on the east side up to McDonald Road in the Village of Roscoe.

Regarding the comment for the two north-south shared use path facilities along University Street and next to a utility corridor in the east side section of Rockford, one of the routes is included in the Boone Winnebago Regional Greenways Plan. This planned facility / route would be located within the Commonwealth Edison right-of-way. The second path is being planned along a collector level street to connect the local land use between several commercial areas south of East State Street (for example, a 16-theater movie complex center and a community-wide park at Elliot Golf Course – Boys Club), to the Northeast Community Park / Sportscore 2 area in the City of Loves Park and a planned commercial area that would provide a pedestrian environment between the soccer fields at the Sportscore 2 facility and the Rockford River Hawks baseball stadium. Ultimately, the paths in this corridor would connect to Rock Cut State Park and the Long Prairie Trail. While these two corridors are in close distance between each other, the facility being planned and built along University Street will primarily serve the residential community in this area of Rockford. The planned use of the Commonwealth Edison right-of-way is viewed as a long-term project that when this area will undergo a land-use conversion from its current rural-agriculture use to suburban / urban land development design, a separate shared use path facility might be pursued as development occurs.

The last question raised is the shared use path (SUP) facility that is being built as part of the Harrison Avenue reconstruction / resurfacing project between Mulford Road and Ohio Parkway. For the section of Harrison Avenue between Mulford Road and Holmes Avenue, a shared use path facility is being constructed. This project is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2008. One of the reasons why the SUP cannot be extended past Holmes Avenue is the location of a cemetery at the southeast corner of the Harrison Avenue / Alpine Road intersection. Also, for the Harrison Avenue project west of Alpine Road to Ohio Parkway, this section is only a resurfacing and joint-repair project. It does not include any additional corridor improvements outside the cross-section of the existing roadway. Therefore, a SUP was not included in the scope of construction for this project.

Another comment that was received pertained to connecting the Saint Anthony Hospital area to the area's bicycling network. Because of the surrounding land use in this area, primarily Rockford College, Mauh-Nah-Tee See Country Club, and Aldeen Park, the possibilities of providing a connecting link are limited. However, as the area and surrounding land uses continue to be developed, primarily from the growth of the hospital and supporting services and other private and public institutions, it might be possible to extend a connection between these existing uses through to Aldeen Park or some other corridor to have this area be connected to the planned regional bicycling network.

4. Summary

At the two public information open houses that were held on May 31, 2007, thirty-five people signed the attendance sheets. The general consensus of the comments expressed were very supportive of the planning approach used in the development of the Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan for RATS. Attached to this section are all the written comments RATS received during the public comment period. The prevailing attitude is "when" will the facilities in the plan be done / completed. While previous plans have focused on the need for recreational trails, this plan embraces bicycle and walking as an alternative form of transportation by planning, design standards, regulation amendments, and public involvement

strategies. The plan outlines both short- and long-term goals to help achieve a variety of implementation strategies.

During the final stages when this planning was being completed, a separate analysis was done by the Rockford Area Economic Development Council, (RAEDC) Next Rockford, and the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) for the recruitment of new citizens to the Rockford and surrounding area. This consortium of organizations hired Rebecca Ryan, President of Next Generation Consulting, to “handprint” Rockford’s “assets to determine (1) how Rockford can differentiate itself from other communities and (2) how Rockford can reach its employers’ talent targets with messages that will resonate with the next generation of knowledge workers.”

In the final report entitled “Attracting and Retaining Talent to the Rockford Area”, two of the findings of that report were:

- “Offer continuous bicycle and pedestrian trails along the riverfront”
- “Designate protected bike lanes along non-arterial streets leading in and out of downtown Rockford and to/from the riverfront”

This plan sets forth strategies for creating a safe, convenient, and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network to encourage bicycling and walking throughout the community. In essence, to follow-through on the above two-findings.

During the fall 2007 legislation session, the State of Illinois enacted two new laws that will encourage bicycling. The first clarifies existing law about:

- (1) vehicles passing bicyclists by requiring a minimum distance of at least 3-feet,
- (2) clarifies that bikes do not have to stay close to the curb where right-turns are permitted, and
- (3) permits the option of using the right arm to signal a right turn.

The second law requires that bicycle and pedestrian ways be established in the planning and construction of all state transportation projects. This is commonly referred to as a “Complete Streets” approach to planning, designing and constructing transportation projects, especially in urban areas.

RATS

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Metropolitan Planning Organization**
City of Rockford, Public Works Department
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Deputy Director George F. Ryan, Illinois Department
of Transportation, Region 2*

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE

RATS 2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN ELEMENT

A public information open house will be held at two area locations to present the **DRAFT BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PLAN** as an **AMENDMENT** to the **RATS Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**. The purpose of this plan amendment is to provide a regional vision for a comprehensive system that will support and encourage walking and bicycling throughout the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. The public is invited to review the draft report. The preparation of the draft report was partly based upon information that was presented and discussed by the citizens with RATS staff during the preparation of the LRTP in 2004 and 2005, a League of Illinois Bicyclists map of the Rockford Metro Area that was published in 2006 and a citizen bike ride and workshop that was held on Saturday, September 16, 2006.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

One of the federal planning requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) law is that RATS must adopt a long-range transportation plan for the metropolitan planning area for the Rockford Urban Area every five years. On July 28, 2005, the RATS Policy Committee adopted the Year 2035 LRTP. Included in the LRTP is a bikeway / pedestrian element. When the Policy Committee adopted the Year 2035 LRTP, one of the suggestions in this element was to do a comprehensive update of the bicycle / pedestrian system, since it had been more than 20 years since the original Regional Bikeway and Pedestrian Plan was adopted. Accordingly, RATS programmed a portion of its annual federal planning funds into its Unified Work Program to accomplish this task in 2006 and 2007.

