RATS

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

ROCKFORD METROPOLITAN AREA

YEAR 2000 – 2025

July 27, 2000

This Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was developed in the interest of promoting, developing and maintaining a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system that will meet the needs of the area's citizens, businesses and industries through the Year 2025. The Plan was developed in consideration of a wide range of citizen, community and technical input as well as the views, priorities and plans expressed in numerous previous plans and documents developed as part of the RATS Planning Process over the last 35 years. This Plan also reflects the goals, priorities and guidance emanating from Federal law, specifically the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century and its predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

This Plan can be amended or updated for reasonable cause at any time. Comments and proposed refinements or changes should be directed to the RATS staff at the address below. By Federal law, the Plan must be updated every five years, at a minimum. Additional copies are available at the address below.

This Report Was Prepared in Cooperation with the Following:
U.S. Department of Transportation / Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration / Illinois Department of Transportation
The Contents, Views, Policies and Conclusions Expressed
in this Report Are Not Necessarily Those of the above Agencies.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Philosophically, we "plan" for one reason: to keep the big bad wolf from blowing our house down. In essence, it all comes down to just that. Like the smart little pig in the old children's story, we recognize that we live in a world fraught with hazards and uncertainties but also blessed with resources that, if employed thoughtfully and frugally, can reduce our exposure to the hazards, improve our quality of life, and make our future more predictable.

Transportation planning is just a different version of the same story. Government, with input from citizens, officials and experts, attempts to play the role of the smart little pig by planning ahead. In this case, instead of a house, government is charged with building a transportation system. And, instead of a big bad wolf, government is faced with a collection of potential problems that manifest themselves if we don't build and maintain an extensive, integrated, safe and efficient transportation system.

Stated another way, local, state and federal governments have the responsibility of constructing, operating, maintaining and/or coordinating all major transportation systems and subsystems. The task must be accomplished with limited resources (tax dollars) and through a variety of methods (pedestrian, bicycle, car, truck, rail, air and water) that meet a plethora of needs (short and long trips; personal, business and recreational trips; and freight trips). If the task isn't accomplished effectively, it results in decreases in the movement of people, goods and freight; decreases in general commerce, business and industrial activity; increases in traffic congestion; increases in pollution; increases in traffic accidents, property damage, injuries and loss of lives; and a waste of tax resources, time and energy.

The Role of RATS

Transportation planning is as old as man's first conscious deliberations concerning the easiest way to move himself from one point to the next. It has been evolving ever since. Today, all major universities offer elaborate curriculums leading to degrees in transportation planning and engineering.

For nearly 40 years, the federal government has required all state and local governments to engage in a **"continuing, coordinated and cooperative"** transportation planning process. This process has been a prerequisite to all federal grants and subsidies for transportation improvements and operating expenses. Since that time, the federal government has also required comprehensive Long-Range Transportation Plans for all large urban areas in the country. With the passage of the **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)** in 1991 and the more recent **Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)** in 1998, the federal government reaffirmed and solidified these requirements.
The **Rockford Area Transportation Study**, or **RATS** as it is called, was formed in the early 1960s and assigned the responsibility of conducting the “planning process” and preparing the transportation plan for the Rockford Metropolitan Area. RATS is much more than a "study." RATS is actually an organization of officials, planners, engineers and citizens that meet on an ongoing basis and continue to study transportation needs and formulate transportation plans and improvement programs at regular intervals. RATS activity is funded primarily by the federal government (up to 80%) with support from local governments. Entities similar to RATS exist in all large metropolitan areas throughout the country. Generically, they are referred to as **Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)**.

Currently, the lead agency for RATS is the **Public Works Department of the City of Rockford**. A varying number of staff from that department and other departments within the City are assigned to RATS work.

As part of its responsibilities, RATS annually prepares a **Unified Work Program (UWP)** in which it specifies the planning work to be conducted over the next year, and a **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** that specifies all major improvements to be made over the next three years. RATS is required to update the **Long-Range Plan** at least every five years.

RATS Membership and Structure

RATS is governed by a Policy Committee that is currently comprised of the officials in **Table 1**. RATS receives advice from a Technical Committee which is currently comprised of a representative from each of the agencies in **Table 2.** The authority of RATS and its responsibilities and duties are set forth in a **Cooperative Agreement** which was last amended and adopted in 1991 and remains in effect.

Table 1 - RATS Policy Committee

Mayor of Rockford
Mayor of Loves Park
Village President of Machesney Park
Chairman of the Winnebago County Board
District Engineer of District 2 of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

In accordance with the Cooperative Agreement, new members may be added to the Policy Committee by the unanimous agreement of the existing members. However, the Agreement suggests the following criteria:

1. The new entity should be an incorporated village or city within the Rockford urbanized area.

2. The entity should contain at least 5% of the total population of the Rockford Urbanized Area according to the most recent U.S. Census.

3. The entity should have responsibility for three or more road miles of Federal route designation on the Federal-Aid 5-Year Classification Map and three miles of daily fixed route transit service.

4. The existing members and new entity(s) must reach mutual agreement regarding voting powers and other relevant factors.

5. The entity desiring membership must make a formal written request.

Table 2 - RATS Technical Committee

Cherry Valley Planning Dept.	Rockford Community Development Dept.
Greater Rockford Airport Authority	Winnebago County ParaTransit System
IDOT District 2	Winnebago County Planning Dept.
Loves Park Planning Dept.	Winnebago County Public Works Dept.
Loves Park Public Works Dept.	Boone County Highway Dept.
Machesney Park Planning Dept.	Belvidere/Boone Planning Commission
Rockford Mass Transit District	
Rockford Public Works Dept.	Ogle County Highway Dept. (nonvoting)

On November 16, 1995, the RATS Policy Committee took action to appoint the Boone County Highway Department and the Belvidere/Boone County Planning Commission as voting members on the RATS Technical Committee.

The RATS Policy and Technical Committees meet on a regular basis (usually monthly) and involve the public in their deliberations and decisions in accordance with a **Public Involvement Process (PIP)** that is periodically updated (the PIP was first prepared in 1995 and was comprehensively updated in 1997).

The Study Area

RATS has planning jurisdiction over the entire **Rockford Metropolitan Area (Metro Area)**. The Metro Area consists of the **Rockford urbanized area**, as defined by the US Census for 1990, plus the area expected to become contiguously urbanized in the next 20 years. The primary responsibility of RATS is the **Rockford Urban Area** which

consists of the Rockford urbanized area (Census), with its boundaries rounded to reflect prominent natural features, and the area expected to become urbanized in the next five years.

MAP 1 (attached) shows the RATS Metro and Urban Areas. As noted above, the Urban Area was largely defined by the US Census Bureau in accordance with their criteria. The Metro Area was determined through a consensus of the RATS Technical and Policy Committee members in consideration of growth trends, land use plans and general planning judgement. The Metro Area boundary, as depicted in **MAP 1**, was adopted by the Policy Committee on September 23, 1993. It includes large portions of both Boone and Winnebago Counties, and the incorporated and projected growth areas of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, Belvidere and New Millford.

It should be noted that contiguous urbanization is also likely to occur to the north of Machesney Park in the projected growth areas of Roscoe, Rockton and South Beloit. These areas, however, are under the jurisdiction of the **State Line Area Transportation Study (SLATS),** the designated MPO for that area. SLATS extends as far north as Janesville, Wisconsin.

To a limited extent, RATS coordinates planning and transportation improvement activities throughout all of Boone and Winnebago Counties. This occurs voluntarily via the communication and cooperation of the County officials from those jurisdictions serving on the RATS Policy and Technical Committees.

The study area defined above will be comprehensively reviewed and revised within the next 1-2 years when the Year 2000 Census information becomes available.

General Description and Demographic Profile

The Rockford Metro Area, as defined by RATS, encompasses approximately 233.5 square miles, and has a total population of 238,846 persons according to data from the 1990 Census. Using these figures, the population density of the overall Metro Area computes to 1,023 persons per square mile. However, the bulk of the population resides on the Winnebago County side which has a population density of 1,181 persons per square mile, while the Boone County side has a population density of only 419 persons per square mile. In Winnebago County, the majority of the population resides in the City of Rockford which, according to the latest Census estimate, has a population of roughly 142,000 persons (up from the 139,426 first reported for 1990). Other jurisdictions in the Metro Area and their respective populations are listed in **Table 3**.

Rockford has been experiencing a slight decline in population over the last 30 years. However, a recent aggressive annexation program has begun to reverse this decline. The Metro Area as a whole, however, has been growing at a slow steady rate. This is evidenced by the increase in the population of Boone and Winnebago Counties, the Rockford MSA and the Rockford urbanized area.

The race/ethnic/age profile of the Metro Area's population is summarized in **Table 4** and **Maps 3-8** (following pages). The majority of the population is White. The largest group of minorities are African Americans, followed by Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans. African Americans are concentrated on the west side of the City of Rockford. Large numbers of Hispanics are also concentrated in western Rockford, but there are also large numbers scattered through eastern Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park and Belvidere. Other minorities are distributed equally throughout the area.

Employment Profile

The labor force in the Rockford area is strong in both manufacturing and nonmanufacturing areas. In manufacturing, the emphasis is on machining, metalworking and transportation equipment. There are approximately 975 manufacturing establishments in the area, ten of which have over 1,000 employees. These include Chrysler Corporation and Hamilton Sundstrand Corporation, each with about 4,000 employees. Most of the remaining industries are much smaller with 100 or fewer employees. **Tables 5-7** (below) summarize the employment situation.

Table 3 – Population Changes – Rockford Metropolitan Area & Selected Jurisdictions

Area \ Year	1998	1990	1980	1970	8-yr chg	% chg	
Rockford MSA	356,887	329,676			27,211	8.3%	
Janesville-Beloit MSA	150,736	139,510			11,226	8.0%	
Rockford urbanized area		207,826	204,304				1.7% in 10 yrs
RATS Metro Area		238,846					
Winnebago Co prt		218,506					
Boone Co prt		20,340					
SLATS Metro Area		64,426 in 1988					
Winnebago Co, IL	267,642	252,913	250,884	246,623	14,729	5.8%	8.5% in 28 yrs
Rock Co, WI	150,736	139,510			11,226	8.0%	
Boone Co, IL	38,734	30,806	28,630	25,440	7,928	25.7%	52.3% in 28 yrs
Ogle Co, IL	50,511	45,957			4,554	9.9%	
Janesville, city	59,149	52,210			6,939	13.3%	
Loves Park, city	18,183	15,457	13,192	12,390	2,726	17.6%	46.8% in 28 yrs
Belvidere, city	18,445	16,059	15,176	14,061	2,386	14.9%	31.2% in 28 yrs
Rockford, city	143,656	142,815	139,712	147,370	841	0.6%	-2.5% in 28 yrs
Machesney Park, vill	19,831	19,042	19,500		789	4.1%	
Winnebago, vill	2,585	1,840			745	40.5%	
Cherry Valley, vill	2,178	1,615			563	34.9%	
South Beloit, city	4,592	4,072			520	12.8%	
Rockton, vill	3,269	2,928			341	11.6%	
Poplar Grove	1,038	743			295	39.7%	
Roscoe, vill	2,330	2,079			251	12.1%	
New Millford, vill	581	463			118	25.5%	
Durand, vill	1,213	1,100			113	10.3%	
Pecatonica, vill	1,795	1,760			35	2.0%	
Capron	672	682			(10)	-1.5%	
Beloit, city	35,157	35,571			(414)	-1.2%	

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 4 - Metro Area Population/Minority Profile

Population Group	Persons	% of Total
Total	238,846	
White	208,062	87.1
AfricanAmerican	22,947	9.6
American Indian	593	0.2
Asian	2,934	1.2
Spanish	9,060	3.8
Youth	61,969	25.9
Elderly	31,240	13.1

Source: US Census Bureau / 1990 Census

Figure 1 - Total Work Force Growth

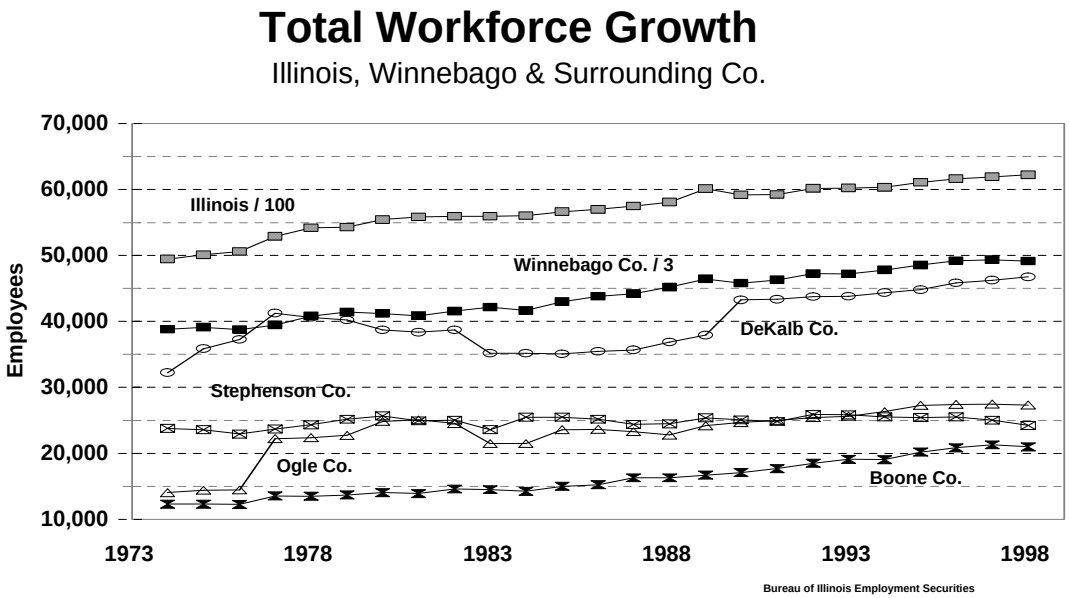

Figure 2 - Avg. Annual Unemployment

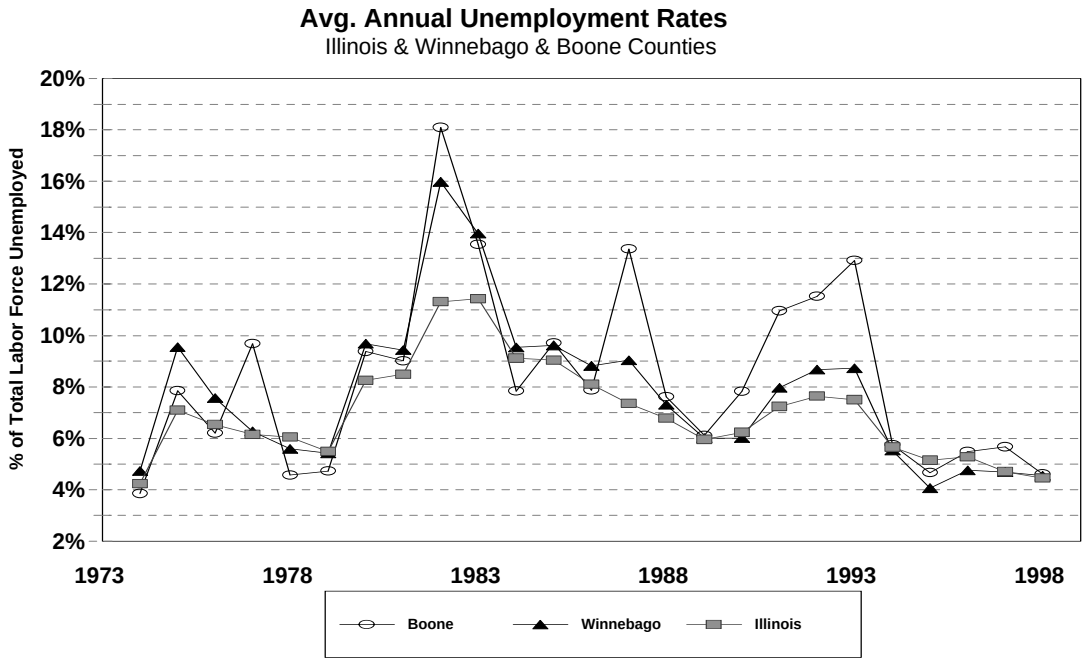

Table 5 - Metro Area Labor Force (1995)	
Civilian Labor Force	157,550
Employed	146,620
Unemployed	10,930
Percent Unemployed	6.9%

Table 6 - Labor Force Composition (1995)		
Total Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Workers	**137,025**	**100.0%**
Manufacturing	**46,900**	**34.2%**
Durable	40,325	29.4%
Nonmanufacturing	**90,125**	**65.8%**
Trans., Comm., Utilities	4,875	3.6%
Wholesale Trade/Retail	29,950	21.9%
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	5,525	4.0%
Services	31,900	23.3%
Government	11,500	8.4%
Mining, Construction, Other	6,375	4.7%

Table 7 - Production Workers Avg. Hourly Earnings (1995)	
Drill Press Operator (2 yrs. experience)	$ 7.80
CNC Machine Operator	$ 11.69
Laborer/Dockhand	$ 6.21
Assembler (no experience)	$ 6.03
Punch Press Setup/Operator	$ 10.87
Arc Welder	$ 9.02
Shipping Clerk	$ 7.66
Tool & Die Maker (apprenticeship & experienced)	$ 13.45
Wirer	$ 10.69
Packer - Heavy	$ 8.35
Plastic Injection Molder	$ 7.51

PART 2: GOALS

It should be noted that, for the most part, the goals, policies, objectives and strategies specified in this section have been in existence for decades in the Rockford area, were part of many previously adopted plans, and were part of the last RATS Plan adopted in 1995-96. This Plan continues to promote the goals set forth in that previous Plan, along with new emphasis areas stemming from recent changes in Federal law.

In a single sentence, this Plan seeks to identify long-range and short-range strategies and actions (including, but not limited to, operations and management activities) that will lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that will facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and will address current and future transportation demand. To accomplish this goal, it is recognized that this Plan must be a cooperative venture of the MPO, all area local governments, IDOT, the public and private transit providers, and numerous other community stakeholders. To accomplish this goal, the Plan must be based on the latest estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment and economic activity and these estimates and assumptions must be periodically reassessed to assure continued validity. In greater detail, the goals of this Plan are as follows.

GOAL 1: A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The overall goal of this plan is to continue the development of a safe and efficient transportation system throughout the RATS Metropolitan Area.

As previously mentioned, such a system must accommodate a wide variety of trip lengths, types, purposes and modes of travel. It must afford efficient and safe movement of people and goods with the minimum consumption of financial, land, fuel and other resources, and with a minimum impact on the natural environment (air, water, wildlife, etc.). **In short, it must be a balanced multimodal system that minimizes costs and impacts to the taxpayer, society and the environment.**

GOAL 2: CONCURRENCE WITH TEA-21

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century specifies seven factors to be considered in the development of this Plan. **In accordance, this document seeks to demonstrate a Plan and a planning process that fully concurs with the seven factors and thereby foster and consider projects and strategies that will:**

I. **Support the economic vitality of the Rockford Metropolitan Area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.**

II. **Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.**

III. **Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.**

IV. **Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life.**

V. **Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes for people and freight.**

VI. **Promote efficient system management and operation.**

VII. **Emphasize the efficient preservation of the existing transportation system.**

Table 8 restates the above seven factors along with several other considerations that are highlighted by the TEA-21 legislation and the recently proposed rules for Metropolitan Transportation Planning (Federal Register, May 25, 2000). The matrix of Table 8 documents the relationship of TEA-21 factors with the various goals, strategies, and policies of this Plan.

GOAL 3: IDENTIFY AND FORECAST DEMAND

This Plan recognizes the need to accurately identify and forecast the transportation demand of persons and goods.

The primary tool used to identify and forecast the transportation demand in the Rockford area is the RATS Traffic Simulation Model developed by RATS staff and consultants over the last five years. This model uses forecasts of land use (dwelling units and employment) to project future travel demand and to allocate this travel over the existing and proposed roadway network in the Urban Area. The land use forecasts were developed by a subcommittee of planners from Winnebago County, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Rockford and Cherry Valley, and were based on the adopted land use plans of these jurisdictions and other more current development plans. At the present time a planning effort has just begun that will expand and recalibrate this traffic simulation model to cover all of Winnebago and Boone Counties in Illinois and part of Rock County in Wisconsin. When complete, roughly 18-20 months from now, the new model will encompass both the Rockford MA and the abutting State Line MA to the north.

TABLE 8		The "7" TEA-21 Planning Factors							Other Considerations									
		I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	X.	XI.	XII.	XIII.	XIV.	XV.	XVI.	XVII.
Local Projects, Strategies, Policies & Other Efforts of this Plan in Support of TEA-21's Seven Planning Factors & Other Emphasis areas of TEA-21 and ISTEA		Support the economic vitality of the Rockford Metropolitan Area, especially by enabling global competitive- ness, productivity and efficiency.	Increase the safety and security of the transport- tion system for motorized and non-motor- ized users.	Increase the accessi- bility and mobility options available to people and for freight.	Protect and enhance the environ- ment, promote energy conserva- tion, and improve the quality of life.	Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transporta- tion system, across and between modes for people and freight.	Promote efficient system manage- ment and operation.	Empha- size the efficient preser- vation of the existing transpor- tation system.	Forecast transpor- tation demand of persons & goods in the MA over the period of this Plan.	Identify, maintain & Improve pedes- trian & bicycle facilities.	Manage congestion / promote CMS.	Promote ENHANCE- MENTS.	ITS integra- tion.	Assure public official and citizen involve- ment.	Consider needs of traditionally under served.	Assure Environ- mental Justice & Title VI equity.	Access to Signi- ficant Facilities.	ROW Preser- vation.
		Economy	Safety	Mobility	Enviro	Connect	Manage	Presrv	4cast	Peds	CMS	Enhnce	ITS	Public	Under served	EJ	Access	ROW
1	The continued maintenance & expansion of the **Greater Rockford Airport (GRA)** including its airline passenger service, its status as a Foreign Trade Zone, its status as a US Customs Port of Entry, its hub facilities for the United Parcel Service & its facilities for other air cargo carriers such as Airborne Express, BAX Global, & Emery Worldwide.	X		X	X	X	X		X				X					
2	Promote the numerous roadway improvements on the Plan to **improve access to & around the GRA**.	X	X	X		X	X		X								X	
3	Continue the special emphasis on **linking low-income households with employment opportunities** by giving priority to projects such as the Harrison Springfield Connection, expanded public transit service & making application for special funds such as Access to Jobs funds & TCSP funds.			X					X						X	X	X	
4	Maintain & improve transit service for **persons with disabilities**.		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X	X	X	
5	Maintain & improve pedestrian facilities for **persons with disabilities**.		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X	X	X	
6	Recognize that **energy conservation** is good for the economy, the environment & national security. Continue to emphasize projects that save energy by reducing congestion, reducing traffic delays at signals & encourage travel by transit or non-motorized modes.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X					
7	Continue to recognize the importance of the preservation **of natural features, areas & resources** &, where possible, route new roadways around such facilities. In this regard, use the Boone/Winnebago Greenways Map & other similar documents as a guide.				X					X		X				X		

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8	Continue to encourage **"enhancements**" & other improvements to reduce the environmental, aesthetic & other adverse societal impacts of traditional transportation structures or activities. Examples include the use of more aesthetic building materials, berms, landscaping & vegetation, physical sound barriers, carefully directed lighting, & aesthetically designed sign, signal & lighting fixtures.				X			X		X		X			X	X		
9	Address the issue of **oversized / overweight loads** that traverse the Metro area & the inaccessibility of parts of the Interstate System to these shipments.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X						X	
10	Improve the area'**s truck route system** connectivity & functionality.	X	X	X		X	X	X									X	
11	Continue to promote intergovernmental agreement & boundary agreements between area governments as a means to reduce conflicts in land use plans.				X	X	X		X	X							X	
12	Continue **collaborative work** with such groups as Winnebago County's Intergovernmental Cooperation & Planning Committee, the Mayor's Welfare to Work Task Force, Rockford's "Blueprint" Process & other similar groups to assure cooperation & consistency.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
13	Continue to encourage all local units of government to **develop consistent & compatible land use & development** plans & ensure that such plans are consistent & integrated with this transportation plan.	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
14	Recognize that before any new facility is built, we have an obligation to **maintain the existing system**. Continue to spend bulk of transportation monies on maintenance. Recognize maintenance in the Financial Plan section of this Plan.				X		X	X	X	X				X		X		

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15	Develop & maintain management systems for congestion, pavement, bridges, safety issues & public transit.						X	X										
16	Promote **system preservation** by giving priority to projects such as the Harrison Avenue Reconstruction Project – the area's next STP-U project.						X	X							X	X		
17	Continue to plan, promote with high priority & construct bicycle & pedestrian facilities.		X	X	X	X				X	X	X			X	X		
18	Promote better **information dissemination & greater public involvement** by developing an **MPO WEB-site.**						X							X	X	X		
19	Periodically update the **Public Involvement Process report** to promote greater involvement.													X	X	X		
20	Investigate the feasibility of **a passenger/commuter rail link &/or Amtrak link connecting to Chicago**.	X		X	X	X			X									
21	Continue efforts to identify **long-range ROW needs** for new or undersized roadways & promote the preservation or acquisition of such ROW before land development precludes or complicates the situation.	X		X	X	X												X
22	Continue goal of maintaining 90% Collector & Arterial Roadways at **Level of Service** at "C" or above, & 75-85% of such roadways at "LOS A or B".		X	X			X	X			X						X	
23	Continue to promote activties suggested in the **Rockford Area Congestion Management Activities** report of October 1997.		X	X	X		X	X			X							
24	Promote **congestion management** & safety by promoting planning & research studies such as the Riverside/Alpine/Forest Hills CM Study & the Harrison Av Corridor Study.		X				X	X			X						X	

TABLE 8		The "7" TEA-21 Planning Factors							Other Considerations									
		I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	X.	XI.	XII.	XIII.	XIV.	XV.	XVI.	XVII.
Local Projects, Strategies, Policies & Other Efforts of this Plan in Support of TEA-21's Seven Planning Factors & Other Emphasis areas of TEA-21 and ISTEA		Support the economic vitality of the Rockford Metropolitan Area, especially by enabling global competitive- ness, productivity and efficiency.	Increase the safety and security of the transport- tion system for motorized and non-motor- ized users.	Increase the accessi- bility and mobility options available to people and for freight.	Protect and enhance the environ- ment, promote energy conserva- tion, and improve the quality of life.	Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transporta- tion system, across and between modes for people and freight.	Promote efficient system manage- ment and operation.	Empha- size the efficient preser- vation of the existing transpor- tation system.	Forecast transpor- tation demand of persons & goods in the MA over the period of this Plan.	Identify, maintain & Improve pedes- trian & bicycle facilities.	Manage congestion / promote CMS.	Promote ENHANCE- MENTS.	ITS integra- tion.	Assure public official and citizen involve- ment.	Consider needs of traditionally under served.	Assure Environ- mental Justice & Title VI equity.	Access to Signi- ficant Facilities.	ROW Preser- vation.
		Economy	Safety	Mobility	Enviro	Connect	Manage	Presrv	4cast	Peds	CMS	Enhnce	ITS	Public	Under served	EJ	Access	ROW
25	Continue the long-standing priority of RATS to improve **road connectivity** by eliminating key offset intersections & developing smooth crossovers where needed.	X	X	X	X	X		X			X						X	
26	Give high priority to projects that **improve connectivity & reduce circuitous routing** such as: Springfield/Harrison Connection, possible Northwest Bypass, & the Beloit Bypass.		X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X				X	
27	Support for the maintenance & upgrading of the **National Highway System & the Interstate Highway System w/emphasis on I-90 & I-39.**	X		X	X	X	X	X			X		X				X	X
28	Promote the planning & construction of more **interchanges** (or the improvement of existing interchanges) to access the Interstate Highway System in both Winnebago & Boone Counties.	X	X	X			X	X									X	
29	**Support IDOT-proposed improvements to US 20** westward to Freeport & Galena.	X	X	X	X	X			X								X	X
30	Continue to put high priority on projects that improve **signalization & signal timing**.		X	X	X		X	X			X		X				X	
31	To the extent possible, **all significant facilities** in the area (such as ports, airports, freight distribution facilities, cultural facilities, military facilities & major employment facilities) should be accessible multi modally (via automobile, public transit & pedestrian/bike facilities).	X		X	X	X	X			X					X	X	X	
32	Continue to recognize the need to **integrate public & private transportation improvements & services**. The Rockford area is served by over 100 trucking companies, 3 railroads, two private airports, three intercity bus companies & several taxi, ambulance, charter bus & limo providers.	X		X	X	X	X				X			X			X	
33	Continue efforts to eliminate **multiple street names** on continuous streets.				X	X	X	X									X	

TABLE 8		The "7" TEA-21 Planning Factors							Other Considerations									
		I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	X.	XI.	XII.	XIII.	XIV.	XV.	XVI.	XVII.
Local Projects, Strategies, Policies & Other Efforts of this Plan in Support of TEA-21's Seven Planning Factors & Other Emphasis areas of TEA-21 and ISTEA		Support the economic vitality of the Rockford Metropolitan Area, especially by enabling global competitive- ness, productivity and efficiency.	Increase the safety and security of the transport- tion system for motorized and non-motor- ized users.	Increase the accessi- bility and mobility options available to people and for freight.	Protect and enhance the environ- ment, promote energy conserva- tion, and improve the quality of life.	Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transporta- tion system, across and between modes for people and freight.	Promote efficient system manage- ment and operation.	Empha- size the efficient preser- vation of the existing transpor- tation system.	Forecast transpor- tation demand of persons & goods in the MA over the period of this Plan.	Identify, maintain & Improve pedes- trian & bicycle facilities.	Manage congestion / promote CMS.	Promote ENHANCE- MENTS.	ITS integra- tion.	Assure public official and citizen involve- ment.	Consider needs of traditionally under served.	Assure Environ- mental Justice & Title VI equity.	Access to Signi- ficant Facilities.	ROW Preser- vation.
		Economy	**Safety**	**Mobility**	**Enviro**	**Connect**	**Manage**	**Presrv**	**4cast**	**Peds**	**CMS**	**Enhnce**	**ITS**	**Public**	**Under served**	**EJ**	**Access**	**ROW**
34	Consider life-cycle costs as projected are designed & promoted.				X		X	X										
35	Continue to explore & promote **telecommuting** as an alternate to physical commutes.		X				X	X			X		X		X			
36	Develop a **comprehensive computerized traffic simulation mode**l covering the area of the RATS MA, the SLATS MA & all of Boone & Winnebago Counties.	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X
37	Promote better & more-informed decision-making, better planning & more efficient use of resources by promoting & participating in the development of **a regional geographic information system & database warehouse (WinGIS).**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
38	Continue to offer, maintain &, to the extent financially feasible, expand **public transit**.		X	X	X		X	X			X				X	X	X	
39	Continue **cooperative planning** with the area's public transit agencies (RMTD & BCCA) & other social service agencies.			X	X		X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
40	Enhance the attractiveness & usefulness **public transit** by improving **security & safety**.		X	X	X		X	X							X	X	X	

GOAL 4: PRESERVE AND USE THE EXISTING SYSTEM

This Plan proposes to preserve, improve and use our existing facilities to meet our transportation needs to the fullest extent possible.

Overall, this Plan recognizes that, before any new transportation facility is constructed or established, we have an obligation to ensure that our existing system is maintained and used to the fullest and most cost-effective extent possible. This goal has three aspects: (1) programming sufficient maintenance projects in each 3-year TIP, (2) emphasizing maintenance in the Financial Planning section of this LRP, and (3) participating in the development and utilization of the "Management Systems" such as Congestion Management, Pavement Management, Bridge Management and Transit Facilities Management systems, as appropriate.

With respect to the TIP, past practice in the Rockford area by all jurisdictions is to assign priority to maintaining existing facilities before constructing new facilities. The proposed TIP for FY 2001-2003 is representative of this practice. In that TIP, only 13 percent of the total expenditures proposed in the 3-year period are for new construction.

The "Financial Plan" section of this LRP further addresses this aspect and demonstrates that considerable resources are devoted to maintaining the existing system. Overall, the judgement of the engineers and planners of the community is that the existing facilities are being adequately maintained. To further assure that this goal is maintained, the City of Rockford is currently gathering data for the development of a comprehensive pavement management system. The system will be functional in approximately two years. For additional discussion on maintenance issues, please refer to the comments on “Normal Operating and Maintenance Costs” in the Financial Plan, Part 9 of this Plan.

GOAL 5: ENERGY CONSERVATION

This Plan will promote energy conservation where possible as part of all proposed improvements.

Energy conservation in transportation is important for the obvious reason that energy, whether in the form of gas, oil or electricity, is a limited and potentially exhaustible resource. Energy conservation is also important because energy production and consumption typically generates undesirable by-products, commonly referred to as pollution. Some transportation modes consume considerably more energy than others and some energy sources produce considerably more pollution than others. The Rockford area is and always has been in full compliance with national air pollution standards and will continue to strive to maintain that compliance.

The following table was compiled from data in the "National Transportation Statistics Annual Report" as published in 1993 by US DOT. It illustrates energy consumption per passenger mile of various forms of transportation.

Table 9 - Energy Intensiveness by Travel Mode (1990)

Mode	Btu/Pass/Mi
School Buses	795
Intercity Buses	994
Motorcycle	1,829
Amtrack Rail	1,975
Passenger Car	3,671
Local Transit Buses	3,722
International Commercial Aviation	4,249
Domestic Commercial Aviation	5,049
Single-Unit Truck	6,009
General Aviation	10,148
Other Single-Unit Trucks	795
Combination Trucks	24,557

By far, most people in the Rockford area travel by passenger car. A small but significant amount of local transportation is by local transit and school buses. The fact that school buses have the lowest Btu consumption per passenger mile of all forms of motorized transportation illustrates the energy savings that can be realized by increasing the number of shared rides. Increasing the number of shared rides in any of the modes of transportation can reduce the total energy consumed.

Energy conservation can also be promoted in numerous other ways. The following are just a few examples: reducing roadway and intersection congestion, improving signal timing, eliminating unnecessary stop signs, improving the connectivity of the roadway system, and reducing or minimizing the number of ingress and egress points on routes which handle large volumes of through traffic.

This Plan promotes energy conservation in all the above ways and stresses the following: (1) highway improvements that improve connectivity within our system and/or relieve congestion on inadequate nodes and links in our system, (2) signalization improvements and signal timing efforts that minimize traffic stoppages at intersections, (3) public transit maintenance, enhancement and promotion to provide an alternative to automobile use, and (4) the construction and promotion of bikeway and pedestrian facilities as an alternate means of mobility.

The above have been long-standing approaches used in the Rockford area and are demonstrated by the current TIP. For example, between FY 2001 and 2003, $9.6 million in intersection improvement projects are programmed.

In addition, Rockford, Loves Park and Machesney Park continue to support public transit systems that serve the entire urban area as documented in the Transit TIP. During the last decade, in the Fall of 1994, the Rockford Mass Transit District expanded its service to include system-wide evening bus service. Within the last two years, in response to comments received through the Mayor's Welfare to Work Task Force, RMTD has proposed adding a limited late night service. Federal funding has been applied for but has not yet been granted for this late night extension.

Finally, sizable investments (Federal, State and local) have been made in bikeway and pedestrian facilities, and the Rockford area has an extensive system of public pathways. Further expansion of this system is a high priority.

GOAL 6: RELIEVE AND PREVENT CONGESTION

Traffic congestion is of less concern in smaller urban areas such as Rockford than it is in the major metropolitan areas. Congestion in the Rockford area is currently limited to a small number of intersections and links of the area's most heavily traveled roadways. Nevertheless, like all other urban areas in the country, travel and traffic congestion are increasing in the Rockford area.

In recent years, RATS has used a traffic simulation model to evaluate the traffic congestion on all major roadways throughout the Winnebago County part of the Metro Area. The roadways were rated in terms of their "Level of Service" (LOS) as commonly defined in transportation literature. LOS is defined in six levels depending on the ease of traffic flow. LOS A is the best rating and is assigned to road segments having complete uncongested free flow at the design speeds of the roadway. LOS F is the worst rating and signifies frequent gridlock or near gridlock congestion on the roadway segment. The table below shows the results of this analysis, and the Technical Committee concurred that this represents the perceived traffic conditions in the Rockford area during the middle of the last decade.

Table 10 - Existing Level of Service by Road Class

Class / LOS	A or B	C	D	E or F
Limited Access	65%	27%	5%	3%
Principal Arterial	91%	6%	1%	2%
Minor Arterial	87%	9%	2%	2%
Collector	92%	7%	1%	0%

As part of the last Woodruff/Wallenberg Feasibility Study, the Technical Committee proposed that efforts be made to continue these high levels of service. Recognizing that maintaining these levels would be difficult, considering growing traffic volumes and limited funding resources, the Technical Committee proposed the following table of values as minimum goals. Further modeling work will monitor the feasibility of these goals, but they are considered a reasonable start. Measures as discussed in Goal 5 above will be encouraged and employed to minimize congestion. In addition, as already stated, the traffic simulation model is being expanded to cover a much broader area. This will

enable better forecasting of potential future bottlenecks in light of forecasted development. In turn, improvement alternatives will be proposed and tested to relieve these bottlenecks.

Table 10a - Level of Service GOAL by Road Class

Class / LOS	A or B	C	D	E or F
Limited Access	85%	10%	5%	0%
Principal Arterial	80%	10%	5%	5%
Minor Arterial	75%	15%	5%	5%
Collector	80%	10%	5%	5%

In 1997, the consulting firm TransCore, under the direction of IDOT, completed the report entitled, **"Rockford Area Congestion Management Activities."** The report was subsequently reviewed and adopted by RATS as the official assessment and strategy for dealing with congestion in the Rockford area. That report, along with all of its findings and recommendations, remains valid today and is made part of this Plan, by reference.

Congestion Management has four primary components: system monitoring, strategy consideration, project selection and effectiveness evaluation.

CMS SYSTEM MONITORING.

System monitoring provides the information needed to identify problems, solutions and the effectiveness of the solutions. System monitoring activities in the Rockford area include:

8 The IDOT/RATS Comprehensive Traffic Count Program – Conducted every five years, this program was last conducted in the Summer of 1999. Preliminary data is available and final data will be released in the Fall of 2000.

9 Local Traffic Count Programs – conducted on an as needed basis by all local jurisdicitons.

10 Transit Data Collection – conducted on an ongoing basis by RMTD and BCCA.

11 RATS Traffic Simulation Model – currently being revised and expanded to include all of Winnebago and Boone Counties and the southern part of Rock County, Wisconsin. When this effort is completed it will be used to develop a simulated regional congestion map. This will be presented to area transportation professionals, officials and citizens and compared to the congestion problems as perceived by these persons.

12 Accident Data – collected continually by area jurisdicitons.

13 Monitoring public input and complaints.

14 Development of WinGIS – Eight area government have recently joined together for the sake of developing a regional geographic information system. Work has just begun on this 4-year project. The development of this GIS will be used to aid in mapping and analyzing the above data, and prioritize where Congestion Management efforts should be concentrated.

As stated, relative to larger urban areas, the Rockford area experiences little congestion, reflecting the region's limited size and low densities. Key areas where congestion could become a problem in the future include the following: downtown Rockford, Alpine Road, East State Street, Main Street, IL 251 in southeast Rockford, the Cherry Vale Mall Area, Perryville road, Mulford Road, and the bridges over the Rock River. These areas are being monitored closely. In anticipation that some of these areas will become significant problems in the future, this Plan reinforces previous plans and proposals for corrective action. Table 21, although name Capacity Expansion Projects, contains a number of projects that will be more effective at staving off congestion in these key area, than actually adding capacity to the system.