As part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning regulations and guidance, local, state and federal governments have the responsibility for coordinating a comprehensive transportation system in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. Besides meeting the goals and priorities originating from federal law, specially SAFETEA-LU, the LRTP is 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. Accordingly, the public is encouraged to review the RATS planning documents, including the DRAFT Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan at its website: <http://www.cityofrockford.net/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=977>

DATE – LOCATIONS

May 31, 2007 – Thursday 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM Rockford City Hall City Council Chambers 425 East State Street Rockford, IL 61103 FORMAL PRESENTATION & Questions – Answer Session at 12:15 PM	May 31, 2007 – Thursday 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM Machesney Park Village Hall Village Board Room 300 Machesney Road Machesney Park, IL 61115 FORMAL PRESENTATION & Questions – Answer Session at 5:45 PM
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For further information, please contact:

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

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

PURPOSE: Public Informational Open House - RATS Bicycle / Pedestrian DRAFT Plan

DATE / TIME: May 31, 2007

LOCATION: Rockford City Hall

Name: Organization (if any) Address: Phone # e-mail address:

1	Bill Tucker	Blackhawk Bicycles/Sk.	5784 Bow Trail, 61109	874-9862	wepedl1@msn.com
2	Russ Milano	"	5337 GINWOOD	877-7165	RJMILANO@INSIGHTBB.COM
3	Brian Eber	"	1005 Highway	398-2841	brian.eber@insightbb.com
4	SUE TUCKER	BLACKHAWK CLUB	5784 Bow Trail - 61109	874-9862	STUCKER@kingland.com
5	LINDA STABACH	"	9700 Grove St. Rockford, IL 61109	885-3300	MISSLASSUB@POL.COM
6	JAY GRANT	Graham Spencer	2127 Broadway 61104		jgraham@jghm.com
7	RICHARD BOWERS	BLACKHAWK BIKES	7080 E. HAWES CORNER	232-8088	DICKANDMELODY@AOL.COM
8	Castor Arnesto	Blackhawk Bike Club	2908 Culver Ct. Poplar Grove	597-6290	arnesto@att.net
9	Jane Arnesto	"	"	"	"
10	Fred Kennedy	"	1619 ARDEN AVE, Rockford, IL	398-6861	STARLINE@AOL.COM
11	Jean Kennedy	"	"	"	"
12	Todd Enneking	Rockford Road Runner	718 N. Court Rockford	862-4016	Todd-Enneking@insightbb.com
13	Mark McDonald	Blackhawk Bike Club	2860 Soland Dr. Itd	877-2574	MMcDonald15387@AOL.com
14	Angelo Carmona	"	4563 HILLTOP DR. LOVES PARK 61111	815-2226630	"
15	RONALD K. MORRIS	BLACK HAWK BIKE CLUB	8004 N. KISHWAUKEE RD S. VALLEY, IL	815-234-4685	"
16	MILTON J. RICE	"	6981 Michelle Dr. Rockford	623-8459	mjeromence@charter.net
17	BOB SUGAR	ROCKFORD ROAD RUNNERS	2316 CUMBERLAND ST	918-8465	SRANDP@AOL.COM
18	Cathy Ward	Boone Co. Road	2917 Cayman Belvidere	978-8029	mikecathward@aol.com
19	Jim Keeling	Perryville Pet	4414 Alpine Oaks	490-4902	jkeeling@kinslaw.com
20	Patrick Zurisice	City of Rockford	425 S. State St, Mfg. C	987-5570	patrick.zurisice@cityofrockford.com
21	Aurell Summing	ROCKFORD	1305 PARMEE APT 1C		
22	Joel Sington	"	1129 Harrison Ave	226-0330	
23	STAN TUNNELL	CITY OF ROCKFORD	4515 MANNHEIM RD	(815) 967-6774	STAN.TUNNELL@CITYOFROCKFORD.IL.GOV
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25					

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

ATTENDANCE LIST

PURPOSE: Public Informational Open House - RATS Bicycle / Pedestrian DRAFT Plan

DATE / TIME: May 31, 2007

LOCATION: Machesney Park Village Hall

Name:	Organization (if any)	Address:	Phone #	e-mail address:
1 Paul A. Mollwoy	Blackhawk Bicycle Club	5337 Reynolds Park Rd	815-384-6540	Paul@Mollwoy.com
2 David R. Koltz	"	9415 ROAD OAK DR RFD	815 332-2238	KOLTZFAM@MCHSI.COM
3 Bob Soltan	SLATS			
4 Janyce Fadden	RAEDC	100 Park Ave - RFD	815-987-8118	jfadden@rockford.il.com
5 Linda Vaughn	Machesney Park	300 Machesney Rd	815/807-5432	LindaV@machesneypark.org
6 Stanley WHEELAND	Machesney Park			
7 DAVID ANDERSON	Next Rockford	330 Springs Creek, RFD	815-637-7624	david@nextrockford.org
8 Tim Gustafson	Tx. Lin		773-792-9000	tgustafson@txlin.com
9 Russ Milano	BLACKHAWK			
10 Bev Moore	ITC	P.O. Box 10-1446W Main St	815-589-2472	bevmoores@aol.com
11 Bob Moran	Rockford Bicycle Co.	4109 STERREYVILLE RD	815-636-6644	info@rockfordbikes.com
12 Paul S. Hughes	RMTD	520 Mulberry St, RFD	815-961-2027	phughes@RMTD.org
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Russ Milano's comments on RATS "Final 4/30/2007 Plan" for pedestrian and bicycle transportation options

Date: June 17, 2007

I applaud the plan. It goes a long way to provide a bicycle transportation network on the roads and for a reasonable amount of money. It would seem that a large amount of this network could be done in 2 to 3 years if the authorities wish.

It prioritizes local money toward the bike routes and bike lanes, which are much more cost effective than shared use paths. It uses on street options, which have the greatest possibility of moving people from their vehicles for everyday trips.

I believe every mile of on street/road bike route and bike lane should be built before one foot of expensive Shared Use Path is constructed. Some of these SUP's are only marginally transportation and primarily recreation. These should be in other types of plans made by Park Districts, Forest Preserves and the DNR. Some of these are better described as linear parks.

I fail to understand how a cross-country shared use path from Pec to SW Rockford is in any meaningful way a transportation option. It will cost millions. I understand the right of way already exists but its use would be primarily recreational. There are wonderful country roads out there, which are used by the bike clubs and other cyclists every day.

I see on the maps in section 5 several approaches to crossing North Second Street at Springcreek/Auburn. How are you planning to get across the entry and exit ramps? Are you going over or under IL 251? Will both east and west bicycle traffic cross on one side of Springcreek?

You have a bike route on the IL 251 frontage road north of Minns, which side? The east side does not go thru and the west side has trucks from the quarry and generally more heavy vehicles.

Why the 2 north/south Shared Use Paths on University and another just east on some yet to be built road from Riverside well into Cherry valley?? These are similar to the extension of Perryville moved east onto Bell School. These 3 expensive paths could finance the whole of the on road plan if only 1 were built.