Table 11 – Congestion Management Strategies Considered & Utilized in the Rockford Area

Strategy Class	Measure	Local Efforts	Impact on Congestion	Prospectus	
Transportation Demand Strategies	Ride sharing	Attempted in the late '70s / early '80s	No impact, travel distances/costs not great enough to influence area drivers, area industries not interested; some intercity / out-of-region benefit but very little intracity / intraregion	Unlikely to be effective in future unless fuel prices soar	1
	Alternative Work Arrangements	Not publicly promoted but used by many area industries & businesses	No comprehensive surveys to assess impact, some positive benefit probable	Option to explore & promote if congestion becomes unmanageable by other means	2
	Transit Subsidies	None	Too few transit users & too limited of transit system to have much impact	Could increase transit ridership but unlikely to have much impact on congestion	3
	Parking Management	Employed to varying degrees	Helpful with parking lot congestion, little impact on traffic congestion	Continue efforts to minimize parking needs	4
	Guaranteed Ride	None	None in Rockford	Unlikely to be useful in small urban areas	5
Traffic Operation Improvements	Traffic Signal & SignalTiming Improvements	Numerous implemented in last 5 years, nearly 400 planned in next 25 years	Extremely important, most congestion in area is at intersections or due to signal timing problems.	**Extremely important & should be continued with high priority**	6
	Intersection & Roadway Geometric Improvements	Numerous, part of New Signalization, Reclassified Road, Same Class Road, ROW & Signal Mod Projects listed in Table 20	Very effective in conjunction with Intersection improvement & signal timing projects	**Extremely important & should be continued with high priority**	7
	Time-of Day Restrictions	Employed throughout the region primarily for safety reasons	None to negative	Continue efforts for safety reasons	8
	Ramp Metering	None, very few locations in area where applicable	Possible but unknown	Could be considered at some locations if safety becomes an issue.	9
	Commercial Veh Improvements	Commercial veh loading zones designatged where possible	Varies but generally positive	Continue as needed	10
	Construction Management	Considered with all major road & bridge projects	Very important, especially for river crossings & high volume corridors	**Extremely important & should be continued with high priority**	11
High Occupancy Vehicle Measures		Not applicable, no significant freeways presently, few planned & unlikely to be politically acceptable		Unlikely to be useful in small urban area as Rockford	12
Public Transit Capital	Exclusive ROW	None	Not applicable in area	Unlikely to be of help	13
	ByPass Ramps & turnouts	2-3 constructed in the area	Very helpful in heavy traffic corridors, places where traffic movement is constrained, & safety is a concern	**Consider turnouts where safety & congestion is documented & as part of road imprvmnts where bus traffic is likely**	14
	Fleet Expansion	Not planned, unlikely to be supported politically	Unlikely to have significant impact on congestion due to propensity of population to drive	Unlikely to be of help	15
	Vehicle Replacements / Upgrades	Upgrades in Intelligent Transportation System areas planned; low floor buses	Expected to reduce traffic delays by expediting bus movement in heavy traffic corridors	**Important priority for transit**	16
	Vehicle Management Sys	Ongoing	Reduces bus downtime incidents & traffic delays in heavy traffic corridors	**Important priority for transit**	17
	Park & Ride	Implemented by private sector for intercity buses	Reduces congestion at O'Hare Airport & out of the region	Monitor to determine intracity potential & adequacy of intercity needs	18
	Mode Change Facilities	Downtown Transit Center & private sector facilities	Little impact at present or expected	Unlikely to be of help in near future	19
Public Transit Operational	Traffic Operation	Signal preemption under consideration	Improve bus movement in heavy traffic corridors	**Important priority for transit**	20
	Service Imprvmnts & other operational measures	Ongoing	Little impact because such a small percentage of internal trips by transit	Unlikely to be of help	21
Non Motorized Mode Measures	Infrastructure improvements	Substantial bike/pedestrian system already developed; significant expansions planned	Small but important impact because of ancillary benefits	**Important priority for the community, the youth & persons under served by traditional methods**	22
	Support services	Maps & some racks provided, more planned as part of enhancements	Small but important impact because of ancillary recreational, aesthetic & community health benefits	**Important priority for the community, the youth & persons under served by traditional methods**	23
Congestion Pricing	Road User Fees	Employed on I-90	None to negative, forces oversized vehicles through the urban area causing congestion	**Very mportant to remove this constraint for oversized vehicles on I-90**	24
	Parking Fees	Limited use	Doubtful if much impact	Unlikely to be of help	25
Growth Management	Land Use Policies/Regs	Many plans encouraging denser development, some regs allowing denser development if transit accessible	Some impact expect	Continue efforts for "smart growth" reasons	26
	Design Standards	above	above	above	27
Access Management	All types	Ongoing practice of all local jurisdictions & IDOT	Very important, especially on arterials in high volume corridors	**Extremely important & should be continued with high priority**	28
Incident Management	All types	Usually employed with limited access / extremely high volume roadways	As defined, not of much importance in this urban area	Might be of use on high volume arterials, consider as appropriate	29
Intelligent Transportation Measures	All types	Some considerations in public transit	Under study	Continue study, likely to be extremely improtant in future, important to comly with national architecture	30
Grade Separation	Low-speed, high speed, rail/road	All types employed in Rockford area	Most effection means of removing directional conflicts	Extremely important on key local arterials as well as access to freeway/interstates	31
General Purpose Lanes	Freeway & Arterials Lanes	Many lane expansion projects planned, see Table 21	The only practical alternative in many parts of the area if high LOS is to be retained	Very important-- continue to employ where needed after consideration of less expensive alternatives above.	32

CMS STRATEGY CONSIDERATION.

As part of the RATS planning process, the development of this LRP and the development of the annual TIPs, RATS encourages the consideration of alternative strategies for relieving congestion and enhancing mobility. Table 11 lists the major Congestion Management Strategies and possible measures as extracted from the Congestion Management Activities report. The list has been further annotated to provide information on the local efforts to utilize these measures, their impact on congestion in the Rockford area, and their prospectus or importance. Seven strategies are identified as the most important to managing congestion in the Rockford area. They include:

1 Maintaining and modernizing traffic signals throughout the area including signal timing and coordination in the longer, more heavily traveled corridors that extend through the Rockford area. Because Rockford lacks crosstown expressways, proper signalization on key crosstown arterials is extremely important. The entire State Street Corridor from downtown to I-90 is a good example of effective signal timing.

2 Geometric improvements, especially on intersections, but also on key roadway segments where bottlenecks exits. Sufficient turn lanes at intersections and bidirectional turn lanes on arterials with multiple access points are proving very helpful modifications on key arterials that had previously been constructed without optimal access control. State Street between Fairview and Mulford and 11th Street south of Harrison are good examples of this strategy.

3 Construction management to assure that projects do not simultaneously block travel in corridors or on bridges that are closely spaced.

4 Access management in the land development process. East State Street, between Mulford and Bell School Road is a good example of the effective use of this strategy.

5 The completion of key segments of critical roadway. These include projects that close missing links in roadways and projects that add lanes in limited stretches of roadway where bottlenecks now exist. The Springfield/Harrison Connection and the Springfield Avenue widening in the vicinity of Rivierside are examples of this strategy.

6 Grade separation (interchanges) at key locations. The interchanges planned at IL-2 & Latham, Alpine & State Street, and Alpine & Charles & Broadway are excellent examples of this strategy.

7 Vehicle management and replacement by the areas public transit systems. Keeping the area's bus fleets reliable increases transit ridership and avoids congestion problems caused by stalled vehicles on busy roadways.

8 The construction and maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Over 30 miles of such facilities have been constructed in the area in the last 25 years and another 36 miles of such facilities are planned in the next 25 years. While these facilities currently accommodate only a small percentage of area trips, they will become increasingly important as the system becomes more complete. They are also important because of their ancillary recreational, aesthetic, and community health/fitness benefits.

9 Considering, developing and deploying measures that can be categorized under the heading of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) including the development of regional ITS architecture that is in concert with the National ITS architecture.

10 Deployment of the above as part of reconstruction and redevelopment projects. Major road reconstructions often afford the opportunity to correct situations created in the past that inherently create traffic congestion. To a limited extent, congestion problems that were caused by inadequate or insufficient access control, lane width, bridge capacity, turn lanes, road or intersection geometry, signalization and signal coordination can be most cost-effectively corrected when accomplished as part of major reconstruction projects. Therefore, congestion management consideration is a part of all roadway and intersection reconstruction projects.

CMS PROJECT SELECTION.

The selection of projects for funding and implementation is organized around the Long-Range Planning process and the Transportation Improvement Program development process. Area jurisdictions follow similar processes in the development of their comprehensive plans and the development of their capital improvement programs. Although RATS has little control over projects constructed solely with local funds, RATS has direct authority over the selection of projects to be funded with Federal funds. To that end, RATS has developed and adopted a policy-paper specifying **"Factors to Be Used During the Review of Requests for RATS STP-Urban Funds (RATS Resolution 94-2, 1/20/94).** Recently, RATS reaffirmed and supplemented this policy through the adoption of Resolution 2000-4. Together, these documents set forth the following:

1 A 5-point Selection Process. This establishes the timing, responsibilities, process for participation, and coordination with the development of the TIP.

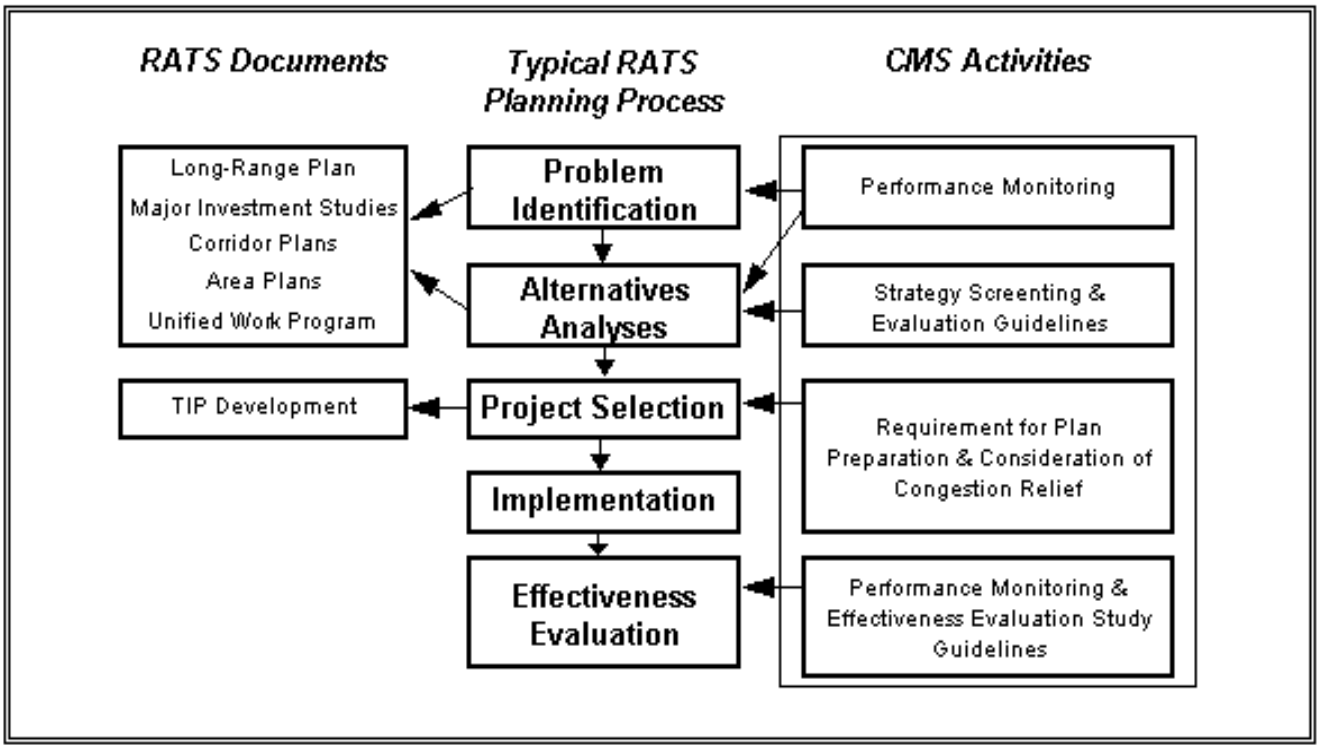
2 A 10-item list of Selection (Evaluation) Criteria. One of these specifically states that any proposed highway-related projects must, "**Have potential to relieve traffic congestion** and increase the efficiency of urban goods as well as the mobility of commuters."

3 An Application Outline / Format for submitting information on candidate projects.

4 An annotated list describing the information required as part of the application including a project schedule, the expected benefits of the project and a requirement that large projects be divided into phases that do not exceed more than 2-years' accumulation of funding.

5 The requirement that the application describe how the project will compliment one or more of the seven planning factors of TEA-21.

Figure 3 – Relationship of the CMS Process to the Overall Planning Process



CMS EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION.

The effectiveness of projects is evaluated to varying degrees depending on the type of project and the time, equipment and manpower available to make such evaluations. Experimental projects are evaluated more than projects that have proven effective in similar situations in the past. Typically, with highway projects, area traffic engineers attempt to record pertinent traffic statistics before and after construction – traffic volumes, traffic speeds, noise, accidents and fatalities are the types of statistics gathered. With transit improvements, boardings and deboardings before and after route changes are examples. An excellent example of an experimental improvement, although not federally funded, that is being closely monitored and evaluated is the recent construction in the Rockford area of "speed humps" and small "traffic circles". Constructed in the interest of traffic calming on heavily traveled residential streets, these and similar devices are being used to deter unwarranted requests for stop signs.

MANAGING SOV TRAVEL.

A special consideration in relieving or preventing congestion is reducing or, at least, managing Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips. This topic is particularly challenging in the Rockford area for three reasons that, together, amplify the propensity of area travelers to make such trips: the lack of significantly convenient alternatives and the relative lack of SOV travel deterrents (long travel times and high travel costs).

The two most important alternatives to SOV travel are public transit and car pooling. Public transit in the Rockford area, although extensive for a community this size, is still not extensive enough or frequent enough to offset its inconvenience in waiting time and travel time compared to the automobile. Car pooling poses similar inconveniences. Such inconveniences are dominantly significant in an area where there is relatively little congestion, the typical travel times via SOV are short, the travel costs via SOV are easily affordable by most citizens, and most citizens or families already own or have access to automobiles.

Given the above factors, opportunities to reduce SOV travel in the Rockford area are limited. Nevertheless, the Metro Area should continue to attempt to manage or reduce SOV travel in the following ways:

1 Continuing to operate, maintain and promote a viable, reliable, and attractive public transit service including a paratransit component that maximizes shared-ride opportunities.

2 Continuing to offer special public transit services for special high travel-inducing public events (i.e., intensive public gatherings at holidays and other special occasions).

3 Supporting private, intercity bus carriers, especially those providing trips to and from the Chicago area and O'Hare Airport. This is of significant benefit to reducing SOV travel and congestion on I-90.

4 Continuing to explore the feasibility of commuter rail between the Rockford Metro Area and Chicago.

5 Exploring opportunities for expanding public and private transit services, especially for the longer commutes.

6 Continuing to build and promote the use of pedestrian and bike facilities.

7 Continuing to support the efforts of environmental groups and energy conservationists in educating the community regarding the need to reduce SOV trips.

GOAL 7: INTEGRATED LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANS

A goal of this Plan is to encourage all local governments in the Metro Area to develop consistent and compatible land use and development plans and to ensure these plans are consistent and integrated with this areawide transportation plan.

Land use planning is extensive throughout the Rockford Metro Area. Although this planning was initiated many decades ago, it was intensified during the sixties, seventies and eighties under numerous programs funded through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. During the last decade, major updates were made to the land use plans of Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley and Boone County. The City of Rockford is, at this time,

comprehensively reworking its land use plan and Winnebago County has just completed an intensive citizen/public official review of its official "Land Use Guide".

The recent efforts of Winnebago County are particularly important to this Transportation Plan because the County made a special effort to identify conflicts between its own plans and the extraterritorial plans of the incorporated entities in the County. Conflicting land use plans can make transportation planning difficult because of the differing traffic generation potential of various land uses. Resolving these conflicts will improve the accuracy of RATS traffic forecasts and the ability of RATS to size and time new roadway needs.

GOAL 8: INTEGRATE THE LRP WITH OTHER PLANS

This Plan recognizes the need for transportation to reflect and complement other area goals, objectives and plans.

In addition to the land use and development plans noted above, transportation should complement and enhance other goals, objectives and plans promoted by national, State and local governments. These include housing goals and strategies, employment plans and strategies, and environmental resource plans.

As part of the effort to achieve this goal, RATS staff participated with staff from the Rockford Community Development Department and numerous public and private social service agencies throughout the community in the development of the area's latest **"Consolidated Plan"** as required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Consolidated Plan seeks to identify all the basic needs (economic, housing, transportation, social, etc.) of low-income persons in the community and to devise a plan to meet those needs, to the greatest extent possible with available Federal, State, local and private funds, over the next five years. **In accordance with the Consolidated Plan, this Plan places special emphasis on linking low-income households with employment opportunities, community services and community amenities.**

The area's transportation system is the key to the above "linking". Transportation is vital to low-income persons. Because the automobile is the primary means of travel in the Rockford area, transportation is more of a problem for low-income persons. They simply cannot afford to own, maintain and operate automobiles to the degree higher-income persons can. Low-income persons are typically public-transit dependent. However, in smaller urban areas such as Rockford, providing and maintaining public transit is more difficult than in larger areas because the bulk of the population (the higher-income, auto-owning majority of the population) does not use or support public transit. Therefore, finding adequate monies to develop and operate a public transit system is often a difficult task in smaller urban areas such as Rockford.

This Plan recognizes the need of low-income persons for public transit services and stresses the need to provide adequate subsidies and other support for this service. Without good public transit service, low-income persons can be detached or denied access to good jobs, health services, social services, shopping opportunities and other community amenities.

This Plan also recognizes the need to improve the access of low-income persons, groups and neighborhoods to the auto-oriented transportation system of the area. Of particular importance to this aspect is the Harrison/Springfield Connection.
The Harrison/Springfield Connection, partially complete at this time, provides for a new roadway linking the west side of Rockford with Harrison Avenue, a major cross-town east-west arterial. This connection will provide easier access to hundreds of businesses and industries on Rockford's east side. It will also provide development incentives for large tracts of open land on Rockford's west side and, in turn, job opportunities for thousands of west side, low-income households.

GOAL 9: TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS

This Plan encourages enhancements and other improvements to reduce the adverse environmental, aesthetic or societal impacts of traditional transportation structures or activities.

This Plan recognizes the extensive adverse impacts of highways and traffic and encourages all feasible methods to reduce these impacts. For the last 20 years or more, a wide range of measures have been tested and implemented to reduce the impacts of traditional transportation activities. These measures fall into three broad categories. First,

efforts have been aimed at directly reducing noise and visual impacts of major roadways. These include such things as the use of more aesthetic building materials, berms, landscaping and vegetation, physical sound barriers, carefully directed lighting, and aesthetically designed signal and lighting standards. For example, since the mid-1970s, extensive parking lot landscaping requirements have been enacted by most jurisdictions and are rigidly enforced on both the public and private sector.

Second, efforts have been aimed at planning and aligning transportation facilities in ways that will minimize impact on special community attributes or resources. These include such things as realigning roadways around major parklands, and efforts to reduce traffic through residential neighborhoods. Examples include the routing of Perryville Road around Rock Cut State Park and the termination of Central Avenue at the Klehm Forest Preserve. Also, several historic districts have been designated and special efforts are being made to reduce traffic impacts in these areas.

Third, efforts have been aimed at establishing alternative transportation modes or facilities that are less impacting than traditional modes. Since the 1970s, nearly nine miles of dedicated bikeway/pedestrian paths and three major dedicated pedestrian bridge crossings have been constructed in the Rockford area.

This Plan urges the continued planning and implementation of enhancement activities that will reduce the adverse environmental and societal impacts of our transportation systems.

GOAL 10: INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION

This Plan recognizes the need to consider the effects of all transportation improvements, both public and private.

Although the bulk of transportation within the Metro Area is facilitated by public improvements, private transportation providers and industries are equally important. The Rockford area is served by three railroad companies, over 100 trucking operations, two private airports, one major public airport served by numerous private air carriers, three intercity bus companies, and several taxi cab, ambulance, charter bus and limousine services.

This plan recognizes the need to consider the effects of both public and private transportation improvements and to coordinate those improvements. This has been a long-standing local concern as illustrated by the efforts to provide berths for intercity bus carriers at the downtown intracity bus terminal. More recently, extensive consideration was given to the needs of the new United Parcel Service terminal at the Greater Rockford Airport and to the surface transportation needs of the airport itself.

GOAL 11: ACCESS TO SIGNIFICANT FACILITIES

This Plan recognizes the need to consider and enhance access to significant facilities throughout the Metro Area such as ports, airports, freight distribution facilities, cultural facilities, military facilities and major commercial and industrial sites or complexes.

Numerous private and public facilities exist throughout the Metro Area that have high priority for special transportation access. These facilities include airports; rail terminals; bus terminals; schools; colleges; motor freight terminals; military facilities; the Rockford central business district and other major retail facilities such as Cherry Vale Mall, Machesney Mall, and the East State Steet, Perryville and Riverside commercial strips; hospitals and health care facilities; governmental facilities; major parks such as Rock Cut State Park, the Sports Core and Magic Waters; cultural facilities such as the Metro Centre; industrial parks and major industries such as Chrysler, Hamilton Sundstrand, Ingersol and numerous others; retirement homes; and major residential areas and other points of interest. **Map 9** of this Plan illustrates the distribution of the majority of the existing significant public and semi-public facilities in the MA. **Map 10** illustrates the distribution of the most significant parks, forest preserves and other natural areas.

This Plan seeks to enhance public access to these facilities. Furthermore, to the extent possible, access should be multimodal. Access via public transit is particularly important to those persons detached or divorced from the auto-oriented transportation system. In this regard, the services of the Rockford Mass Transit District and the Boone County Council on Aging are extremely important. Efforts should also be continued to provide nonmotorized (pedestrian/bicycle) access to significant facilities.

GOAL 12: ROAD CONNECTIVITY

This Plan recognizes the need to consider and enhance road connectivity (intra- and inter-regional) as well as the connectivity of transit and non-motorized systems.

Better road connectivity has been a long-standing priority of RATS. This is evidenced by several road crossover projects and offset intersection elimination projects, some implemented over the last two decades, and others contained in the Plan but not yet implemented. These improvements will provide smoother transitions between major parallel arterials (i.e., the Rockton-to-Winnebago crossover, completed); others are eliminating offsets at major intersections (i.e., the College/5th Avenue improvement, completed). Others are connecting major north-south arterials with east-west arterials (i.e., the Springfield/Harrison connection, under construction).

Interregionally, RATS has always encouraged projects which provide better connectivity to the State-marked highway system, the federal highway system and the Interstate Highway System. This Plan continues to promote such connectivity and also encourages improvements that enhance the connectivity to the routes that have been designated on the National Highway System.

Multiple names on continuous streets is a special problem related to road connectivity within the Rockford area. One of the most glaring examples is the Fairview Avenue collector. Although continuous over three miles, this street has five names: Chelsea Avenue at the north end, Fairview Boulevard north of State Street, Fairview Avenue south of State Street, Peter Avenue south of Seventh Avenue, and 31st Street south of Charles Street. Throughout the Rockford area, there are dozens of multiple-named streets. This creates enormous confusion for travelers who are unfamiliar with Rockford. Efforts are being made to correct these problems, but residents and businesses often thwart these attempts because of the temporary inconvenience caused by renaming. **This Plan continues to endorse efforts to eliminate multiple names on continuous streets.**

The connectivity of other modes is also important. Cooperation between the Rockford Mass Transit District and the Boone County Council on Aging, which provides paratransit service throughout Belvidere and Boone County, will become increasingly important as the area populations grow. Loves Park Transit System has produced almost seamless transfers within their systems. Efforts have been made to provide connectivity between the three intercity bus carriers serving the Rockford area and the intracity buses. In the future, further planning will be needed to determine the need for extending intracity buses into the Boone County part of the Metro Area.

Recently, the desire and need for a passenger/commuter rail connection between the Rockford/Belvidere area and Chicago has been brought forth by numerous community leaders. Efforts are being put forth by the State of Illinois and several interest groups to provide a statewide system of pedestrian/recreation pathways. Further planning will be needed in both these areas.

GOAL 13: MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

This Plan continues to recognizes the value of "Management Systems" and encourages further work toward implementing such systems where needed.

A Management System provides detailed information on the extent and condition of various transportation subelements. Typically Management Systems can be developed for: Pavement, Bridges, Safety Concerns, Congestion Activities, Intermodal Concerns, and Public Transit Facilities and Equipment. Currently, the City of Rockford is developing a Pavement Management System for all of its local roadways. This system will inventory, evaluate and monitor pavement conditions and help determine when, where and to what extent maintenance is needed on the local roadway system. This quantified approach will provide a more equitable and cost-effective basis for maintaining the City's public streets. Please refer back to Goal 6 for a discussion of the area's Congestion Management (Activities) System and attempts to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel.

GOAL 14: ROW PRESERVATION

This Plan recognizes the need to identify and preserve rights-of-way (ROW) for needed roadway projects.

The determination of future ROW needs and the preservation or advanced acquisition of ROW has been an ongoing activity for many years in the Rockford area. Our State and County governments are most active in this role and this

is common practice for arterial roadways. ROW for collector roadways is acquired through the land subdivision/ development process. More planning and work are needed in this area, however, particularly with regard to ROW needs at future major intersections and in the developing area east of the I-90 Tollway. Also, major efforts have recently been aimed at preserving abandoned railroad ROWs for future use as pedestrian paths and bikeways. This Plan encourages further efforts in this area.

GOAL 15: FREIGHT MOVEMENT

This Plan recognizes the need to enhance the efficient movement of freight.

The safe, efficient movement of freight is essential to the commerce and prosperity of the community. Greater efforts will be directed toward improving access to truck and rail terminals and airports. A comprehensive review of designated truck routes has been underway for the past several months. The result of this work has been the development of an area-wide truck route map and a proposed truck route map **(Maps 16 & 17**), included as part of this Plan.

Over the next five years, a comprehensive rail needs assessment and rail plan should be developed for the Rockford area.

In addition, considerable freight movement in and out of the Rockford area is by air. This Plan continues to support the efforts of the Greater Rockford Airport Authority in this regard.

GOAL 16: LIFE-CYCLE COSTS

This Plan recognizes the value of considering life-cycle costs in the design of transportation structures and systems.

Life-cycle costing is the process of identifying and quantifying all costs associated with a structure over its useful life. An examination of life-cycle costs can have two benefits. First, when evaluating proposed new structures, it provides a more complete estimate of the total costs and allows more valid comparisons of alternatives. A project which is inexpensive to build but is expensive to maintain or has a short life span may be less cost-effective than a project that is more expensive to build but less expensive to maintain or has a longer life span. Second, life-cycle costing can be a useful aid for forecasting and programming future funding needs for the maintenance of existing structures. Either way, funding resources can be better conserved.

Life-cycle costing is not intended to replace the need for careful monitoring and periodic inspections of structures. Such work is still needed to ensure safety and locate unpredicted problems. However, life-cycle costing is encouraged by this plan as projects are proposed, pre-engineered and compared.

GOAL 17: OVERALL EFFECTS

This Plan recognizes the need to consider the overall effects of our transportation decisions, including the social, economic and environmental effects.

A broader look at transportation alternatives is needed to avoid situations where the solution to one problem becomes the cause of another. As transportation improvements are proposed and evaluated, care must be taken to minimize adverse impacts on housing availability and quality, maximize employment and community development opportunities, preserve or enhance air and water quality, preserve and conserve natural resources, minimize noise, improve aesthetics, and generally preserve or improve the quality of life.
To achieve this goal, this Plan has been prepared with consideration of the input provided through the RATS Public Involvement Process, Rockford's "Blueprint" process, the Boone and Winnebago Regional Greenway Plan (12/97), the Consolidated Plan and numerous other planning efforts throughout the community. On a continuing basis, extra effort will be directed to ensure that this Plan does not conflict with goals, plans and facilities of agencies and entities responsible for area parks, forest preserves and natural lands. Area agencies responsible for preservation, development and restoration of housing will be consulted, as will agencies responsible for historical, environmental and cultural resources. This Plan will attempt to minimize or reduce air pollution throughout the area and include measures to ensure compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act.

GOAL 18: PUBLIC TRANSIT

This Plan recognizes the need to enhance and increase the use of transit.

As already discussed in previous goals, efficient, effective transit decreases the need for automobile use, increases the number of shared trips, promotes energy conservation, reduces air and water pollution, provides transportation for low-income persons and other persons disenfranchised from the automobile, and provides a sense of community identity and cohesiveness.

Transit has been promoted for many years by the area's transportation plans. Further work is needed and will include experimentation with various types of expanded service, such as the night service mentioned earlier, service to other points of interest and activity centers in the community, service to the eastern parts of the Metro Area as urbanization expands, better scheduling, better reliability, and expanded complementary paratransit services.

Of particular importance are recent transit efforts in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act. All fixed-route buses are now wheel-chair accessible. 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 and throughout Boone County by the BCCA.

Lastly, related to transit and services to persons with disabilities, extensive efforts are being made area-wide to provide better pedestrian facilities so that all persons, but especially persons with disabilities, have better mobility to and from bus routes. Current emphasis is on curb cuts for wheelchair users, especially in the vicinity of bus routes. The City of Rockford's 50/50 Sidewalk repair program is encouraging the repair of sidewalk facilities throughout the City.

GOAL 19: TRANSIT SECURITY

This Plan recognizes the need to maintain security for transit users.

In the past, transit security (i.e., protection from crime) has not been a significant problem in the Rockford area. The overall crime situation in Rockford, although not to be admired, is far less extreme than most large urban areas. Problems at the main downtown transfer area have been alleviated by the construction of the RMTD Transfer Center. The Transfer Center is manned by dispatchers and a security officer, and bus berthing areas are monitored with security cameras. Also, the Transfer Center is located across the street from the Public Safety Building (police headquarters) and the entire area is fully lighted at all times.

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

Recently, the extension of transit service into the evening hours is creating new concern. While the fixed-route buses travel predominantly on the safer arterial streets, paratransit vehicles must occasionally enter small enclaves where crime is a serious problem. This situation is being carefully monitored. Special training may be needed for drivers entering these areas and constant contact with the dispatcher may also be appropriate.

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

While transit security is not a serious problem in the Rockford area, many Rockford citizens perceive it as a problem and, as a result, are fearful or reluctant to use the systems or allow their children to use the systems. This perception reduces ridership and results in higher rates of automobile traffic. To help mitigate this and other misconceptions regarding the use of transit, RMTD is initiating a program of Consumer Training. This program will give instruction in route/schedule reading and will help demonstrate that the transit system is a safe and secure environment.

Finally, RMTD appreciate that adverse weather presents a security problem for transit patrons. To minimize this, bus stop shelters have been installed at numerous places throughout the service area and bus drivers make extra efforts

to adhere to schedules as closely as possible. Also, RMTD has special provisions to provide seasonal paratransit eligibility for persons who are particularly susceptible to inclement weather conditions.

GOAL 20: AN INTEGRATED MULTIMODAL SYSTEM

The Plan recognizes the need for an integrated transportation system that provides several modes of transportation (pedestrian facilities, roadways, transit and airports) in a manner that provides connectivity among the modes both inter- and intra-regionally.

An integrated transportation system is a system that provides several alternative modes of travel and a high level of connectivity between the modes. As previously stated, significant community facilities should be accessible by a variety of transportation modes or combination of modes. An airport is of little value if persons and freight cannot get to and from the airport via roadways and transit (or rail, in some cases). A transit system is of little value if there are not adequate roadways for the buses to travel or adequate walkways for persons to get to and from the transit routes. Wheelchair lift-equipped buses are of little value if wheelchair users cannot get to and from the buses because sidewalks are in disrepair or curbs form barriers. Similarly, an intracity bus system should provide access to the intercity bus system and local roadways should provide good access to regional and national roadway systems.

This Plan reemphasizes and encourages the complementary aspects of the area's roadways, bikeways, sidewalks, transit and paratransit services, railways, airports, truck routes and hazardous cargo routes.

GOAL 21: FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

The Plan will financially demonstrate how the proposed improvements in this plan can be implemented.

The TEA-21 requires a "financially constrained" approach in the development of this Plan. There are three steps to this approach: (1) estimate the cost of possible projects or improvements, (2) make reasonable estimates of anticipated revenues, and (3) evaluate and revise the list of possible improvements and propose only those projects that are financially feasible when compared with anticipated revenues. Effective maintenance of the existing system must be included.

The financially constrained approach is applied at two levels, the TIP and the Long-Range Plan. The 3-year TIP is the most precise level. At this level, project costs and anticipated revenues must be precisely estimated and balanced, especially for the first or implementation year. Project cost estimates and revenue forecasts must also be balanced at the Long-Range Plan or 20-year level. Projects or improvements which cannot be funded with the 20-year forecasted revenues may still be part of this Plan but will be identified as needing a new special revenue source or they will be programmed more than 20 years from the present.

GOAL 22: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This Plan seeks to ensure Environmental Justice in accordance with Presidential Executive Order 12898 and the derivative US DOT and FHWA Orders. In essence, this means that minority and low-income populations must be treated fairly and equitably, compared to other non-minority and more fortunate higher income populations. In simple terms, as we apply federal programs, use federal funds and impose federal regulations we:

I. Should not apply a disproportionate share of funding or assistance to minority and low-income populations.

II. Should not allow a disproportionate share of the adverse impacts of our activities to fall upon minority and low-income populations.

III. Should make a concerted effort to determine what populations are going to be affected, before we spend any federal funds, implement any federal program, impose any federal regulations, or create or cause any adverse or harmful impacts.

IV. Should, periodically, review and analyze our past actions to determine if we are, in fact, treating all groups equitably.

V. Should make concerted efforts, as we plan and program our activities, to involve minority and low-income groups in the decision-making process.

The overall goal of the Executive Order is to ensure that all communities and persons, across the nation, live in a safe and healthful environment. Further, the Order recognizes that many undeniably beneficial public works projects, infrastructure improvements and governmental actions are often accompanied by adverse or undesirable impacts. Therefore, the order seeks to ensure that minorities and low-income communities or persons don't bear the brunt of a project's or action's adverse impacts, while white and higher income communities or persons take the lion's share of the benefits.

PART 3: THE ONGOING PLANNING PROCESS

This transportation plan is a compilation of new and previously prepared work. Intensive transportation planning has been carried on continuously by RATS and the jurisdictions within the Rockford Metro Area for the past 30 years. During that time, numerous plans have been prepared, subjected to public scrutiny, modified and adopted. As laws, conditions, community values and technologies have changed and new information has become available, these plans and documents have been subsequently amended or updated.

For the most part, these past plans were developed and adopted in accordance with the goals and objectives similar to those stated in the previous section. RATS and its sponsoring communities throughout the area have developed comprehensive land use plans with "intermodal" transportation elements for many years. While the US Department of Transportation concentrated its efforts on highway systems, even to the point where it discouraged the use of planning subsidies for other modes, local planners recognized the need for more comprehensive, integrated approaches. Most area land use plans contain transportation elements which are coordinated with public facility needs, land development proposals, community social needs and environmental considerations. While the most recent previous RATS Transportation Plan Update concentrated on highway needs, it also recognized and incorporated the more comprehensive plans of its member communities, as well as pedestrian and transit elements of previous updates that remained valid.

It is not, therefore, the intention of this plan to rescind or ignore these previously adopted, well thought-out studies and documents. Rather, this Plan (1) brings these documents together, (2) evaluates them and reaffirms those parts that are still valid, and (3) proposes changes where needed, or (4) proposes further work to define where changes are needed.

The 1990 LRP Update

A milestone in the evolution of the transportation planning process in the Rockford area was the Long-Range Plan Update that was adopted by the RATS Policy Committee in May of 1990. That update was the culmination of a lengthy effort initiated in 1986 by a large proactive citizen participation effort, identified as the Mayor's Transportation Task Force (TTF), and continued by the RATS Technical Committee. Subsequently, the 1990 Update was taken to the legislative authorities of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, the Village of Cherry Valley and Winnebago County for incorporation as part of their respective comprehensive land use and development plans. The 1990 LRP Update had many useful and valid parts that remain reflective of community values and are retained as part of this Plan.

The 1990 Update made five major points or changes concerning previous policy issues: (1) it reversed a previous policy and reestablished the use of existing diagonal arterials as part of the RATS roadway network; (2) it reversed a previous policy limiting multilane roads to four lanes; (3) it reaffirmed a policy supporting the elimination of different street names on continuous streets; (4) it reaffirmed ring road concepts for better intraregional circulation; and (5) it recommended greater review of development site plans for access control on arterial and collector roadways. In addition, the Update concentrated its efforts on the area's roadway network and made 31 statements or changes regarding the arterial and collector systems. Together, this work remains the basis for the planned functionally classified roadway networks of the Winnebago County side of the RATS Metro area.

The 1995 LRP Update

Adopted initially in May of 1995 and updated in January of 1996, the 1995 Update is the model for this Plan. Based on the requirements stemming from the ISTEA, which differ only marginally from the requirements of TEA-21, the 1995 Plan covered the same geographical area, considered the same planning factors, and included nearly identical projects (with the exception of those since implemented) as this Plan.

Significant Changes Since 1995

Since adoption of the 1995 Update, a number of changes have occurred in the Metro Area, or in RATS planning, that need to be addressed in this comprehensive update. These include:

1. The **passage of the TEA-21**, similar to the ISTEA, but with some changes in emphasis.

2. The **dissolution of the Winnebago County Paratransit System** and the absorption of paratransit and ADA responsibilities by the Rockford Mass Transit District and the Loves Park Transit System.

3. The **implementation of evening bus service** by the Rockford Mass Transit District.

4. The **dissolution of the Loves Park Transit System**. (This development is relatively "plan neutral" because the identical services provided by LPTS are now being provided by RMTD via contractual arrangements between the City of Loves Park and RMTD.)

5. Updates or **amendments to the land use and development plans** of Rockford, Loves Park, Winnebago County, Cherry Valley, Machesney Park, Belvidere and Boone County.

6. The development of the **Boone and Winnebago Regional Greenway Plan and Map** (12/97) (This development is also relatively "plan neutral". Conservation and preservation of the Greenways and natural environment was always a goal or policy of the Plan. The Greenways document provides a more up-to-date and comprehensive inventory of environmental factors that need to be considered.) (See **Map 21**)

7. The solidification of the **Greater Rockford Airport** as a major air-freight hub for the region.

8. The beginning of the construction phases of the **Harrison/Springfield Connection** – the MA's multiyear, multimillion dollar STP-U project. And, the designation of the MA's next multiyear, multimillion dollar STP-U project: the reconstruction of the **Harrison Avenue Arterial** across all of south Rockford.

9. The initiation of the **expansion of the computerized traffic simulation models** to cover all of Boone and Winnebago Counties, and part of Rock County, Wisconsin (effectively combining the modeling of the entire Rockford MA and the State Line MA and providing for much greater cooperation and comprehensiveness).

10. The **initiation of WinGIS**, the area's first regional Geographic Information System and database warehouse.

11. Recent emphasis on **Environmental Justice and Title VI** (fairness to minorities and low-income populations).

12. Recent concerns over the impact of vehicular traffic in neighborhoods and concepts of **Traffic Calming**.

13. As per recommendations in the 1995 Update, the compilation of an up-to-date regional map of existing **designated truck routes** and the development of a proposal for a more comprehensive truck route system in the future (see **Maps 16 and 17**).

14. The identification of **special transit needs** for persons attempting to return to the workforce (i.e., limited night-time transit and dependent care and classroom facilities in close proximity to transit.)

15. The determination that an **interchange** will be needed within the next 25 years at the intersection of **Charles Street, Newburg/Broadway and Alpine Road** (the 5-Points Intersection). The approximate cost is estimated at $12 million.

16. The determination, by IDOT, that an **interchange will not be needed** (within the next 25 years) at the intersection of **IL-251 and IL-173**.

17. The determination, by IDOT that the **interchange proposed at IL-2 and Latham Road, will be needed within the next 25 years.**

Parts of this Plan Remaining Incomplete

This LRP update will address many of the above issues but will not be entirely complete for a number of reasons. Among these are:

1. The computerized traffic simulation model being developed for the three counties will not be complete for approximately 18 months. The results of this effort are needed to test and better define the planned arterial and collector roadway systems for the entire RATS/SLATS MAs and surrounding developing lands.

2. The City of Rockford Land Use Plan, when completed, may precipitate further revisions to this Plan.

3. RMTD has programmed a comprehensive Route and Schedule Analysis. The results of this work may modify the routing and/or delivery of transit services in the area.

4. Although significant public involvement in this planning effort has been afforded through the RATS public involvement process, Winnebago County's Intergovernmental Cooperation and Planning Committee, the development of the HUD-required Consolidated Plan, the Mayor's Task Force on Welfare to Work, the development of WinGIS, and numerous other planning efforts – public involvement is an ongoing process. RATS intends to accept public input and comment on the Plan even after adoption. As needed and appropriate, the Plan will be amended in response to this public input.

PART 4: LAND USE PLANNING

Very often new developments and land uses are encouraged by the accessibility afforded by new transportation systems. Perhaps just as often, however, the land uses are planned first, in response to some other attraction or need, and the transportation systems are then developed to accommodate the new traffic and access needs. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that land use intensity is directly and inseparably related to the transportation system, and vice versa. Any attempt to plan one without consideration of the other is foolish.

The accepted practice in planning is to base the transportation system, its locations and road sizes, etc., on the land uses proposed or predicted in the area's land use and development plans. City planners first take a comprehensive view of the landscape. In light of the area's soils, geology, drainage, topography and pre-existing cultural features (including existing transportation routes), and current development impetus, they decide where it is best to locate future residential, industrial, commercial and public land uses, and at what densities. From this, transportation planners then estimate the number of trips that will be generated from the various land uses and locations and, in turn, design and size a transportation system to accommodate those trips.

Since the 1950s, transportation planners have developed and used computerized traffic simulation models to assist in this complicated accounting exercise. RATS is now using and expanding such a model to simulate and test the adequacy of the roadway system that has been planned for the area for the last several decades. However, the accuracy or reasonableness of the proposed transportation network, derived through the above planning procedure, depends primarily on how accurate and up-to-date the area's land use plans are. As part of the RATS modeling effort, it is necessary to project the number of dwelling units and the number of employees by Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) throughout the modeled area. This process brings to light several important considerations.

1. It is important that all jurisdictions maintain and update their Land Use Plans on a regular basis. Land use development is primarily a private enterprise that is loosely regulated by government. It is impossible to predict or plan for all possible scenarios of development which might be proposed by the private sector. Therefore, land use planning must be flexible and changeable. Communities experiencing growth must update and amend their plans frequently. Comprehensive updates are advisable every 5-10 years.

2. Many of the jurisdictions have areas of overlapping planning authority. In Illinois, municipalities have authority to impose their plans up to 1.5 miles beyond their corporate limits (extraterritorial jurisdiciton). However, several of the municipalities have overlapping extraterritorial areas and have differing plans for these areas. Municipalities can establish future boundary agreements with nearby municipalities, but this practice also is not fully employed in the Rockford area. Further, in many cases, municipal plans differ from County plans. The recent effort by Winnebago County's Intergovernmental Cooperation and Planning Committee will lead to the elimination of many of these conflicts. But as long as there are multiple jurisdictions in a planning area, there will be differences in plans, policies and priorities. Diligent attention to these differences is an ongoing need.

Table 12 - Status of Land Use Planning

Entity	Updated Recently	Planning Commission	Require Utilities	Boundary Agreements	Transpor-tation Plan	Plan overlap Areas
Rockford	Update underway	No	Yes	MP,CV	Yes	BCo, NM, WCo
Loves Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rkfd	Yes	MP, Ros Bco, WCo
Machesney Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rkfd	Yes	LP, Ros, WCo
Cherry Valley	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rkfd	Yes	BCo, WCo, Belv
New Millford	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Rkfd, WCo
Belvidere	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	CV
Winnebago County	Update underway	No	No	No	Yes	Rkfd, LP, NM, MP,CV
Boone County	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rkfd, LP, CV

Table 12 summarizes land use planning of the jurisdictions in the Rockford Metro Area. With the exception of the township governments, all of the major jurisdictions within the Rockford Metro Area possessing the authority to conduct land use planning are currently exercising that authority. These jurisdictions include the cities of Rockford, Loves Park and Belvidere, the villages of Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, Roscoe and New Millford, and the counties of Winnebago and Boone. Only Rockford, New Millford and Winnebago County exercise this authority without an active advisory Planning Commission; the legislative bodies of these entities do the planning directly. All of the municipalities require full utilities in conjunction with development. Only the counties allow development on private well and septic systems. All of the jurisdictions have adopted comprehensive plans, and all but New Millford (the smallest) have transportation elements within their plans. All of the jurisdictions have been diligent in comprehensively updating their plans. Rockford and Winnebago County have not comprehensively updated their plans for several years but are currently working on updates.

In addition to the municipal and county governments noted above, there are a number of "special districts" that exert significant impact on the growth and path of development in the Metro Area. Probably the largest and most important is the Rock River Water Reclamation District (RRWRD) but the North Park Water District (NPWD), the Rockford Park District (RPD), the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (WCFPD) and the Boone County Conservation District (BCCD) also play major roles.

The RRWRD provides sanitary sewer services for nearly all of the Rockford Urban area and has plans to extend service into Boone County. The NPWD provides public water to parts of Loves Park, most of Machesney Park and other areas to the northeast. The RPD provides and operates most of the publicly- funded park and recreational services in the Urban Area. The WCFPD and the BCCD also provide significant park and recreation services in their respective parts of the Metro Area.

Land Use Planning Recommendations

Although in varying states of repair, all of the area's land use plans provide a reasonable starting point for determining probable future land uses as a basis for assessing future transportation demand. This Plan encourages the following with regard to area Land Use Planning and its integration with the area's overall transportation needs.

1. **As with the Transportation Plan, the area land use plans should be updated more frequently than has been done in the past. The updates need not be extensive, but significant changes to proposed land uses should be documented and publicized on a regular basis. Plan updates should keep pace with municipal annexations.**

2. **The exercise of extraterritorial review powers by local municipalities should be more diligent and deliberate. Future boundary agreements should be established and adopted by all adjacent municipalities.**

3. **Efforts should be continued toward resolving planning conflicts between adjacent or nearby municipalities and county governments in the areas of overlapping planning jurisdiction. Such conflicts confuse and confound public facilities planners and private developers alike. Piecemeal resolution of these conflicts can result in improperly-sized public facilities and/or permanent land use conflicts.**

4. **Efforts should be made to further validate or improve the land use forecasts developed as part of the most recent RATS Traffic Modeling Effort and described below.**

5. **The area's "special districts" should make extra efforts to inform all other jurisdictions as they plan and expand the services they provide. This is particularly important in the areas of overlapping municipal planning jurisdictions. Public services should not be extended into areas of jurisdictional conflict until the conflicts are resolved.**

Housing and Employment Forecasts

During the summer of 1992, RATS staff and area planners reviewed the area's land use plans, and population and growth projections as part of the RATS Traffic Modeling effort. The goal of this work was to develop dwelling unit and employment forecasts between 1990 and 2015 to be used in projecting future travel demand. The results of this work have been used in the Traffic Model for testing various proposed highway system improvements or alternatives. At the present time, RATS and SLATS planners and a consultant are comprehensively updating these dwelling unit and employment forecasts for all of Winnebago and Boone Counties in Illinois and part of Rock County in Wisconsin.

Environmental Considerations

Goal 17 of this Plan recognizes the need to consider the environmental effects of transportation decisions. Goal 9 recognizes the need for "enhancements" (special efforts as part of transportation projects) to reduce the adverse impacts of transportation projects. To the greatest extent possible, public improvements should protect, conserve and/or preserve, or at least, minimize their adverse effect on major natural resources.

Air and water quality are broad categories deserving special consideration in the planning and development of public transportation improvements. More specific natural resources present, and deserving attention in the Rockford Metro Area, include the vast and valuable ground water resources; the sand, gravel and bedrock resources; the fertile and productive agricultural resources; the remaining forested areas; and the floodplain and wetland areas. The latter areas are particularly important in preserving wildlife and wildlife habitat.

The Rockford Metro Area has an extensive system of public parks and forest preserves. These lands, as well as other large areas of open space and natural land, are illustrated in the recently developed **Boone and Winnebago Regional Greenway Plan Map (12/97)**. (A scaled-down version of the Greenways Map is include for illustration purposes as **Map 21**). Future transportation decisions should not encroach upon these areas but, instead, should enhance public access so that the public can enjoy and appreciate these areas.

The Rockford Metro Area is dissected by an extensive array of surface waterways and flood plains, including the Rock River, Kishwaukee River, and numerous tributaries as illustrated on **Map 22**. These waterways and their adjacent flood plains and sensitive lands are extremely important to the area's ecosystem. Efforts should be made to minimize the impact of transportation facilities as they cross or traverse these natural areas.

As transportation decisions are made, area transportation planners, transportation engineers and public officials should consult and seek advice from area experts in environmental and resource conservation matters. Area agencies with such expertise include, but are not limited to, the **Rockford Park District**, the **Winnebago County Forest Preserve District**, the **Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Boone and Winnebago Counties**, the **Illinois Natural Land Institute**, the **Boone County Conservation District**, the **Soil Conservation Service of the US Department of Agriculture**, the **US Environmental Protection Agency** and the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources**.

PART 5: HIGHWAY SYSTEMS

Roadways, the facilities used by cars and trucks, are the primary means of travel within the Rockford Metro Area and for short- and medium- range trips outside the Metro Area. This Plan identifies a complete system of such roadways throughout the Metro Area. Within the Rockford Urban Area, this system has long been established through the RATS planning process and is being continuously reviewed and tested through the use of the traffic simulation model for the Rockford area. In the Boone/ Belvidere portion of the MA, the planned roadway system was developed through the planning processes of the Belvidere/Boone County Regional Planning Commission (BBCRP). This entire system of roadway is currently under review, pending completion of the RATS/SLATS/Boone/Winnebago Co. traffic simulation model.

Roadway Classification

For planning purposes, roadways are classified according to their function. **The classification system used in this Plan is a simplified version of the systems used by IDOT and FHWA, and by RATS in previous plans.** More elaborate systems have rural and urban subsystems. But because this plan focuses on areas urbanized or expected to become urbanized in the next 20 years, it will not include rural classes. Also, this simplified system does not include exact cross section widths or other design standards. These details fall within the realm of engineering rather than planning. The classification system of this Plan has five roadway classes arranged in a hierarchy:

I. **Principal Arterial** -- This is the highest classification in the system. These roadways are designed for high-speed and/or high- volume traffic. They range from controlled access freeways (examples include I-90, I-39 and US-20 Bypass), to limited access highways (parts of Mulford Road, East State Street and many others), to semi-limited access roadways that carry high volumes of traffic (such as Alpine Road, North Second Street

and others). They are typically used for long trips within the region (intraregional) or trips through the region to other regions (interregional). They are especially important because they are part of State-wide or nation-wide networks. A special sub-class of these roadways is the National Highway System. Most Principal Arterials are marked (signed) State, Federal or Interstate Highways. The intersections of Principal Arterials are always signalized or grade-separated.

II. **Minor Arterial** -- These roadways also provide for high-speed and/or high-volume traffic, but they are typically used more for intraregional rather than interregional trips. They are usually under local jurisdiction; examples include Perryville, Forest Hills, Spring Creek and Rockton Roads. Minor arterials often form boundaries between recognized "neighborhoods" and collect traffic from collector streets. Also, arterials are usually given movement preference over lower-level streets (crossing traffic will yield or stop, or is grade-separated).

III. **Collectors** -- These roadways are designed for lower-speed, lower-volume traffic than arterials. Collectors "collect" the traffic from the neighborhoods and direct it to the nearest arterials (or disperse the traffic from the arterials into the neighborhoods). They are often less continuous than arterials and a complete trip through the region on a single collector is not usually possible. Many collectors are less than two miles in length, but some, such as Bell School Road, are longer. Access to collectors is not as strictly controlled as with arterials (i.e., driveway cuts can be allowed from every property) but, where possible, access is directed to the local streets.

IV. **Local Streets** -- These include all the roadways not covered in one of the classes above. They allow direct access to individual homes and businesses, and through-traffic is generally discouraged from using these streets, particularly in residential neighborhoods, although such traffic does use them when arterials and collectors become congested or blocked. To minimize construction and maintenance costs, local streets are designed with less concern for connectivity from street to street, narrower geometrics, and other lesser standards. The lesser standards also tend to discourage through traffic and could be reduced further except for the requirements of emergency vehicles. Traffic control devices (stop signs) are sometimes used to discourage through traffic, but this is not advisable as a rule.

Roadway Spacing Standards

This Plan follows traditional system design standards (and past RATS policy) for arterial roadway (Principal or Minor) spacing. Consequently, they are usually spaced at roughly one-mile intervals. Arterials are usually located on the section lines (Public Land Survey System).

Collector roadways are also spaced at one-mile intervals, i.e., roughly one-half mile from and equidistant between each arterial. Physical features, property lines, cultural features and developer demands sometimes make it necessary to deviate from this rule.

In some instances, additional collectors are designated and required. This can occur where arterials have been spaced more than a mile apart, where a single continuous collector is not possible, where traffic generation is expected to be heavy, or where the nearby arterials have strict access limitations.

Local streets are spaced to provide access to all existing lots, or lots which may be potentially created through the subdivision process.

In some areas that were developed many years ago, collector streets were not defined or were poorly defined or spaced. In these areas, streets that were originally designed as local streets are often functioning as collectors. Where such streets have good connectivity with the overall system, these streets are designated as collectors in the Plan. When making improvements to these streets in the future, they will be designed to accommodate the heavier traffic to the extent possible while, at the same time, minimizing adverse impacts to adjacent properties.

Dedication/Construction Responsibilities

This Plan continues to recognize that arterial roadways are generally the responsibility of government. Typically, the full cost of both right-of-way acquisition and construction of arterials is borne by the local, State or federal governments. **However, in some instances, the private developers are asked to bear a share of these costs. This is appropriate where the development is a high traffic generator and/or where the development will benefit greatly from some enhancement of the arterial facility.** Costs for extra ROW, extra turn or deceleration lanes, special signalization and frontage roads are examples of costs that developers might be asked to bear in conjunction with arterial improvements.

The ROW and costs of collector roadways are generally borne by developers in the private sector. Sometimes local government will participate. Examples include unusually expensive bridge structures or connections to the collector arterial system not necessary to the development but beneficial to the overall transportation system.

The ROW and construction costs of local roads are always the responsibility of the land developer.

ROW and Construction Standards

ROW and construction standards for the various road types are based on local subdivision regulations and applicable State and federal standards. In most cases, local and collector streets are built on 60-70 feet of ROW with 25-35 feet of pavement. Arterial roadways are considerably wider, depending upon expected traffic volumes and speeds, the degree of access limitations and other factors. Construction standards also vary depending on expected traffic weights and volumes, topographic, soil and drainage conditions, and differing governmental requirements. **This Plan endorses the development of area-wide uniform standards wherever possible.**

System Connectivity

This Plan, as in past RATS plans, stresses the connectivity of arterial and collector roadways both within the region itself and the connectivity of these roadways to State and national systems. Unfortunately, early in the development history of roadway systems in the Rockford area, many major roadways were developed with offset intersections or on grid systems that are canted with respect to the Public Land Survey grid. **This Plan continues to propose numerous improvements designed to eliminate intersection offsets, especially on the arterial system, and projects that minimize the confusion and traffic flow interruptions caused by the canted grids.**

This Plan also continues to propose collector layouts with as much roadway continuity and connectivity as possible. This Plan stresses the elimination of collector offsets, especially as they cross arterials, for the sake of reducing intersection congestion, safety and traffic flow problems.

Roadway Systems (EXISTING)

MAP 11 shows the currently existing system of principal arterial, minor arterial and collector roadways in the Rockford Metro Area. In the Winnebago County portion, the network was established by past RATS planning processes and the roadways fit into the classification system described above. The system has a high degree of connectivity, especially at the arterial levels. Some collector roadways are incomplete and discontinuous, especially where parcels of land remain undeveloped. The classification of roadways in the Boone County portion of the map was developed in work sessions with the Boone County Highway Engineer and the planner from the Belvidere/Boone Planning Commission during the 1995 Plan Update process.

Roadway Systems (PROPOSED)

MAP 12 shows the roadway system that is expected to exist in the Metro Area at the end of the 20-25 year time frame of this Plan. The system is somewhat more extensive on the Winnebago County side of the Metro Area where development pressure and planned land use intensities are greater.

MAP 13 illustrates the actual improvements planned to the existing roadway system in the 20-year time frame of the Plan. It is difficult to program the exact year when these improvements will be made because such programming is dependant upon the pace and direction of community growth and the availability of funding. The need for these

improvements is will be comprehensively tested over the next 5 years with the expanded traffic simulation model. The improvements shown on **MAP 13** are considered viable financially with respect to the estimated costs of the improvements and the projections of future revenue (see PART 9 of this Plan).

Roadway System Beyond Year 2025 – "Illustrative Projects"

MAP 14 shows the proposed system of roadways for the Metro Area beyond the Year 2025 and MAP 15 better illustrates the actual improvements. The improvements shown on these maps have been long-planned as part of RATS roadway improvement plans. However, these improvements are not considered implementable under the levels of funding projected in the financial part (PART 9) of this Plan for the next 20 years. The improvements shown on **MAP 15** were selected because they were considered to be of lower priority for the purpose of meeting the goals of this plan at this time. This is not to say that development pressures, traffic increases, traffic congestion or other factors will not increase the priority of these improvements over other improvements now programmed for earlier implementation. In short, should the need arise and the funding materialize, these projects could be implemented sooner, and thus fall in the category of "Illustrative Projects" as defined by the TEA-21.

Truck Routes

Throughout the Urban and Metro Area, a special subsystem of roadways has been designated for many years as Truck Routes. The purpose of this system has been to limit truck traffic to those roadways that are geometrically designed and properly constructed to accommodate large heavy vehicles hauling freight. In addition, the noise and vibration created by such vehicles is undesirable in residential neighborhoods.

The Existing Truck Route System shown in **MAP 16** is a composite of such systems currently adopted by the various jurisdictions within the Metro Area. It was compiled over the last several months through the efforts of the RATS Truck Route Subcommittee. Note that the Existing Truck Route System is somewhat incomplete – i.e., there are obvious gaps in the connectivity of this system. These gaps exist because some of the roadways have not be constructed to handle heavy truck traffic on a constant basis. To eliminate these gaps and to accommodate future needs for truck routing through new developing areas, the Truck Route Subcommittee developed a Planned Truck Route System. This Planned System will be implemented incrementally and incidentally as road segments become eligible for major repair or reconstruction. The Planned System is shown on **MAP 17.** Also, this Planned System is a proposal and is not yet finalized. It will be subjected to further public review, particularly by the Trucking industry, before it is officially adopted.

PART 6: PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit services in the Rockford Metro Area fall into several categories, based on their function, as follows:

1. **Fixed-Route Intracity Transit** -- This refers to bus service that follows published schedules along regular (fixed-) routes that are confined within the Metro Area or authorized parts of the Metro Area. Because these services are usually not profitable (i.e., farebox revenues seldom equal or exceed the cost of the service), this type of transit is usually provided only by public agencies.

2. **Intracity Rail** -- Passenger rail service for trips within the Metro Area (currently available only for short recreational excursions).

3. **Fixed-Route Intercity Transit** -- This refers to bus service following published schedules along fixed routes and connecting this region with other cities, regions and parts of the country. This service is usually provided by private carriers.

4. **Intercity Rail** -- Passenger rail service to and from the MA (currently unavailable).

5. **Charter bus service** -- Privately-operated bus services for intra- or intercity transport needs but not following fixed routes or schedules. Such services are usually privately operated.

6. **School bus services** -- Publicly- or privately operated bus services following fixed routes and schedules but restricted for use by primary and secondary school children and used strictly for transport to and from school events.

7. **Paratransit bus service** -- A wide variety of publicly- or privately-provided bus services aimed at meeting the special transportation needs of elderly persons or persons with special transportation disabilities. These services are usually provided with smaller, specially- equipped buses or vans (lift- or ramp-equipped). Sometimes these vehicles are dispatched on regular fixed routes, but usually they are dispatched only on demand. They provide door-to-door service for persons who are unable, because of disability or incapacity, to get to and from the fixed-route transit.

8. **Other surface transportation** -- Other specialized publicly- or privately-provided transportation services, including taxi, limo and ambulance services, which provide for special transport needs both within and outside the Metro Area. These services are usually privately provided, but are often regulated by local, State or federal laws.

Fixed-Route Intracity Transit

A single public agency now provides intracity bus service in the Rockford MA: the **Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD)** (the Loves Park Transit System (LPTS) was officially dissolved as of June 30, 2000). RMTD is heavily subsidized from federal, State and local sources to operate. RMTD provides scheduled, fixed-route bus services on 12-14 routes throughout most of the densely populated parts of the Metro Area, including the area previously served by LPTS, but they do not provide services in Boone County or to Belvidere. At present, there are no fixed-route regular intracity bus services in Boone County or Belvidere.

RMTD provides service Monday through Saturday. Buses operate on half-hour to hour headways, with regular services beginning between 5:00 and 6:00 AM and extending to nearly 7:00 PM on weekdays, somewhat less on Saturdays. In the mid-1990s, RMTD expanded its service hours, into the late evening hours but with extended headways and an abbreviated route structure. RMTD currently maintains a fleet of 37 full-sized buses. At peak hours, an average of 27 buses are in service. RMTD also operates a "trolley -bus" on a seasonal basis in the Rockford downtown area.

MAPS 18 and 19 show the present route alignments and effective service areas of the RMTD system. The combined peak vehicle requirement to operate the system under current daytime schedules is 25 vehicles. Based on the latest reports from the 1990 Census, the total population served is nearly 208,000 persons over an estimated 106 square miles.
On a typical weekday, RMTD will provide over 6,000 passenger trips. The average number of passengers per hour on weekdays is 21 to 22 and the passengers per mile is approximately 1.8. Saturday and evening service is somewhat less productive.

In 1992, a Comprehensive Route/Schedule/Fare Structure Analysis of the services provided by RMTD and LPTS was conducted by a consultant. Overall, the study concluded that the systems were operating as efficiently and effectively as possible, given the levels of funding available. Several minor changes where suggested to the route structure that could potentially increase ridership, but all would also result in an increase in the operating budget and require additional public funding. In response to questions regarding the possible benefits of privatization, the consultant concluded that potential savings could not be proven and recommended against privatization unless sizable service expansions were considered.

In 1994, citizen input through Rockford's "Blueprint" planning process offered compelling support for evening bus service in the area. Such service was deemed necessary to help increase employment, recreation and education opportunities for the area's moderate, low-income and minority populations. In response, RMTD formulated a plan to provide limited evening bus service on a six-month experimental basis. The trial was funded with local and State funds and was initiated in October 1994. As the experiment progressed, RMTD's evening ridership approached or exceeded their Saturday ridership. As a result, RMTD decided to continue the evening service. Adjustments to daytime service, small fare increases, and increased subsidies from IDOT and Rockford have funded the evening service.

In 1998, the **Mayor's Task Force on Welfare to Work** examined the transportation problems of unemployed, low-income and other transit dependent persons in the Rockford area. The Task Force reached a number of conclusions.

1. That the auto-oriented transportation system of the Rockford area and the difficulty of low-income persons to own, maintain and operate an automobile was a significant transportation problem facing these persons.

2. That even though the Rockford area spends between $5-6 million dollars annually subsidizing public transit, the area's public transit system is not financially able to meet all the transportation needs of the transit-dependent population.

3. The most difficult time for persons returning to work would be their first few weeks or months. During that time, learning to use the transit system would be an obstacle, even where the system was adequate. Opportunities for carpooling would be limited until the new workers could establish personal relationships and trust.

4. Because many new jobs are night-time jobs, the absence of night transit service would be critical.

5. The absence of a dependent-care facility in close proximity to the main downtown transfer center created a particular hardship because the need to deboard and reboard coupled with long bus headways.

6. A need for an adult training center at a point central to and more easily accessible by public transit was identified.

As a result of the above finding, RMTD, in conjunction with the City of Rockford, the Rockford Housing Authority, RATS and other community organizations, formulated a plan to assist with some of the above problems. The plan has three components:

1. The deployment of **limited night-time transit service**. The service would be experimental, initially useing smaller paratransit vehicles in a modified demand-response structure.

2. Construct a small **classroom facility adjacent to the downtown transfer center**.

3. Construct a **dependent care facility adjacent to the downtown transfer center** (the classroom and care facility would be in the same building).

To fund the above proposals, RMTD has applied repeatedly for Access to Jobs funds and for a TCSP grant but, to date, the requests have been rejected.

Fixed-Route Transit Recommendations

In light of the improbability of additional federal, State or local operating subsidies, this Plan recommends:

1. The continuation of daytime and evening transit services as currently provided.

2. Minor modifications to the route structure should be considered to keep pace with the expansion of the urbanized area.

3. Sufficient ridership demand to expand fixed-route service eastward in the Metro Area into Belvidere seems unlikely in the near future, but should be reconsidered periodically.

4. The 3-part proposal of RMTD (night service, dependent care and classrooms), described above, should continue to be promoted and funds sought from any sources available.

Intracity Rail

The only intracity passenger rail service provided within the Rockford MA is a short recreational/excursion trolley that travels from downtown Rockford, northward to near the southern Loves Park City Limit. This service is only operated during the Summer months and has no commuter potential due to the limiting extent of the rail and the open-air design of the vehicle. No further intracity rail is envisioned in the foreseeable future. The area's population and population densities are not high enough to support such services.

Fixed-Route Intercity Transit

Fixed-route intercity bus service is currently provided to the Rockford Metro Area by three privately-operated carriers: Greyhound Bus Lines, Rockford Peoria O'Hare Bus Company and Van Galder Bus Company.

Greyhound Bus Lines offers five daily trips to Chicago, three daily trips northward to Madison and beyond, and one daily trip westward to Freeport and beyond.

The Van Galder Bus Company provides regular daily service between Madison, Wisconsin, and O'Hare Airport, with 22 daily stops in the Rockford area.

The Rockford Peoria O'Hare Bus Company provides 15 round trips daily between Rockford and O'Hare, as well as more limited service to the south.

Most intercity bus terminals or stopping points in the Rockford area are located along East State Street (US-20 Business) in the vicinity of I-90. These points are accessible via the RMTD bus system on a regular and frequent basis. Access was provided at the downtown RMTD terminal, but the private carriers determined this location to be inconvenient for adherence to their schedules.

Intercity Transit Recommendation

This Plan recommends continued cooperation with the intercity bus carriers in locating terminal sites. Efforts should be continued to maximize possible passenger transfers between the privately-operated intercity buses and the publicly-operated intracity buses.

Intercity Rail

No intercity passenger rail currently serves the Rockford area. Amtrak passenger rail service between Dubuque, Iowa, and Chicago, with regular stops in Rockford, was available until the mid-1970s. It was discontinued due to low ridership and inadequate funding. The closest commuter rails to the Rockford area are two extensions of Metra's lines out of Chicago to Harvard and Marengo. These extensions are within a 30- to 40-minute drive from Rockford. Early in the 1990s, a proposal was made by a consultant for the Greater Rockford Airport Authority to construct a high-speed rail line between O'Hare Airport and Rockford Airport. Although studied extensively, that proposal was not further spirited due to high costs and an apparent decision not to link the two airports.

Within the last year, Amtrak has made a proposal to establish passenger rail service on the I&M Rail Link that runs from Chicago to Davenport. The I&M Rail Link passes through Davis Junction, in Ogle County, approximately 8 miles from Rockford. This proposal has spurred Rockford- and Belvidere-community leaders to think more about the need and feasibility of intercity rail service. This Plan endorse further study of such rail serivce.

Charter Bus Service

Charter bus services are provided by five private carriers in the Rockford area: the Rockton Bus Company, Hedlund & Associates Bus Brokers, Lassandro Tri-State Tours, Rockford Peoria O'Hare Bus Company, and Van Galder Bus Company. There are no public or governmental programs to assist these carriers. They are, however, consistently notified and informed of all RATS planning activities. In accordance with federal laws prohibiting unfair competition, the publicly-funded intracity bus provider, RMTD has eliminated charter services.

Paratransit Bus Service

Publicly-supported paratransit services are offered by two agencies in the Metro Area: The Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) and the Boone County Council on Aging (BCCA) in Belvidere.

BCCA was established as a not-for-profit corporation in 1973. BCCA operates a fleet of 5 minibuses and provides demand-response, door-to-door service to persons living throughout Boone County. The buses have been funded through the FTA/IDOT Section 16 and Section 18 programs. Boone County is the local sponsor for the Section 18 program. BCCA transportation service is provided to the general public, but priority is given to older persons and persons with disabilities. All buses are wheelchair lift-equipped or will be in the very near future.

BCCA services are provided between the hours of 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Requests must be made 24 hours in advance. The fares are nominal: $1.00 per one-way trip for persons under 60 years of age residing within the Belvidere City Limits, $1.50 for persons residing outside Belvidere; 75 cents for children under 12 years, and no fare for persons 60 years and older but donations are accepted. Services beyond the county line are provided for medical reasons and require one week advance notice. BCCA also provides medical car escort service, via volunteers driving agency-owned vehicles, for out-of-county medical appointments. One week advance notice is again required and donations are requested.

RMTD has been providing paratransit service throughout its service areas (comprising most of the western part of the Metro Area) since the late 1970s. Until recently, RMTD subcontracted with other paratransit providers, primarily WCPS, to provide the service. For the last 4-5 years, RMTD has provided it own paratransit service and currently operates a fleet of 24 paratransit vehicles throughout most of the Urban area. Service is provided in accordance with ADA guidelines and is provided at all times when fixed-route bus service is provided – i.e., approximately between 6:00 AM and 11:30 PM.

PART 7: PEDESTRIAN/BIKEWAY SYSTEMS

Over the last century, with the development of the automobile and the auto-oriented highway systems, the development of pedestrian facilities have often been overshadowed. Prior to the automobile, pedestrians had little difficulty using the same roads used by other modes of transportation. Where dedicated pedestrian walkways were needed, they were provided. However, as automobile usage increased, public expenditures for roadways were concentrated on highways, and the predicament for pedestrians was worsened by the hazards created by the automobiles themselves. Today, major arterial roadways can pose as much a barrier to pedestrian movement as a major river did in the past.

In recent years, federal, State and local governments have begun to recognize the magnitude of pedestrian problems and have begun to direct efforts toward better accommodation of pedestrian needs. From the Federal and State side, the ISTEA and TEA-21require the planning of balanced, intermodal transportation systems. To further this, large allocations of "enhancement" funding are being directed toward pedestrian and bikeway improvements. Also from the Federal side, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act has drawn long-overdue attention to the needs of large groups of Americans who have great difficulty traversing our pedestrian systems.

Locally, in the Rockford area, efforts to improve pedestrian systems have come from several directions, some inspired by the Federal laws mentioned above, but others encouraged by local citizens and agencies concerned with environmental and recreational issues.

The Sidewalk System

The sidewalk system within the densely developed parts of the Metro Area is extensive but inadequate in many respects. In the past, most municipalities required sidewalks as part of the land subdivision process, especially in conjunction with streets constructed with curb and gutter. However, extensive parts of the area were first developed under County regulations where sidewalks were not required. In some areas, these problems have been corrected. The City of Loves Park, for example, constructed sidewalks as part of a city-wide neighborhood street rehabilitation program conducted in the 1970s. Other jurisdictions, such as Rockford, now have cost-share programs with private property owners whereby assistance is provided for constructing new sidewalks or reconstructing damaged sidewalks. Also, it is becoming common practice to construct sidewalks as part of all major street reconstructions. And within the

last decade, all municipalities within the Metro Area have adopted requirements for sidewalks within all new land subdivisions. County subdivisions, however, are still built without sidewalks.

In the summer of 1992, RATS employed a team of student interns to inventory the pedestrian system within a short walking distance (1-3 blocks) of the area's fixed-route bus routes. The purpose of this work was to determine the adequacy of the system for persons with disabilities when accessing the bus system. The results of this work were extensively mapped but not quantified. Needless to say, the results documented severe inadequacies in the system.

Sizeable areas were found with no sidewalks at all. The past practice of improving arterial roadways, especially in unincorporated areas, has produced long stretches that are very difficult for pedestrians. Large stretches were also found where the sidewalks had deteriorated to the point where they would be hazardous to persons in wheelchairs. Other areas were noted where topographic conditions would inhibit wheelchair passage, with or without sidewalks.

Along most of the major streets in the older parts of the urban area, curb cuts (wheelchair ramps) were not available at the intersections. While this is less of a problem on low-traffic streets where wheelchair users can access the streets via nearby driveways, this method of access on arterials is hazardous as well as inconvenient.

Most local jurisdictions are dedicating a portion of their annual street repair budgets to making retrofit curb cuts. The City of Rockford, for example, has been appropriating $25,000 per year for this purpose for several years and has recently increased the funding considerably. However, even with increased funding, a complete job will take many years. The City estimates it has 3,600 intersections. In 1995, the City had retrofitted roughly 25 percent of the intersections. At present, the City estimates that 65 percent are accessible. Retrofit costs have increased by $40 per cut over the last several year. At an average of $290 per cut, it costs roughly $1,160 to make a complete intersection accessible. Initially, efforts were concentrated on or near bus routes and at locations where persons with disabilities requested assistance.

Related to the above are the special needs of persons with sight disabilities. For example, audible walk signals can be installed, at relatively low cost, at signalized intersections in conjunction with the standard visual walk signals. Braille information can be added to most pedestrian signage, and braille or audible information can be provided at bus terminals and information kiosks. To date, outside of efforts by the local transit systems (braille info on their bus stop signs and audible information on their buses), very little of this has been done throughout the community.

Causing further difficulty for persons with disabilities is the frequent failure of citizens to clear their sidewalks after snowstorms. To its credit, RMTD has recognized that winter weather always aggravates transportation problems for persons with disabilities. During the cold months, RMTD has less stringent eligibility criteria for paratransit services.

Pedestrian System Recommendations

1. **All jurisdictions within the Metro Area should pursue the development of better pedestrian sidewalk systems. All new developments of half-acre per lot densities or greater should be required to have a pedestrian system, preferably sidewalks on both sides of the street.**

2. **Current retrofitting programs for sidewalks and curb cuts should be increased to the extent possible.**

3. **The past practice of constructing major roadways without pedestrian facilities should be discontinued. Efforts should be made to add pedestrian facilities to existing major roadways and to provide adequate safe crosswalks.**

4. **Practices and improvements, as described above, should be increased to aid persons with sight disabilities when using the pedestrian and public transit facilities.**

Bikeway and Pedestrian Path Systems

The planning departments of all the RATS participants, the Rockford Park District, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, the Boone County Conservation District and numerous area environmentalists and recreationists, along with RATS, have supported and planned for the development of a regionwide bikeway/pedestrian path system for many years. Much of this work was drawn together by the **RATS Regional Bikeway Plan** adopted by RATS on June 27, 1984, and last published in August of 1985. The Plan was subsequently amended by RATS Resolution 91-10

on November 11, 1991. The amendment, referred to as the Perryville Path System, refined the network in the east Rockford corridor between Alpine Road and the County line.

Prepared in conjunction with an extensive public involvement process led by the RATS Bikeway Subcommittee, the Plan was intended to "define a bicycle riding network for the Greater Rockford Community which is logically feasible, economically and physically attainable, and safe for the user; a network which all governments can adopt in concept and in plan, and which can be accomplished through cooperation by each, providing adequate facilities to serve the bicycling public."

The Plan defines a three-tier classification system similar to that used by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and other planning groups, as follows:

> Class I Bikeway: Bike Path - This facility is completely separated from motor vehicle traffic lanes. It is designed for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow by motorists minimized.
>
> Class II Bikeway: Bike Lane - This is a restricted right-of-way, usually abutting and adjacent to other traffic lanes used by motorists. It is designated for the exclusive use of bicycles, but with crossflows by motorists and pedestrians permitted.
>
> Class III Bikeway: Bike Route - This is a shared roadway designated by signs or permanent pavement markings, used by both motorists and cyclists. It serves to provide continuity to other bicycle facilities or to indicate to bicyclists, as with bike lanes, that there are certain advantages to using these routes as compared to alternative routes. The use of sidewalks as Class III bikeways is discouraged.

The RATS Regional Bike Plan, including recently added links in the Boone County area, is illustrated in **MAP 20**. The Plan, as adopted in 1984, also contained a listing and description of the 17 major segments of the system, a set of eight implementation strategies, and a "Five-Year Financially Attainable" section which detailed three path segments.

Among the implementation strategies, the Plan recognized that the system is primarily a Class I system and noted that funding for it would be difficult to obtain. It was also recognized that the exact pathway locations could be flexible and the mapped lines should be considered broad corridors. Cost, political acceptability and opportunity could preclude some alignments and favor others. Therefore, it was suggested that implementation focus on a segment-by-segment "opportunity" basis. The best opportunities for implementation would be in conjunction with roadway improvements or when other linear ROWs are acquired or abandoned. Also, the land development and subdivision process would also provide opportunities.

The Regional Bikeway Plan was presented to and adopted by the Rockford Park District, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, and the County of Winnebago. Further, the Park District and the Forest Preserve District established bikeway implementation as one of their highest priorities and took a leadership role in implementing the network.

Boone County also has an extensive system of planned bikeways and pathways. Developed and promoted by the Belvidere/Boone County Planning Commission and the Boone County Conservation District, the system is complementary to the RATS Regional Bikeway Plan and has been added as part of the RATS Bikeway Plan.

Pathway plans covering much broader regions are also being promoted by the State of Illinois and other groups. In the development of the RATS and Boone County plans, care was taken to integrate the local plans into these wider-reaching networks.

Bikeway System Recommendations

1. **The RATS Regional Bikeway Plan, as summarized above and illustrated on MAP 20, is an essential part of this Long-Range Transportation Plan.**

2. **Plan implementation should proceed as suggested on an opportunity basis but also with greater emphasis due to the increased funding offered through the TEA-21. The implementation of the Bikeway Plan should be a high priority for the use of TEA-21 enhancement funds.**

PART 8: AIR TRANSPORTATION

Air transportation services to the Rockford Metro area are provided at three airport facilities: the Belvidere Airport located northeast of the Metro Area in Poplar Grove, Illinois, Cottonwood Airport located in northwest Rockford, and the Greater Rockford Airport located in south Rockford.

General Aviation Airports

Both the Belvidere Airport and Cottonwood Airport are privately-owned, publicly-accessible facilities serving general aviation needs.

Cottonwood, the smallest of the two, is owned and operated by Cottonwood Corporation and is located in northwest Rockford, off of Auburn Street. It is publically accessible and serves general aviation needs. It has one 2,600-foot north/south turf runway that is lighted all night and maintained year-round. The airport provides tiedown space for transcient aircraft at no cost and long-term tiedown space for monthly rental. It has a community hangar for limited inside storage, a facility for maintenance and repair, an office and a pilot lounge.

Cottonwood provides land leases for private hangars that currently house roughly 25 planes. The airport experiences about 3,000 operations per year. Most of the activity is private pilot training, personal transportation and recreational flying. There has been an ongoing program of upgrading and improvements to roads, drainage and parking. The long term airport goal is to provide additional hanger space and continue to support general aviation.

The Belvidere Airport is an all-purpose general aviation airport offering considerable service. It has a 4,000-foot, lighted, paved runway capable of instrument approaches. It offers full aircraft maintenance services including major maintenance. It is open seven days a week and includes a flight school with five flight instructors. As services are expanded at the Greater Rockford Airport, in the military and commercial aviation areas, Belvidere Airport may be considered as a "reliever airport" for general aviation needs.

Greater Rockford Airport

The Greater Rockford Airport (RFD) is located near the confluence of the Rock and Kishwaukee Rivers, situated on 3,000 acres located in the southwest quadrant of the City of Rockford. RFD has two runways: one 8,200 feet in length and the other 10,000 feet in length with a Category II/III Instrument Landing System. Presently Northwest Airlink is the only passenger carrying airline providing service to RFD. Northwest Airlink offers four daily departures to the Northwest Airline hub in Detroit. At Detroit, passengers can connect to flights to over 400 cities, worldwide. Three rental car agencies are located in RFD's passenger terminal and there is ample automobile parking adjacent to the Terminal Building.

Table 13 - RFD Runways

Runway	Dimensions
1/19	8,200' x 150'
7/25	10,000' x 150'

RFD is home to Foreign Trade Zone #176, is a United States Customs Port of Entry and accommodates the second largest sorting facility in the United Parcel Service's system. Other cargo carriers providing service to RFD include Airborne Express, BAX Global, and Emery Worldwide. RFD is the 26th most active cargo airport in the United States. Over 4,000 persons are employed by RFD's aviation and industrial tenants causing RFD to have an impact on the regional economy of over $350 million annually.

Air Transportation Recommendations

1. **The potential surface transportation needs and the surface traffic generation potential of the RFD is significant. Growth in enplanements coupled with major expansions to accommodate the UPS terminal make it imperative that the situation be monitored closely. If the growth of the airport continues, the City of Rockford, Winnebago County and RATS may need to rapidly shift their**

deployment of transportation resources to accommodate the airport's supporting surface tranportation needs.

2. Sizable portions of the Greater Rockford Airport's general aviation traffic may seek alternative airports as the RFD expands its commercial and cargo operations. If this occurs, general aviation traffic may expand at both Cottonwood and Belvidere Airports. Again, the situation will need to be monitored to determine if surface transportation facility improvements will be needed in the vicinity of those airports.

Table 14 – RFD 20-Yr Development Program (not included in this Update)

PART 9: FINANCIAL PLAN

In accordance with Federal guidance, the financial component of this Long-Range Transportation Plan is **financially constrained**. This means that the estimated costs of the proposed projects over the 25-year planning period must balance with the estimated revenues reasonably expected to be available. This component of the RATS LRP will demonstrate the required financial constraint.

Funding Public Transit

For the past 20 years, two public transit agencies, the Rockford Mass Transit District and the Loves Park Transit System have provided fixed-route and demand-response transit services throughout the more densely populated parts of the Rockford urbanized area. On June 30, 2000, the Loves Park Transit System will permanently cease operation and turn over the bulk of its transit equipment and facilities to the State and Federal governments for disposal in accordance with applicable laws. Some of the buses and equipment will be transferred to RMTD. Buses and equipment not useful to RMTD will be transferred to other public transit operators throughout the State of Illinois or will be disposed of by public sale. The Loves Park Transit Garage and Maintenance facility will most likely be turned over to the City of Loves Park, contingent upon satisfactory compensation to the Federal Transit Administration and the Illinois Department of Public Transportation (the entities that funded large parts of the construction of the facility).

Beginning July 1, 2000, RMTD, contingent upon the successful negotiation of a contract for service with the City of Love Park, will begin providing public transit service (on similar routes and under similar schedules) to the area previously served by LPTS. The reason for this change is primarily financial. Economies of scale make it more cost-effective for RMTD to provide the same transit service that LPTS provided.

Given this single but significant change, the Rockford Mass Transit District intends to continue providing public transit service for the next 25 years in much the same manner as it has for the last 25 years. RMTD will continue to be funded through a combination of federal, State and local subsidies, primarily the City of Rockford, but now with the addition of a local subsidies from the City of Loves Park and the Village of Machesney Park. RMTD also has considerable internally-generated revenues derived from transit fares and advertising on the buses.

Federal Subsidies to RMTD

The mainstay of federal support for public transit as provided by RMTD (and, in the past, LPTS) has been the **FTA 5307 program** (since 1983) and similar precedent programs since the early 1970s. This program allocates subsidies to eligible public transit agencies throughout the country based on a formula which divides congressional apportionments according to population, population density, and the total revenue vehicle miles of public transit service provided in the area. In recent years, the 5307 program has provided roughly $1-1.5 million in subsidies to the Rockford area, annually. In the past, a role of RATS was to suballocate the 5307 funds between LPTS and RMTD. With the dissolution of LPTS, all 5307 funds will be automatically allocated to RMTD, the only remaining fixed-route operator in the area.

Until the last 4-5 years, the FTA 5307 program divided the subsidy into two parts: one that could be used for both operating expenses (salaries, etc.) and capital expenses (building, equipment and planning), and one that could only be used for capital expenses. About 5 years ago, the less-restrictive operating part was eliminated. In its place, however, the FTA created a category of capital-eligible costs called Associated Maintenance costs. In this category, the FTA will fund most expenses incurred for equipment, parts and labor associated with maintaining and extending the useful life of the rolling stock. In effect, “operating subsidies” were not fully eliminated but were recategorized, more restricted, and reduced (where roughly $1.5 million was available annually for operating during the mid-1980s, only $0.5 million is being used per year for Associated Maintenance costs, today).

Among the many restrictions placed on the use of Section 9 funds, FTA specifies that the funds must be matched with State or local funds. At present, the minimum required local match for capital purposes is 20%. The State of Illinois usually provides much of this match; some parts are provided locally.

Other Federal Sources for Transit

In addition to the 5307 funds discussed above, Congress annually appropriates **FTA 5309 funds** to help in meeting transit's capital equipment and facilities needs. Congress and FTA award the 5309 funds on a discretionary basis (no

apportionment formula is used; awards are based on demonstrated need). 5309 awards are not easy to obtain, but RMTD, in conjunction with efforts and endorsements by IDOT, has been successful in obtaining a number of recent 5309 grants for bus replacements as well as a grant to help with the construction of the Downtown Garage and Transfer Facility in the mid-1980s.

The **FTA 5310 and FTA 5311 funding sources** also contribute to the overall transit services throughout the Metro Area. The FTA 5310 grants are provided to meet needs served by regular transit services and are used primarily for paratransit services. In the past, these funds were restricted to private not-for-profit agencies. Recently, the guidelines have changed to allow access to these funds by public transit agencies. RMTD and the now defunct Winnebago County Paratransit System benefitted from several 5310 grants over the last two decades. The Boone County Council on Ageing (BCCA) has also received 5310 grants. FTA 5311 funds are targeted at rural public transportation needs. No agencies in Winnebago County are currently eligible for 5311 funds because the County must agree to be a local sponsor and has elected not to do so. BCCA, however, has received a number of 5311 awards (which can be use for operating and capital needs) through their sponsoring agency, Boone County.