I do not understand why we have programmed a SUP along Harrison and provided nothing between Ohio and 20th Street. Why is a lane not being built into the massive road rebuild going on right now? Is this a missed opportunity?

Thank you to Gary, the reps of TyLin and all others who worked on this plan. Those who care about these issues need to get behind it with questions and support. It is a good plan.

----- Original Message -----

From: rjmilano

To: rrseditorial@registerstartower.com

Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2007 8:57 PM

Subject: RATS - Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan - Revised to be shorter

I would like to commend the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS) and particularly Gary McIntyre for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan released for public comment. This plan for non-motorized transportation has involved plenty of public input, advice from consultants (TyLin) & bicycling organizations and the work of public officials from much of Winnebago and Boone Counties.

This is the most comprehensive and logical plan to date, it is a cost effective integrated network approach to non-motorized transportation. If the high priority elements are implemented quickly this will soon be a better community in which to live, work and get around. I may not agree with or understand everything in the 173 page plan but I will be making myself heard. I hope others will provide their input.

If you are interested in improving the quality of life in the entire region look at this report and talk to your local representatives. The plan is on the city of Rockford web site, public works department, <http://www.ci.rockford.il.us/government/works/index.cfm?id=1688>

If you want comments considered for the FINAL report they are due by June 21, 2007.

Russ Milano

Gary McIntyre

From: rjmilano [rjmilano@insightbb.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 17, 2007 5:57 PM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: My Comments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan



Public Comment on 4
30 2007 pl...

My comments and the letter to the editor are in the attached document. I actually had notes with more questions but I have lost them. If I wait I may miss the deadline.

Thanks for all your work. I am sorry if my impatience's seems that I am ungrateful, I am not.

Regards
Russ Milano

From: Paul Mollway [paul@mollway.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2007 9:55 PM
To: Gary McIntyre
Subject: Comments regarding Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan Bicycle/Pedestrian Element

Dear Gary:

My name is Paul A. Mollway, 5237 Regents Park Road, Rockford, Illinois 61107-5062. Following are my comments:

First, I would like to say that I am extremely pleased that the City of Rockford and Mayor Morrissey are supportive of an improved system of bicycle routes in Rockford and the surrounding area. Furthermore, I agree with your priority of establishing east/west bicycle routes to connect to existing north/south routes.

Now I will list some personal priorities which would also benefit many other bicyclers –

1. Since I live in the vicinity of OSF St. Anthony Hospital, I would very much like to see a safe route for me to get to the existing downtown path along Rock River. Although I am on track to bike about 7,000 miles in 2007, I have not been on the existing path along Rock River this year because I know of no convenient and safe way to ride my bike there from my home.
2. As you know, the Blackhawk Bicycle Club frequently rides into Boone County. A safer way to cross the Interstate 90 would be very beneficial.
3. Again, for frequent Blackhawk Bicycle Club rides, improvements along Squaw Prairie Road in Boone County should be a high priority.
 - a. Traffic along that road is increasing and there is no paved shoulder for the most part.
 - b. In a few areas there are “rumble strips” which cross the entire traffic lane. Leaving a foot of pavement on the right side of the road without the rumble strips would accommodate bicyclists and would still be sufficient to warn other vehicle traffic of an upcoming stop sign.

As a final specific comment, I would urge those considering bicycle routes to make paved routes a priority. You said that those responsible for moving the Pecatonica Prairie Path forward are considering a crushed rock path. In my opinion, a paved path is much, much better for bicycling. Crushed rock paths are not only more difficult to ride on, they are more easily damaged by weather, and the dust and dirt from them causes unnecessary wear and tear on bicycle components.

As a general comment, I would add that having safe, smooth, clean paved riding surfaces is very important to me. Poorly maintained bicycle routes are not a lot better than no bike routes. Potholes and/or gravel or other debris on roads make for very, very difficult and unsafe bicycling.

Thank you for your work on this plan. Quick implementation of high priority bicycle routes would be very, very much appreciated and of great benefit to Rockford and the surrounding area.

Very best regards,

Paul A. Mollway

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
May 31, 2007

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN ELEMENT

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

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

Comments will be accepted until June 21, 2007

Your Name: Cathy Ward Chairwoman Boone Co. Board

Address: 2917 Caymen lane, Belvidere, IL 61008

Please write your comments below:

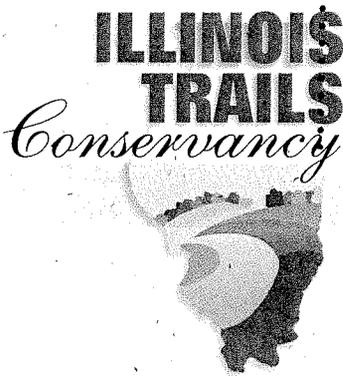
Love to see Boone County Develop
more bike trails.

How can we help ?

Cathy

P.S. Thanks for your work for all of us !!!

Continue on Page 2



*connecting the state's
communities and countryside
and promoting the use of trails for
recreation and transportation*

Bev Moore, Volunteer Chairman
ILLINOIS TRAILS CONSERVANCY
P.O. Box 10 - 144 W. Main St.
Capron, IL. 61012-0010
815-569-2472/Fax 815-569-2976
bebomoore@aol.com

June 1, 2007

Gary McIntyre
Rockford Area Transportation Study
Rockford City Hall
425 East State St.
Rockford, IL. 61107

RE: 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan
Bicycle/Pedestrian Element

Dear Gary:

Thank you for the opportunity to view the Bicycle/Pedestrian Element of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan for Rockford and surrounding communities. I was totally pleased with what I saw. I would like to get a hard copy when they are available so I can add it to my library of Transportation Plans for communities in Illinois. I would be more than happy to pay for one of the printed copies. I did pickup a CD at the meeting.

I was especially pleased with the information you provided regarding walking in a radius around schools. This information will be very helpful to schools as they fill out applications for Safe Routes to Schools Funds. This federal funding program will be increasing each year for the next 3 or 4 years and it is important that we provide safe access to children to get to school by walking or riding their bicycles.

I have difficulty comprehending whatever happened in the past when communities allowed developers to building neighborhoods without sidewalks or connections to shops, libraries, video stores, schools and other retail establishments.