State Funding for RMTD and BCCA

The **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)** provides considerable funding for local transit. In past years, IDOT has funded over 50% of most transit operating expenses and provided most of the local match required for capital projects (usually 20%), including the match for bus replacements in recent years. IDOT also administers the FTA 5310 and 5311 funds and provides large parts of the matching funds for those awards.

Local Funding for RMTD

As previously mentioned, RMTD receives local subsidies, primarily for their operating expenses, but sometimes for limited capital needs. The **City of Rockford** currently provides over a million dollars annually to assist RMTD. **The City of Loves Park** and the **Village of Machesney Park** will also provide assistance to RMTD in exchange for services within their respective corporate limits. Local funding has no set formula or share proportion but is appropriated based on need and in the interest of maintaining existing service levels.

Funding for Paratransit in Boone County

As already stated, the paratransit service program of the BCCA is funded, federally, through the FTA 5310 and FTA 5311 programs. BCCA also receives considerable assistance from Boone County, the City of Belvidere and other entities in Boone County, as well as through donations. These funding sources appear stable.

Overall Transit Financial Assessment

The continuation of public transit services in the area is largely dependent on State and Federal funding sources with State and local subsidies filling the gaps when Federal levels have dropped. The most stable source of funding for transit in the Rockford area for the last 18 years has been the State. State operating subsidies for fixed-route services have increased steadily from 33% of the total operating need in 1983, to nearly 55% of the operating need projected for 2001. State capital contributions have consistently provided the bulk of the required 20% for buses, equipment and facility needs. Local assistance has varied according to need, based a goal of maintaining a stable level of public transit service. In response to varying levels of Federal operating subsidy, local contributions have ranged as low as 5.7% of the annual funding, to as high as 30.1% of the funding need. On the average, over the last 18 years of public transit operation, Federal operating subsidies have contributed 19.1%, the State – 44.1%, local government – 18.6%, and internally generated revenues have averaged 18.2%. With regard to capital needs, the Federal government has contributed a consistent 80% of the need (all sources combined) while the State has contributed the bulk of the remaining 20%.

The above statistics and further analysis of the past financial data, as depicted in Tables 15 and 16 below, leads to the following conclusion: there is a strong, almost unwavering, commitment to maintain a viable public transit system throughout the Rockford community. The funding committed has been sufficient to operate, maintain and replace the equipment of the public transit systems in the Rockford area. This Plan assumes these trends will continue. Therefore, fixed-route transit services are expected to continue at relatively stable levels throughout the 25-year term of this Plan. The same holds true for the paratransit services provided by BCCA. In conclusion, the continued short- and long-term operation and capitalization

of RMTD and BCCA appears feasible as long as Congress, the State of Illinois and local governments continue subsidies within the range of recent trends.

Table 15 - Fixed-Route Operating Expenses by Funding Source (1000s of 1995$)

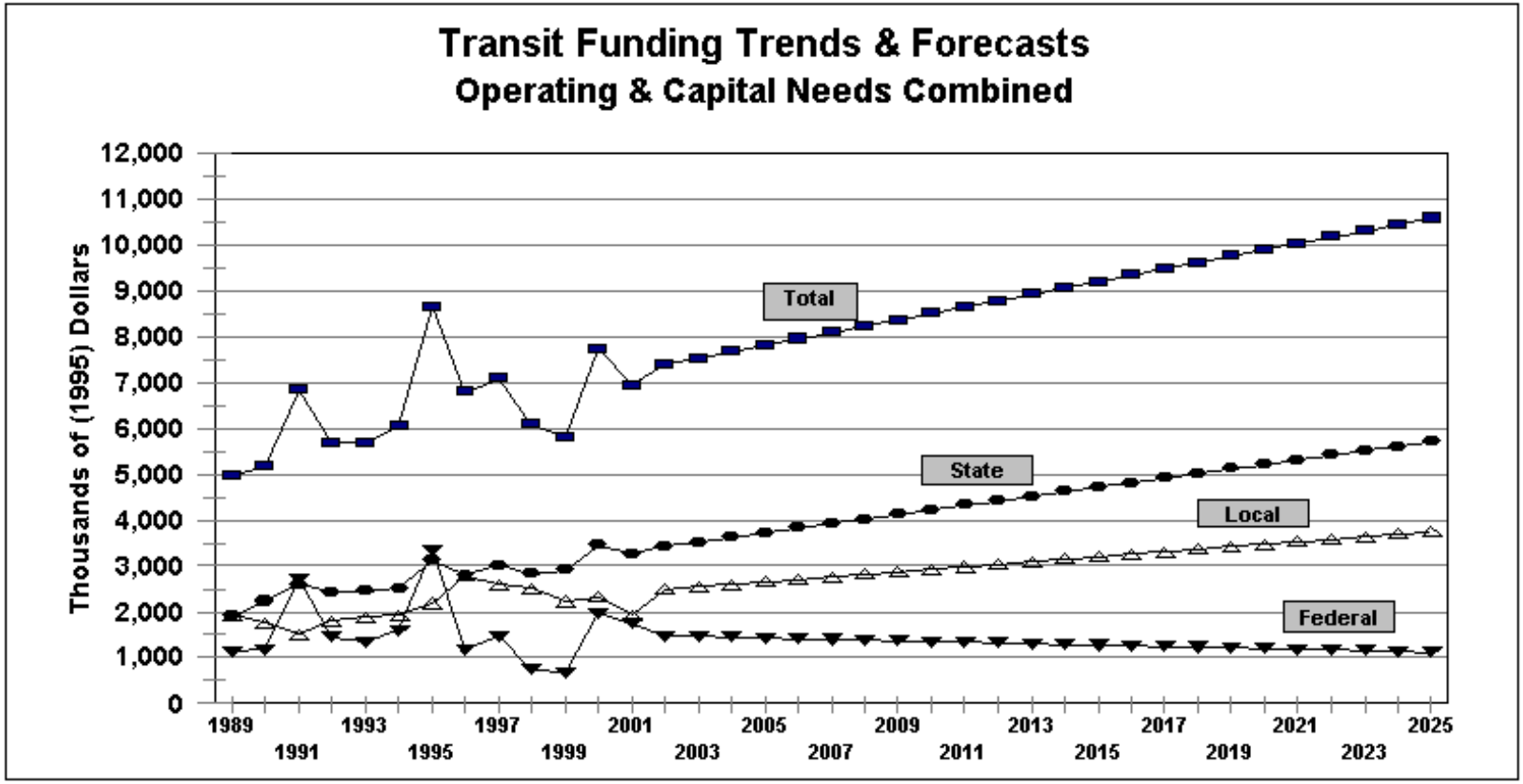
Year	FTA 5309	IDOT	Local	Fares & Revs	TOTAL	% FTA	% IDOT	% Loc	% F&R
1983	1,630	1,688	603	1,173	5,094	32.0	33.1	11.8	23.0
1984	1,732	1,532	263	1,112	4,639	37.3	33.0	5.7	24.0
1985	1,511	1,856	275	1,041	4,683	32.3	39.6	5.9	22.2
1986	1,459	2,018	612	987	5,076	28.7	39.8	12.1	19.4
1987	1,349	1,922	688	858	4,817	28.0	39.9	14.3	17.8
1988	1,326	1,841	576	870	4,613	28.7	39.9	12.5	18.9
1989	995	1,882	1,050	892	4,819	20.6	39.1	21.8	18.5
1990	947	2,182	916	838	4,883	19.4	44.7	18.8	17.2
1991	1,365	2,266	730	788	5,149	26.5	44.0	14.2	15.3
1992	1,037	2,321	1,041	767	5,166	20.1	44.9	20.2	14.8
1993	1,008	2,365	1,071	815	5,259	19.2	45.0	20.4	15.5
1994	983	2,371	1,137	794	5,285	18.6	44.9	21.5	15.0
1995	856	2,488	1,401	789	5,534	15.5	45.0	25.3	14.3
1996	437	2,632	1,764	1,025	5,858	7.5	44.9	30.1	17.5
1997	538	2,782	1,434	1,172	5,926	9.1	46.9	24.2	19.8
1998	354	2,739	1,432	1,071	5,596	6.3	48.9	25.6	19.1
1999	528	2,880	1,157	1,081	5,646	9.4	51.0	20.5	19.1
2000	403	3,059	1,322	995	5,779	7.0	52.9	22.9	17.2
2001	496	2,949	978	947	5,370	9.2	54.9	18.2	17.6
AVG.	**998**	**2,304**	**971**	**948**	**5,221**	19.1	44.1	18.6	18.2

Table 16 - Fixed-Route Capital Expenses by Funding Source (1000s of 1995$)

Year	FTA 5307	FTA 5309	FTA 5310	IDOT Local	TOTAL	% 07	% 09	% 10	% I&L
1983	1,571	0	0	393	1,964	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1984	1,130	0	0	283	1,413	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1985	1,116	0	0	279	1,395	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1986	582	1,211	0	449	2,242	26.0	54.0	0.0	20.0
1987	491	0	0	123	614	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1988	232	0	0	58	290	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1989	132	0	0	34	166	79.5	0.0	0.0	20.5
1990	223	0	0	56	279	79.9	0.0	0.0	20.1
1991	296	1,059	0	339	1,694	17.5	62.5	0.0	20.0
1992	315	90	0	102	507	62.1	17.8	0.0	20.1
1993	117	27	194	85	423	27.7	6.4	45.9	20.1
1994	581	0	28	152	761	76.3	0.0	3.7	20.0
1995	676	1,599	215	623	3,113	21.7	51.4	6.9	20.0
1996	752	0	0	188	940	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1997	422	501	0	231	1,154	36.6	43.4	0.0	20.0
1998	392	0	0	98	490	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
1999	135	0	0	34	169	79.9	0.0	0.0	20.1
2000	1,565	0	0	392	1,957	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
2001	1,253	0	0	313	1,566	80.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
AVG.	**631**	**236**	**23**	**223**	**1,112**	56.7	21.2	2.1	20.0

Forecasted transit funding is shown in the data and graphs contained in Figure 4 on the following page. These amounts are projected from the data in Tables 15 and 16. Based on trends going back as far as 1983, these amounts will be sufficient to: (1) maintain the existing level of transit service throughout the community (i.e., a route and schedule structure similar to that which exits now, plus complimentary paratransit service thorughout the MA); (2) maintain and replace, as needed, the existing rolling stock; (3) maintain the existing transit buildings and support equipment; and (4) make minor expansions to the transit service to accommodate the slow economic growth and gradual urbanization similar to what occurred in the last two decades. Significant expansion of the public transit service, especially, fixed route service, is not presently anticipated. Such expansions could occur, however, into Roscoe, Rockton, South Beloit, Winnebago, Cherry Valley and Belvidere, if those communities determine that such service would be in the best interest of their citizens and they commit new funding resources to public transit. This Plan supports such expansions on a fair share basis.

Figure 4 – Transit Funding Trends & Forecasts



Transit (1995$)	FY-2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
FEDERAL	1,749	1,472	1,457	1,442	1,426	1,411	1,396	1,381	1,366	1,350	1,335	1,320	1,305
STATE (IDOT)	3,262	3,430	3,529	3,628	3,727	3,826	3,925	4,024	4,123	4,223	4,322	4,421	4,520
LOCAL	$1,925	2,492	2,547	2,602	2,656	2,711	2,766	2,821	2,876	2,930	2,985	3,040	3,095
Total	**$6,936**	**$7,394**	**$7,533**	**$7,672**	**$7,809**	**$7,948**	**$8,087**	**$8,226**	**$8,365**	**$8,503**	**$8,642**	**$8,781**	**$8,920**

Transit (1995$)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
FEDERAL	1,290	1,274	1,259	1,244	1,229	1,214	1,198	1,183	1,168	1,153	1,137	1,122
STATE (IDOT)	4,619	4,718	4,817	4,917	5,016	5,115	5,214	5,313	5,412	5,511	5,610	5,710
LOCAL	3,150	3,204	3,259	3,314	3,369	3,424	3,479	3,533	3,588	3,643	3,698	3,753
Total	**$9,059**	**$9,196**	**$9,335**	**$9,475**	**$9,614**	**$9,753**	**$9,891**	**$10,029**	**$10,168**	**$10,307**	**$10,445**	**$10,585**

Funding Public Roadways

Funding Sources:
Funding for major roadway or intersection improvements is from a wide variety of sources. In alphabetical order, the sources used over the last six years for roadway projects are as follows:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – funding authorized through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and allocated to the Rockford area (Average annual allocation to transportation related needs - $24,000)

Bridge Replacement & Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP) -- funding authorized through the US DOT and the ISTEA for bridge improvements. (Average annual allocation - $767,000)

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) -- funding authorized in association with major airport improvements. (Average annual allocation - $150,000)

General Obligation Bonds (GOB) -- bonds authorized through general purpose units of government for capital improvements. (Average annual allocation - $6,385,000)

General Obligation Bond Annexation (GOBA) -- similar to above. (Average annual allocation - $25,000)

Greater Rockford Airport Authority (GRAA) -- funding authorized from the general fund of the GRAA. (Average annual allocation - undetermined)

High Priority Project (HPP) – (Average annual allocation - $50,000)

Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) -- funds authorized for railroad crossing improvements. (Average annual allocation - $215,000)

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) -- funds for roadway and bikepath improvements in conjunction with park, recreation and natural areas (Average annual allocation - undetermined)

Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA) -- funding for improvements to I-90 and other toll highways under the jurisdiction of ISTHA. (Average annual allocation, not including maintenance funds - $1,433,000)

Local -- funding from an unspecified local funding source, usually from the jurisdiction's general fund. This includes funding from the general funds of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, Belvidere, and Boone and Winnebago Counties. It also includes Township Bridge Funds and other special funds of local origin. (Average annual allocation - $10,148,000)

Major Bridge Fund (MBF) -- a federal funding source for major or serious bridge repair projects. (Average annual allocation - $1,135,000)

Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) -- taxes on gasoline and fuel oil to be used by the State or local governments for roadway improvements. This is also the source for State Bridge Funds. (Average annual allocation - $5,135,000)

National Highway System (NHS) -- a special category of federal funding authorized through the ISTEA and TEA-21 for improvements on specially designated roadways of national significance. (Average annual allocation - $287,000)

Other Local Funds – other user fees and vehicle sticker fees assessed by local government (Average annual allocation - $1,308,000)

Private -- funding committed toward a project from a private land owner or developer. (Average annual contributions - $217,000)

Railroad Safety Funds (RRS) -- funding available for rail crossings, etc. (Average annual allocation - $147,000)

State -- funding from the State of Illinois. (Average annual allocation - $7,217,000)

Surface Transportation Program (STP) -- funding authorized through the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), reauthorized under TEA-21,and administered by the US DOT. (Average Annual Allocation – $880,000)

STP-Enhancement (STP-E) – STP funds earmarked for qualified projects which enhance the beauty of a roadway project, improve nonmotorized transportation opportunities, mitigate for the adverse impacts of more traditional roadway projects or other qualified projects.

STP Hazard Elimination & Safety funds (STP-HES) -- STP funds allocated specifically for qualified projects that improve safety. (Average annual allocation - $359,000)

STP-Rural -- STP funds allocated to counties for rural highways. (Average annual allocation - $236,000)

STP-State -- STP funds allocated to the State of Illinois for use on State marked or unmarked routes or other qualified projects at the State's discretion. (Average annual allocation - $1,895,000)

STP-Urban -- STP funds allocated for use on qualified projects at the discretion of RATS and the Rockford Urban Area. (Average annual allocation - $3,555,000)

Truck Access Route (TAR) – funds from the State of Illinois (Average annual allocation - $17,000)

Funding Projections Derived from Past Trends

The majority of the above funding sources were traced and averaged over the last six years From this an average annual allocation was computed for each funding source, as noted above and further summarized in **Table 17** below. In total, the average annual allocation was **$43,860,000**. Multiplied by 25, this yields a 25-year forecasted revenue of **$1,096,500,000 or 1.097 billion dollars**, not including 3-4 sources for which expected allocations could not be determined. **Tables 18 and 19** illustrate how these funds were used (types of projects) and which agencies had lead agency responsibility.

Table 17 - Annual Highway Funding Forecast by Source
Based on 6-Year (1995-2000) Average

Source	$ (1000s)	Percent
CDBG	24	0.05%
FAA	150	0.34%
HBRRP	767	1.75%
HPP	50	0.11%
MBF	1,135	2.59%
NHS	287	0.65%
RRS	147	0.34%
STP	880	2.01%
STP-E	2,146	4.89%
STP-HES	359	0.82%
STP-RURAL	236	0.54%
STP-STATE	1,895	4.32%
STP-URBAN	3,556	8.11%
Fed Subtotal	**$11,632**	26.52%
GOB	6,385	14.56%
GOBA	25	0.06%
ICC	215	0.49%
ISTHA	2,435	5.55%
LOCAL	9,146	20.85%
MFT	5,135	11.71%
Other	1,436	3.27%
Private	217	0.49%
TAR	17	0.04%
Local Subtotal	**$25,011**	57.02%
STATE	**$7,217**	16.45%
TOTAL	**$43,860**	100.00%

Table 18 - Highway Projects by Type
Based on 6-Year (1995-2000) Average

Work Type	$ (1000s)	Percent
Engineering	2,060	4.70%
Enhancement	2,146	4.89%
Intersec. Imp/Mod.	2,348	5.35%
New Construction	6,654	15.17%
Reconstruction	12,320	28.09%
ROW Acquisition	3,484	7.94%
Resurfacing	14,848	33.85%
TOTAL	**$43,860**	100.00%

Table 19 - Highway Funding by Agency
Based on 6-Year (1995-2000) Average

Lead Agency	$ (1000s)	Percen
BELVIDERE	268	0.61%
BOONE COUNTY	558	1.27%
CHERRY VALLEY	1,201	2.74%
GRAA	683	1.56%
IDOT	11,183	25.50%
ISTHA	2,435	5.55%
LOVES PARK	1,172	2.67%
MACHESNEY PARK	388	0.88%
NEW MILLFORD	0	0.00%
ROCKFORD	12,257	27.95%
ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT	335	0.76%
WINNEBAGO COUNTY	13,380	30.51%
TOTAL	**$43,860**	100.0

Highway Projects Selected for Funding

In mature urban areas such as the Rockford MA, the bulk of the system of highways and bridges has existed for many years. In such areas, most transportation improvements are aimed at simply keeping the system in good repair. Consequently, most of the project funding is aimed at maintaining the existing transportation network. Nevertheless, to keep pace with growth, development and increases in travel, a significant amount of funding must also be directed at: (a) adding new links or segments, (b) widening or expanding some of the existing links, (c) constructing major intersection improvements or adding new interchanges, and (d) other measures which add traffic capacity to the existing system.

The proposed roadway improvements over the 25-year time frame of this Plan are identified on **Map 13**. Most of the proposed improvements have been carried from past RATS plans. Their selection is based on:

1. Past and current professional judgement of the planners, engineers and transportation consultants who have conducted numerous technical studies, some going back as far as 4-5 decades.

2. Past and currently adopted transportation plans that have repeatedly been subjected to review and comment by the general public, public officials, and professional transportation planning staff – again some of this work going back many years.

3. The recent judgement of the RATS Technical and Policy Committee, the RATS Planning staff, the planning and engineering staff of the many communities in the Rockford MA and the input from the general public received during this last LRP Update process.

To a great extent, the need for these projects has been verified with the RATS computerized traffic simulation model. In this regard, further extensive testing of most of these projects will be conducted during the next five years, following the expansion/combination of the RATS/SLATS traffic simulation model (now underway with the assistance of a consultant and via a Special Planning and Research grant). Moreover, additional testing these proposed improvements will be conducted as the projects proceed into the preliminary engineering stage and as they are selected for inclusion into the annual Capital Improvement Programs of the lead agency jurisdictions responsible for them and into the annual RATS Transportation Improvement Program.

Project Categorizing & Cost Estimating

For the sake of the cost estimating, the roadway improvement proposed in the next 25 years were divided into several categories as described below. Unit costs were developed for the various categories based on past similar projects and the professional judgement of the construction cost estimators and engineers in the Rockford Public Works Department.

1. Capacity Expansion Projects – Capacity expansion projects are broadly defined in this Plan to include any project that significantly increases the vehicular traffic carrying capacity, the connectivity / continuity, or funcitonality of the system. These are projects that deserve special mention because they are more than maintenance, simple reconstruction, and/or minor geometric improvement projects. A detailed list of such projects is the subject of Table 21. It is important to note that the projects in Table 21 are considered part of the area's Congestion Management System and while some of these projects add lanes miles and may tend to increase the use of single occupancy vehicles (SOVs), they are none-the-less, essential to the continued development of a sound and efficient transportation system for the Metro Area. The projects in Table 21 that will add new lanes are considered the only viable alternative to increases in traffic likely to occur in the next 25 years. Some of these projects have already been subjected to Major Investment Study requirements as required by federal law; others will be subjected to more intense scrutiny next year when the expanded RATS/SLATS traffic simulation model is completed and again as the projects approach pre-engineering stages. Several of the projects are necessary simply to provide an adequate basic road network in areas that are transitioning from agricultural to urban. Others are major intersection improvements that will improve connections and/or reduce major traffic conflict points in the existing system.

2. **New Interchanges** – The expense of these improvements warrants an category of its own. Five new interchanges are planned in the MA in the next 25 years. Since these interchange are significantly add to the capacity of the system they are also listed in Table 21. Two of these interchanges will improve access to the

Interstate highway system at key locations in the Metro Area. The three other interchanges will have significant congestion mitigation and safety enhancement effects without adding significant lane miles.

a. **IL-2 & Latham Road**. As part of the complete reconstruction and expansion of IL-2 between Rockford and Roscoe, IDOT has determined that a grade separation is needed at this key, troublesome and often dangerous intersection.

b. **East State Street (US Bus 20) & Alpine Road**. One of the heaviest traveled intersections in Rockford, the City and IDOT concur that the best way to handle future traffic congestion and safety problems at this intersection will involve some form of grade separation. The close proximity of businesses and a cemetery will make this an expensive and complicated project to design and build.

c. **I-90 & Irene Road**. The need for another interchange to access I-90 in the vicinity of Belvidere and the Chrysler Plant and been contemplated for many years. This seems the most plausible location at this time.

d. **Alpine Road & Broadway/Newburg/Charles (5 Points)**. Rockford believes grade separation must be part of the solution to this complicated and heavily traveled intersection.

e. **IL-173 & I-90.** This will provide better regional access to the Interstate highway system, a direct connection of two National Highway System routes and opportunities for economic development in a highly attractive cooridor.

3. **New signalization projects** – With the projected changes in land use and the increase in vehicle trips, existing and/or new intersections will warrant traffic signals. Recent history indicates the RATS area is averaging more than one new traffic signal a year.

4. **ROW Projects** – Projects involving the purchase or reservation of land for future expansion projects.

5. **"Reclassified" Road Projects** – Maintenance and improvements to roads or links that are being are being upgraded to handle somewhat more traffic or improve the roadways ability to accomodate the existing traffic. Examples include roadways where existing lanes are being widened and roadways that are being raised in hierarchy from local to collector or collector to arterial and such. This category is further subdivided into Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial and Collector Road projects, and into those projects located in the Winnebago County part of the MA and those in the Boone County part.

6. **"Same-Class" Road Projects** – Maintenance and improvements to roads or links that are not being significantly upgraded or reclassified. These would include rebuilding, reconstruction and resurfacing projects that do not involve significant widening. Again these are subdivided by roadway functional classification and county location. These types of improvements typically have lower unit costs than the Reclassified Road category.

7. **Signal modernizations** – The nature and, again, the expense of these improvements warrant a separate category. Existing traffic signals and/or timers will need to be upgraded to reflect the new technology and changes occurring in traffic signals. Since new timers and signals can improve traffic movement and safety, it is envisioned that, over the 25-yeaqr planning period, 369 of the existing traffic signals will be replaced.

8. **River/Creek Crossing Projects** – New and major reconstruction bridge projects. These are further subdivided between Boone and Winnebago Counties.

9. **Railroad Crossings Projects** – Mostly reconstructions, again subdivided into Boone and Winnebago parts.

10. **Enhancement Projects** – Projects funded with their own special category of Surface Transportation Program (STP-E) funds and used for non-traditional transportation projects (bike and pedestrian facilities) or projects that enhance the aesthetics of a transportation facility or reduce the adverse impacts of such facitities.

Table 20 – 25-Year Project Cost Summary

Cat. #	Project Types		Units/Mi	Dollars in Millions Subtotals		Totals	% of Tot
1	**Capacity Expansion Projects**					**$388.230**	**35.4%**
2	**New Interchanges** (Cost included above)				$62.200		
	IL-2 & Latham Rd		1.0	$10.000			
	E. State St (US Bus 20) & Alpine Rd		1.0	$15.000			
	I-90 & Irene Rd		1.0	$10.000			
	Alpine/Broadway/Newburg/Charles		1.0	$12.000			
	IL-173 & I-90		1.0	$15.200			
3	**New Signalization Projects**		25.0			**$2.250**	**0.2%**
4	**ROW Projects**					**$15.000**	**1.4%**
	Subtotal, Capacity Expansion & related				***$405.480***		***37.0%***
5	**Signal Modernizations**		369.0		$20.295	**$20.295**	**1.9%**
	Rockford		253.0	$13.915			
	Winnebago County		28.0	$1.540			
	Loves Park		32.0	$1.760			
	Machesney Park		12.0	$0.660			
	Cherry valley		4.0	$0.220			
	IDOT		23.0	$1.265			
	Boone County		0.0	$0.000			
	Belvidere		17.0	$0.935			
6	**"Reclassified" Road Projects**					**$321.160**	**29.3%**
	Winnebago Co.	Principal Arterials	29.8	$102.060	$250.760		
		Minor arterials	62.8	$109.310			
		Collectors	57.6	$39.390			
	Boone Co	Principal Arterials	0.0	$0.000	$70.400		
		Minor arterials	41.7	$33.520			
		Collectors	32.7	$36.880			
7	**"Same Class" Road Projects**					**$185.810**	**17.0%**
	Winnebago Co.		382.1	$166.090			
	Boone Co		38.0	$19.720			
8	**River Creek Crossing Projects**					**$120.872**	**11.0%**
	Winnebago Co.	**Major Bridge**	19.0	$71.250	$95.698		
		Other	64.0	$24.448			
	Boone Co	**Major Bridge**	6.0	$22.500	$25.174		
		Other	7.0	$2.674			
9	**Railroad Crossing Projects**					**$5.775**	**0.5%**
	Winnebago Co.		61.0	$4.575			
	Boone Co		16.0	$1.200			
10	**Enhancement Projects**					**35.765**	**3.3%**
	Kent Creek Path continuations (part already under application)		8.3	$5.98			
	Perryville Path continuatons (already under application)		3.8	$2.18			
	RCSP Connection to Long Prairie Path		5	$4.00			
	Perryville Path continuation north		3.3	$2.64			
	Rock River paths from downtown		12.4	$10.92			
	Cherry Valley path accross Kishwuakee R.		0.06	$2.28			
	Willow Creek / Machesney Park Path (already under application)		1.5	$1.85			
	Connection to NE Park and RCSP		5	$4.46			
	Kishwaukee R. connection to CV (already under application)		2.3	$1.46			
	Subtotal, Non Capacity Expansion				***$653.912***		***59.7%***
	Total Estimated 25-Year Project Costs					**$1,095.157**	**100.0%**

LRP\TABLE 20 **15-May-01**

Table 21 - Capacity Expansion Roadway Projects in the 2025 Plan

#	Name of Facility	Project Limits (From - To)	Type of Improvement	$ Millions	Source	Justification & Relationship to the Congestion Management System
1	**Airport Dr**	Kishwaukee Av to Beltline Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	4.00	F / S / L	Current 2-lane rural-type roadway inadequate for truck and vehicular traffic of airport and surrounding growing industrial complex
2	**Alpine Rd - N. section**	Riverside Blvd to Spring Creek Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	6.00	F / S	Signal timing and other CMS approaches inadequate to handle forecasted traffic in this critical section of the National Highway System
3	**Alpine Rd - S. section**	Newburg to US-20 (Bypass)	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	6.00	F / S	Signal timing and other CMS approaches inadequate to handle forecasted traffic in this critical section of the National Highway System
4	**Bauer Pky - Elmwood Crossover**	IL-2 to Elmwood Rd	New construction	1.20	L	Corrects a short offset of an existing and future arterial, necessary for system continuity / connectivity and to accommodate urbanization in the area
5	**Bell School Rd**	Newburg Rd to Spring Creek Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	10.40	F / S	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
6	**Beltline Rd**	Kishwaukee Rd to Falcon Rd	New construction	2.00	F / S / L	Reestablishment of an arterial that was temporarily closed to accommodate airport runway extension
7	**Broadway & Alpine & Charles**	Interchange	New construction	12.00	F / S	Interchange is only alternative to accommodate congested conditions at intersection of 3 major arterials; signal timing and less extensive geometric improvement inadequate.
8	**US Bus 20 & Alpine Rd**	Interchange	New construction	15.00	F / S / L	Interchange only alternative to accommodate traffic at congested / hazardous intersection; signal timing and less extensive geometric improvement inadequate.
9	**Elmwood Rd**	Il-2 to Owen Central Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	5.20	F / S	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
10	**Falcon Rd**	Kishwaukee to Beltline Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	4.00	F / S / L	Current 2-lane rural-type roadway inadequate for truck and vehicular traffic of airport and surrounding industrial complex
11	**Harlem Rd / Dawson Lake Rd Connection**	Argyle Rd to Beloit Rd	New construction	2.60	L	Necessary for system continuity and to accommodate suburban development in an area that used to be predominantly rural and agricultural
12	**Harrison Av**	Alpine Rd to Mulford Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	1.50	F / L	Only alternative to accommodate traffic on this heavily traveled arterial
13	**IL-173**	IL-251 to Beloit Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 5 lanes	24.00	F / S	Necessary to accommodate thru and local traffic on this National Highway System-link in this developed/developing segment; center turn lane to be added for access and safety
14	**IL-2 & Latham Rd**	Interchange	New construction	10.00	F / S	Project is part of an approved MIS, also needed to correct hazardous situation where other less intensive attempts have been inadequate
15	**IL-2 / N. Main St**	Elmwood Rd to Rockton Bypass	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	13.80	F / S	An MIS was conducted and approved, no alternative is adequate to handle local and thru traffic increases in the corridor
16	**IL-2 & Auburn St**	Intersection	Reconstruct & improve	4.00	F / S / L	Grossly substandard intersection is a major bottleneck to both arterials; no other alternative
17	**IL-2 / S. Main St**	Beltline Rd to Cedar St	Reconstruct & widen to 5 lanes	10.00	F / S	Center turn lane to be added for access and safety; other alternative inadequate
18	**IL-251 / 2nd St - 3rd St**	Whitman St Intg to Walnut Av	Reconstruct w/ crossover	5.00	F / S / L	Necessary for system connectivity and to deter heavy traffic from residential / historic area
19	**IL-251 / Harrison Av**	Kishwaukee St to 11th St	Reconstruct & widen to 5 lanes	5.00	F / S	Center turn lane needed to safely accommodate multiple access points
20	**IL-251 & Spring Creek Rd**	Interchange	Reconstruct and improve	10.00	F / S	Basically a reconstruction project, included because some widening may be needed. Ramp metering will be considered as an alternative when project is designed

#	Name of Facility	Project Limits (From - To)	Type of Improvement	$ Millions	Source	Justification & Relationship to the Congestion Management System
21	**I-39**	I-90 to Baxter Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	90.00	F / S	Critical area south of the junction of three interstates, no other alternative feasible
22	**I-90 & Irene Rd**	New interchange	New construction	10.00	F / S / L	New access to interstate needed to accommodate growth and development and expand usefulness of the existing system
23	**Lyford Rd**	Riverside Blvd to Harlem Rd	New construction	2.60	L	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
24	**Meridian Rd Bridge**	IL-2 to Kishwaukee Rd	New construction	5.00	F / L	Project will greatly improve system continuity by connecting long segments of Meridian Rd north ans south of Rock River to the benefit or the airport/industrial complex and regional travel
25	**Morgan St / College Av Bridge**	IL-2 to IL-251	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	9.00	F / L	Existing deteriorated 3-lane bridge must be totally reconstructed; lane to be added to accommodate increase in traffic and enhance safety
26	**Mulford Rd**	Harrison Av to Sandy Hollow Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	3.00	F / L	Missing link in truck route system, necessary for system continuity and efficient urban freight movement
27	**Orth Rd**	Lyford Rd to County Line	New construction	1.30	L	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
28	**Perry Creek Rd**	McFarland Rd to Bell School Rd	New construction	0.30	L	Complete short missing arterial link in intensely developing commercial area, necessary for system continuity
29	**Perryville Rd**	IL-173 to Swanson Rd	New construction	5.00	L	Extension / completion of long-planned arteria in RATS/SLATS system; needed to accommodate urbanization and enhance system continuity
30	**Prospect Av - 5th Av Crossover**	E. State St to 11th St	Reconstruct & widen	2.50	L	Project corrects an offset intersection problem and will relieve congestion on a major arterial without adding lane miles to the arterial.
31	**Sandy Hollow Rd**	Alpine Rd to Mulford Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	5.00	F / L	Missing link in truck route system, necessary for system continuity and to accommodate freight movement
32	**Spring Brook Rd**	Perryville Rd to Bell School Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 3 lanes	0.70	L	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
33	**Springfield Av - Riverside Blvd**	Auburn St to Central Av	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	6.00	F / S	Long-planned project to accommodate growth and enhance ring road, ROW was acquired long ago in anticipation of future development and traffic increases
34	**Springfield Av Extension**	W. State St to Montague Rd	New construction	10.50	F / L	Project already underway, approved; will complete vital missing link in ring road system, open lands for industrial development, aid in revitalization of declining area
35	**Town Hall Rd**	US 20 (Bypass) to US Bus 20	New construction	12.00	F / S / L	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban
36	**US Bus 20 / E. State St**	Mulford Rd to Lyford Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	6.00	F / S	Widen short narrow link in this highly developed corridor where most of roadway is already 6-lanes; project will also improve safety and access to I-90
37	**US Bus 20 / E. State St**	Olsen Rd to Belvidere	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	7.00	F / S	Need to accommodate increases in intercity travel and changes from agricultural to urban in this corridor between Rockford and Belvidere
38	**US Bus 20 / W. State St**	Meridian Rd to Rock River	Reconstruct & Resurface	12.00	F / S	Only short segments not 4-lane, capacity may be expanded by removing parking, eliminating some intersections, adding turn lanes and other CMS strategies.
39	**US-20 (Bypass)**	IL-2 to I-39	Reconstruct & widen to 6 lanes	32.00	F / S	Only alternative on this link in the interstate / National Highway System system; necessary to accomodate regional thru traffic and local traffic
40	**Riverside Blvd**	E of I-90 to Argyle Rd	Reconstruct & widen to 4 lanes	1.43	Local	**Basic rural to urban conversion** necessary to accommodate land use changes from agricultural to urban

#	Name of Facility	Project Limits (From - To)	Type of Improvement	$ Millions	Source	Justification & Relationship to the Congestion Management System
41	**IL-173 & I-90**	New interchange	New construction	15.20	F/S/ ISTHA	Necessary to provide better access to existing interstate system and to accommodate development in a area converting from agricultural to urban
F= Federal, S=State, L=Local, ISTHA=IL State Toll Highway Authority				**388.23**		

Table 20 summarizes the cost estimates for the above-listed categories of projects. These cost estimates demonstrate that the proposed highway improvements in the Metro Area during the 25-year plan are financially feasible. Table 20 shows a total estimated cost of $1,095,127,000. Revenues are forecasted for the same period at $1,096,500,000 (Table 17). Finally, all proposed projects will be more thoroughly evaluated as they are prioritized and included in the annual RATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The current TIP is consistent with this LRP and is considered part of this LRP. Care will be taken to ensure future TIPs are also consistent.

(NOTE: Although revenues exceed projected funding needs, no further effort is being made at this time to balance projected revenues with projects costs. This is because, projected revenues may be on the high-side due to the time period, the last six years, used to judge revenue trends. During that time, the Metro Area received large allocations of STP-E funds and STP-U funds. Such allocations may not be characteristic of future allocations. This situation will be carefully monitored and reconsidered in the next major Plan update.)

Further Comments on Road-related Issues in the 2025 Plan and Beyond

Perryville Road. This Plan reaffirms the need to construct Perryville Road northward into the fast developing areas of northeastern Winnebago County. This Plan also recognizes and reaffirms the Corridor Access Plan developed for the stretch of Perryville Road between Riverside Boulevard and Newburg Road. For further details on this refinement seen the minutes of the Policy Committee meeting of November 16, 1995, and Policy Committee Resolutions 95-10 and 95-12.

Riverside Boulevard Corridor - Access Plan. This Plan reaffirms the access plan developed for Riverside Boulevard between Sage Drive and Mulford Road. Refer to the RATS Policy Committee minutes of November 16, 1995 and related documents on file in the RATS offices for further details.

IL-173 Corridor and New Interchange at I-90. This Plan reaffirms the need to construct an interchange at I-90 and IL-173. As the Rockford Urban area continues to develop in the eastern portion of Winnebago County and the western portion of Boone County, one of the area's primary goals is to increase access to the NorthWest Tollway (I-90). Over the past two decades, the Winnebago-Boone County area has experienced increasing residential growth of citizens who commute to the Chicago area for employment. Many of these commuters utilize IL-173 and I-90 to connect with commuter rail in Harvard, IL and RATS expects this trend to continue over the next several years as new employment centers are constructed in the collar counties of Chicago. Also, both of these roads are identified on the National Highway System (NHS). A direct connection of these two vital roadways is needed. This Plan also recognizes and reaffirms the access plans developed by IDOT for the IL-173 Corridor. Refer to documents on file at IDOT District 2 and in the RATS offices for further details.

Springfield/Harrison Connection. The completion of the last remaining link of the RATS Beltway System is currently underway. The completion of this project is recommended. The connection is an important transportation link from a regional standpoint and will also be of considerable benefit to the economic revitalization of Rockford west side. The project is also important for Environmental Justice reasons. The bulk of the areas minorities and low-income persons reside in the vicinity of this project. When completed this link will provide these populations with better access to jobs, commerce and community facilities.

Surface Transportation to Support the Airport. The importance of the Greater Rockford Airport to the Rockford economy cannot be overstated. This Plan reaffirms the need to give priority to roadway improvements serving and providing access to the Airport.

Collector Roads to complement the Arterial Roads. While the importance of the arterial road network is obvious, it is also important to provide access to the arterials and to avoid overburdening the arterials with shorter trips. The collector road system serves this function. Because collector roads are typically constructed with private funds as part of the land development process, their importance is sometimes overlooked. This Plan reaffirms the need for diligence in securing sufficient and adequately-sized collector roadways as urbanization continues.

Normal Operating and Maintenance Costs. Participants at the RATS Certification Review conducted in May 1995 suggested that the normal operation and maintenance costs for all roadways should be estimated and included as part of the LRP. This task is not as simple as it may seem. Examples of the myriad of costs that might be included are: (1) highway patrol and related law enforcement costs, (2) accident investigation and management, (3) traffic court costs, (4) highway and traffic data collection/analysis costs, (5) street sweeping, (6) pothole repair, (7) striping and lane marking, (8) signal maintenance and timing costs, (9) roadway signing, (10) sidewalk repair, (11) alley repair, (12) capital equipment costs and equipment maintenance costs, (13) highway facility buildings and grounds costs, and maintenance costs, (14) administrative costs, (15) storm sewer and detention pond construction/maintenance costs, (16) costs of snow removal and winter traction improvement, (17) mowing and weed control costs, (18) trash and debris pickup/disposal costs, (19) the share of multi-use public works buildings and equipment, and (20) the share of mass transit costs relevant to roadways, especially local streets, due to the extra wear and tear caused by the weight of the buses. Consequently, this is an accounting task the RATS MPO is not equipped to tackle from a quantitatives, pure-accounting standpoint.

Subjectively, however, judging from the professional opinion of local public works officials and local public attention and complaint levels, the existing transportation system within the MPO planning boundaries is being adequately operated and maintained with the revenue sources that are provided through federal, State and local jurisdictions. By adequately maintained we mean two things: (1) the system is, at all times, being maintained from the standpoint of safety; and (2) the efforts are being put forth in a conscientious and timely manner so as to extend the useful life of the system and its components.

This is not to say that there is always agreement that the system is being optimally maintained at all times. Stated another way, there is periodic debate regarding the degree and timeliness of maintenance from the standpoint of extending the useful life of infrastructure to its maximum. Although this Plan supports the goal of “optimal maintenance” it also recognizes, for obvious reasons, this goal as idealistic in nature and not fully achievable. Suffice to say, this Plan recognizes the need for constant diligence in maintenance, the need to strike a reasonable balance between maintenance and new construction, and the need to frugally apply the area’s finite transportation funding resources to both.

The Northwest Bypass. Under the direction of the RATS Policy Committee, RATS staff has begun to study the need and feasibility of a new limited access roadway that would the periphery of the northwest quadrant of the Rockford MA. Preliminary indications are that such a facility will be needed in the future but the exact timing of the need and the best alignment for the facility has not yet been determined. The ongoing expansion of the RATS traffic simulation model is a prerequisite to further work on this topic. This Plan reaffirms the need for continued study of this topic.

The Woodruff/Wallenburg Expressway. A recent, extensive reevaluation of the Woodruff/Wallenburg crosstown expressway was not entirely conclusive in demonstrating the need for this facility; neither, however, did the study conclusively dispel the value of the facility. The situation needs to be monitored, especially in conjunction with rail plans in the corridor.

PART 10: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Public Involvement

Public Involvement in this Plan Update was afforded and encouraged in numerous ways.

1. In accordance with the official RATS Public Involvement Process (the PIP), involvement has been encouraged at all meetings of the RATS Technical and Policy Committees. The meetings are announced in the media and open to the public. Agendas are mailed to an extensive mailing list before the meetings and the public is invited and afforded opportunities to speak on any and all transportation issues. The Plan Update itself has been brought up at numerous such meeting and input requested.

2. On Sunday, April 24, 2000, the following public notice was published in the Rockford Register Star, the newspaper of widest circulation in the area:

   NOTICE OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

   NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS), the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford area, is seeking public comment on the transportation planning process and the development of the following documents. RATS coordinates transportation planning and improvement decisions among the jurisdictions of Rockford, Loves Park, Machesney Park, Cherry Valley, Belvidere, Winnebago County, Boone County, New Milford, the Rockford Mass Transit District, the Loves Park Transit System, the Boone County Council on Ageing and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

   FY2001 Unified Work Program. ***This document specifies transportation planning work proposed over the next year (7/1/00 - 6/30/01). A draft is available for inspection. Comments will be accepted until May 5, 2000.***

   Long-Range Plan (LRP) Amendments. ***The LRP discusses, plans and assigns priority for all major transportation system improvements for the Metropolitan Area over the next 20 years. Currently, a comprehensive update of the Plan is being prepared. The update will reevaluate and potentially reaffirm the existing plan and extend the planning horizon to Year 2025. The update will be scheduled for adoption in late July of 2000. Copies of the existing plan are available now; the proposed update will be available in late May. Public comments and input is welcomed at any time.***

   FY2001 Transportation Improvement Program. ***This document identifies and prioritizes all major transportation improvements scheduled for implementation in the Metro Area in the next three years (7/1/00 - 6/30/03). (Target adoption date: on or about July 27, 2000) Public comments should be submitted prior to July 1, 2000.***

   Public comments are welcomed on all the above work and at all RATS meetings. RATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings are typically held once a month. The meetings are announced at least a week in advance, are open to the public, and public comment is invited during the meetings. Persons seeking to be placed on the RATS mailing list so that they can receive copies of announcements, agendas and other reports should contact RATS staff at 815-987-5628 or 5638. Or, write to: RATS, Rockford City Hall, 425 East State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61104. Information is also available at the Rockford Public Library, the North Suburban District Library (Loves Park, IL) and the Ida Public Library, (Belvidere, IL).

3. In early June 2000, RATS supplied copies of the two most important map-components of the LRP to the Rockford Board of Realtors: the map of the Existing Functionally Classified Roadway System for the Metro Area and the map of the system as proposed between now and the Year 2015. In a cover letter it was explained that RATS is in the process of updating the LRP and that comments and ideas are welcome. That map and cover letter was mailed to over 1,200 persons or agencies withing the area including all of the areas realtors, banks, mortgage companies, other lending institutions and title companies.

4. On May 18th, 2000, RATS staff presented the existing Plan at a meeting of the local chapter of the Sierra Club and asked for their input and comments on the pending update.

5. RATS participated in the efforts of the Intergovernmental Cooperation and Planning Committee of Winnebago County in it efforts throughout the first six months of the Year 2000 to update the County's Land Use Guide. This county-wide planning effort involved representatives from all local governments and planning commissions in the County as well as the media and numerous citizens. The effort was aimed at updating the County's land use plans, conserving the County's land and resources, encouraging "smarter' growth and development and resolving conflicts in the development plans of area governments. On May 25th and June 1, 2000, RATS presented the LRP to this Committee and sought input regarding the ongoing Plan Update.
6. During 1999, RATS staff participated in the development of the HUD-required Consolidated Plan. The RATS LRP and other planning documents were reviewed in consideration of the goals of the Consolidated Plan to provide assistance to low-income and minority populations throughout the community.

7. During 1998, RATS staff participated in the deliberations and planning efforts of the Mayor's Welfare to Work Task Force. The input received from this effort resulted in significant proposals to expand or augment public transit services in the Rockford area, as discussed and recommended in this Plan.

8. In consideration of all of the above input, during the week of June 19th (2000), the proposed LRP 2000 was completely redrafted and republished. On June 26, 2000, the draft was mailed to all persons on the RATS mailing list, including the media, and made available in area public libraries for public review. Time was reserved on the agendas of the July 20, 2000 and the July 27, 2000 meetings of the RATS Technical and Policy Committee meeting for public input on the Plan Update.
9. Finally, RATS does not regard any of its required planning documents as static or unchangeable. RATS policy is to accept public input on any and all transportation topics that come to the interest of area citizens. RATS will continue to accept input and comments on this LRP after adoption. **In accordance, the LRP is considered amendable, at any time, for reasonable cause.**

Blueprint for Rockford's Future

While the following public involvement effort occurred in the early 1990s, many of the finding of the effort remain valid today and continued to serve as important input into this Plan Update. The following excerpt from the 1995 LRP Plan Update is included verbatim to reaffirm the Blueprint importance.

> ***In the early Spring of 1994, the Mayor and Community Development Department of the City of Rockford initiated an effort to qualify a large part of the City as an "Empowerment Zone" (EZ) or "Enterprise Community" under a new federal program directed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Accomplishing this goal requires the preparation of a Strategic Plan that is developed through an extensive collaborative involvement of neighborhood residents, community-based organizations, religious institutions, small and large businesses, schools and universities, civic organizations, the financial sector, and State and local governments. In short, a public involvement process similar to the broad-based proactive public involvement process stressed by the ISTEA.***
>
> ***On March 29, 1994, the first "Blueprint for Rockford" meeting was held after widespread publicity. Attendance by a wide spectrum of community leaders and citizens was so good that the group was split into seven committees averaging 12-15 persons each. Each committee was assigned to brainstorm and report community needs pertaining to one of the following general topics: Arts & Recreation, Health, Housing, Industry and Neighborhood Businesses, Public Safety, Public Services, and Education and Training.***
>
> ***Over the next several months, these committees met dozens of times to discuss community problems, needs and possible solutions. Surprisingly, even though none of the committees was specifically asked to look at transportation issues, it quickly became apparent that transportation was of special importance to all. In fact, transportation issues were brought forth so often that a Transportation Subcommittee was formed.***
>
> ***Although the complete findings of all the various committees have not yet been compiled, the following examples are representative of the issues and problems cited.***

1. ***There is a need to develop a coordinated system of public transportation and alternatives to public transportation coordinated with public and private institutions.***

2. ***We need to develop a network of recreation paths accessing all areas of the community.***

3. ***A transportation survey is needed to better determine where people want to go and when.***

4. ***There is a need for evening bus service. Many employees work second shift and evening bus service is essential.***

5. ***The area's truck routes need to be more clearly defined and improved. Impediments to truck movement on several main roads should be removed. Examples include narrow bridges, low overpasses (such as 20th Street and Woodruff), poor railroad crossings, and turning radii that are too tight.***

6. ***Improvements need to be made to some of the main arterials to get traffic through the urban area.***

7. ***The Harrison/Springfield beltway needs to be completed.***

8. ***Better access is needed to downtown Rockford and to southwest Rockford.***

9. ***Support was expressed for the Greater Rockford Airport's proposal to establish a high-speed rail link between Rockford and O'Hare Airport. The train should come into downtown Rockford.***

10. ***The west side of Rockford needs a better system of arterials and better connection with the east side.***

11. ***A better taxi system is needed.***

Environmental Justice

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 USC 2000d-1) states that, **"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."** Title VI bars intentional discrimination as well as disparate impact discrimination (i.e., a neutral policy or practice that has a disparate impact on protected groups).

Environmental Justice (EJ) is an amplification of Title VI that extends the basic principles of Title VI to low-income populations. Recent emphasis on EJ stems from the 1994 *Executive Order 12898* that states, **"Each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human healt or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."**

In 1997, the US Department of Transportation issued its *DOT Order to Address Environmental; Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* to summarize and expand upon the requirements of *Executive Order 12898.* DOT notes that the need to consider environmental justice is already embodied in many long-standing laws, regulations and policies such as: the *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 109(h) of Title 23, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA),* as amended, as well as the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).*

In light of the above dictums, this Plan recognizes the following goals as part of its transportation project selection and priority setting process:

1. Minority and low-income populations should be allocated a fair share of transportation expenditures and services.

2. Minority and low-income populations should not be burdened with a disproportionate share of the adverse impacts originating from the transportation projects.

3. As part of the RATS Planning process, a concerted effort should be made to determine what populations are going to be affected by various projects in the Plan and, especially, the annual TIPs.

4. RATS should periodically review and analyze past projects and transportation decisions to determine if we have, in fact, treated all groups equitably.

5. RATS and the RATS participants should make a concerted efforts to inform and involve minority and low-income groups in the transportation decision-making process.

To assure that the RATS Planning process was being conducted in concert with the above goals, in March of this year, RATS staff prepared the document entitled the Title VI Update for Planning and Roadway Improvements. The document looked closely at the distribution of planning funds in the Urban Area and the distribution of major highway projects with respect to the distribution of minority and low-income groups. The document is on file in the offices of RATS and IDOT in Springfield. The conclusions of the document are as follows:

Specific guidance (State or Federal) on how to determine if transportation planning resources and roadway-related transportation improvements and being equitably applied minority groups throughout the community is nonexistent. In the absence of that guidance, this report has attempted to assemble information documenting where minorities are located within the RATS Metro Area and cite specific activities, projects and conditions that demonstrate that minorities are not being neglected or discriminated against and are, in fact, targeted with efforts to improve their situations and conditions.

In that context, the information presented in this report supports the following conclusions:

I. The suballocation of transportation planning funds (State and Federal sources) is heaviest to the community in the Urban Area with the highest percentage and concentrations of minorities, particularly Black Americans and Hispanics.

II. Several major recent, current or proposed planning activities will be of significant direct or indirect benefit to minorities. The West State Street Corridor planning, the South Main Street Corridor Planning, the planning to improve Harrison Avenue, and the ongoing transit planning provide direct significant benefits. The creation of WINGIS, the development of the Rockford pavement management system, and the public participation efforts, all, have the potential to benefit minorities in the future.

III. The organizational structure of RATS provides opportunities for input from minorities. Minority persons have active roles on the RATS Technical and Policy Committees.

IV. RATS has made specific efforts to determine where minorities are located throughout the region and makes concerted conscious efforts to consider the needs of the minorities in its planning and programming activities.

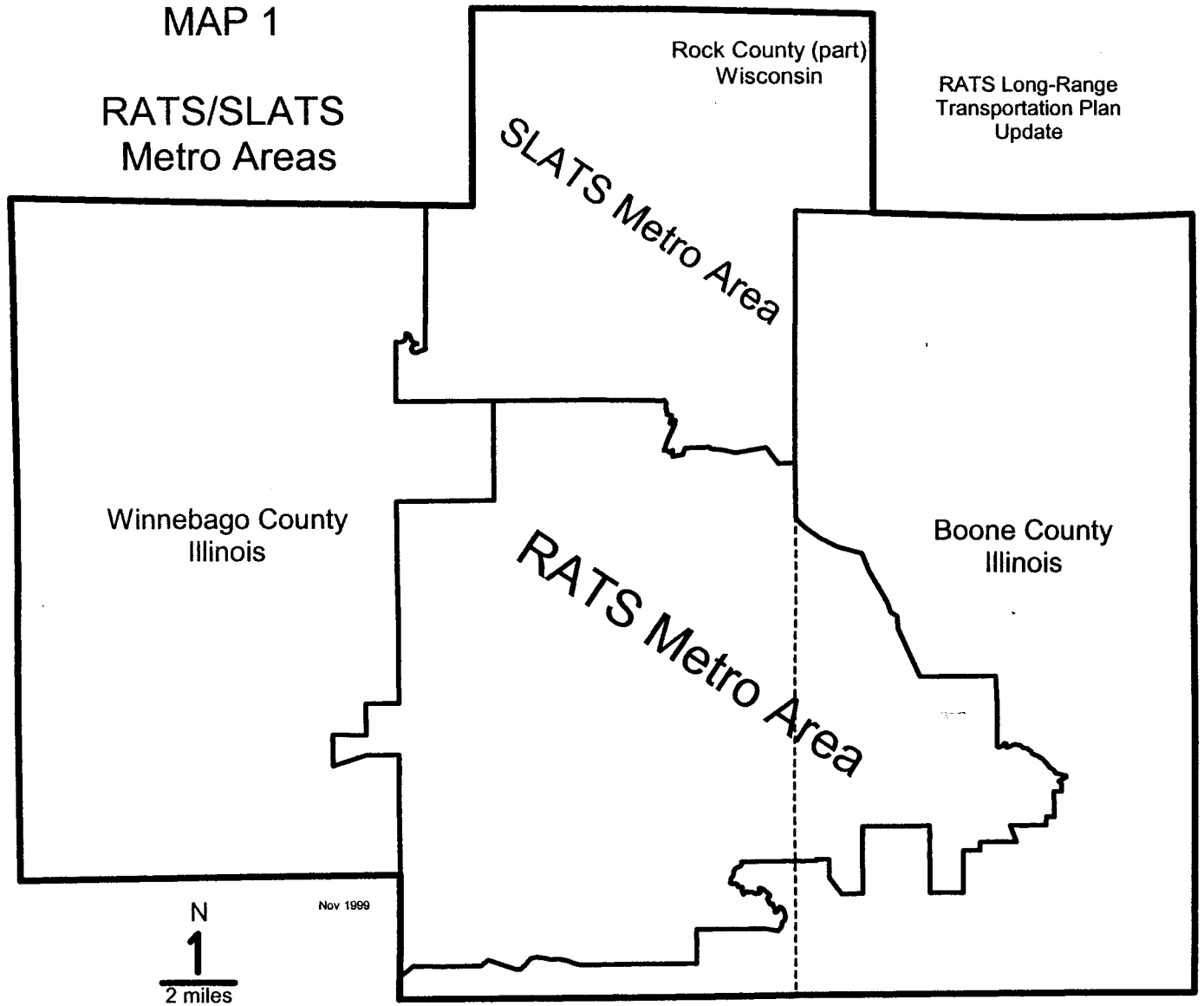
V. It has been thoroughly documented that the delivery of public transit services is specifically targeted at the economically poor and transit-dependent persons of our community; and therefore targeted, indirectly, at minorities.

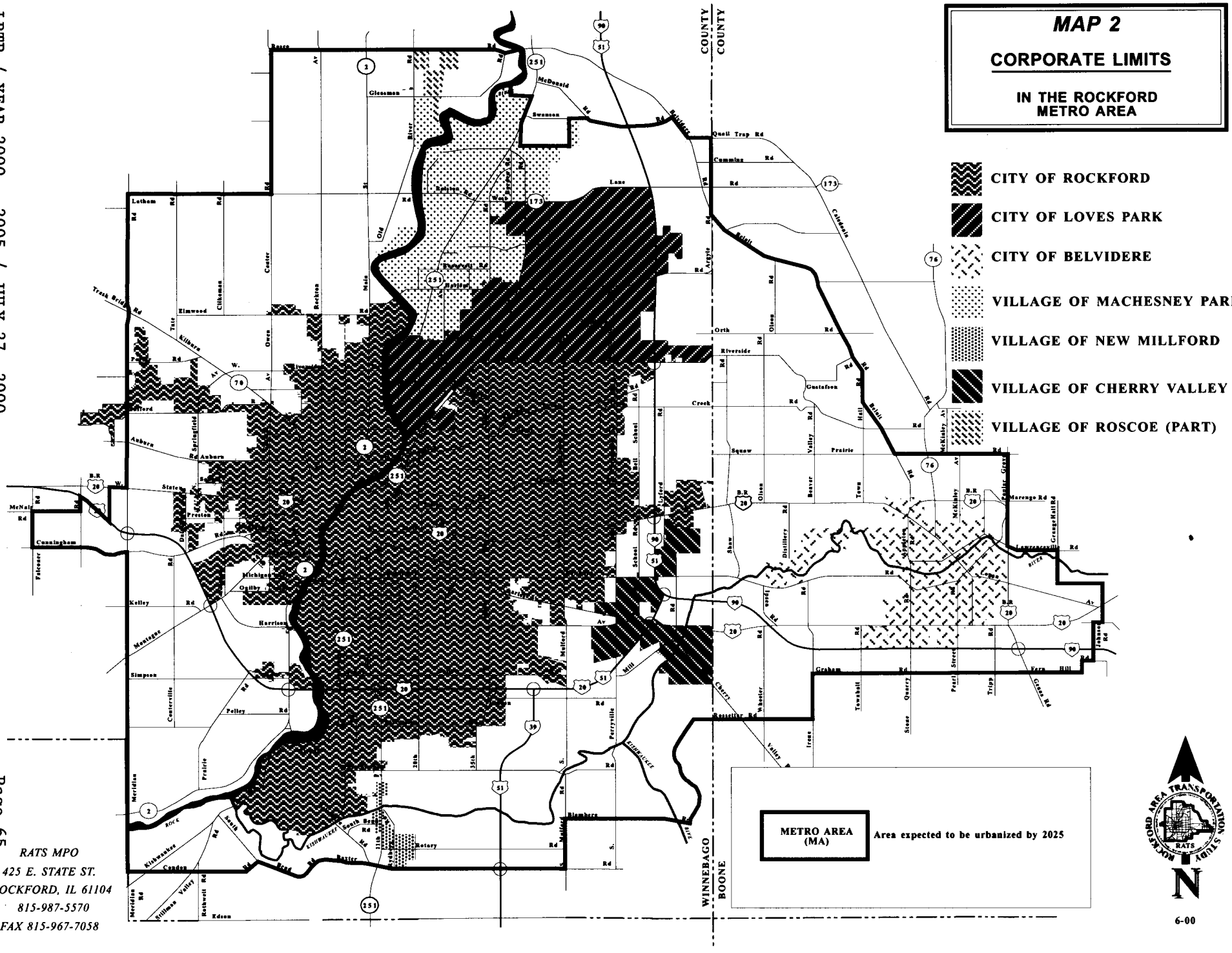
VI. A visual comparison of the latest TIP project locations with the distribution of minorities shows numerous projects in minority areas.

VII. Overwhelmingly significant expenditures of STP-Urban funds and sizable amounts of TEA-21 Enhancement funds are targeted to benefit minority areas. Also, applications have been filed for Access to Jobs funds and TCSP funds for major projects that will benefit minorities.

To further assure that the Planning process was being prepared in concert with the above goals and to comply with suggestions made in recent memos by IDOT and FHWA, RATS staff revisited the topic in May of this year and prepared the document entitled: *Environmental Justice Considerations related to Transportation Planning and Transportation Improvements in the Rockford Metropolitan Area*. Again, that document is on file in the RATS offices and the IDOT offices in Springfield. The conclusions of the document are as follows:

> ***The above discussions along with the analyses and discussions contained in the Title VI Update for Public Transit Providers (June 1998) and the Title VI Update for Planning and Roadway Improvements (March 15, 2000) serve to illustrate that environmental justice has been a long-standing consideration in the RATS planning process. Information has been developed that identifies the location of minority groups and low-income populations in the Rockford area. When compared with transportation projects in the TIP, it appears there is an equitable balance of projects in minority / low-income areas and non-minority / upper income areas. The identification and location of minority / low-income populations will be renewed when Year 2000 Census information becomes available. Hopefully, also, at that time, significant aspects of WinGIS will be implemented and these will enable the rapid depiction of area demographics compared to programmed and planned transportation projects. The delivery of public transit services will also be thoroughly reevaluated at that time. Considerable anecdotal evidence is also presented in this report to substantiate that environmental justice has long been an important topic in the Rockford area, even before the term was coined, and continues to be a major concern today.***


MAP 1
RATS/SLATS
Metro Areas
Rock County (part)
Wisconsin
RATS Long-Range
Transportation Plan
Update
SLATS Metro Area
Winnebago County
Illinois
RATS Metro Area
Boone County
Illinois
N
1
2 miles
Nov 1999



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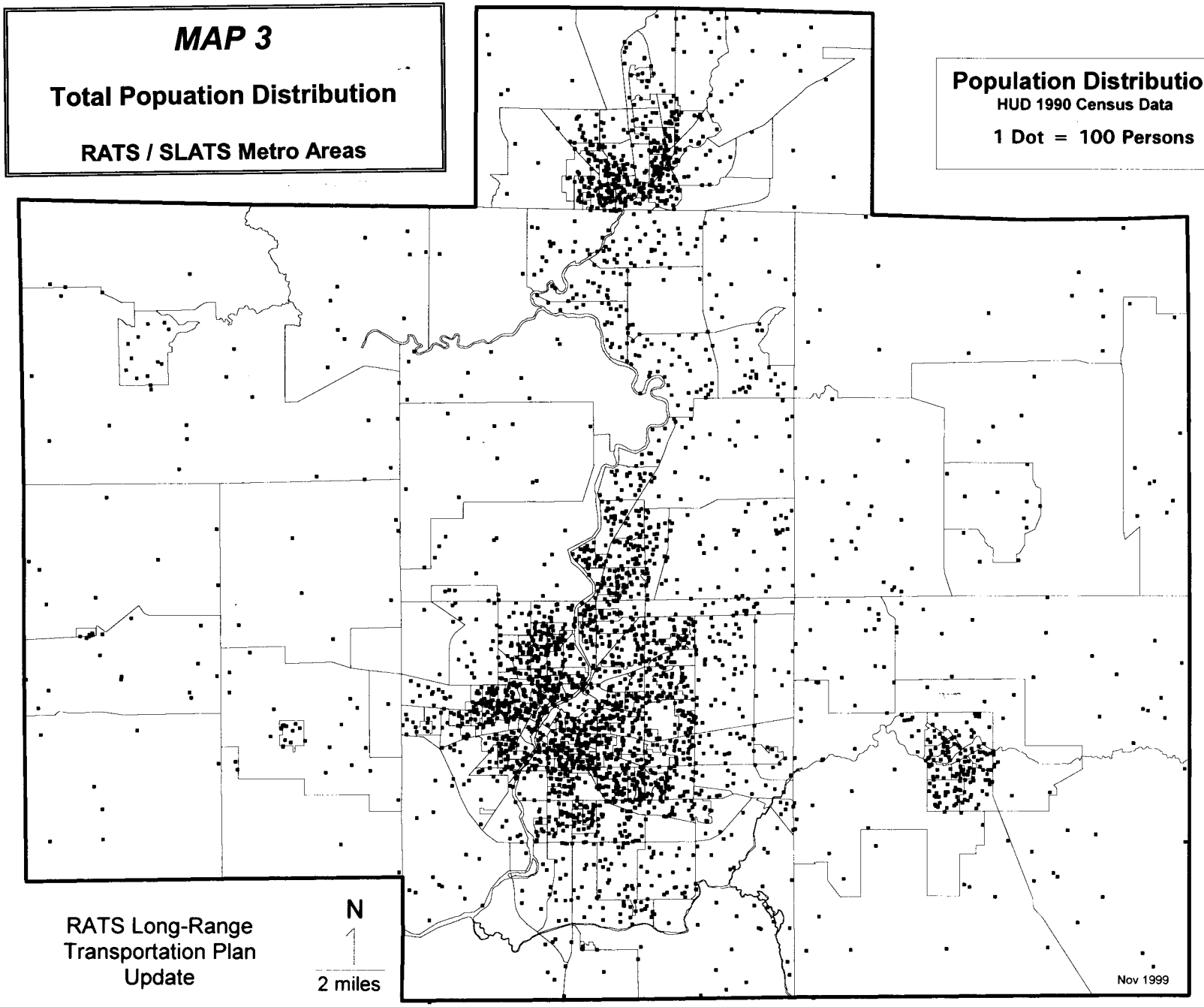
MAP 3