I just wish there was a way that we could make it mandatory that all communities provide safe passageways for bicyclists and pedestrians whenever a roadway is being improved, a new neighborhood being designed or major transportation avenues are created. I'm sure that we would have healthier, happier and cleaner Cities and Villages if it were required that all communities follow a transportation plan such as the one you have provided.

Sincerely,

Bev Moore, President & Acting Director

cc: Lodd Hill in Springfield

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
May 31, 2007

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN ELEMENT

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

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815/987-5638 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail: gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until June 21, 2007

Your

Name: ANGELO CARUANA

Address: 4563 HILLTOP DR. L.P. 61111

Please write your comments below:

REQUIRE BICYCLES TO HAVE SOME TYPE OF TYPE OF
SOUND WARNING WHEN PASSING - E.G. BELL, HORN ETC
ALLOW FOR A BIKE LANE WHEN POSSIBLE ON
CURRENT STREETS AS CHICAGO TRIED ON BLUES.
PLACE USER RULES APPROPRIATELY

Continue on Page 2

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
May 31, 2007

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

YEAR 2035 LONG-RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN ELEMENT

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

City of Rockford / RATS
Mr. Gary W. McIntyre
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815/987-5638 (voice number)
815/967/7058 (fax number)
e-mail: gary.mcintyre@ci.rockford.il.us

Comments will be accepted until June 21, 2007

Your Name: RUSSELL BRANNING

Address: 1305 PARMELE APT 1F ROCKFORD IL 61104

Please write your comments below:

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION
SAFER BIKE PATHS
SAFER AT NIGHT FOR FISHERMAN
OVERALL SAFER FOR THE OVERALL COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES
HABITATE FOR HUMANITY UNITED WAY, SALVATION
ARMY, AND OTHER CHARITIES CATHOLIC

Continue on Page 2
1
LUTHERAN
EAST - WEST
SOUTHERN AND
BAPTIST NORTH

From: Larry Morrissey
Sent: Monday, July 02, 2007 11:21 AM
To: 'jim@thefabricator.com'
Cc: Steve Ernst; Gary McIntyre; Jim Ryan; Julia Valdez
Subject: Re: Bike Lanes in Rockford

Jim,

I have copied some of my staff who have worked on this. Gary McIntyre is the project lead. We are now putting public comments into the final report.

The study impacts the entire region. We plan on getting some of the projects moving for 2008.

Feel free to check with Gary or my office for further information.

Best wishes,

Mayor Morrissey

----- Original Message -----

From: Jim Gorzek <jim@thefabricator.com>
To: Larry Morrissey
Sent: Mon Jul 02 10:22:07 2007
Subject: Bike Lanes in Rockford

Mr. Mayor,

I would like to inquire about the progress related to the study being performed for more bike lanes in Rockford. I fully support more opportunities to be able to more safely ride my bike in and around the Rockford area.

Take a look at this article from the Twin Cities. Having more bike lanes garner national attention, and would be a great way to boost the image of our city, not to mention all the peripheral benefits from more people riding bikes (less reliance on fossil fuels, a better air quality, more healthy citizens, more productive people, etc.):

<http://www.startribune.com/462/story/1274101.html>

If there is someone else I could speak with about the study, and the progress of it, please let me know. I try and commute at least once a week, and it really is beneficial.

Thanks,
Jim Gorzek

StarTribune.com | MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Biking to work? So are 4,700 in Minneapolis

The city ranks second in the number of people who ride bikes to work. Only Portland, Ore., has more.

By **Tim Harlow**, Star Tribune

Last update: June 29, 2007 – 12:10 AM

According to figures released this month by the U.S. Census Bureau, more people in Minneapolis ride their bikes to work than in any other U.S. city, except Portland, Ore.

Figures show that, on average, more than 4,700 people age 16 and older who work in Minneapolis bike to work. That's 2.4 percent, well above the national average of 0.4 percent, according to the report.

"We believe that the 4,700 figure is pretty reliable based on counts that we have done in the Public Works department," said Don Pflaum, bike coordinator and transportation planner for the city of Minneapolis. The city's network of trails and designated bike lanes on city streets have helped make the city cyclist friendly, contributing to the high number of people who bike to work or take advantage of recreational opportunities, he said.

Pflaum said that department counts show that in addition to those who ride to work, more than 10,000 people in the city ride their bikes to run errands or for recreation each day.

On a recent Saturday, Pflaum said, the department counted 3,500 riders on the Midtown Greenway, a bike path one block north of Lake Street in south Minneapolis.

Bikers who use that trail will soon have an easier way to cross Hiawatha Avenue and the light rail tracks at 28th Street. A new bridge for pedestrians and bikers is under construction and set to open later this year, Pflaum said. The construction of the new bridge comes at a time when more people are hitting the trails and streets with their bikes, including more women and older riders.

"Now folks of all ages, sizes and color, people from all demographics are using the facilities," he said.

Riders might have more options in the future. Earlier this month, the Transit for Livable Communities awarded a \$7.3 million grant to communities in the Twin Cities to increase the number of miles of bikeways in the city. Tim Harlow • 612-673-7768

Tim Harlow • harlow@startribune.com

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Steps for Public Participation

B. As part of the public participation process, RATS and T Y Lin held three public meetings to invite the community organizations and individuals the opportunity to put their ideas into the LRTP process.
(12/1/04, 1/20/05 & 6/16/05)

C. In the adopted Year 2035 LRTP, it stated that "a comprehensive update to the pedestrian/bicycle system is in order." To programmed this study into the RATS planning process, some of our UWP funds were budgeted to initiated this study in 2006.
(July 28, 2005)

D. During the UWP development, the LIB held a planning and mapping session to developed a system of existing streets to encourage bicycle transportation in the Rockford Urban Area (RUA).
(January 18, 2006)
In April 2006, LIB produced a map of the RUA.

A. During the development of the 2035 LRTP, the RATS MPA Community recognized the need to update the Bike / Ped Element.
(2004 - 2005)

F. Once the draft document was completed, two public open houses were held to allow the public to view, ask questions and submit comments. (May 31, 2007)
Prepare Public Comment section to be included in Final Document. ***WE ARE HERE***
Then submit the Final Plan to RATS Technical and Policy Committees for discussion and possible action/amendment to the RATS LRTP.