Total Popuation Distribution

RATS / SLATS Metro Areas

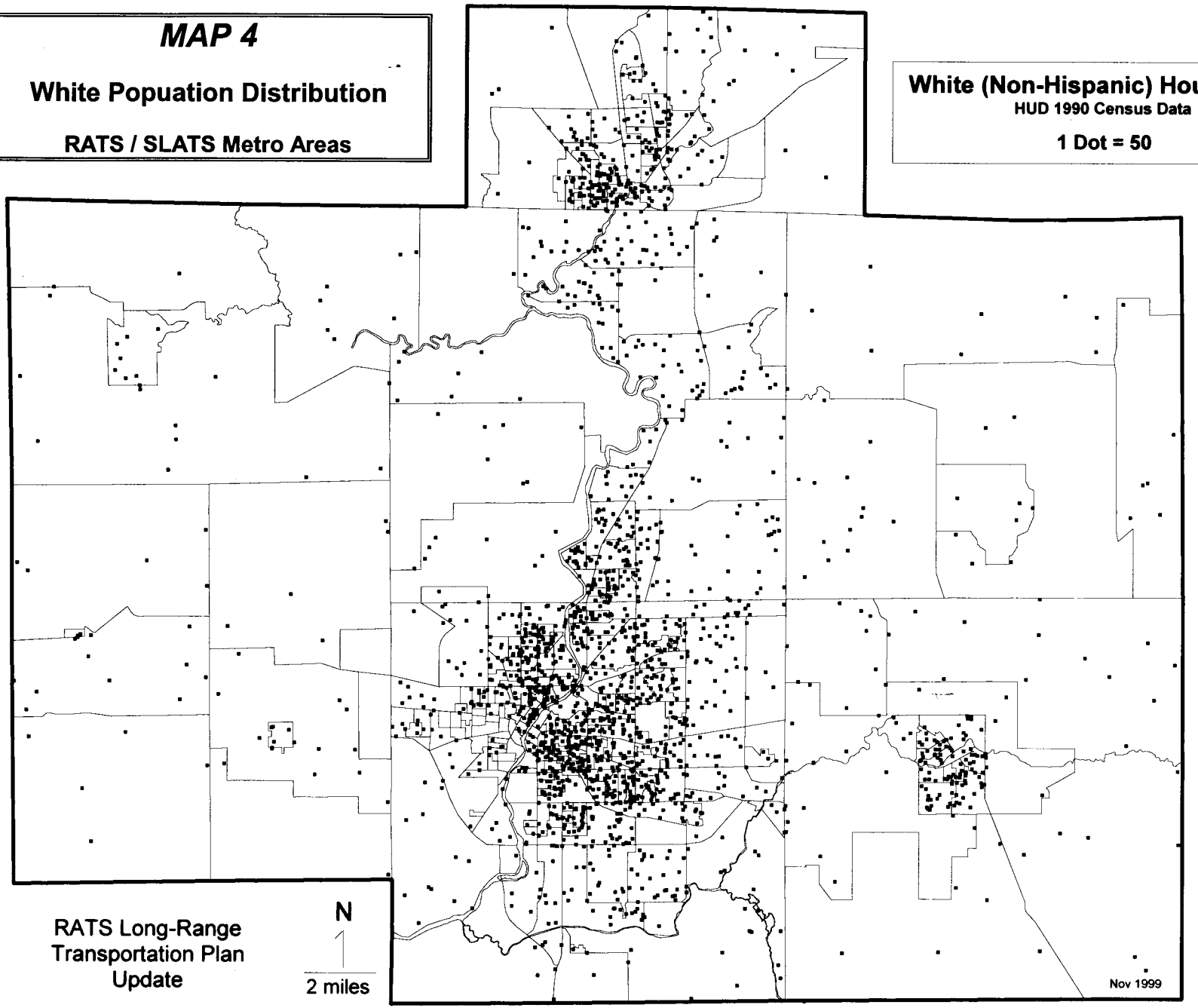


MAP 4

White Popuation Distribution

RATS / SLATS Metro Areas

White (Non-Hispanic) Households
HUD 1990 Census Data
1 Dot = 50

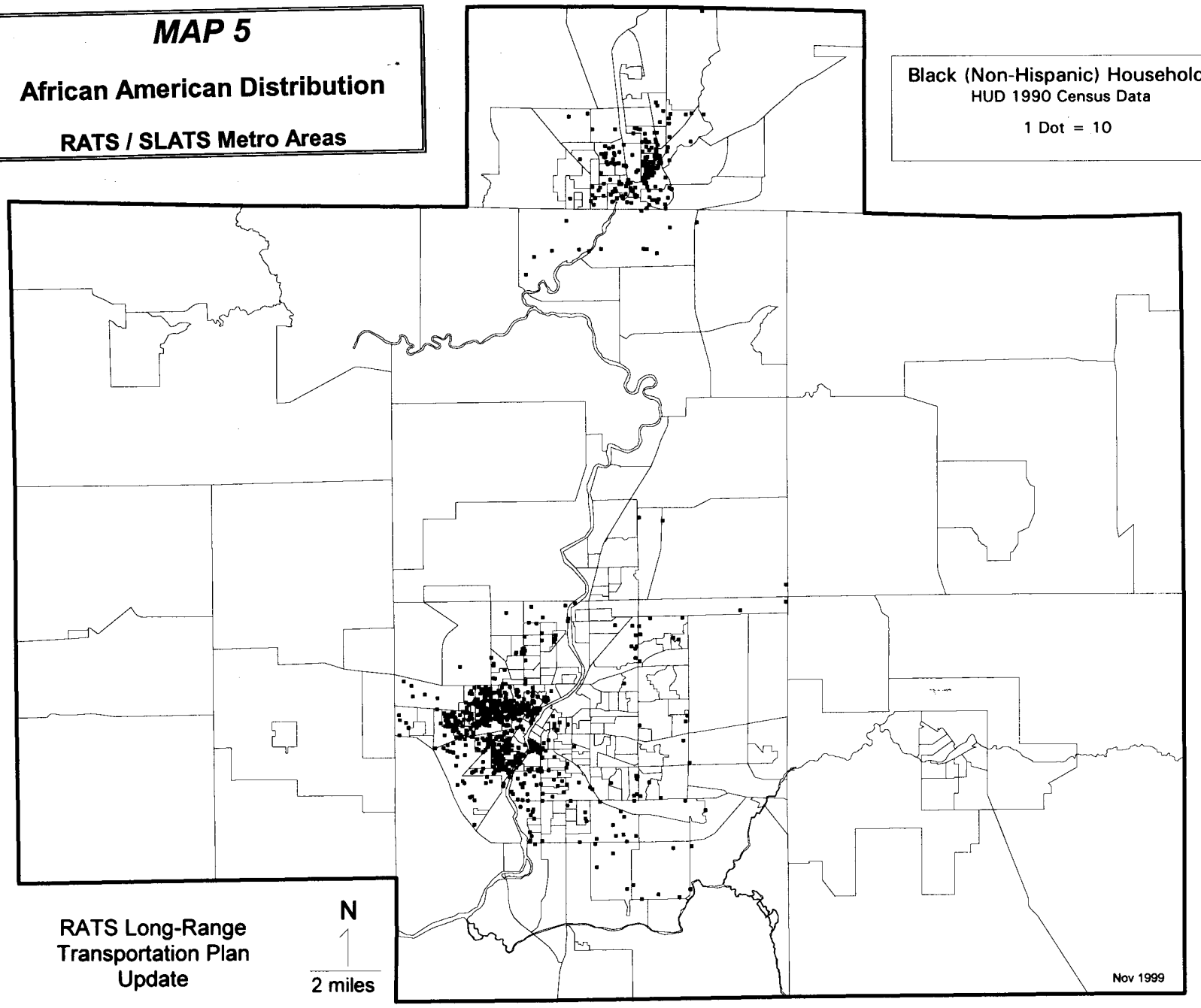


RATS Long-Range
Transportation Plan
Update

MAP 5

African American Distribution

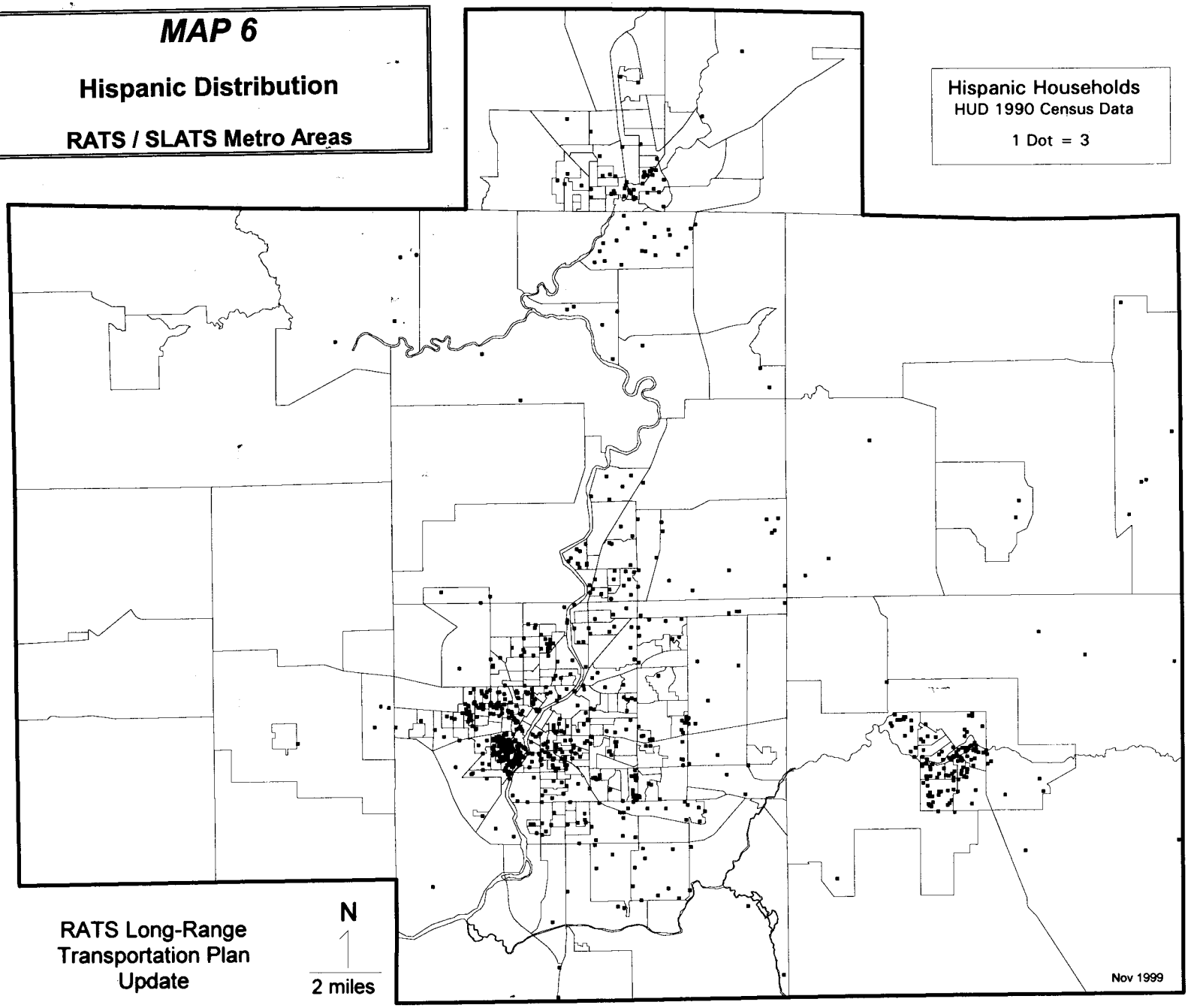
RATS / SLATS Metro Areas



MAP 6

Hispanic Distribution

RATS / SLATS Metro Areas

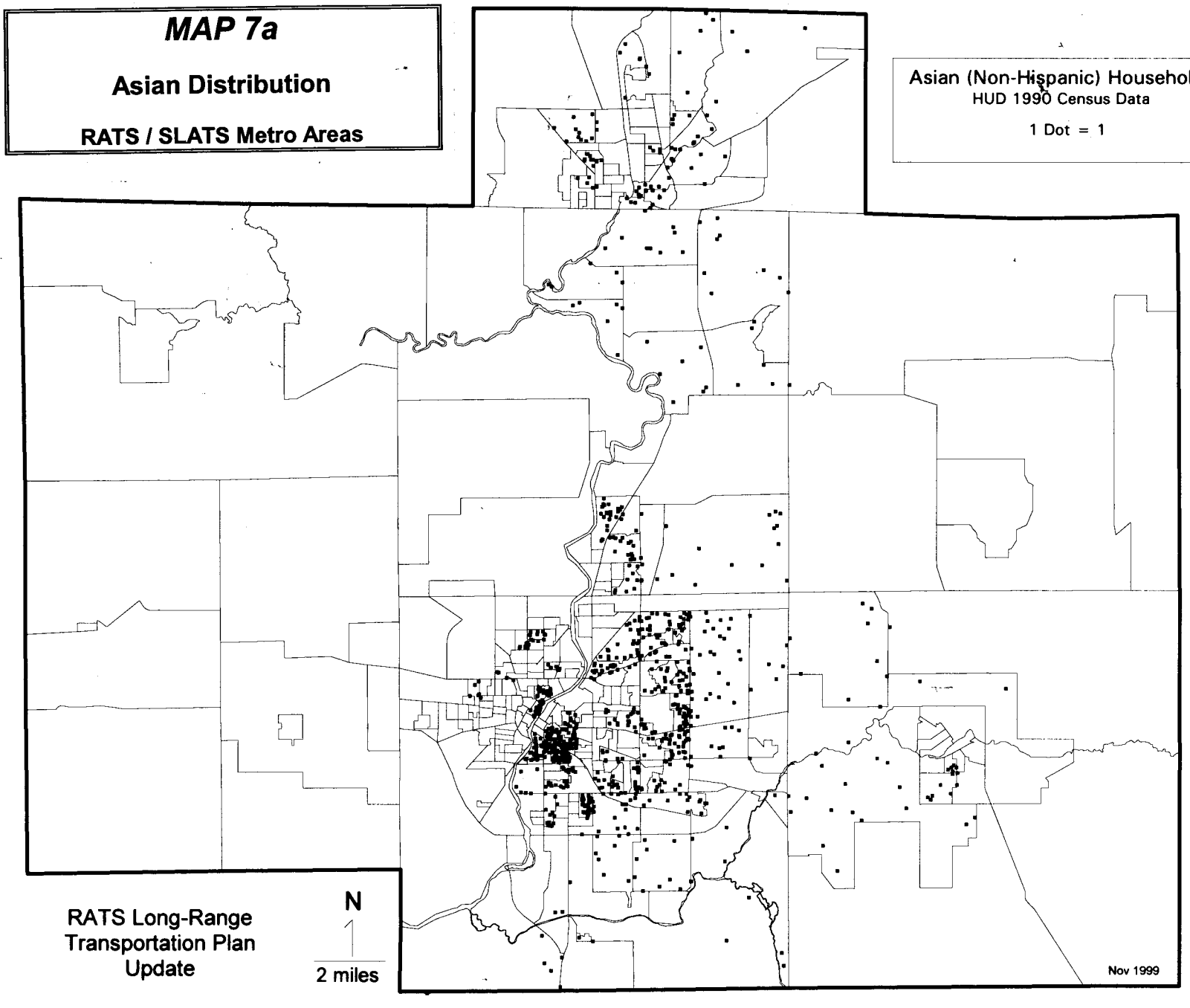


RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan Update

MAP 7a

Asian Distribution

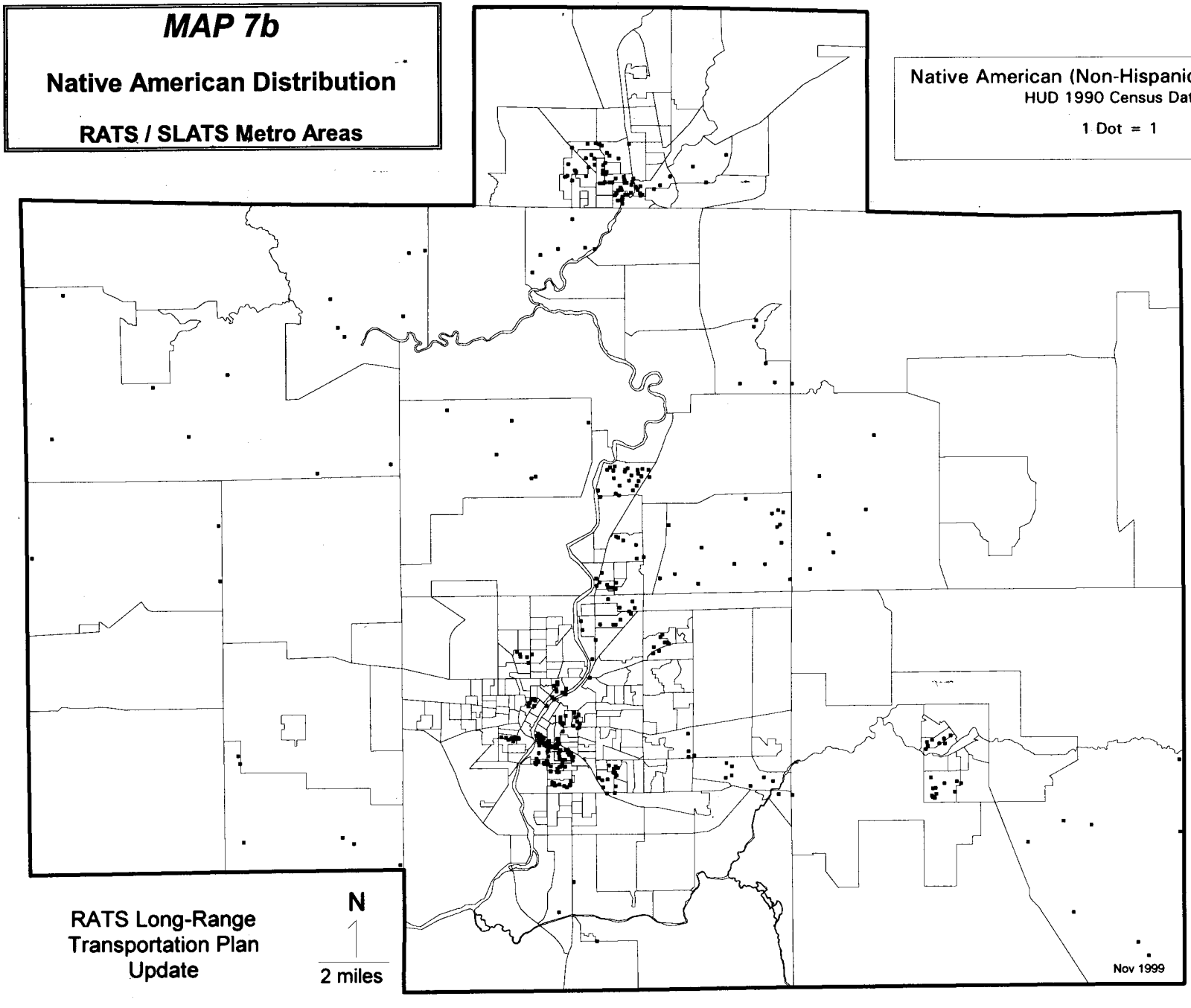
RATS / SLATS Metro Areas



MAP 7b

Native American Distribution

RATS / SLATS Metro Areas



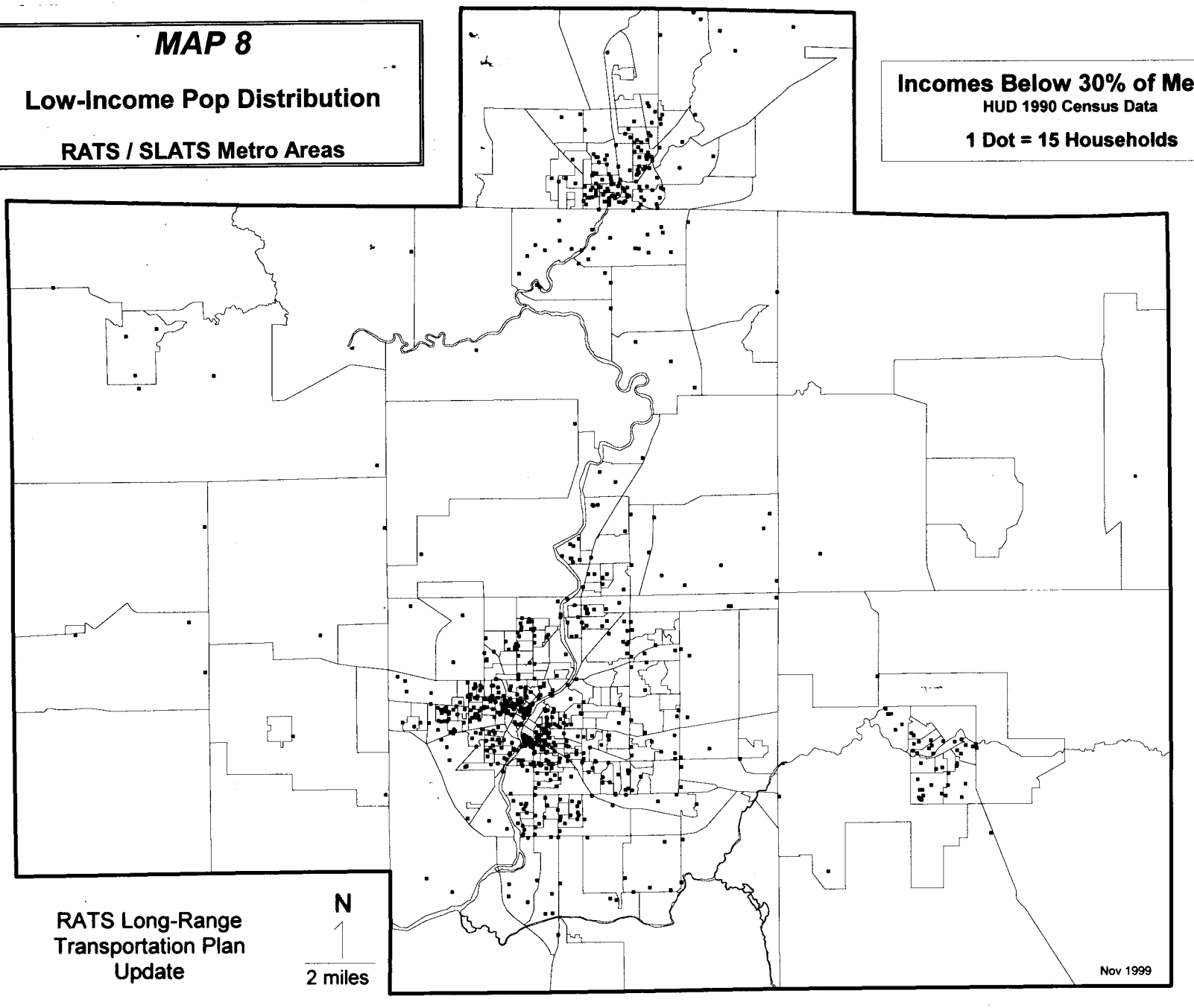
MAP 8

Low-Income Pop Distribution

RATS / SLATS Metro Areas

Incomes Below 30% of Median
HUD 1990 Census Data

1 Dot = 15 Households

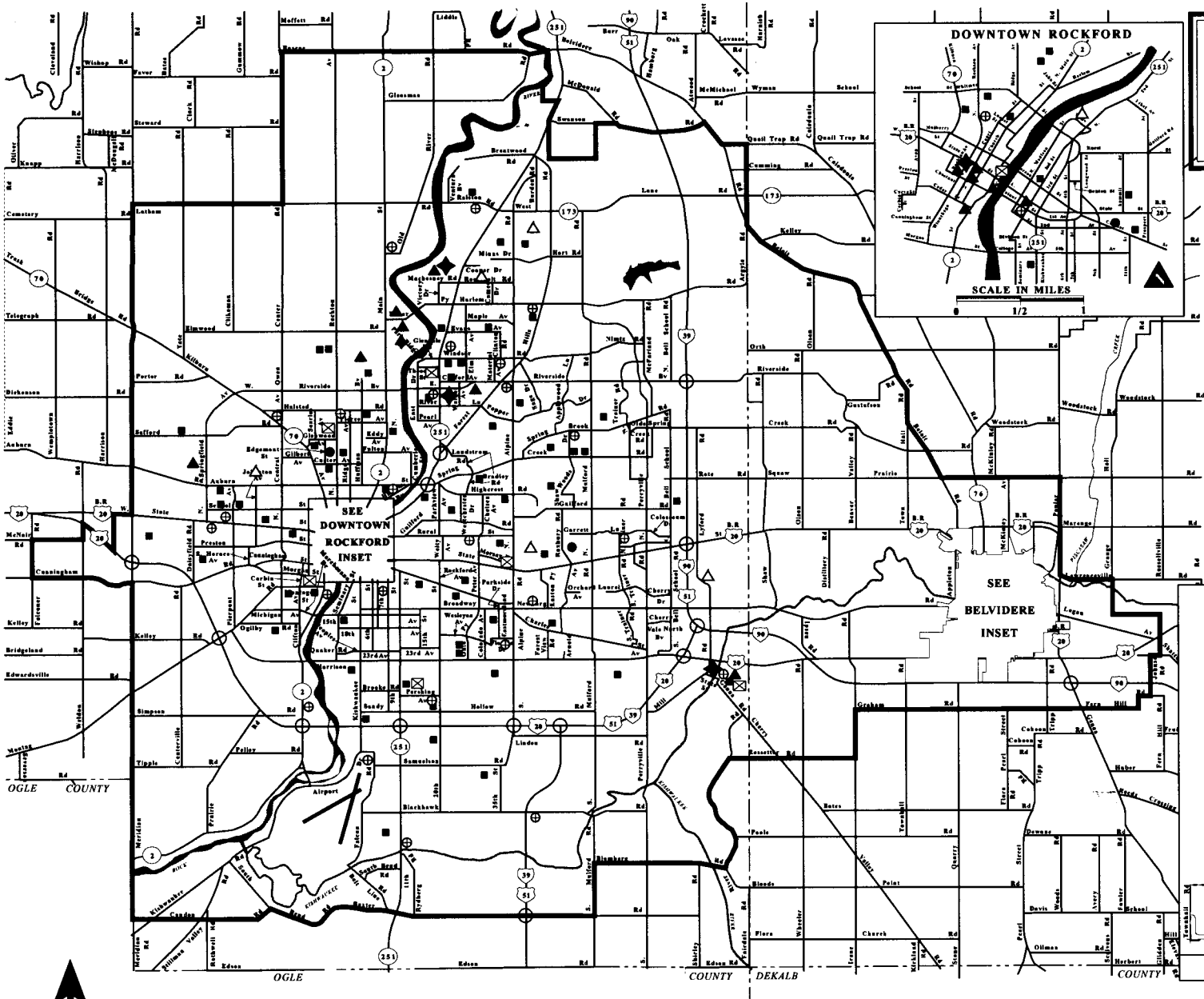


RATS Long-Range
Transportation Plan
Update

MAP 9

EXISTING PUBLIC & SEMIPUBLIC FACILITIES

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



SCHOOL

HOSPITAL

FIRE STATION

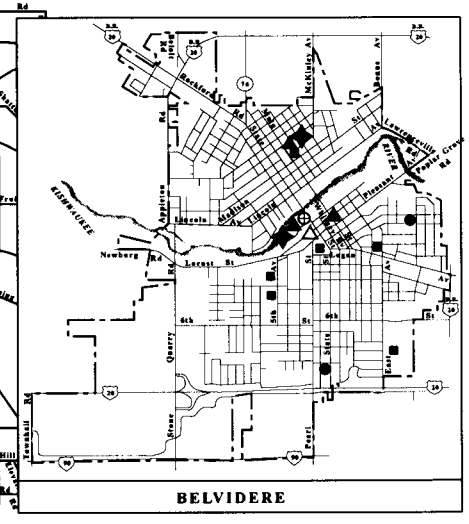
POLICE STATION

LIBRARY

GOVERNMENT BUILDING/FACILITY

COMMUNITYCENTER/ CLUB

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025



N

6-00

SCALE IN MILES

0 1/2 1 1-1/2 2

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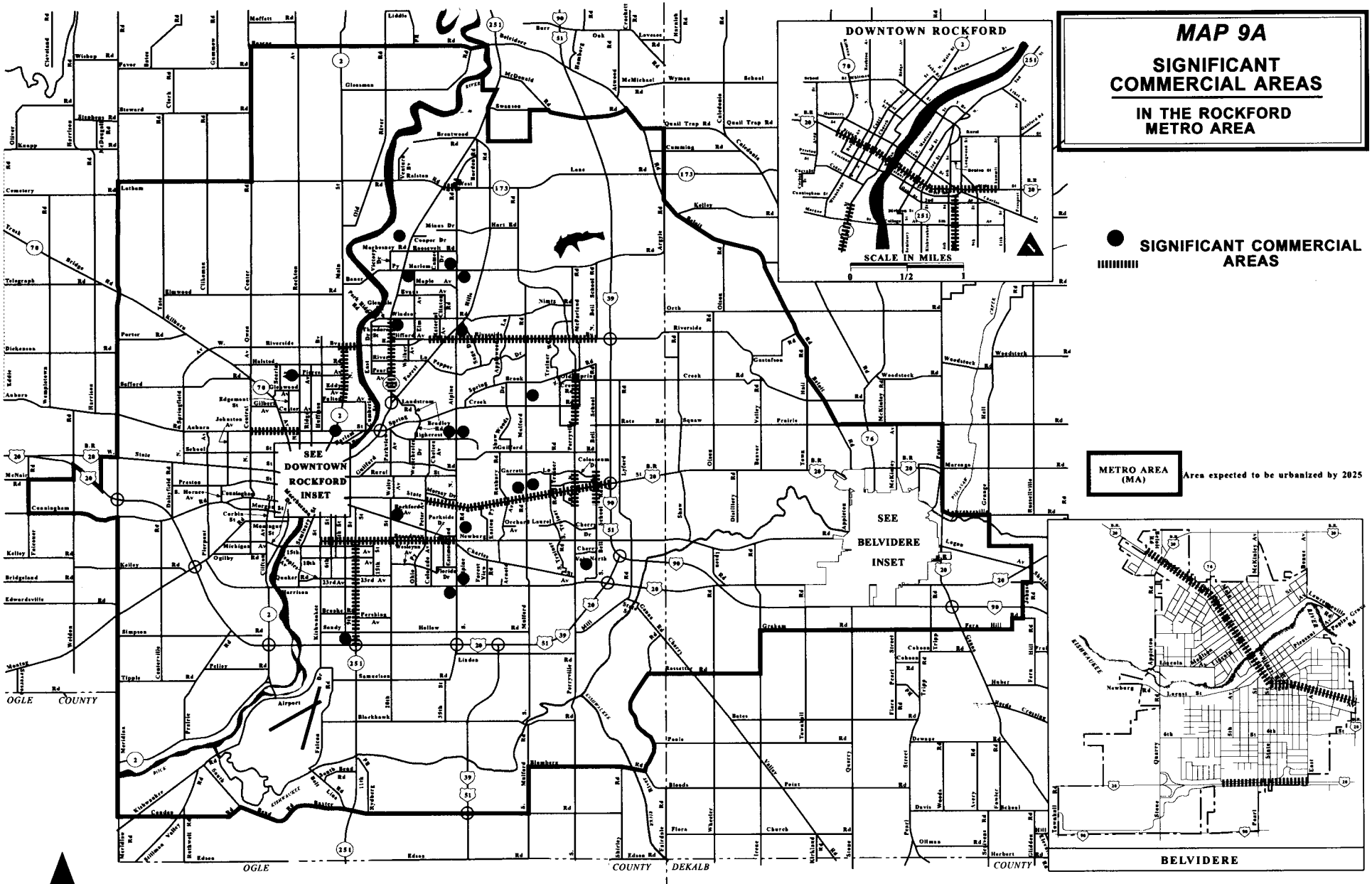

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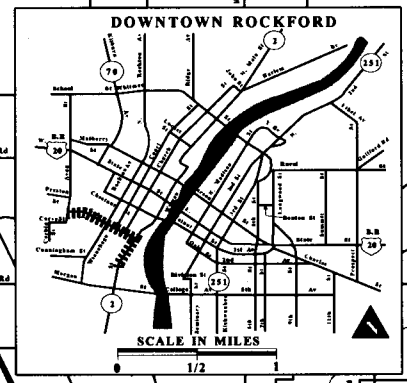
MAP 9B

SIGNIFICANT INDUSTRIAL AREAS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



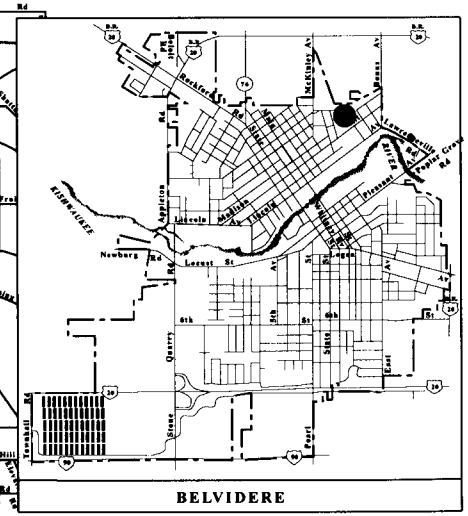
SIGNIFICANT INDUSTRIAL AREAS

METRO AREA (MA)

Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

SEE DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD INSET

SEE BELVIDERE INSET



OGLE COUNTY

OGLE COUNTY

DEKALB COUNTY

N

6-00

SCALE IN MILES

0 1/2 1 1-1/2 2

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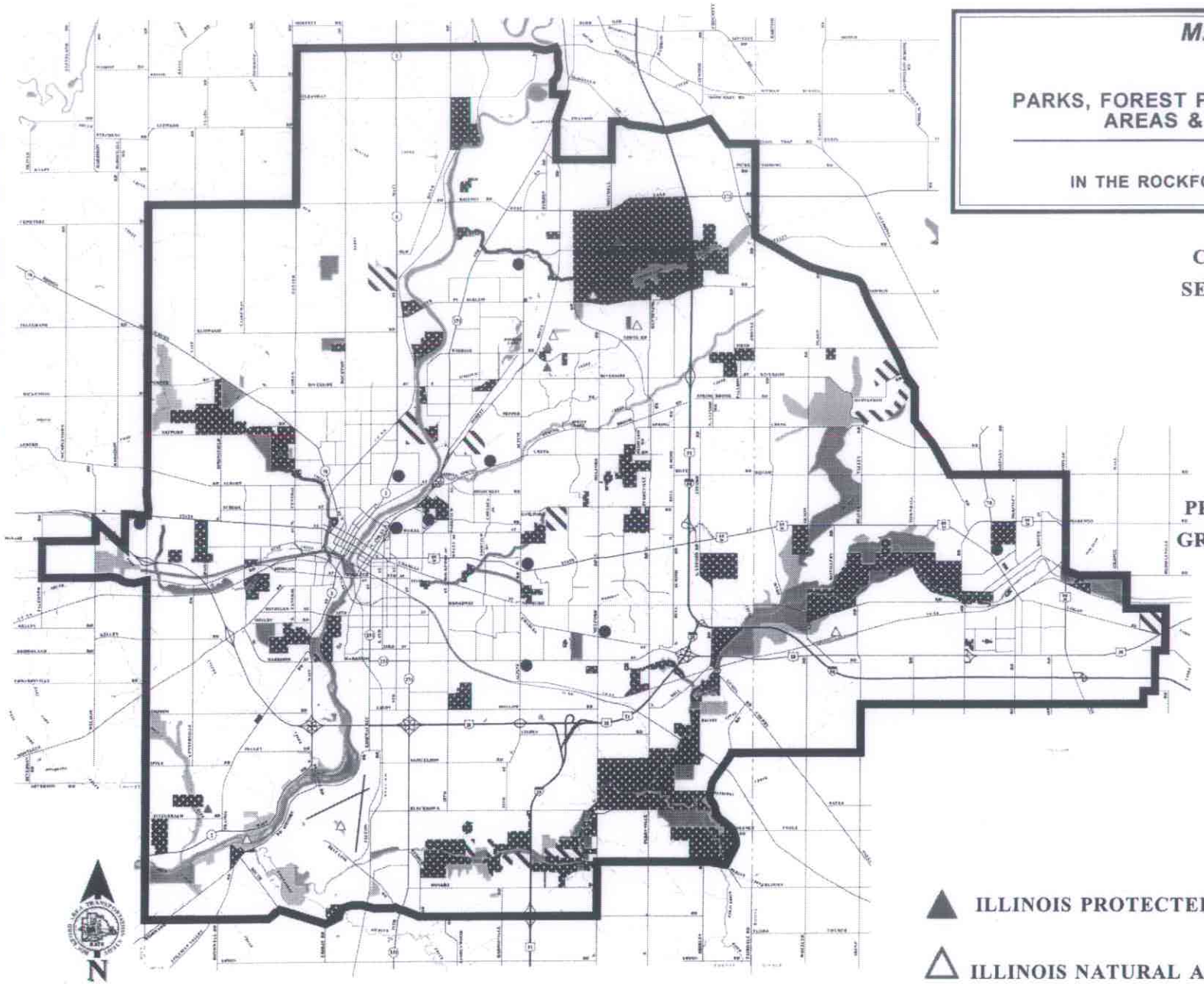
MAP 10

PARKS, FOREST PRESERVES, NATURAL AREAS & CEMETERIES

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



CRITICAL AND SENSITIVE LAND

CEMETERY

PRIORITY PARK/ GREENWAY AREA

EXISTING FACILITY

PVT. OPEN SPACE

▲ ILLINOIS PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS

△ ILLINOIS NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY SITES

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

N

6-00

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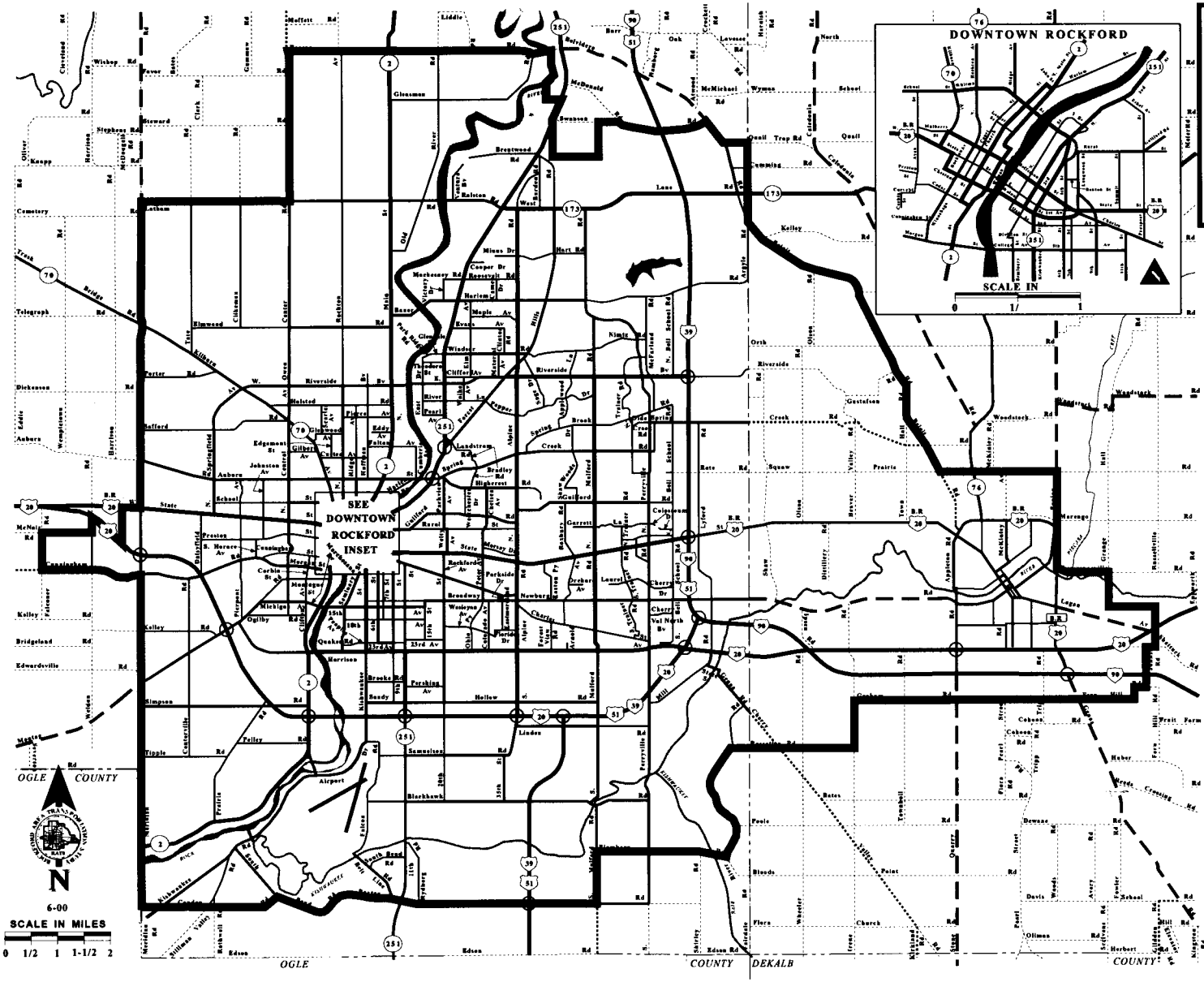

MAP 11

FUNCTIONALLY CLASSIFIED SYSTEM OF

EXISTING ROADWAYS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

Roadway Classes in Winnebago & Boone Counties Part of MA as Defined by RATS / IDOT

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MINOR COLLECTOR
- UNCLASSIFIED RURAL

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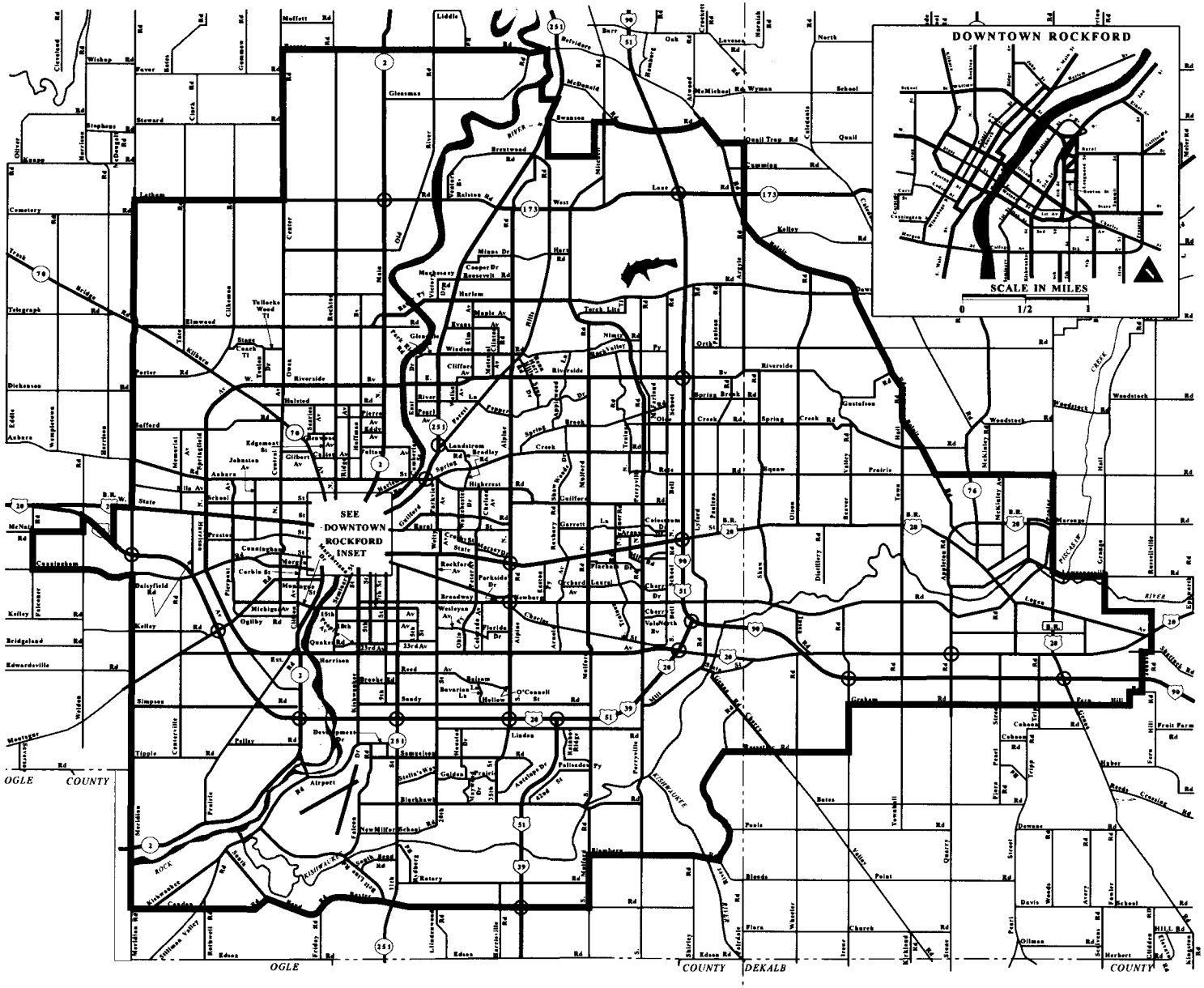
MAP 12

PLANNED FUNCTIONALLY CLASSIFIED SYSTEM OF ROADWAYS BY

YEAR 2025

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

Roadway Classes in both Winnebago and Boone Counties Parts of MA as defined by RATS

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- UNCLASSIFIED RURAL

N

6-2000

SCALE IN MILES

0 1/2 1 1-1/2 2

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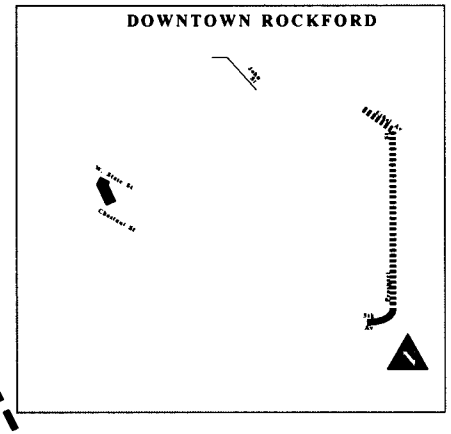
MAP 13
PLANNED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN PRESENT and 2025
IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



NEW PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

NEW MINOR ARTERIAL

NEW COLLECTOR

NEW INTERCHANGE

MINOR ARTERIAL TO PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

COLLECTOR TO PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

COLLECTOR TO MINOR ARTERIAL

MAJOR COLLECTOR (BOONE COUNTY) TO MINOR ARTERIAL

MINOR COLLECTOR (BOONE COUNTY) TO COLLECTOR

MINOR COLLECTOR (BOONE COUNTY) TO MINOR ARTERIAL

UNCLASSIFIED RURAL (BOONE COUNTY) TO COLLECTOR

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
RATS

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6-2000

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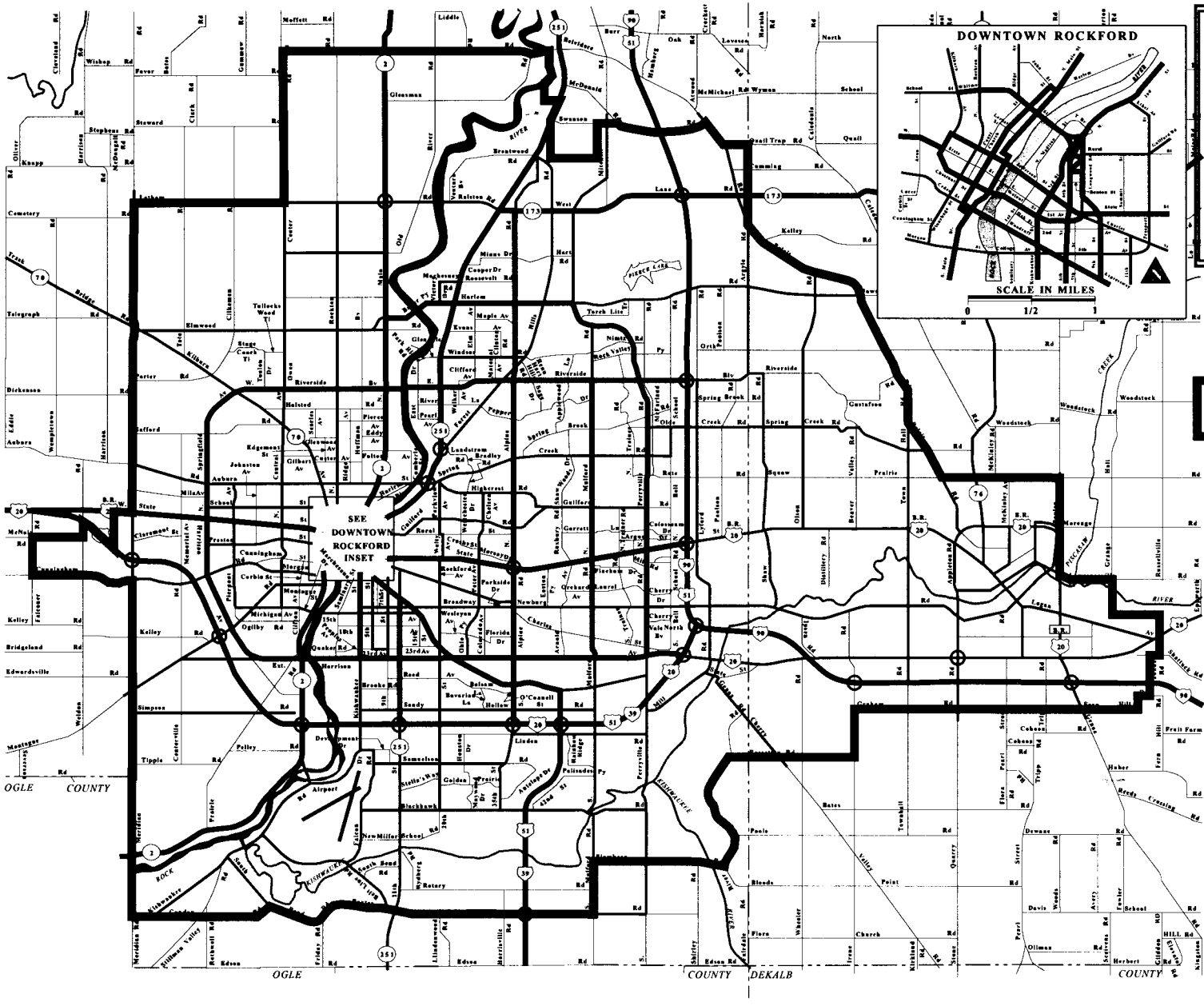

MAP 14

POTENTIAL FUNCTIONALLY CLASSIFIED SYSTEM OF ROADWAYS

BEYOND YEAR 2025

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

Roadway Classes in both Winnebago and Boone Counties Parts of MA as defined by RATS

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- UNCLASSIFIED RURAL

N

6-2000

SCALE IN MILES

0 1/2 1 1-1/2 2

RATS MPO
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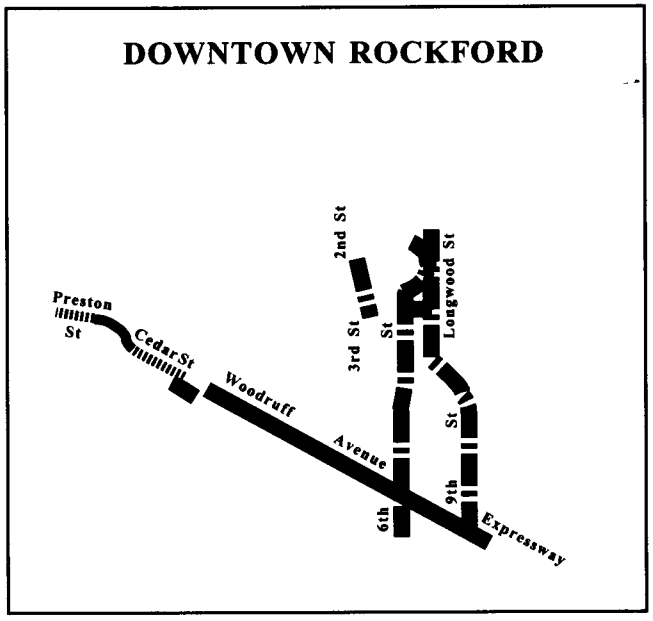
MAP 15

POTENTIAL ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

BEYOND YEAR 2025

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



NEW PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

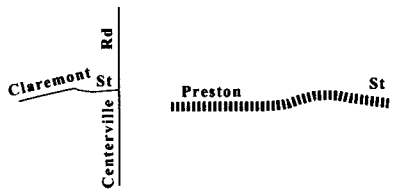
NEW MINOR ARTERIAL

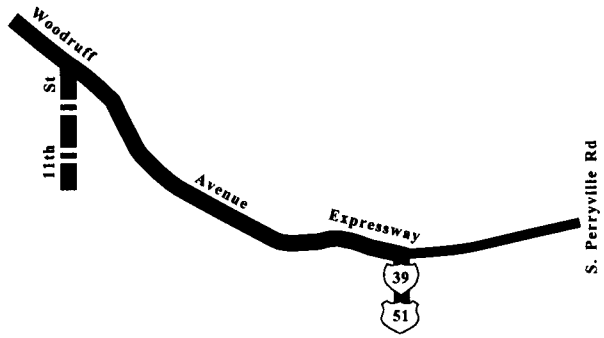
NEW COLLECTOR

NEW INTERCHANGE

MINOR ARTERIAL TO PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

COLLECTOR TO MINOR ARTERIAL





6-2000

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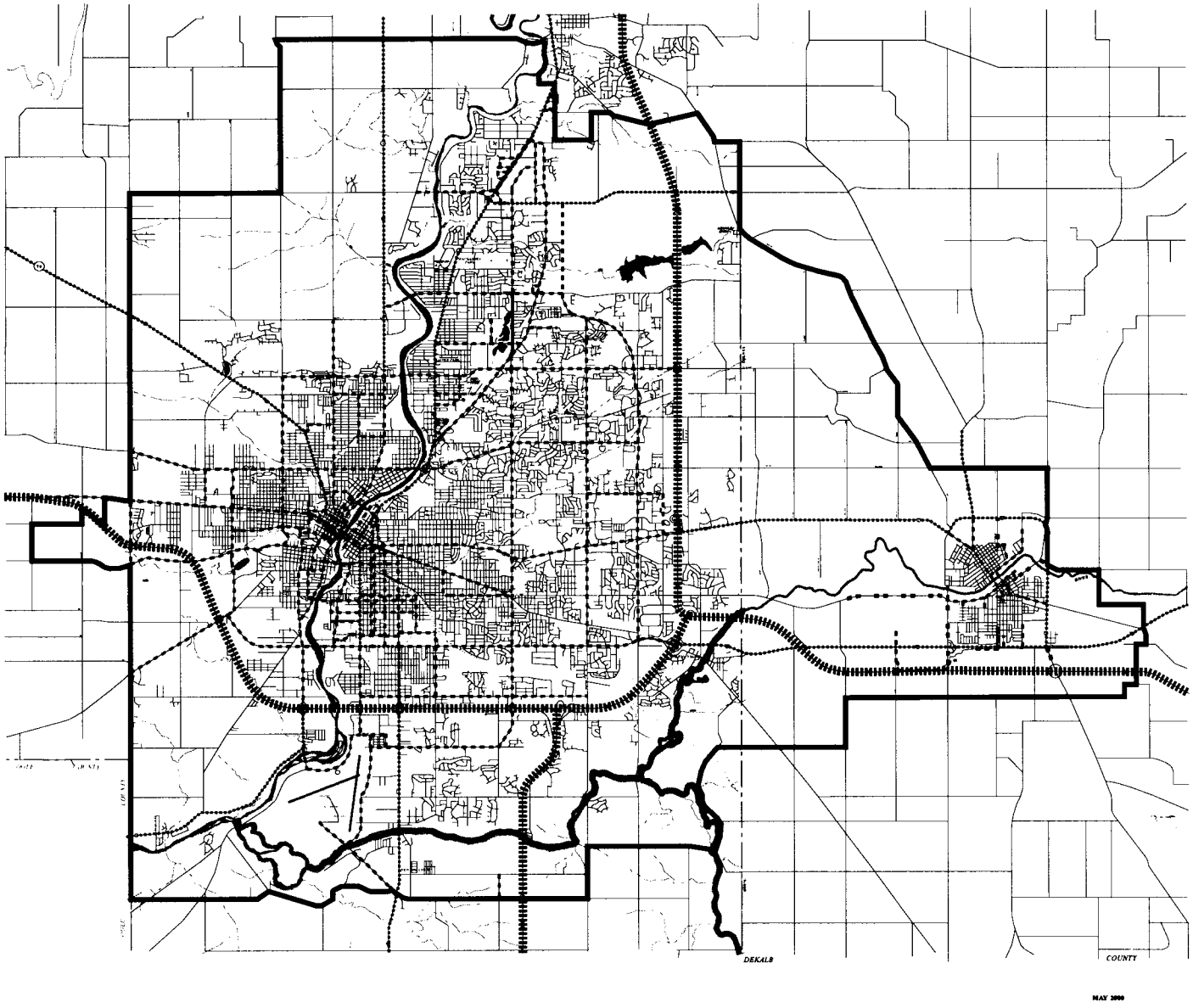
MAP 16

EXISTING TRUCK ROUTE SYSTEM

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



METRO AREA (MA) Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

MAP SYMBOLS

- LOCAL TRUCK ROUTE
- STATE OF ILLINOIS CLASS I
- STATE OF ILLINOIS CLASS II

N

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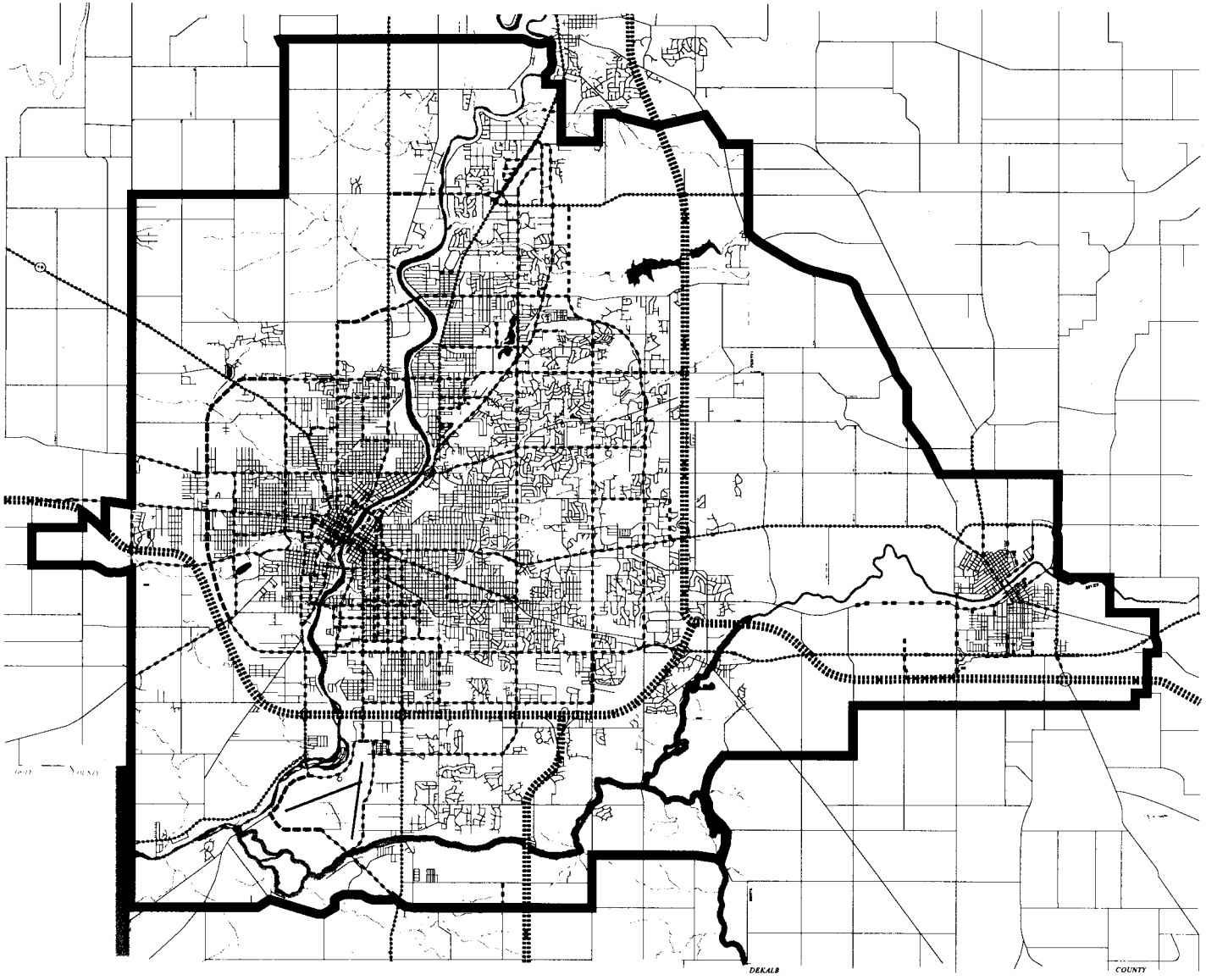
MAP 17

PLANNED TRUCK ROUTE SYSTEM

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



METRO AREA (MA) Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

MAP SYMBOLS

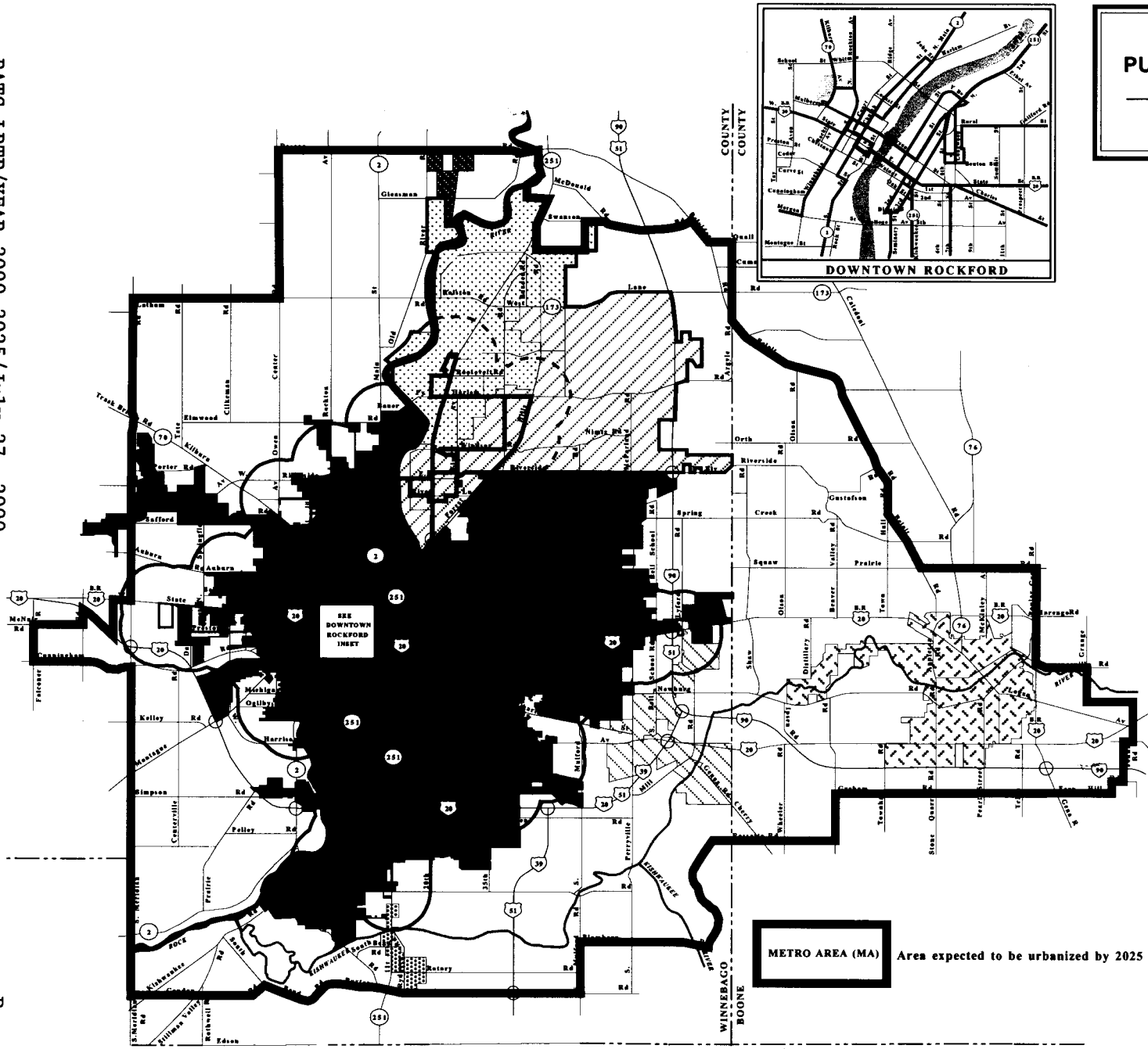
- LOCAL TRUCK ROUTE
- STATE OF ILLINOIS CLASS I
- STATE OF ILLINOIS CLASS II
- PLANNED TRUCK ROUTE

RATS MPO
425 E. STATE ST.
ROCKFORD, IL
61104
815-987-5570
FAX 815-967-7058

MAP 18

PUBLIC MASS TRANSIT ROUTES AND SERVICE AREAS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



Day-time Fixed Routes & Service Areas

Day-Time fixed route public transit service is provided in the Winnebago County portion of the Metro Area by the Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD)

RMTD also provides supplemental curb-to-curb paratransit service for eligible persons in the RMTD service area.

The "Service Area" includes all lands within 3/4 miles of an RMTD bus route and all areas within the corporate limits of Rockford, Loves Park, and Machesney Park.

Public paratransit service is also provided by the Boone County Keen Age Center which serves all the citizens of Boone County and frequently provides rides into the Rockford area for special needs.

All public transit services are provided in accordance with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

BUS ROUTE

SERVICE AREA

- CITY OF ROCKFORD
- CITY OF LOVES PARK
- CITY OF BELVIDERE
- VILLAGE OF MACHESNEY PARK
- VILLAGE OF NEW MILLFORD
- VILLAGE OF CHERRY VALLEY
- VILLAGE OF ROSCOE (PART)

N

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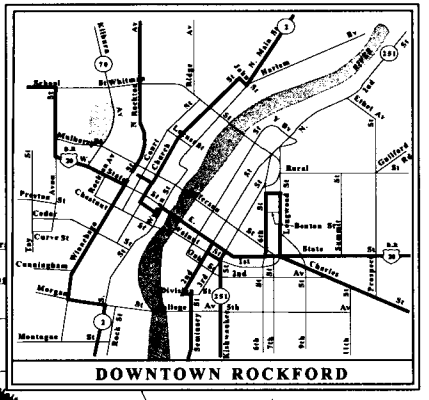
FAX 815-967-7058

MAP 19

PUBLIC MASS TRANSIT ROUTES AND SERVICE AREAS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



SEE DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD INSET

COUNTY
COUNTY

WINNEBAGO
BOONE

EVENING SERVICE

BUS ROUTE

SERVICE AREA

- CITY OF ROCKFORD
- CITY OF LOVES PARK
- CITY OF BELVIDERE
- VILLAGE OF MACHESNEY PARK
- VILLAGE OF NEW MILLFORD
- VILLAGE OF CHERRY VALLEY
- VILLAGE OF ROSCOE (PART)

METRO AREA (MA)

Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
RATS
N
6-00

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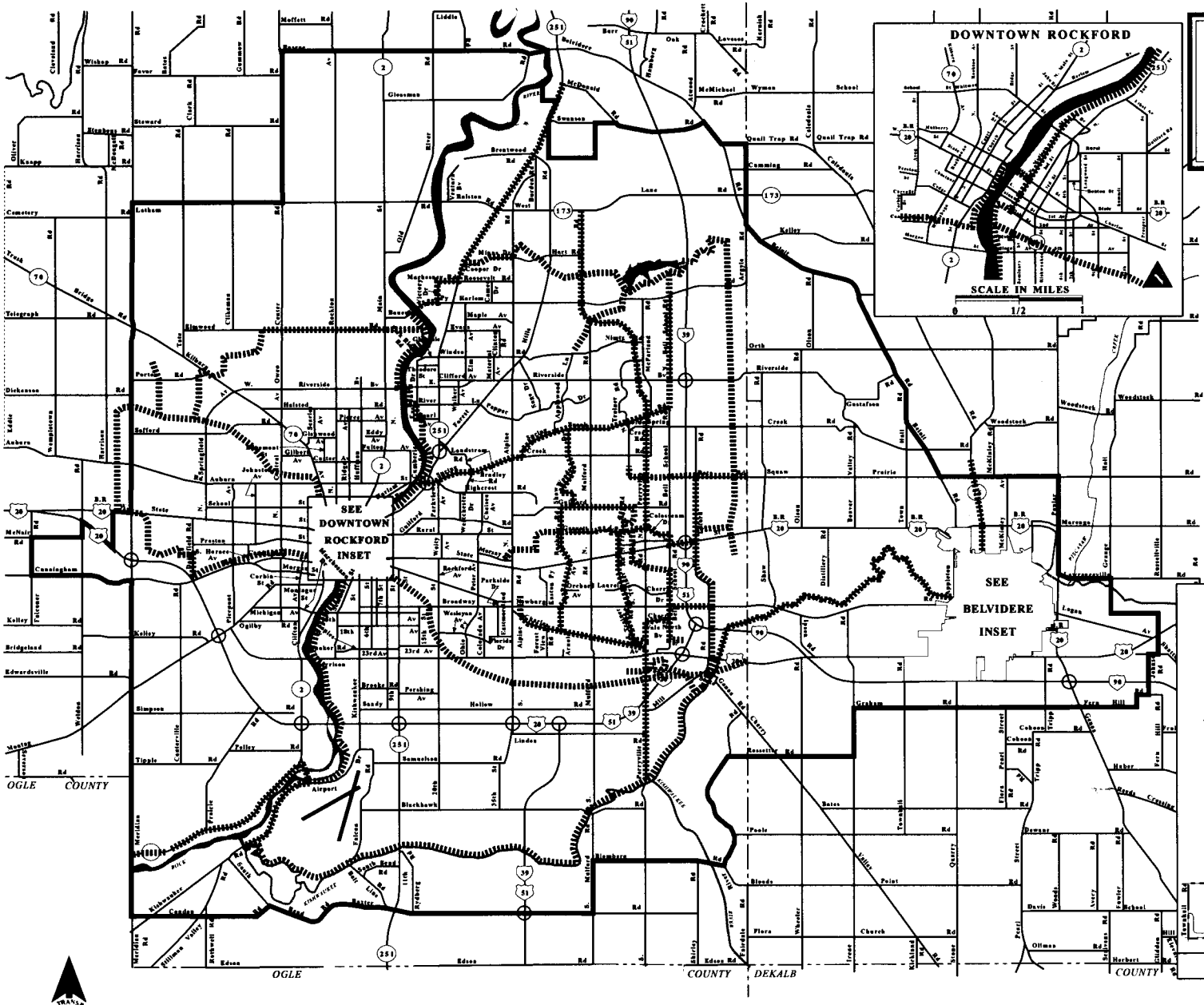
FAX 815-967-7058

MAP 20

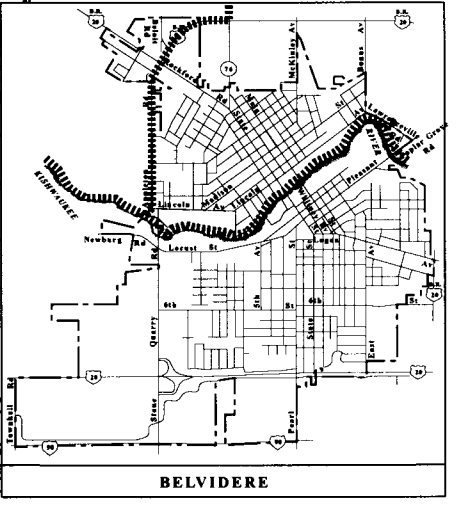
REGIONAL BIKEWAY/ PEDESTRIAN PATH PLAN

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



BIKEWAY / PEDESTRIAN FACILITY

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025



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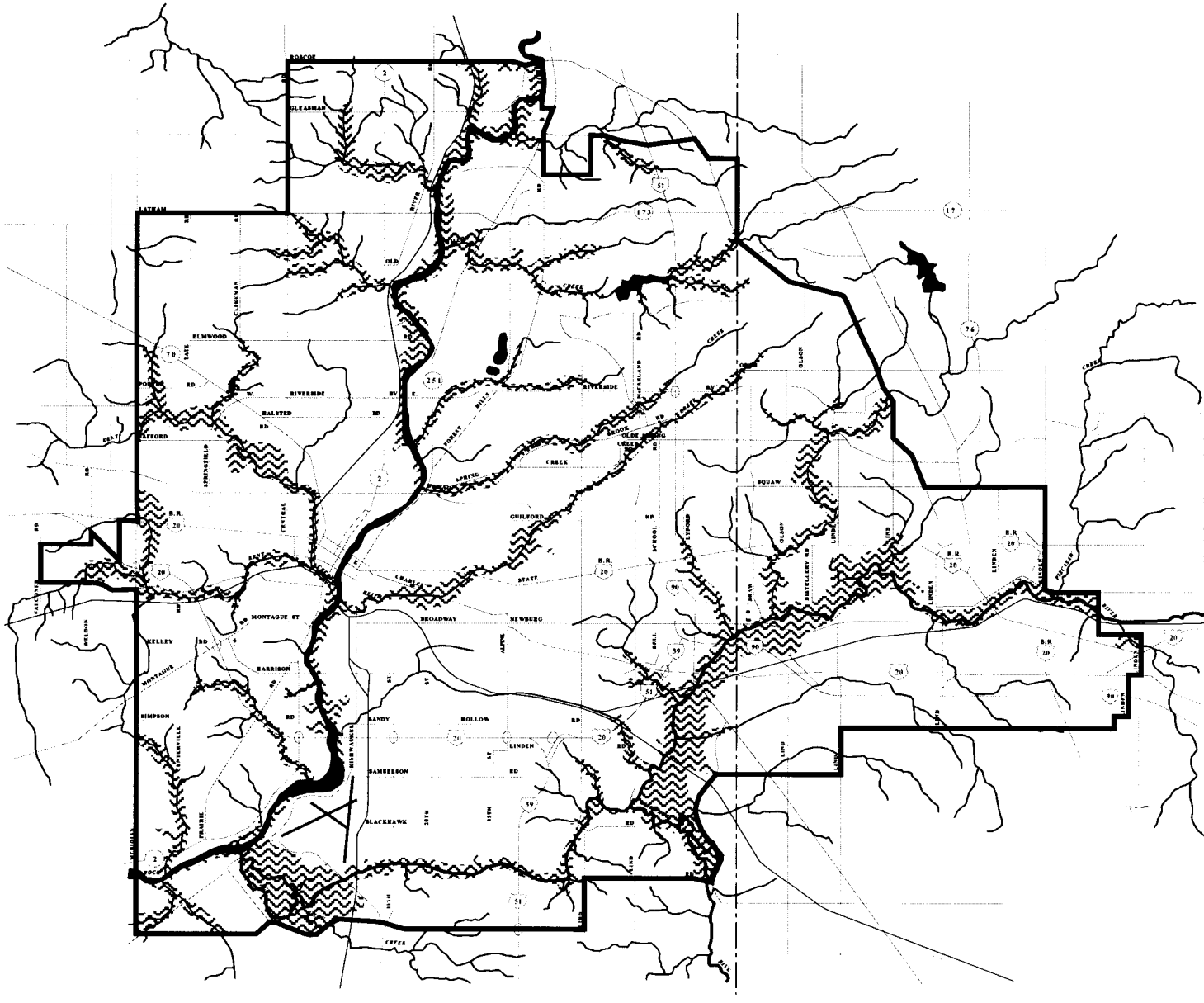
BOONE and WINNEBAGO
REGIONAL GREENWAY PLAN MAP
CORRIDOR LIMITS
EXISTING RECREATION PATHS
POTENTIAL RECREATION PATHS
ILLINOIS PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS
ILLINOIS NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY SITES
CANOE LAUNCH SITE
GRAND ILLINOIS TRAIL
MAP 21
RATS LRP

MAP 22

FLOODPLAINS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA



METRO AREA (MA) Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

This map illustrates the rivers, streams and drainageways in the Rockford Metro Area. These natural features, their floodplains, and other related wetlands and natural areas are regarded as irreplaceable resources which must be protected or at least conserved as the Metro Area is urbanized and redeveloped. At the scale of this map, these areas can only be roughly depicted. More definitive reference documents for this information include the FLOOD INSURANCE STUDIES of the NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM, the countywide SOILS CLASSIFICATION STUDIES OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, the BOONE AND WINNEBAGO REGIONAL GREENWAYS PLAN , and numerous other studies and reports prepared by the WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT, the ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT, the BOONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, the BELVIDERE PARK DISTRICT, the NATURAL LAND INSTITUTE, and the ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT of NATURAL RESOURCES.

GENERALIZED 100 YEAR FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

N

6-2000

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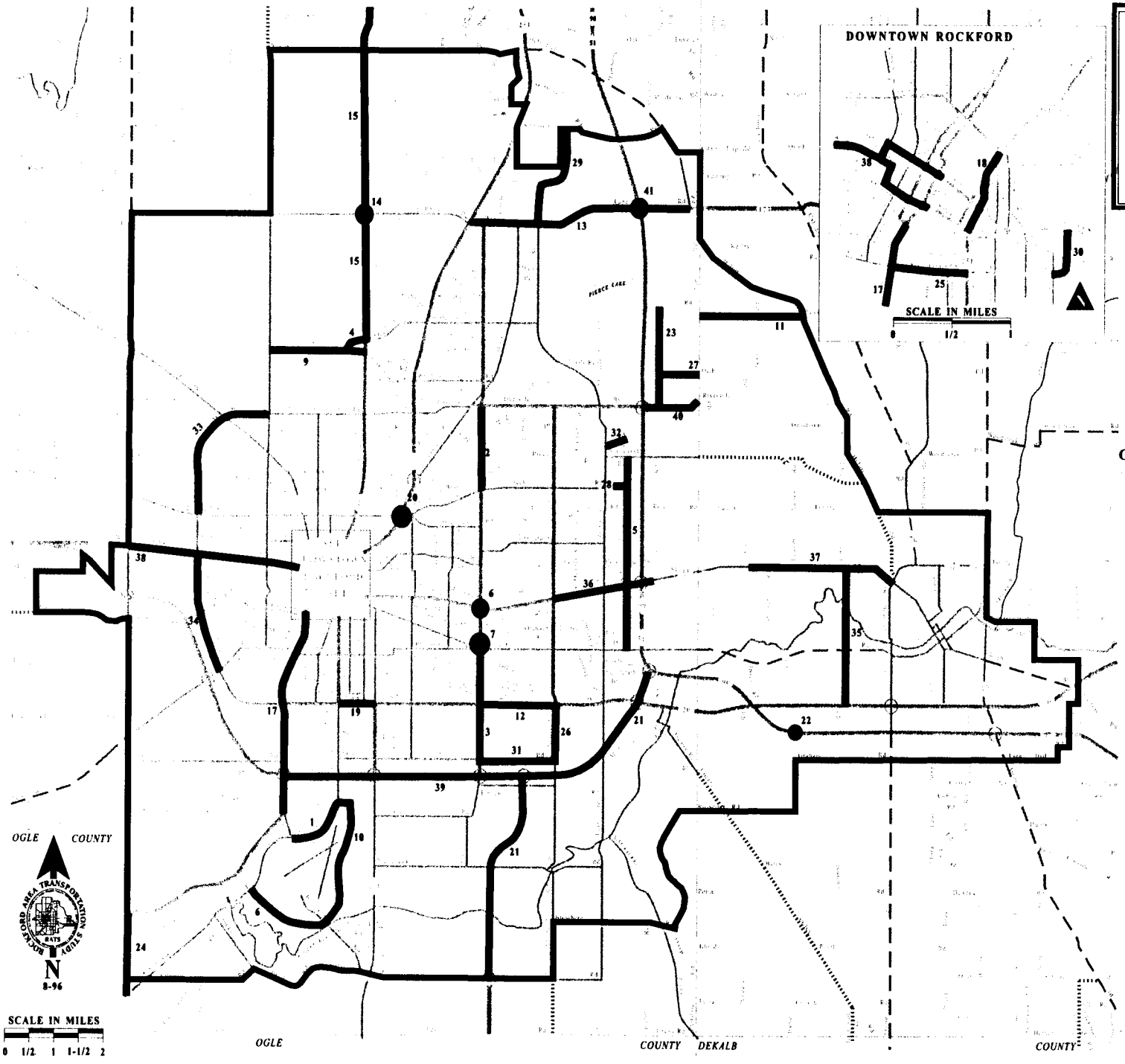

MAP 23

CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECTS

IN THE ROCKFORD METRO AREA

METRO AREA (MA) — Area expected to be urbanized by 2025

Roadway Classes in Winnebago & Boone Counties Part of MA as Defined by RATS / IDOT

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MINOR COLLECTOR
- UNCLASSIFIED RURAL

- INTERCHANGE
- ROAD CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT

Note: These capacity expansion projects also include congestion management measures that are in the RATS CMS report.

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POLICY COMMITTEE / ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
RESOLUTION 2000-10

LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN for YEAR 2000 – 2025

WHEREAS the Rockford Area Transportation Study (RATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rockford Metropolitan Area, and the RATS Policy Committee is responsible for transportation planning within the area; and

WHEREAS the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and it predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), require a Long-Range Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS over the last several months, the RATS staff and Technical and Policy Committees have prepared a comprehensive update to the Long-Range Transportation Plan in the interest of promoting, developing and maintaining a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system that will meet the needs of the area's citizens, businesses and industries through the Year 2025; and

WHEREAS as part of the planning process, RATS (1) considered a wide range of citizen, community and technical input in accordance with the adopted RATS Public Involvement Process; (2) provided opportunities for public input and comment at all RATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings and other informational meetings; and (3) made the June 26, 2000, draft of the update available for public inspection and comment for a 30-day period via distribution to all persons on the RATS mailing list, including the public libraries and other public places; and

WHEREAS Addendums A and B of this Resolution summarize the comments received on the June 26, 2000, draft and specifies changes and / or responses resulting from said comments (none of which are regarded as substantive enough to warrant an extended public review period); and

WHEREAS the RATS Technical Committee has reviewed the June 26, 2000 draft and said proposed changes and has recommended incorporation of these changes into a final draft and subsequent adoption by the RATS Policy Committee; and

WHEREAS the above said changes have been incorporated into the July 27, 2000 version of the LRTP and the Policy Committees has reviewed the July 27, 2000 document; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED that the Policy Committee adopts the **Long-Range Transportation Plan (dated July 27, 2000)** for the purpose of coordinating transportation improvements and the delivery of public transportation services over the next 25-year period (Year 2000 – 2025).

DATED THIS 27th DAY OF JULY, 2000

Darryl F. Lindberg, Mayor,
City of Loves Park

Charles E. Box, Mayor,
City of Rockford

Stephen Kuhn, President,
Village of Machesney Park

Kristine Cohn, County Board Chairman,
County of Winnebago

Roger E Rocke

Roger E. Rocke, District Engineer, District 2,
Illinois Department of Transportation

ADDENDUM A – RATS RESOLUTION 2000-10

Chronological Account of Public Comments, Responses & Changes – From Draft Plan to Adoption

1. June 26, 2000 – The June 26th draft of the LRP was mailed to all persons on the RATS mailing lists including the media and libraries.

2. June 29, 2000 – The June 26th draft of the LRP was presented and discussed at the RATS Technical Committee meeting which was continued from June 22 and at the RATS Policy Committee meeting. The following corrections were noted:

a. An incorrect, early, working version of Table 20 had been inadvertently included in the June 26th LRP draft. The corrected version of Table 20 was handed out to all persons at both meetings. The corrected version separates "Enhancement Projects" as a category of its own, adjusts some of the totals in the other categories (because some enhancements were previously included in those categories and some unit costs used in calculations were updated) and raises the total 25-year costs from $1,047.375 million to $1,078. 527 million. Textual discussion of Table 20 in the June 26th LRP draft cited the enhancement projects and totals correctly numbers so no changes were needed to the LRP text itself.

b. The projected cost of Project 15 in Table 21 was inadvertently rounded to $14 million. It should be $13.8 million. This correction recalculates the total for Capacity Expansion Roadway projects from $371.8 million to $371.6 million.

c. The above correction will be mailed to the full mailing list on Friday, July 7, 2000 along with any other errors that may be uncovered.

3. July 5, 2000 – Extensive comments on the June 26th draft were received in a letter from William Charles, Ltd. These comments have been included verbatim in **ADDENDUM B**, **Attachment One** of Resolution 2000-10.

4. July 7, 2000 – A RATS Technical Committee meeting was scheduled for July 13, 2000, and announced via mail to all persons on the mailing list. The announcement noted that the sole purpose of the meeting would be to discuss the proposed Long-Range Plan and the comments received thus far.

5. July 10, 2000 – Comments on the June 25th draft were received in a FAX from Kirk Fauver of the Federal Highway Administration via Bob Soltau from IDOT. **(See ADDENDUM B Attachment Three)**

6. July 11, 2000 – Mr. Fauver's comments were discussed via telephone conversation between Mr. Fauver and Russ Petrotte of the RATS staff.

7. July 13, 2000 – The proposed Plan was discussed at a special Technical Committee meeting. Lengthy discussion was devoted to the comments received from William Charles, LTD and to the comments of Mr. Fauver of the FHWA. General consensus was reached on how to address most of the concerns and staff was instructed to prepare changes and addendums to the Plan as appropriate. At the meeting staff presented several items to be added to the Plan. These included:

a. a table listing Congestion Management Strategies Considered & Utilized in the Rockford Area;

b. a new map illustrating Significant Commercial Areas in the Metro Area;

c. a new map illustrating Significant Industrial Areas in the Metro Area;

d. a revised Map 14 showing the correct location of the proposed interchange of I-90 with Irene Road in Boone County.

Other instructions to the RATS staff, by the consensus of the Committee were as follows:

e. Greater explanation should be added to the Plan text describing the area's compliance with Congestion Management System requirements, especially with regard to the Capacity Expansion Projects listed in Table 21.

f. Verbiage should be added to the Plan discussing why the Metro Area Boundary is not being expanded as part of this Plan update. If the Boundary is not to be expanded, all maps should be checked for the correct date.

g. Verbiage should be added to the Plan regarding system maintenance indicating that although the areas roadways are being adequately maintained from a safety standpoint and a system preservation standpoint, the system is not always being maintained optimally or in the most cost-effective standpoint.

h. Suggestion where made regarding response to many of the William Charles comments.

8. July 14, 2000 – At the request of Loves Park a Riverside Boulevard improvement was added to Table 21. At the request of IDOT, the I-90 / IL-173 interchange was added to Table 21. Both were added as funded projects. The totals in Tables 20 and 21 will be adjusted accordingly.

9. July 14, 2000 – A mailing was assembled for all persons on the RATS mailing list. This included: announcements and agendas of the July 20th Technical Committee meeting and the July 27th Policy Committee meeting and information addressing all of the changes suggested above.

10. July 18, 2000 – Goal 6 of the Plan (Relieve and Prevent Congestion) was rewritten to better explain area's Congestion Management Activities, to better comply with Federal guidance and to show how the primary components (system monitoring, strategy consideration, project selection, and effectiveness evaluation) are integrated into the RATS Planning Process. These changes were primarily in response to comments received from the FHWA (Item 5, above). The changes were faxed to Kirk Fauver for further review.

11. July 18, 2000 – In response to comments made at the July 13, 2000, Technical Committee meeting, parts of the Financial Plan section of the Plan were revised. These changes included the development of a long-range revenue forecast for public transit, minor revisions to some of the cost in Table 20, the addition of two projects in Table 21, and the addition of an entire column in Table 21 wherein the justification of the project was described in relation to the RATS Congestion Management System. These changes were also faxed to Kirk Fauver for review.

12. July 19, 2000 – As per instructions from the Technical Committee, RATS staff finalized a draft response to the comments made by William Charles LTD, Item 3 above. The response was faxed to all Technical Committee members and to William Charles LTD. **(See Attachment Two)**

13. July 19, 2000 – Mr. Fauver faxed comments on the above changes to Mr. Petrotte. Mr. Fauver and Mr. Petrotte discussed the comments via phone and Mr. Petrotte agree d to make corrections, most of which were spelling corrections or grammatical phrasing changes. An additional point was added to Goal 6, CMS Strategies as follows: "Considering, developing and deploying measures that can be categorized under the heading of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) including the development of regional ITS architecture that is in concert with the National ITS architecture."

14. July 20, 2000 – The rewrites of Goal 6 and the modified parts of the Financial Plan were presented at the RATS Technical Committee meeting for review. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the rewrites and the response to the comments from William Charles, LTD. The Technical Committee recommended that all the above changes be incorporated into a new draft of the Long Range Plan and Resolution 2000-10 and presented to the Policy Committee for adoption at their July 27, 2000 meeting.

15. July 24, 2000 – A letter was received from John Holmstrom III of William Charles, Ltd., regarding the RATS response to the first letter from William Charles, Ltd. That letter and a second response from RATS staff is included as **Attachments Five and Six of ADDENDUM B,** respectively, to this resolution.

16. July 27, 2000 – A revised draft, incorporating all of the above-mentioned changes, was presented to the RATS Policy Committee for adoption.

ADDENDUM B, RESOLUTION 2000-10

ATTACHMENT ONE – Letter from William Charles, Ltd.

July 5, 2000

Rockford Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o City of Rockford
Public Works Department
425East State Street
Rockford. Illinois 61104

I am writing to comment on the proposed Rockford Area Transportation Study Long-Range Transportation Plan. The updated Long-Range Plan obviously represents an enormous effort involving the coordination of information generated from government and private sector planning activities across a wide range of jurisdictions.

State Funding Assumption. The scope of the projects included in the twenty-five year projection is influenced by the amount of funding which is projected to be available for transportation projects. Apparently, TEA 21. also requires, a "financially "constrained" approach to the development of the Plan. The projections which form the basis for the financial constraints are derived from the historic six-year average of transportation funding in the RATS area.

The availability of funding for transportation projects in this area is, to a major degree, a political decision. By that, we mean it is a decision which involves appropriations which are, in the first instance, legislative in nature and it is a decision which involves state and federal agencies allocating limited resources to different local political jurisdictions. Based on the six-year averages reported in the Long-Range Plan, for example, twenty-five percent of transportation funding in the RATS area comes from the Illinois Department of Transportation and another five percent comes from the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority.

Relying on historic averages to project future funding has the effect of perpetrating the levels of funding which have existed in the recent past. Winnebago County is in IDOT District 2. During the ten year period 1985 through 1994, Winnebago County received an annual average of over 15.6% of the District 2 funds allocated to State highway projects. Over the past ten years, Winnebago County has received approximately 13.3% of the IDOT funds allocated by District 2 for state highway projects. Over the most recent six years, the period used in the Long-Range Plan, the average has actually been under 12%.

Winnebago County, however, has over 30% of the population of District 2. Additionally, based on the analysis of 1996 data conducted by Northern Illinois University, Winnebago County generates approximately $30 million per year in state motor fuel taxes while the state spends an average of $12 to $13 million per year on state highway projects in the County. Even if state funding of local roadway improvements is included, the state spends less than $20 million per year on highway projects (state and local) in Winnebago County. We believe that this inequity in funding is wrong and that its continuation will damage the economic health of this region. Unfortunately, the financial projections which are used in the Long Range Plan will have the effect of reinforcing this inequitable level of funding.

Local Funding Assumption. The financial projections in the Long-Range Plan also use the6-year averages of municipal and county transportation funding as a basis for estimating future funding levels. Over the past twenty-five years, the jurisdictional responsibility for a significant part of our road maintenance has shifted from the State to the County or the City of Rockford. Since 1975, the total number of miles of state highways in Winnebago County has decreased by almost thirty percent. Over time, the result of this decrease in the road miles for which the State is responsible has the effect of shifting the cost of maintenance, repairs, and improvements to the City and County.

There has not, however, been a corresponding shift of revenue to the City or the County to maintain these roads, instead, ten or fifteen years after the maintenance responsibility changes, tax caps and limited resources require that the City and the County shift resources from their other highway maintenance and improvement needs to pick up the responsibility for these former state roads.

The financial impact of this shift can be expected to increase on an annual basis. If the Long-Range Plan estimates the funds available from the City and the County based on past funding levels, the estimate will understate the need for local funding because it will ignore the level of responsibility that has been shifted from the State to local units of government.

Existing System Maintenance. The Long-Range Plan states that "Overall, the judgment of the engineers and planners of the community is that the existing facilities are being adequately maintained." This finding seems to be directly contrary to the legislative findings in support of both the TEA-21 and Illinois First programs. On a subjective basis, it appears to be contrary to anecdotal experience relating to many of the major roadways in Rockford and the surrounding area. Local governments are maintaining existing roadways as *well as is possible under the financial constraints which affect local governments in the area,* but many critical roadways and bridges in this area are not adequately maintained.

Commuters. The Long Range Plan itself does not appear to account for the change in commuting habits which is reflected in other statistical data bases. Since 1970, Woods & Poole reports that the total earnings of employees who commute into Winnebago County to work has increased by over four times. In the same time frame, earnings from all employment in the County have only doubled. Since 1993, the total earnings of commuters into the County has increased by over 70%, almost three times the rate of growth in County earnings generally. This data suggests that "commuting in" plays an increasingly important role in Winnebago County's economic growth. The nature and location of transportation improvements necessary to accommodate increases in travel by non-resident commuters going to and from employment in this area may not be the same as those required to address the transportation of people within the area or the transportation of goods to, from, or through the area.

The Woods & Poole data regarding the increase in the earnings of commuters who travel to Winnebago County to work is even more significant because it reflects a "net" increase. It reflects the total amount by which the earnings of employees who travel to Winnebago County to work exceeds the total earnings of Winnebago County residents who travel elsewhere to work. We believe that the number of Winnebago County residents who commute outside the County to work has grown dramatically over the past five years, so the fact that earnings of commuters into the County has grown even faster provides a significant insight into commuting patterns affecting the area.

Additionally, the RATS area has become an increasingly significant regional retail center. National retailers view this area as serving a regional market of up to 750,000 people, and the principal regional retail facilities are virtually all located in the Cherry Vale Mall and East State/Perryville area. An effective Long-Range Plan for the transportation needs of the RATS area should include specific measures to retain and enhance the area's regional retail presence.

Industrial Development. The Plan expressly provides for the monitoring of several key issues (such as the course of development of the Greater Rockford Airport) so that resources can be shifted as necessary to accommodate changes in circumstances. The Plan does not, however, address the impact that new or improved roadways or other transportation infrastructure will have on the course of economic development. In this regard, the Plan appears to present the transportation system primarily as a response to demographic or economic conditions and not as a cause of them.

The Plan also acknowledges that it is the long-standing policy of the County and the municipalities in the area not to fund right-of-way acquisitions or road construction costs except for arterial roadways. Very few new arterial roadways are constructed, and advance right-of-way acquisition or reservation is actually a rare occurrence.

The policy of relying on the subdivision and land development process to establish virtually all additions to the road transportation system has the unintended consequence of discouraging industrial land development. Industrial land development requires large tracts and involve long development periods. (A 100 acre industrial park is a fifteen-year project while a 100 acre residential subdivision may take only four or five). Moreover, the value of developed industrial land is lower than that of developed residential land. As a result, few if any developers are willing to invest in the infrastructure necessary to establish an industrial development, and as a result of the "developer-built" road policies, roads which could be used to provide access to future industrial areas are not built.

Highway access (along with the availability of sewer service) is actually one of the principal causes of development activity. It is also the infrastructure component which takes the longest to put in place. Businesses which are looking for locations for new industrial, warehouse, or distribution facilities, however, are looking for locations where the critical infrastructure is already in place, not merely promised. As a result, the continuation of governmental policies which rely on developers to provide the infrastructure for industrial development will inhibit future industrial development.

We recommend that the Long Range Plan take these two factors into account: a) that new or improved highways can *cause* economic activity, and b) that a policy which relies on exclusively on developers to construct the roads will not provide sufficient industrial development for sustained economic growth.

Airport Development. The Plan recognizes the importance of the Greater Rockford Airport as a major component of the regional transportation infrastructure. The Plan also includes two roadway improvements a the Greater Rockford Airport: Beltline Road and Falcon Drive. In addition, we recommend that an entrance to the Airport and the Greater Rockford

Industrial Park be established from Eleventh Street (Route 251), and that the Beltline Road/Baxter Road/I-39 corridor be improved to provide efficient long-term access to and from the interstate system to the south.

Perhaps because of its regional focus, however, the Plan ignores the impact that Chicago's O'Hare Airport has on transportation in the RATS area. For example, the description of Fixed Route Intercity Transit describes the bus services from Rockford to O'Hare as essentially point-to-point transportation services, independent of any inter-modal transportation function. Similarly, Part 8 of the Long Range Plan states that air transportation services to the Rockford Metro Area are provided at three airport facilities, the Belvidere Airport (which is now known as the Poplar Grove Airport), Cottonwood Airport, and Greater Rockford Airport. Actually, the Rockford Peoria O'Hare Bus services are a major part of the transportation system which serves this region. They are one of the most effective inter-modal transportation services in the area. Moreover, they provide an operating, market-driven, service on which expanded commuter service to the greater Chicago area can be evaluated.

Format. The Long Range Plan relies heavily on maps to describe the specific components of the twenty-five year forecast and the Illustrative Projects. In a technical planning document, that approach is fine. Over the next five years or more, however, the Plan can also help to increase public awareness of planned transportation improvements and, more particularly, those improvements which are needed but whose implementation is deferred for funding reasons. The Plan will also frame the political debate over the allocation of resources among competing regions. It will become the key policy document which our region uses to obtain funds for transportation funding and improvements.

Maps. Maps 9 and 10 illustrate the location of existing facilities such as parks, hospitals, schools, etc. These maps do not appear to be current.

Summary. Our specific recommendations are as follows:

1. The estimated level of IDOT funding for RATS area transportation projects should be based on a reasonable, political best judgment of the funding level which IDOT should provide based on the area's comparative need, population, economic impact, motor fuel tax receipts, and other relevant factors. It should not be based on the average over the past six years.

2. The estimated level of IDOT funding for RATS area transportation projects should be adjusted to account for the funding levels announced by IDOT in their 2000-2004 Five Year Plan.

3. The governmental units participating in RATS should adopt policies under which transportation infrastructure or improvements necessary to serve areas designated for industrial development can be constructed at public expense.

4. The RATS Long Range Plan should include projections of the future economic or demographic impacts which would be caused by alternative transportation improvements which are identified in the plan.

5. The State Senator(s) and representatives serving the RATS area and the U.S. Congressional Representative whose district includes the RATS area (or their representatives) should be members of or participate directly in the RATS Policy Committee.

6. The mayor of Belvidere and the Village Board President of Cherry Valley should be members of or participate directly in the RATS Policy Committee.

7. The Policy Committee should use the Long Range Plan to create a nontechnical political planning document which can be used with state and federal funding sources as a part of long range efforts to obtain adequate funding for capital improvements in the area.

8. The Plan should include specific provisions which address the transportation facilities and improvements necessary for commuters who come to the area to work and commuters who leave the area to work.

9. The Plan should identify Cherry Vale Mall and Magic Waters as significant public facilities and identify those measures which are necessary or appropriate to enhance their accessibility to the larger region.

10. The statement that "existing facilities are being adequately maintained" should be qualified to be consistent with the legislative findings in support of TEA-21 and Illinois First and to reflect the financial constraints within which local governments are required to operate in the performance of their maintenance responsibilities.

11. The Plan should address the role that O'Hare International Airport and the Rockford/O'Hare bus services play in the RATS area transportation system.

12. The maps of existing public facilities should be current.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on the Plan. the development of a plan like this for an area in which there is no comprehensive regional planning agency is very difficult. It is not made any easier when many of the political entities whose cooperation is required for the plan to play an effective role in the region's economic development are competing with each other.

Very truly yours, William Charles, LTD – By John Holmstrom

ATTACHMENT TWO – RATS Response to Comments from William Charles, Ltd.

Response to the July 5, 2000, letter from William Charles, Ltd (hereafter, WCL) regarding the June 26, 2000, draft of the RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (hereafter, the Plan)

Overall, the comments presented in the WCL letter were constructive, thought-provoking and reflective of a substantial effort on the part of the writer. RATS is grateful to WCL for the effort. The comments and these responses are likely to stimulate productive discussion on many aspects of our transportation system and our community for months to come. While RATS does not agree with all of the statements and recommendations of WCL, we respect all of them and wholeheartedly agree with some of them. The RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan is a constantly evolving document. Further comment on these topics or any aspect of the Plan or the RATS Planning Process are welcomed at any time.

1. The estimated level of IDOT funding should be based on a judgement of need rather than on past averages.

The suggestion that the IDOT funding levels should not be based on the average of the last six years was rejected for several reasons. First, the trend of the six-year period between FY95-00 appears to be representative of both the contributions of IDOT and the other funding sources and the slow steady economic growth occurring in the area. Had we presented all of the actual data, perhaps this would have been clearer. In addition, Federal law suggests, if not requires, the consideration of historic information.

Second, text in the WCL letter regarding the State funding suggests an inequity in State funding over the last several years and further expresses concern that basing the funding forecast on recent trends will perpetuate this inequity. Although analysis of funding since 1989 confirms a slight decline in State funding, the conclusion that local governments are bearing a disproportionate or increasing share of the transportation funding burden may not be true.

Exhibit A, attached was prepared from data taken from the Annual RATS TIPs. The data combines highway and public transit funding and was adjusted, using a construction cost index, to constant 1995 dollars. While the year-to-year funding amounts fluctuate widely, the trend lines computed from this data show that the combined Federal and State funding appears to be increasing at a faster rate than local funding. A trend line of the forecast base years (Fy95-00) is not dissimilar to the longer trend because FY 2000 marks the highest year of combined State/Federal contributions in the entire data set.

Third, it is beyond the scope of this planning effort to evaluate the equity of the various funding sources to our area. Whether the State or the Federal government should be funding more of our transportation needs and whether the Rockford area is receiving it fair share of funding in comparison to other metro areas in Illinois is not an issue RATS can address as part of the Long-Range Plan. This issue could, however, be the subject of further special study, either by RATS or appropriate State officials.