E. As part of the public participation process, a Community Bicycle Ride and Workshop was held to provide an open forum
(September 16, 2006)

Public Involvement

Bike Map Project Starts in Rockford

LIB's January 18 public meeting in Rockford kicks off our new initiative to increase Illinois' collection of bike maps. IDOT produces free maps that are very helpful in showing trails and rating rural roads. However, excluding the Chicago-Land Bicycle Federation's map, most Illinois metro areas do not have maps showing the best routes for biking around town. "As part of our mission to promote bicycling, we would like to fill that gap," said LIB's Ed Barsotti.



The plan is for free 11" X 17" maps to be distributed at bike shops, park districts, libraries, etc. – and on-line. Map templates could be easily tailored for each city. Shown would be preferred roadways, trails, street names, and more. On the back side would be diagrams teaching safe riding tech-

niques for various road and trail situations.

LIB will be partnering with members and local bike clubs in each metro area. Printing costs will come from ads.

The Rockford area will be first. The LIB-led meeting will focus on: gathering public input on the best roads to bike around town, under present conditions; and suggesting roads that could be striped or improved for bikes, in the future. Each attendee will be asked to mark up a map and jot down his or her ideas. Local officials (including Mayor Larry Morrissey) will be present. After the meeting, a map will be produced for publication in spring. Other metro areas around the state will follow.

** – Meeting time: Wed. Jan. 18, Rockford City Hall (425 E. State St.), 5-6PM, Council Chambers.*

LIB Web Resources

Below are some selected links – check www.bikelib.org for more!

www.lepirtle.com/lib/rides/events.cfm --- Organized bike rides

bikelib.org/roads/maps.htm --- Illinois bike maps

bikelib.org/gitap --- GITAP bike tour (mid-June)

bikelib.org/completestreets --- Give your input on new road projects near you

bikelib.org/trails/git --- Grand Illinois Trail guidebook, cue sheets

bikelib.org/mrt --- IL Mississippi River Trail guidebook, cue sheets

bikelib.org/education/resources.htm --- Safety education information

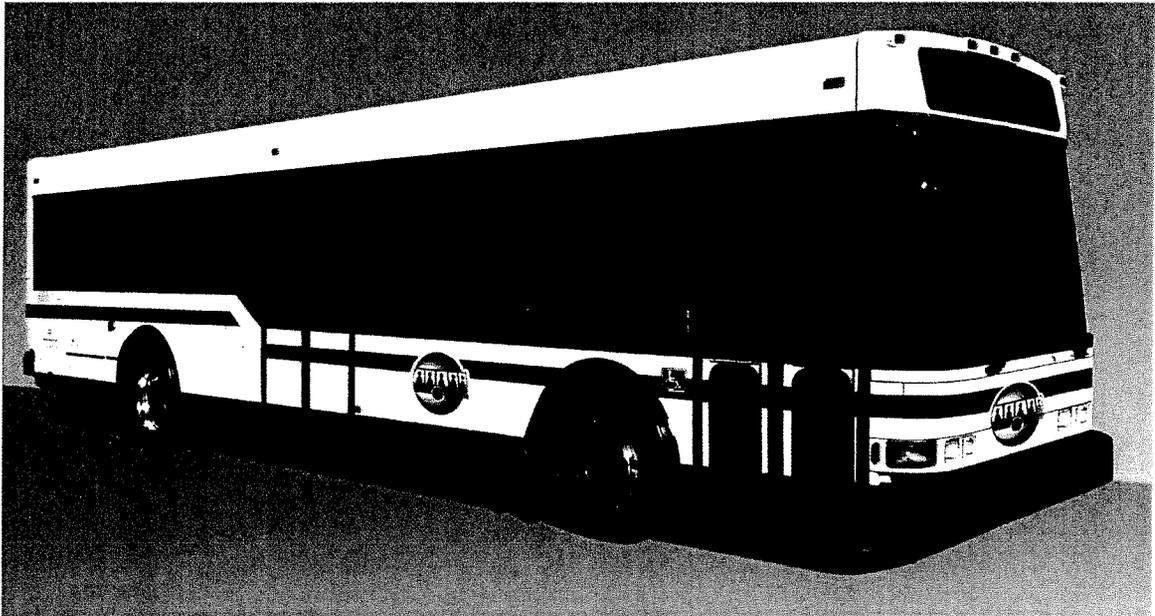
bikelib.org/education/kidsheets.htm --- Kids/parents bike safety info

bikelib.org/education/laws.htm --- Illinois bike laws card

bikelib.org/muniguide --- FAQ's about bicycling, for local officials

www.lepirtle.com/lib/data/clubs.cfm --- Bike clubs

YOU'RE INVITED ... TO MEET THE NEW NABI'S



Tuesday, May 29, 2007
1:30 p.m.
RMTD Transfer Center
501 W. State Street

Join us as we introduce the newest additions to our fleet ... the NABI's. Twenty of them have been rolling into Rockford and are waiting to make their debut. On May 29, 2007, RMTD officials, along with the Mayor of Rockford, Lawrence J. Morrissey and the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau will be unveiling these new buses. Learn about the state-of-the-art features on board these vehicles. See how RMTD and the CVB are promoting the Rockford Region brand. Check out the one feature that is making Rockford a really "cool" place to live while giving new meaning to increased mobility. Or just come for the refreshments. See you on the 29th, rain or shine.

An RSVP is appreciated: 815.961.2226

rrstar.com

New buses designed to get bikers aboard

By Mike Wiser

ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR

[Click here for more information about Mike Wiser](#)

ROCKFORD — Maybe our roads aren't what many people would consider "bicyclist-friendly," but our buses sure are. The Rockford Mass Transit District showed off three of its 20 new buses during a news conference at the downtown transfer center Tuesday afternoon.

The new buses look like ones most people in this town are familiar with, with one obvious exception: front bike racks.

People can hook their bicycle on the front of the vehicle before they get on the bus and take it off when they get off.

While bike-and-ride programs aren't new, they are new to the Rockford area. And it's one that the transit authority — and the city's mayor — hopes people will use. Possibly, the racks will attract riders from a wider area since users can now pedal to their stops.

"Rockford is now a community where public transportation is a viable and attractive alternative to gas pumps," Mayor Larry Morrissey said.

Nineteen of the 20 buses were replacements for existing vehicles bought in 1991 and 1995. The 20th bus is actually an additional one that brings the number of vehicles in the RMTD fleet to 40.

The buses were purchased from Alabama-based North American Bus Industries Inc. for \$6.4 million. The company was one of four vendors that sent in bids to the transit authority, said Lisa Brown, marketing and public relations specialist with the district.