Fourth, in the interest of spurring economic development, the 6-year-derived forecast may not be as large as some would like to forecast, but it is still a reasonable reflection of our community's total ability to muster transportation funding. What the community has received in the past represents the total of many factors: the general tax base the community is willing to accept, the willingness of our citizens to fund special tax assessments and bonds; the level of travel and fuel purchases in the area; the funds received by fixed formulas provided though State and Federal programs; the willingness of our developers and private sector to fund parts of the area's needs; the degree of effort the community has put forth to qualify for certain discretionary funds, and last but not least, the persuasive ability of our leaders and elected officials in securing special funding as they plead our needs in competition with other regions in the State or Country.

Lastly, Federal law requires the development of a "financially constrained" plan. In imposing this requirement, the ISTEA and its successor, TEA-21, deliberately prohibited communities from developing wishful plans and financial forecasts. The following elaborates on this last point.

The RATS LRP is not the same as a plan of what the community "would like to build or feels it needs to build." Transportation funding, as with funding for all other types of infrastructure, is finite – whether it comes from local, State, Federal or private sources. What a community "wants or needs" is a highly subjective judgement that varies widely depending upon who one asks in the community and what economic development scenarios and priorities one assumes. The first RATS Long-Range Plan developed in the mid-'60s was a "wants or needs" plan. At present, going on 35-40 years since the development of that plan, many of the projects proposed are still not built. Some of them are unlikely to be built even within the scope of this Plan (i.e., by the Year 2025). Under current Federal guidance, however, the RATS Plan must attempt to walk a fine line between what various factions in the community want or need, what is needed to sustain a healthy economy, and what the community can actually afford to build and maintain.

This is not to say that a community should not develop "wants and needs" plans. Such plans are, however, more within the function of the Chamber of Commerce, the Council of 100, area developers and contractors, and other agencies within the community charged with the responsibility of promoting economic growth (also see the discussion of "illustrative" projects in item 2 of this response).

Admittedly, there may be components of the future Rockford transportation system that are not included in the Plan that will turn out to be truly needed, funded and constructed – in spite of the Plan. The above statement and the Plan are not in contradiction because, the Plan must not be regarded as a static, unchangeable document. The Plan can be amended at any time for reasonable cause and must be comprehensively updated every five years, at a minimum, by Federal law. If and when a transportation need becomes more apparent, whether to correct an existing traffic congestion problem or to accommodate a well-defined economic development need, and a funding source can be identified, the Plan will be amended.

While the use of the 6-year average may appear to perpetuate a "status quo" approach, there is still ample opportunity, supported by the Plan, to accommodate accelerated growth in the community or to respond to special needs. Over the next five years, several topics will be studied or are being considered for study that could lead to the further expansions to transportation infrastructure or services and further requests for funding. Among those are:

a. The development **RAT/ SLAT traffic simulation model** which will include revised land use forecasts and a new evaluation of all major roadway facilities (existing and planned) in and around Rockford,

b. The evaluation of the **Northwest ByPass** (this will resume when the above traffic simulation model is completed),

c. The City of **Rockford's Pavement Management System** (this will inventory and assess the maintenance needs of all Rockford streets),

d. The **West State Street Gateway Study** (planned but not yet underway),

e. The **Riverside / Alpine / Forest Hills Congestion Management Study**,

f. The **2nd Street Interchange Study**,

g. The Harrison Avenue Corridor Study,

h. Investigations proposed regarding the feasibility of **passenger/commuter rail** service to the Rockford/Belvidere area, and

i. Recent interest expressed by the **CN & I&M Rail Link** to enhance rail facilities in the Rockford area.

Any and all of these studies could lead to the documentation of special needs not identified in the current plan and, subsequently, to requests for special funding (Federal, State or local) not included in the financially constrained Plan.

Further, included in the Plan is one major project that is scheduled beyond the 25-year horizon because there is not sufficient funding to come close to implementation – namely, the Woodruff/Wallenberg Expressway. The last feasibility study for this project developed a near one-quarter billion dollar price tag. While the study was somewhat inconclusive regarding the desirability of the expressway as opposed to the alternative of expanding numerous existing roadways and intersections, the study documented the likely evolution of traffic congestion problems if the community continues to grow over the next several decades. This topic will be reevaluated when the new traffic simulation model is completed.

2. The estimated level of IDOT funding should reflect the IDOT 2000-2004 Five Year Plan.

First, all of the projects in IDOT's 2000-2004 Plan are included in the RATS Plan. IDOT projects are included in several of the categories or project types listed in Table 20, the 25-Year Project Cost Summary. This includes several Capacity Expansion Projects, large parts of nearly all the New Interchange Projects, some of the New Signalizations and Signal Modernization and some of the River/Creek Crossing Projects.

Second, although we cannot say this with as much certainty as the statement above, in the 25-year time-frame of the Plan, State funding is likely to increase because several State projects are advancing through their planning stages toward implementation stages. These include projects such as improvements to Kishwaukee Street, South Main Street, West State Street, IL-2 between Rockford and Rockton, and the IL-173 / I-90 Interchange. Whether these and other projects of State responsibility will be funded with State funds, with Federal funds for which the State has authority or some combination cannot be determined at this time but will be decided as part of the State's ongoing 5-Year Planning process and the annual RATS 3-Year TIP Programming process.

A rough estimate derived from the Capacity Expansion Projects listed in Table 21, shows 76% of these projects are likely to be funded with Federal funds, 14% with State funds and only 10% with local funds.

The RATS Planning Process recognizes the competition for roadway improvement funds throughout the area, the region, the State and the Country. The Plan emphasizes the need for State involvement in the above-named and numerous other projects in the Rockford area. To that end,

the Plan encourages expanded dialogue and cooperative planning by the State, the appropriate Federal agencies and all area local jurisdictions.

3. Infrastructure improvements necessary for industrial development at public expense.

This is an understandable suggestion and to limited, varying levels, has been done in the past with Community Development Block Grant funds and other limited local resources. Examples are the Greater Rockford Industrial Park and the improvement to Easy Street.

Ideally, all collector roadways would be built at public expense, even in residential areas, because the developer-built procedure often leaves gaps or results in undersized roadways, offset intersections and indirect routings.

In addition to the transportation infrastructure, sewer and water must also be extended before industrial development can occur. Constructing one without the others would be a waste of effort.

RATS and the Plan are supportive of this suggestion. The difficulty is finding ample public funds. Presently, the area's funding resources are stretched to their limit with the responsibilities of maintaining the existing system, eliminating system shortcomings, managing congestion and constructing new arterials in developing areas. Adding collector roadways, sewer, and water to this list would require new funding sources and/or increases in taxes.

RATS suggests promoting further public dialog on this matter in the interest of determining if there would be public and political support for the changes in policy and the increases in taxes necessary to implement the suggestion.

4. Projections of future economic or demographic impacts caused by alternative improvements proposed in the plan.

We are unsure of what specific alternative improvements this comment pertains to or what WCL is attempting to achieve. Any and all of the proposed and alternative transportation projects mentioned in the Plan are likely to have, to varying degrees, combinations of both negative and positive economic and demographic impacts.

If the comment is aimed at stimulating greater transportation expenditure forecasts because of potential positive impacts of more elaborate projects, we have to respond that Federal regulations do not allow us this option within the 25-year framework of the main body of the Plan. In other words, high growth forecasts based on speculative aggressive economic development projects aren't allowed by the federal regulations.

We can propose more elaborate projects if we define them as "illustrative projects" but we must single them out as projects for which additional funding will be needed (beyond the forecasted funding). In a slightly different way, we have included such projects by (1) placing them in a category that will be funded and constructed after Year 2025 (i.e. the Woodruff Expressway / Wallenberg Parkway Feasibility Study and the Guilford Road Crossover – see Map 15), and (2) citing them as projects to be studied or discussed more in the future (i.e., the Northwest ByPass and commuter rail).

With regard to the Wallenberg, the most recent "Wallenberg Parkway Feasibility Study, June 1996, does an excellent job of discussing many of the costs, benefits and impacts of this proposed facility but was less than conclusive. Moreover, the project was not extensively mentioned in the Plan because of the extremely high cost and unlikelihood of funding in the foreseeable future. It is also debatable whether the adverse impacts in adjacent Rockford neighborhoods can be adequately mitigated.

The Northwest ByPass is mentioned a number of times, but until the RATS/SLATS traffic simulation model is completed we cannot evaluate its potential traffic impact, let alone its demographic and economic impact.

Considerations regarding commuter rail have just recently surfaced. RATS is awaiting further community input before determining whether serious feasibility, economic and demographic analysis is warranted in the near future.

Generally speaking, with regard to other projects in the Plan, to varying degrees, the analysis of demographic and economic impact is already a part of the RATS Planning Process. The demographic impacts of projects are assessed in conjunction with Federal Title VI and proposed Environmental Justice requirements. In accordance with Title VI we must periodically examine our proposed and implemented improvements to determine if they are adversely impacting (or ignoring) the needs of minorities. Environmental Justice extends these considerations to low-income persons.

With respect to highway projects, these assessments are more subjective and anecdotal than quantitative. With regard to public transit projects, the assessments are both subjective and quantitative, in accordance with detailed Federal guidance. Copies of these assessments are available at the RATS offices. Further extensive demographic analysis is not recommended at this time because the primary source of data, the 1990 Census, is out-of-date. When Year 2000 Census data becomes available, within the next 12-24 months, demographic analysis will be renewed.

Finally a few general comments on economic impact analysis and similar studies may be appropriate here. Economic impact analysis is complicated, expensive and often controversial because of the multitude of factors that must be considered, difficulties in forecasting, and differing

values of community leaders and citizens. Major highway projects are subjected to more in-depth analysis than smaller improvements. But even where extensive, as noted with regard to the Wallenberg, the results are not always conclusive.

The expected economic benefit of other major projects is so obvious that extensive economic analysis in not needed and would be a waste of research funds. Examples of such projects are the improvements to State Street east of Alpine Road, the construction of Perryville Road and the proposed construction of the Springfield/Harrison Connection. The latter project is a good example. Although currently embroiled in controversy over alignment and land-taking issues, few will criticize the economic benefit potential of this project. It will provide access to large areas of land planned for industrial and commercial uses, complete a ring road that will improve access to all areas of west Rockford and stimulate the revitalization of Rockford's economically-depressed west side.

Currently, as part of the development of the RATS/ SLATS traffic simulation model, alternative land use and economic development scenarios are being developed. These scenarios will range from low-growth to high-growth options and will be tested against various roadway network configurations.

In conclusion, Federal law and concern for simple justice dictates that projects should be evaluated with respect to demographics to assure that minority groups and low-income groups are not being disproportionately adversely impacted or that the transportation needs of these groups are being disproportionately ignored. Where obviously needed, analysis of the cost and benefits to the area's economy should also be part of the process of setting priority to proposed transportation improvements. However, funding for research and study is limited. Consequently, it is position of RATS that the use of such funds should continue to be selectively applied to the evaluation of improvements that are controversial and/or complicated and where such analysis has a reasonable chance of resolving the controversy and aiding in the decision-making process.

5. Involvement of State and Federal elected officials.

On key issues, RATS has sought involvement of the elected officials of the State and Federal governments, and vice-versa. Congressman Manzullo's office is on the RATS mailing list and receives all materials presented before the RATS Technical and Policy Committees. RATS staff participated in a Town Meeting on Transportation Issues conducted by Senator Durban two years ago in Belvidere.

As per the recommendation of WCL, all State and Federal elected officials (Senators and Congressmen) with jurisdictional authority extending into RATS territory will be placed on the RATS mailing list. This will assist all of them in becoming better informed of the transportation needs and issues facing the Rockford Metropolitan Area. These officials will also be invited to attend and participate in RATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings. Actual voting membership on the RATS Technical and Policy Committees is not recommended because these officials have constituencies and responsibilities that extend far beyond the jurisdiction of RATS and, to our knowledge, such officials are not voting members of any of the other MPOs in the State.

6. Adding the Mayor of Belvidere and the President of Cherry Valley to the RATS Policy Committee.

This suggestion has been considered in the past and temporarily rejected. Two factors must be considered as membership on RATS is provided: (1) recognition and authority of the central city, and (2) representation of all of the other players in the region.

The central city, the City of Rockford, contains nearly 60% of the RATS Metro Area population (1990 Census). The other five municipalities in the Metro Area, plus the unincorporated parts of Boone and Winnebago Counties contain only 40% of the population. This, coupled with the fact that Federal law requires that the central city have the leadership role in the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), dictates that the voting structure on the RATS Policy Committee must favor the City of Rockford.

Federal law also requires that the other jurisdictions in the MPO have representation, but does not specify how they must be represented or that they must be on the Policy Committee. Federal law recognizes the importance of the central city and seeks to ensure that the central city retains a strong say in the planning process.

The current RATS Policy Committee voting structure ensures the authority of the central city in two ways. The Policy Committee is limited to a small size (only five members) and, although each member has one vote, decisions on matters involving funding or financing require a 4/5^{ths} majority vote. Under this structure, nearly all decisions made by RATS are made by consensus and with the approval of Rockford. A decision against Rockford would require a block vote of all other members, a condition that has never occurred in the history of RATS.

Adding members to the RATS Policy Committee, although seemingly simple, is complicated by the need to construct a voting structure that prevents the central city from being easily overwhelmed by a small block of small-entity voters – yet still allowing the small-entities to have a reasonable say in the decisions of RATS.

Another factor complicating the addition of Belvidere is the fact that that city, because it is not currently part of the "Urban" area, is now eligible for a small amount of Federal STP funding over which they currently have singular control. If admitted to RATS with voting status, those funds, now

available only to Belvidere, would be merged with the STP funds assigned to the RATS MPO and would be subject to the desires of the Policy Committee. In the early 1990s, Belvidere petitioned to become a member of the RATS Policy Committee but later withdrew the request, deciding that it was better to have singular control of the small amount of funds they now are assured of rather than a 1 out of 6 chance at the larger pool of funds that RATS controls.

For a time, in the early decades of RATS, the Village of Cherry Valley had "non-voting" membership on the RATS Policy Committee. But in the late1980's, when the RATS Cooperative Agreement was rewritten that status was eliminated because the Village seldom attended meetings. Also, considering the small population of the Village, it was reasoned that Winnebago County should act on behalf of the Village (a role which Winnebago County also plays on behalf of New Millford and the area township governments).

7. Development of a non-technical planning document to aid in securing adequate funding.

This is a good suggestion, especially for major projects that are currently unfunded or underfunded or that will require application for discretionary funds. RATS will endeavor to implement this where appropriate.

8. Specific provisions to address the needs of commuters.

At this time, we are unsure of the need for such special provisions. Information from the last Census Transportation Planning Package showed such a small percentage of the Rockford area work force commuting to / from the Rockford area that this topic didn't appear to merit much consideration beyond the efforts we already make to improve the area's position with regard to commerce in general. As data in the WCL comments suggest, this aspect may be changing. With its lower housing costs and generally good standards of living, Rockford is an attractive area for some commuters. RATS is awaiting data from the Year 2000 Census to help better assess this situation.

Opportunities for commuter rail service are being explored but such service would likely require a substantial local subsidy, at least to start. Currently, the area's intercity bus carriers are providing limited park and ride lots but the adequacy of these facilities has not been publicly studied. A study is now underway through the University of Illinois funded by the IDOT Division of Public Transportation to determine ways to assist intercity bus carriers in meeting the public's transportation needs. RATS will provide information for this study when requested and will monitor the progress of the study.

Generally speaking, what is good for the area's internal travelers is also good for persons who commute in and out of the area. Travel time is critical to commuters. Many of the capacity improvement projects listed in Table 21 will help reduce travel time or, at least, keep it from increasing substantially. Particularly important will be the proposal to add lanes to US 20 south of Rockford and the proposed improvements to IL-2, IL-173, Harrison Avenue, Springfield Avenue, and the two new interchanges proposed on I-90. Congestion management is also a key to minimizing travel time. Congestion management in the Rockford area focuses on intersection improvements, better signalization and more coordinated signal timing. All of these measures are stressed in the Plan. Incident management has some potential to reduce episodic traffic backups and delays.

Other projects outside the RATS MA will also benefit commuting conditions. Examples are the I-Pass system on I-90, proposed improvements to US 20 west of Rockford all the way to Galena, Illinois, the northward extension of Perryville Road, and the proposed South Beloit ByPass.

9. Public Facilities and accessibility.

There are so many important facilities in the Rockford area it is difficult to show them on a single small scale map or assign priority to their importance. A map of commercial facilities such as Cherry Vale Mall is not included in the draft Plan but will be included in the final version. A map of important industrial areas will also be included.

Goal 11 of the draft Plan states: This Plan recognizes the need to consider and enhance access to significant facilities throughout the Metro Area such as ports, airports, freight distribution facilities, cultural facilities and military facilities." That goal is followed by a more elaborate statement that cites major retail facilities, major industries and others. Magic Waters and Cherry Vale Mall will be cited in the final version of the Plan.

With specific regard to Magic Waters and Cherry Vale Mall, the accessibility of these two facilities, via automobile, is very good and will improve as new facilities such as the Springfield/Harrison Connection, Perryville Road (northward) and the Charles Street extension are completed. Public transit access to Cherry Vale Mall is not being provided at this time because neither the Village of Cherry Valley or the Mall administration has agreed to provide the public subsidy necessary to cover cost of this service extension.

10. Qualifying the statement that "existing facilities are being adequately maintained."

To repeat the statement, the general consensus of area engineers and planners is that the existing facilities are being adequately maintained. This is a subjective statement and opinions may differ but we feel it is a fair statement in two ways. First, all facilities are being maintained to the point that they are not posing a safety risk to the motoring or traveling public. This is the most

important aspect of system maintenance. To assure this aspect, all area bridges are being comprehensively inspected at a minimum of every two years. Area roadways are also inspected on a less rigorous basis but are constantly being monitored by public works employees and the general citizenry as they travel through the Rockford area. Hotlines have been established for hazard and pot hole reporting and all area jurisdictions make diligent efforts to repair hazardous situations in a timely manner. Area public transit facilities and rolling stock is inspected on a regular basis by qualified mechanics. Vehicles with safety problems are not allowed to be put in service. Vehicles that become hazardous during service are immediately removed from service.

Second, all facilities are being maintained in a manner that will extend their useful life. City-wide pot hole patching, crack sealing, and resurfacing projects are line items in nearly every TIP and jurisdictional CIP. Currently, the mechanism for deciding which streets are maintained is somewhat subjectively based on input from public works officials, elected officials and complaints from the general public. Nevertheless, it is a system that appears to work reasonably well.

Within the City of Rockford an extensive Bridge Management System has been the basis for assigning priority to bridge repairs for nearly 15 years. Currently, a Pavement (inventory and) Management System is under development. This system will add more objectivity to the selection and prioritization of roadway maintenance projects.

With regard to transit, all indications are that RMTD and BCCA are rigorously maintaining their vehicles by following regular maintenance schedules for the for the typical day-to-day items. These efforts are aimed at extending the useful life of the rolling stock and at maintaining the appearance of the vehicles.

Therefore, as so defined, the system is being adequately maintained. Whether the system is being optimally maintained is a far more difficult question to answer.

Optimal maintenance means accomplishing maintenance in the most efficient, timely and cost-effective manner. For example, the best time to reseal a pavement is before water seeps beneath the pavement, becomes partially trapped and results in the breakup of the pavement under heavy load burdens or due to freeze-thaw pressures. But this is not as simple as it seems. Resealing too late causes the obvious problem. Resealing too early or too often is a waste of limited resources. Similar timing / frequency considerations are present with regard to all types of maintenance and, although there are volumes of scientific studies and recommended procedures and practices, there is still debate over best practices. New materials and techniques are always being developed. Assessments of need still depend mainly on visual inspections. Errors can be made by even the most diligent inspectors. And countless factors can thwart even the most conscientious public works officials as they endeavor to implement cost-effective maintenance goals. Suffice to say here, that the Plan recognizes the need to employ educated officials who are cognizant of the concepts of optimal maintenance and that these officials are encouraged to engage their knowledge and skills to the best of their ability.

11. O'Hare Airport and area intercity bus services.

The Plan regards both of these transportation elements as extremely important to the Rockford area. Page 39 of the Plan identifies the intercity bus services provided by Greyhound Bus Lines, the Rockford Peoria O'Hare Bus Company and the Van Galder Bus Company. Together, these three bus lines provide 39 or more scheduled round-trips into the Chicago area, most of which stop at O'Hare Airport. In combination, this bus service and the services of O'Hare provide Rockford citizens and businessmen with access to world travel unequaled by most cities in the country. The Plan recognizes and supports this vital transportation linkage.

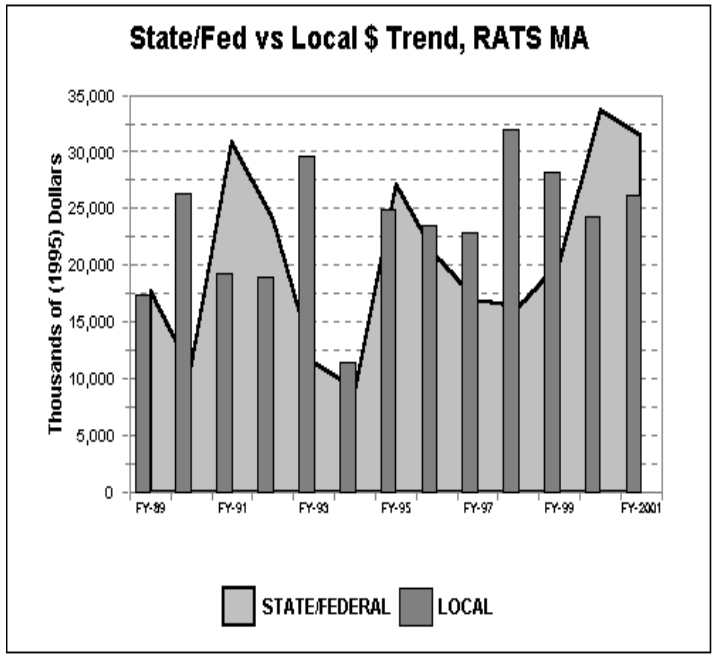
12. Maps of the existing public facilities.

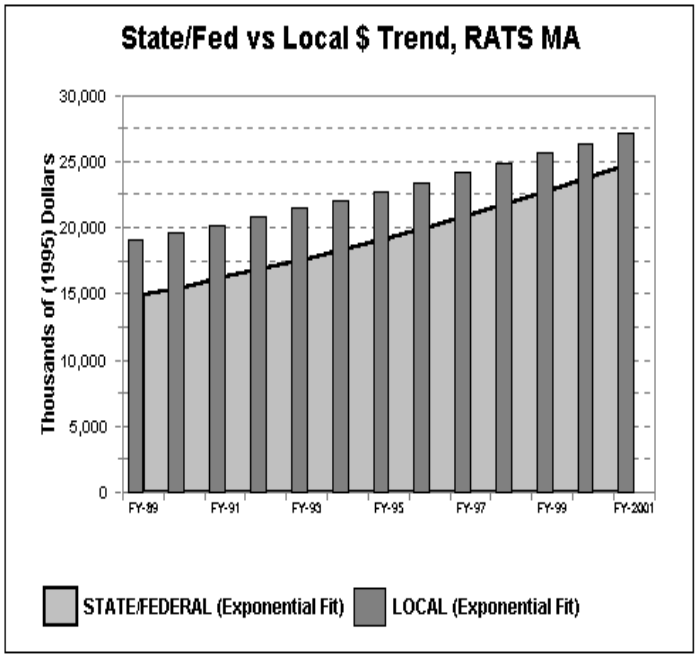
These maps are being updated and will be included in the final version of the Plan.

All Transportation Funding Combined (Highway & Transit) – Adjusted to 1995 $

Exhibit A

Source	FY-89	FY-90	FY-91	FY-92	FY-93	FY-94	FY-95	FY-96	FY-97	FY-98	FY-99	FY-2000	FY-2001
STATE/FEDERAL	17,771	10,769	30,819	24,157	11,443	9,092	27,159	20,755	16,866	16,315	20,136	33,635	31,419
LOCAL	17,351	26,277	19,279	18,878	29,552	11,505	24,880	23,429	22,956	32,002	28,148	24,280	26,232





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ATTACHMENT THREE – FHWA (7/10/00) Comments & Responses

Comments (Bold - Italic type) Faxed from Kirk Fauver, FHWA (7/10/00) followed by responses (regular type) prepared by RATS.

RATS Long Range Plan Update Comments

Table 8 - Review items listed in Table 8 and indicate their tie with an "x" to the planning factor number VI, promote efficient system management and operation. There appears to be many activities which are not marked that would definitely impact this planning factor.

Corrections made in Table 8; indeed, several additional items were applicable to both Factor VI and Factor VII.

Page 12 - Item number 15 should also include the required management systems (i.e.,congestion).

Correction made; congestion management added to the phrase.

Page 13 - Item number 30 impacts the planning factor number VI.

Correction made; "X" placed in the Column VI box.

Goal 4 - First paragraph, item 3, references management systems. Where is congestion?

Correction made; reference to congestion management added.

Goal 6 - Page 17, reference is made to the Congestion Management Activities report completed in October 1997. There is some reference to management strategies which will be carried cut, such as signalization and signal timing – primary means to be used to manage congestion in the Rockford area. However, only a small dollar amount (2.3%) is being devoted to these activities in the 25-year plan (Table 20). How will potential CMS strategies. Table I of the Congestion Management Activities report, be carried forward to ensure these strategies are considered in specific capacity expansion projects? Also. it would be good to have the Plan briefly address each of the potential CMS strategies of Table I in the Congestion Management Activities report of October 1997. An attempt to include a few of these strategies have been placed in the Plan.

This comment was addressed in several ways:

1. The descriptive text following Goal 6 was completely rewritten to more precisely and elaborately reflect the Congestion Management Activities (CMA) report.

2. A complete new table was added in the descriptive text. This table parallels Table 1 of the report and annotates the list of total possible Congestion Management Stategies and Measurs with descriptions of "Local Efforts" employed or attempted in the Rockford area, the "Impact on Congestion" these local efforts had or are having, and the "Prospectus" of the measures in the future.

3. A complete new sub-section was added to Goal 6, "Managing SOV Travel", describing the difficult local situation with respect to single-occupancy vehicles in the Rockford area was added. The section list seven ways that the community should continue to attempt to manage or reduce SOV travel.

4. In the Financial Plan, under the sub-section of "Project Categorizing & Cost Estimating", the description / definition of "Capacity Expansion Projects" was elaborated to explain that the Rockford definition of such projects is broad and includes part of the area's congestion management efforts. While some of these projects will add lane miles and have a tendency to increase SOV travel, they are part of the area's CMS. Some of these projects involve the construction of long-planned "missing-links" that will greatly reduce meandering travel. Others will add bi-directional turn lanes which are not truly travel lanes but will greatly increase the capacity of existing travel lanes. And others are necessary because there is no reasonable

alternative to deal with the situations; one such project has already gone through a Major Investment Study that documents this fact.

5. Considering the above, Table 20 is not constructed with a single all-inclusive category for Congestion Management Activities. Congestion Management Activities are part of most of the Project Types listed in Table 20, not just the Signalization and Signal Modification Project Types; therefore expenditures for CM work will be significantly greater that the 2.3% mentioned in the FHWA comment.

6. Lastly, Table 21 itself, the list of Capacity Expansion Projects, was expanded with a column that lists each project's "Justification & Relationship to the Congestion Management System".

Goal 13 - Congestion Management System (Congestion Management Activities) is already in place. How is it being used to address strategies that reduce SOV travel 23 CFR 109(a)?

The answer to this is contained in the discussion under Goal 6, as noted above.

Table 20 - Capacity Expansion Projects account for 35% of the cost in the 25-year plan. How will these projects be developed with consideration to the requirement of a CMS? Explicit consideration is to be given to the incorporation of appropriate features into the SOV project to facilitate future demand management and operational improvement strategies that will maintain the functional integrity of those lanes.

Also addressed in the response to the comments on Goal 6, above.

ATTACHMENT FOUR – FHWA (7/19/00) Comments & Responses

Comments (Bold - Italic type) Faxed from Kirk Fauver, FHWA (7/19/00) followed by responses (regular type) prepared by RATS.

RATS Long Range Plan Update - Comments

Goal 6, CMS SYSTEM MONITORING, item 7, rewritten as, "Development of Win GIS - A consortium of area governments have recently joined together to develop a regional geographic information system. Work has just begun on this 4-year project. The development of this GIS will be used to aid in mapping and analyzing the above data, and prioritize where Congestion Management efforts should be concentrated."

Comment and suggested change accepted. The meaning is the same but the wording is clearer.

Goal 6, CMS STRATEGY CONSIDERATION, recommend that Intelligent Transportation Systems be added as item 9. It might read, "The deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). A regional ITS architecture, that would provide a framework for ITS integration and deployment in the Rockford area, may be developed in the future."

Comment and suggested addition accepted with a slightly different wording.

Spelling / Grammatical errors noted: (underline indicates the change suggested).

Goal 6, second paragraph, first sentence, "...RATS has used a traffic simulation model..."

Goal 6, first section should be "CMS SYSTEM MONITORING."

Goal 6, CMS SYSTEM MONITORING, last paragraph, second to the last sentence, "...some of these areas will become..."

Goal 6, second section should be "CMS STRATEGY CONSIDERATION."

Goal 6, CMS STRATEGY CONSIDERATION, item 8, last sentence, first word should be "They" in lieu of "The."

Goal 6, third section should be "CMS PROJECT SELECTION."

Goal 6, Figure 3, CMS Activities, third box, "Requirements for Plan Preparation & Consideration of Congestion Relief."

Goal 6, fourth section should be "CMS EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION."

Goal 6, CMS EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION, item 4, "Rockford MA" should be spelled out as "Rockford Metro Area."

All of the above spelling errors will be corrected.

ATTACHMENT FIVE – 2nd LETTER FROM WILLIAM CHARLES, LTD.

July 24, 2000

Russ Petrotte,
Rockford Area Transportation Study
City of Rockford Public Works Department
425 East State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61104

Dear Russ,

Thank you very much for your response to my comments on the draft of the updated RATS Long Range Transportation Plan. I know I probably directed a number of comments to you which did not actually fall within the responsibilities or intended scope of the RATS Plan. Unfortunately, the RATS Plan seems to me to be the *only* regional transportation plan that exists. As a result, you receive comments, like many of mine, that should actually be directed somewhere else.

My feeling is that, as long as there is no comparable "wants and needs" transportation plan in this region, the RATS Plan will be used as not only the technical, financially constrained plan that it is intended to be, but will also be used as the exclusive listing of the transportation improvements that the area needs. In the absence of a plan or agenda which defines the long range transportation improvements which the region needs and ranks them in priorities, the elected officials in this region will use the RATS Plan by default, even if that is not what the RATS Plan is designed to do. I think we both agree that this is the wrong approach. Hopefully, some dialogue over the current RATS Plan update might lead to other planning by the public and private 17 sectors.

My comment regarding the inequity in State funding for highway projects in this area has two aspects. Neither one is the responsibility of RATS. Moreover, my comments were focused on highway funding, and not on all aspects of transportation funding.

The first inequity arises out of the fact that Winnebago County receives a disproportionately low share of the highway funds spent by IDOT District 2. That our share is "disproportionately low" is fundamentally a political judgment and is not RATS responsibility. Irrespective of who is responsible for the proportion of District 2 funds allocated to Winnebago County has declined steadily over twenty-five or thirty years. The allocation of these funds is a function of, as you put it, "the persuasive ability of our leaders and elected officials in securing funding as they plead our needs in competition with other regions." That is especially true over a long term. As I mentioned earlier, if there is no other plan besides the RATS Plan which attempts to delineate our needs, our leaders and elected officials will be pleading from the wrong text.

The second inequity arises from the fact that the number of miles of highways in Winnebago County for which the State is responsible has declined significantly over the past twenty years. The reduction in Winnebago County has been substantially greater than in any other county of District 2. I do not mean that the State's share of transportation funds has declined over the recent past. Over the next twenty-five years, however, the shift of road miles from the State to local units of government will impact the costs of highway maintenance and replacement borne by local government.

Again, this evolution is not the responsibility of RATS, but your plan update provides an opportunity to raise the issue. Given the time that will pass between major repairs to a highway, it is not surprising that there does not appear to have been a significant change in the past ten years in the proportion of state and federal highway funding compared to local highway funding. I would submit, however, that it is not reasonable to expect that local units of government can take on the responsibility for over thirty per cent of the highway miles previously maintained by the State without an increase in their costs.

One of my comments related to the inclusion of IDOT's projected 2000-2004 funding in the RATS Plan. The Plan's discussion of financial constraints and the determination of the level of funds expected to be available in the future (pg. 43-44) were based on the average spent over the past six years. In this calculation, the average annual amount funded by IDOT was $11.183 million per year.

IDOT's projected 2001-2004 spending plan for Winnebago County, however, is at an annual level that is essentially double the level of the past six years. The total increase in IDOT funds over the 2000-2004 period is in excess of $55 million. While it is not appropriate to estimate that the IDOT funding level will continue after 2004 at this increased level, I believe it would be appropriate to include a reference to it in your discussion on page 44 of the Plan.

I recognize that the level of funding announced by IDOT for Winnebago County highway projects might not occur. It obviously did not occur in FY 2000. Nonetheless, part 9 of the Plan should include a description of these funds. Otherwise, your projection would effectively mean either that we reasonably expect to see IDOT funding decrease by over $50.0 million in the last 20 years of the Plan or that we do not expect IDOT to actually fund what it has said it plans to fund in 2000-2004.

I realize that specific projects which are included in the IDOT five year plan are all also included in the list of projects which are to be completed under your Plan. Several of the IDOT projects in their 2000-2004 year plan, however, have been announced by IDOT as projects which would not go forward without the additional funding made available through the Illinois First program. It seems to me that this statement is inconsistent with the idea that these same projects actually will occur within the RATS 25 year scope of the plan without any extra funding in addition to the average funding that has existed in the past six years. The IDOT 2000-2004 plan is a publicly announced, widely circulated document, and is incorporated in the current "STIP." For these reasons, it would make sense to refer to it in your discussion of the expected funding levels available, even if all you do is say why it is not considered in the RATS projection of available funds.

Your letter notes that there are many projects under various stages of consideration which are not included in the RATS Plan because the Plan is required to be based on what a community can actually afford to build and to maintain. A classic example in our area is the "Wallenberg Expressway." I recognize that the RATS Plan is a technical document that must comply with the Federal regulations applicable to such regional transportation plans, and that the following comment is really not appropriately directed to you. It was nonetheless interesting to read last week that Peoria had begun work on a $320 million project to upgrade Route 74 through downtown Peoria and the various connecting roadways in the downtown area. I do not think the estimated cost of the Wallenberg Expressway ever hit $320 million.

Your letter mentioned a 1960's RATS Plan that was a "wants and needs" plan. Is a copy of that Plan available? I would be glad to pay for the copying.

Finally, I partly agree with your comment that "wants and needs" plans are within the function of community agencies involved in promoting economic growth. I believe, however, that the major responsibility for the development of comprehensive "wants and needs" plans lies with the public sector. Transportation infrastructure is overwhelmingly the responsibility of government. Highways are designed, built, and maintained by the public sector, to standards developed and enforced by the public sector, following procedures established by the public sector, and using funds allocated by the public sector. If the public bodies with the responsibility for funding, building, and maintaining the highway system do not take the lead in planning its development, the plan will simply not happen.

Thanks again for the information you sent me and for taking the time to prepare such a thoughtful response.

Very truly yours,

John Holmstrom III

ATTACHMENT SIX – RATS STAFF RESPONSE TO 7/24/2000 LETTER FROM WILLIAM CHARLES, LTD.

The July 24, 2000, letter from Mr. Holmstrom reiterates and elaborates on the following main points (italics and bold):

1. ***The RATS Plan, even though it must be financially constrained, should plead some of the unfunded wants and or needs of the Rockford area.***

RESPONSE

RATS concurs that this is true. The Plan does this to some extent, but the substance of the effort is overshadowed by the emphasis on the financially constrained aspects. The Plan pleads unfunded wants and needs with regard to several significant projects or transportation considerations:

a. **The Woodruff/Wallenburg Expressway.** This quarter billion dollar proposal is based on the suppositions that the urban area will continue to densify and that traffic volumes will continue to increase significantly in the Rockford part of the Metro Area (despite currently planned efforts to reduce SOV travel). Although there is still considerable debate as to how to deal with these increases, the Woodruff is retained in the Plan as one of the main possible alternatives. Other alternatives to dealing with the increases in travel would be expanded efforts to reduce SOV travel, employment of intelligent transportation measures, major improvements to significant arterials and intersections, all of the other measures mentioned with respect to Congestion Management (including expanding public transit) as discussed in Goal 6 of the Plan, and / or some combination of these alternatives. Whether the Woodruff or its alternatives are selected, additional financial resources will have to be secured if the travel continues to increase.

b. **The Northwest ByPass.** Currently under study and awaiting the completion of the region-wide RATS / SLATS traffic simulation model, this proposed project (or its many alternatives) is an example of an outstanding possible need if the economic growth of the area continues or accelerates.

c. **Commuter Rail to Chicago.** Mentioned briefly in a number of areas in the Plan, the need and feasibility of this concept should be explored. Considerable additional funding must be secured, both for implementation and operation, if this need is confirmed.

d. **Bolstering the area's truck route system.** This is currently in the Plan as part of the funded roadway reconstructions. If these improvements have to be accelerated, additional funding will need to be secured.

e. **Freight Rail needs.** Comprehensive study of this topic is not stressed in the Plan but should be considered.

In future planning efforts, the next 5-Year update if not sooner, RATS will endeavor to expand the list of "illustrative projects" (i.e., by Federal law, unfunded projects that the community would like to build if funding were to become available – synonymous in our Plan with "Projects Beyond 2025"). RATS will enlist the aid of the Chamber of Commerce, the Council of 100, and civic-mined organizations such as William Charles, Ltd. in developing and prioritizing such projects.

2. ***The conversion of State highway mileage over recent decades will expand and burden local road maintenance needs.***

RESPONSE

RATS concurs that these changeovers will increase local maintenance funding needs and that local governments should carefully evaluate any future jurisdictional transfers to insure that they will not be overburdening the local ability to maintain its share of the transportation network. Also, the possibility that some additional roadways are of strategic significance to the State, and should be transferred to the State, should be explored. Examples include: Alpine Road, Perryville Road, Harrison/Springfield/Riverside and, in the future, the Northwest ByPass and the Woodruff Expressway, if they are built. In addition, the section of the I-90 in Winnebago County might better serve the needs of the area and the State if it were under the jurisdiction of the State.

3. ***The Rockford area is not receiving its fair share of State funding compared to other Metro Areas.***

RESPONSE

We do not know if this is a fair statement. We do know that it is an extremely complicated issue (that may never be resolved to everyone's satisfaction). If the statement is true, we do not believe it has been a deliberate attempt on the part of State officials to shortchange the Rockford area. With those limitations, staff takes liberty to editorialize.

Three significant decisions in the lessening of State mileage and funding to the Rockford area come to mind: (a) the decision to route I-90 east of the urban area as opposed to through Rockford's downtown, (b) the decision to construct this route as a toll facility rather than a State-owned freeway, and (c) a policy followed from the late 1960s through the early 1980s to de-emphasize Rockford's diagonal arterials.

While the former certainly contributed to the decline of Rockford's downtown (commercially), it eventually spawned downstate Illinois' best shopping area and it preserved the charming "small town" character of much of older Rockford's residential and commercial areas (an important factor that will need to be revisited if the Woodruff is seriously considered). The decision to make I-90 a tollway was probably wise at the time but now, should be reconsidered in light of the inability of the facility to pass oversized, wide loads through the Rockford area.

Both of these decisions were frugal ones, on the part of the State of Illinois. Had they made similar frugal decisions in Peoria, they might not now be faced with the inordinate expense of upgrading I-74 through the heart of Peoria. There are differing schools of thought in urban planning – but one school suggests it is more sensible to build new cities (or new parts thereof) to accommodate the dominating presence of the automobile than it is to reconstruct old cities to accommodate the same. The former is far cheaper and allows the older commercial centers to redevelop into less intense residential and special commercial neighborhoods. While the transition in Rockford, over the past quarter century, has been painful – in the long run, Rockford will have its prime commercial district (East State / Mulford / Perryville / Riverside) in a situation that is far easier to maintain and prosper than it ever could have been in the old CBD where it was dissected by a major river, constrained by narrow roadways, and walled with decaying infrastructure. Perhaps it was better to redefine the role and function of the old CBD, than to attempt to reshape its form and structure to accommodate the automobile.

The decision to de-emphasize Rockford's diagonal arterials was retracted in RATS Plans in the mid-1980s. By this time however, at least one critical diagonal roadway, Charles Street between downtown Rockford and Cherry Valley had been truncated at Alpine Road and removed as a State highway. This roadway could have had great intra-regional significance (access to Cherry Vale) and inter-regional significance (access to DeKalb and NIU and access to I-39, if complimentary connections had been envisioned and improved).

To put a slightly different spin on the William Charles comment, although we might agree that Rockford has not been getting the same share of State highway dollars on a per capital basis, in comparison to other areas – this may be because we have selected our projects more wisely. Subjectively, the proof being that our highway system, traffic congestion situation, and general economy is not floundering reletive to other urban areas in the State. But this is not meant to imply that our leaders should resist requesting and encouraging the State to spend further State tax dollars here in Rockford. Rockford may well have some very important currently unfunded needs in the near future, and should not be paying for the mistakes of other urban areas.

To that end, RATS supports further exploration of the funding equity issue and of possible special transportation needs beyond what we have been able to fund by simple historic trend analysis.

OTHER CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE JUNE 29 VERSION

All other changes to the June 29, 2000 draft were of a non-substantive nature (corrections to spelling, punctuation, grammar, format, and phase or sentence structure to improve readability but not meaning) and are not considered significant changes to the meaning or intent of the document.

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