Most of the money for the buses came from federal and state funds. RMTD had to put up just \$125,000 of the price.

But the bike racks are only the most noticeable part of the new bus bells and whistles.

RMTD Executive Director Richard McVinnie said the buses also have:

- An automated voice annunciation system where a computerized system will announce each stop.
- A particle trap built into the engines that helps reduce exhaust emissions.
- Security cameras inside and outside the bus. Each bus will have seven cameras.

Brown said the RMTD wants to retrofit its existing buses with bike racks as well, so the entire fleet will eventually be equipped for the bike-and-ride option.

For now, the new buses will run on four routes: Route 4, North Main; Route 16, Big Loop North; Route 17, Big Loop South; and Route 20, Alpine Crosstown.

Staff writer Mike Wiser can be reached at 815-987-1377 or mwiser@rrstar.com.



GARY L. CARLSON | ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR
Rockford Ald. John Beck tries out the wheelchair ramps on one of the new Rockford Mass Transit District buses as Gary McIntyre tests the bike mounts. Twenty new buses were unveiled Tuesday at a news conference.

Classified Partners: Jobs: CareerBuilder.com - Cars: Cars.com - Apartments: Apartments.com - Shopping: ShopLocal.com

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GateHouse Media


RiverView
Printing


Rockford
Woman


USA
WEEKEND

RATS 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Bicycle / Pedestrian Element

Public Information Open House

A public information open house will be held at two area locations to present the **DRAFT BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PLAN** as an AMENDMENT to the **RATS Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**. The purpose of this plan amendment is to provide a regional vision for a comprehensive system that will support and encourage walking and bicycling throughout the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. The public is invited to review the draft report. The preparation of the draft report was partly based upon information that was presented and discussed by the citizens with RATS staff during the preparation of the LRTP in 2004 and 2005, a League of Illinois Bicyclists map of the Rockford Metro Area that was published in 2006 and a citizen bike ride and workshop that was held on Saturday, September 16, 2006.

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

Date	
May 31, 2007 – Thursday 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM Rockford City Hall City Council Chambers 425 East State Street Rockford, IL 61103	May 31, 2007 – Thursday 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM Machesney Park Village Hall Village Board Room 300 Machesney Road Machesney Park, IL 61115

ROCKFORD ROAD RUNNER APPLICATION

As a member of the Rockford Road Runners, you will receive a monthly newsletter, a list of monthly running events sponsored by the club as well as other area races, discounted race entry fees, and discounts at local sports stores. Note: if you prefer getting your newsletter through e-mail, you will get it about one week earlier. Annual dues include \$1.25 for a subscription to the RRCA's quarterly magazine, FootNotes for one year.

Please **circle** yes or no for CIRCUIT if you wish to be scored or not scored in the race circuit for this year.

<p>MEMBERSHIP STATUS (check one)</p> <p>New <input type="radio"/></p> <p>Renewal <input type="radio"/></p> <p>MEMBERSHIP FEES (Annual) (check one)</p> <p>Student (18 & under) <input type="radio"/> \$10.00</p> <p>Individual <input type="radio"/> \$15.00</p> <p>Couple <input type="radio"/> \$20.00</p> <p>Family (all at one address) <input type="radio"/> \$25.00</p> <p>HOW WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NEWSLETTER DELIVERED? (Check one) E-Mail <input type="radio"/></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">U.S. Mail <input type="radio"/></p> <p>PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:</p> <p>Rockford Road Runners P.O. Box 7991 Rockford, IL 61126</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">NAME</td> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">BIRTH DATE</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top;">CIRCUIT YES NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">ADDRESS</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">PHONE</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">CITY</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">STATE</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">ZIP</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">EMAIL ADDRESS</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="padding-top: 5px;">If application is for couple or family:</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">SPOUSE'S NAME</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">BIRTH DATE</td> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: top;">CIRCUIT YES NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="padding-top: 5px;">If a family membership, list dependents. More than three, add separate sheet</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">NAME</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">BIRTH DATE</td> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: top;">CIRCUIT YES NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">NAME</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">BIRTH DATE</td> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: top;">CIRCUIT YES NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">NAME</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">BIRTH DATE</td> <td style="text-align: center; vertical-align: top;">CIRCUIT YES NO</td> </tr> </table>	NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO	ADDRESS	PHONE		CITY	STATE	ZIP	EMAIL ADDRESS			If application is for couple or family:			SPOUSE'S NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO	If a family membership, list dependents. More than three, add separate sheet			NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO	NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO	NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO
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NAME	BIRTH DATE	CIRCUIT YES NO																													

From: Peaceman50@aol.com
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2007 2:39 PM
To: pobiz@core.com; Paulsonjerry@aol.com; Sbreidigam@aol.com; davidkiefer@worldnet.att.net; matmarkley@yahoo.com; jjohannsen@wcfpd.org; campandtrails@yahoo.com; swv1@sbcglobal.net; Rich_Muniz@hotmail.com; rfiet@msn.com; lynwherley@earthlink.net; bruceandmary@insightbb.com; Peaceman50@aol.com
Cc: stuff@simplecircle.com; brotherquinn@hotmail.com; Springbrookbird@aol.com; willowfirehawk@yahoo.com; robb.sinks@gmail.com; thelazybirder@insightbb.com; Moonblinkstudios@hotmail.com; vickira@rockford.com; wicz2@juno.com; stan4land@comcast.net; cdegutis@co.winnebago.il.us; PShaw13238@aol.com; kbartlein1@yahoo.com; marge.gugerty@gmail.com; e.hahne@yahoo.com; jlphoto42@hotmail.com
Subject: Public input for Bicycle Path Study

RATS 2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN ELEMENT

A public information open house will be held at two area locations to present the **DRAFT BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PLAN** as an AMENDMENT to the **RATS Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**. The purpose of this plan amendment is to provide a regional vision for a comprehensive system that will support and encourage walking and bicycling throughout the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. The public is invited to review the draft report. The preparation of the draft report was partly based upon information that was presented and discussed by the citizens with RATS staff during the preparation of the LRTP in 2004 and 2005, a League of Illinois Bicyclists map of the Rockford Metro Area that was published in 2006 and a citizen bike ride and workshop that was held on Saturday, September 16, 2006.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

One of the federal planning requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) law is that RATS must adopt a long-range transportation plan for the metropolitan planning area for the Rockford Urban Area every five years. On July 28, 2005, the RATS Policy Committee adopted the Year 2035 LRTP. Included in the LRTP is a bikeway / pedestrian element. When the Policy Committee adopted the Year 2035 LRTP, one of the suggestions in this element was to do a comprehensive update of the bicycle / pedestrian system, since it had been more than 20 years since the original Regional Bikeway and Pedestrian Plan was adopted. Accordingly, RATS programmed a portion of its annual federal planning funds into its Unified Work Program to accomplish this task in 2006 and 2007.

As part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning regulations and guidance, local, state and federal governments have the responsibility for coordinating a comprehensive transportation system in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area. Besides meeting the goals and priorities originating from federal law, specially SAFETEA-LU, the LRTP is 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. Accordingly, the public is encouraged to review the RATS planning documents, including the DRAFT Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan at its website:

<<http://www.cityofrockford.net/government/works/index.cfm?section=planning&id=977>>

ILLINOIS TRAILS CONSERVANCY - JUNE 2007 TRAIL NEWS

SUMMER IS HERE!!!.....

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

DRAFT 2007 ILLINOIS STATE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS. IDOT is asking for your input on policies and goals, anticipated trends, as well as needs and issues that will affect transportation over the next twenty years. **ATTEND THESE MEETINGS IF YOU CAN:** June 5 - Bloomington-Normal at Bloomington Airport Conference Room 3210 CIRA Dr. 10:00 a.m. - Noon and 1:00-3:00 P.M. June 6 - LaSalle-Peru, Illinois Valley Community College 815 N. Orlando Smith Ave., Oglesby 1:00-3:00 P.M. June 7 - Chicago IDOT at 300 West Adams 2nd Floor 10:00-Noon and 1:00-3:00 P.M.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN MEETINGS....are being held. Rockford Area Transportation Study will host theirs on May 31, 2007 - 11:00-2:00 at Rockford City Hall and 4:00-7:00 at Machesney Park Village Hall. It is important for you to attend the one in your area to be sure they are planning for all types of transportation and not just vehicles. **CALL YOUR CITY HALL TO FIND OUT WHERE & WHEN.**

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS....Applications are available from www.dot.il.gov/saferoutes and will be accepted through June 30, 2007. Projects are 100% reimbursed with no local match required. All applications require an approved Illinois School Travel Plan. **Schools K-8 need to apply ASAP**

RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANTS WERE ANNOUNCED MAY 15, 2007. Cook County Village of Bellwood received \$214,080 to enhance 1.23 miles of Illinois Prairie Path, Cook County Village of Buffalo Grove received \$152,320 to construct 1/2 mile of trail for hiking and walking. Kane County City of Geneva received \$156,000 to construct 1 mile of trail adjacent to a proposed 75 acre wetland. Madison County Village of Glen Carbon received \$225,600 to construct 1.8 miles of trail through a natural area. Lake County DOT received \$264,000 to construct a tunnel under Monaville Rd. between Illinois Route 59 and Fairfield Rd. Henry County received \$444,960 to acquire 206 acres to be developed into a public OHV riding area along U.S. Route 6 east of Atkinson.

RECEIVING NEWS FROM ITC MEMBERS IS HELPFUL, FUN & INFORMATIVE.

- **Membership Renewals received in May** included \$100 from JoAnn Fraser in Washington & from Duward Inch in Geneseo and \$200.00 from Rockford Park District. **ITC MEMBERS ARE GENEROUS.**
- **Rich & Laura Kuhlman from Winfield** stopped in to visit Bev while they were plotting the route for 2007 **GITAP**. Capron Masonic Lodge is planning to provide refreshments for riders as they pass through Capron on June 22.
- **Peter Botzek from Chicago**, ITC's writer shared an article he wrote in the Chicago Sun Times about Reasons to Bike.
- **Deborah Fagan from DuPage County** sent Bev a copy of the DuPage County Trail-Roadway Crossing Guidelines. She continues to answer **Charlie Johnson's concerns** about drinking fountains, trees & trash containers along the trails. She shared some words of wisdom for Bev when she needed patience dealing with government bureaucracy.
- **Louise Grobl from Naperville** shared her frustration with riding in the rain as was happening for Bev recently. Let's hope it doesn't rain on us this weekend during the Route 66 ride.
- **Mike Incopero from Wheaton** shared information about **Rich & Laura Kuhlman** who will be riding in Paris in August.
- **Sylvia Kellog from BRATS in Wheaton** e-mailed minutes from the April 10 & May 15 meetings. They do great work.
- **Gary Lyons from Marion** sent Bev his new E-Mail address. **HAVE YOU CHANGED YOURS RECENTLY??**
- **Rick Strader from Rockford** continues to help with Willow Creek Trail. **ITC MEMBERS CONNECT TRAILS.**
- **Cathy Winslow from Galena** shared a newspaper article about the Earth Day poster winner. Bev was at Galena Earth Day.

ITC BOARD MEMBERS ARE BUSY HELPING BEV

- **George Burrier from Peoria** continues to fight to keep the Kellarline on the road toward a recreational trail Contact George at gburrier@mtco.com for information. **ITC BOARD MEMBERS PERSERVERE.**
- **Bob Hargis from Charleston** has been attending meetings in Champaign and also in Effingham with groups that are getting new trails on the ground. He encouraged schools to apply for Safe Routes to Schools Funds. He will also check into the rail abandonment opportunity in Flora when he returns from Cincinnati.
- **John Wilson from Lansing & Keith Mistrik from Palatine** approved putting some ITC funds in a CD.
- **Craig Williams from Oak Park** is working with a group on a Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Policy. He will meet Bev in Chicago on June 7 at the IDOT Transportation Plan Public Meeting.

ACCESS IDOT Transportation Enhancement Program on successive linked pages beginning at www.dot.il.gov/opp/WebRep2.html

ITC ACTIONS IN APRIL INCLUDE:

- **May 1** – Created, copied & distributed MAY TRAIL NEWS to 249 ITC Members.
- **May 1** - Mailed a Galena Bike Trail Brochure to a person in Chicago.
- **May 1** - Forwarded a Press Release about the Route 66 Ride to Wally Haas at the Rockford Register Newspaper.
- **May 1** - Spoke to Dan Gibbard from the Chicago Tribune about the many reasons there are GAPS in Trails.
- **May 1** - Forwarded e-mail from Rhonda Border Boose at RTC to Amy Madigan about the check presentation to ITC.
- **May 2** - Attended a meeting of the IDOT Context Sensitive Solutions Policy Team in Springfield.
- **May 2** - Mailed a copy of the BRATS agenda to Leo Ratzer ITC member in Lisle so he might attend a meeting.
- **May 3** - Shared information with Ray Hoven from American Bike Trails on the list of Illinois Trails received from Ryan Phillips, RTC Project Coordinator of the updated list of bike trails in Illinois. They were missing a lot of trails.
- **May 4** - Mailed a check to Center for Neighborhood Technology for our ITC support. They do great work.
- **May 4** - Received an advance copy of an article by Wally Haas in the Rockford Register about legal issues for cyclists.
- **May 7** - Participated in a telephone conference call of the Grand Illinois Trail Executive Council. Bev was able to share news about Trail projects in McHenry County, Galena and Rockford. George Bellovics shared information about SAFTEA-3 High Priority Projects, Route 66 and the Rock Island Trail Extension to the Hennepin Canal.
- **May 7** - Received an e-mail thanks from Dan Kane for organizing the Long Prairie Trail Cleanup.
- **May 7** - Mailed an IDOT request for information to Todd Volker about IDOT plans for IL 26 from I-80 to US34.
- **May 8** - Attended the Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Task Force Meeting in Chicago with Randy Neufeld in charge.
- **May 9** - Clipped a newspaper article from the Rockford Register titled "Loves Park lands key role in bike-path plan"
- **May 9** - Composed a letter to Elizabeth Lyons commending her for good work on the Nippersink Creek Trail Project.
- **May 14** - Mailed information obtained from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety meeting to Rick Strader at Rockford Park District and to Deborah Fagan at DuPage County Planning. That group did a fantastic job obtaining a lot of data.
- **May 15** - Received a request for support from John Wilson in Lansing for their project of Bike Racks for the Pennsy
- **May 17** - Received a copy of a letter from the Anderson family in Loves Park who are willing to donate property for a trail.
- **May 18** - Clipped an article from Rockford Newspaper about my friend Jerry Olson who was injured by an automobile driver while Jerry was on his way to work on his bicycle. Wally Haas wrote a wonderful article.
- **May 18** - Shared information about trail building guidelines with a young man at Lewis & Clark Community College.
- **May 22** - Received information on 2007 IDOT Rescission History from Ed Barsotti at LIB.
- **May 23** - Received an invitation to attend an RTC Active Transportation Network Opportunity in Indianapolis on June 18 & 19. Passed the invitation on to other ITC Board Members because Bev has been called for Jury Duty on June 18.
- **May 24** - Received notice from Kelly Pack at RTC regarding an Upcoming Rail Corridor Abandonment in Flora, Illinois. Bev forwarded the information on to Ron & Mary Ann Ayers, our ITC friends in Flora.
- **May 24** - **Actually received an invitation from IDOT to attend Transportation Planning Public Meetings...WOW**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU IN 2007:

- **June 2, - NATIONAL TRAILS DAY - Ride Route 66 in segments. Joliet, Bloomington, Staunton, Pontiac, Springfield or Edwardsville celebrations at Noon.** Register at <http://www.bikelib.org/route66>
- **June 2 – NATIONAL TRAILS DAY – Hike & Bike to Ratcliff Park. Other Trail Day Events will be held in Farmington, Fairview, Liverpool and Banner.** Contact Angie Sanders at angiesanders@extension.uiuc.edu for information.
- **June 7 - IDOT Transportation Plan Public Meeting - 10:00-Noon and 1:00-3:00 p.m. in Chicago**
- **June 11-15 - DuPage County Bike to Work Commuter Challenge.** For information contact Pamela Brookstein at Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, 312-427-3325 Ext. 242.
- **June 12 - BRATS meeting at Wheaton Park Dist. Community Center - 7:30-9:00 p.m.**
- **June 16 - BIKE RODEO AT Danada Headquarters Building in Wheaton sponsored by DuPage Co. Forest Preserve Dist.**
- **June 17-23, - Grand Illinois Trail & Parks (GITAP) Bicycle Tour.** Go to www.bikelib.org/gitap or oestreich@qconline.com
- **June 22-24 – MS Bike Tour de Farms.** Check out www.msillinois.org for more information.
- **June 23 - BIKE RODEO IN Capron.**
- **August 12 & 13 – Tour Elk Grove Village Event.** Contact Mark Rafferty @ Mark@searchpointusa.com for info.
- **September 9-15 – Illinois Great Rivers Ride.** See www.illinoisgreatriversride.com for information.
- **December 9-12, - Mid America Greenways & Trails Conference in Chicago @ Renaissance Hotel.**

NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE FROM ITC: Transit Future Newsletters from Center for Neighborhood Technology, Summer Issue of Rails to Trails Magazine, Riffler & Eddies from Boone County Conservation District, Pedaler from McHenry County Bike Club. Illinois Trail Riders and Illinois Bicyclist from LIB. Wanderings from the Hennepin Canal 100 Years Old in 2007.

CONTACT ILLINOIS TRAILS CONSERVANCY at www.ILLTrails.com & do not hesitate to contact Bev about anything mentioned in TRAIL NEWS. E-Mail her at ITC bebomoore@aol.com for info. Postal address for Illinois Trails Conservancy is P.O. Box 10, Capron, IL. 61012. Telephone is 815-569-2472 and Fax is 815-569-2976. Cell phone is 815-289-1024.

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Published: June 17, 2007

Letters to the Editor React to bike, walk plan

I would like to commend the Rockford Area Transportation Study and particularly Gary McIntyre for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan released for public comment.

This plan for nonmotorized transportation has involved plenty of public input, advice from consultants and bicycling organizations and the work of public officials from Winnebago and Boone counties.

This is the most comprehensive and logical plan to date. It is a cost-effective, integrated network approach to nonmotorized transportation.

Education that gives you an edge

[more]

University of teachers who are doers

If the high-priority elements are implemented quickly, this soon will be a better community in which to live, work and get around.

I may not agree with or understand everything in the 173-page plan, but I will make myself heard. I hope others will provide their input.

If you are interested in improving the quality of life in the entire region, look at this report and talk to your local representatives. The plan is on the City of Rockford Web site, www.ci.rockford.il.us, under Public Works Department.

If you want comments considered for the final report, they are due June 21.

— Russ Milano, Rockford

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