

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Planning Efforts for Milwaukee County

August 2022

The following provides a summary of work recently completed or underway at the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, including both regional planning efforts and efforts for Milwaukee County and municipalities in the County.

EFFORTS AT THE REQUEST OF THE COUNTY OR A MUNICIPALITY WITHIN THE COUNTY

Transportation Planning

- North-South Transit Enhancement Study:** In May 2020, Commission staff initiated work for Milwaukee County on a transit enhancement study for the 27th Street corridor generally between Brown Deer Road (STH 100) on the north and Oakwood Drive on the south. The study corridor connects a racially and economically diverse set of communities and has involved a significant public involvement effort. This past year, Commission staff made significant process, including completion of a draft Tier 2 Document that includes an analysis of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route alternatives and station locations, resulting in a recommended alternative. The draft Tier 2 document will be available for public comment in September and completion of the study will follow. Milwaukee County is initiating the next phase of the project with more detailed engineering and environmental review of the recommended alternative to begin this Fall. It is expected that the BRT service will open in 2027 or 2028.
- Milwaukee County Jurisdictional Highway System Plan:** At the request of MCDOT, Commission staff initiated work on an update to the jurisdictional highway system plan for Milwaukee County, which was completed in the late 1960's. Because travel patterns within Milwaukee County and the Region have changed over the last 50 years, Commission staff will be reassessing the capacity needs of the arterial streets and highways in the County from a multimodal perspective. This will include the identification of roadways with extra capacity that could be rededicated to other uses and recommendations to reduce reckless driving through design and infrastructure solutions. This project is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.
- W. Washington Boulevard:** In 2018, at the request of the Milwaukee County Parks, Commission staff initiated work on a traffic engineering study to address safety concerns related to the higher volumes and speeds of vehicles and poor sight distances along W. Washington Boulevard between STH 175 and W. Vliet Street in the City of Milwaukee. More specifically, the study will identify low-cost traffic engineering measures to improve the safety of motorists and pedestrians/bicyclists along, and crossing, W. Washington Boulevard. Commission staff met with County Parks staff in

January 2019 to present a set of potential alternatives for the County to consider. Commission staff will prepare a more detailed analysis of any of the proposed alternatives upon request of the County Parks staff.

- **Traffic Forecasting:** In support of preliminary engineering for highway and transit projects, the Commission provides long-range traffic forecasts to municipalities, counties, and the State of Wisconsin. Recent work has included forecasts for the Milwaukee County North-South Transit Study; East-West Bus Rapid Transit Line between the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center and Downtown Milwaukee; W. College Avenue (CTH ZZ) in the Cities of Franklin, Greendale, and Greenfield; S. 76th Street (CTH U) in the City of Franklin; S. 27th Street (STH 241) in the Cities of Franklin and Oak Creek; the IH 94 N-S reconstruction; the Zoo Interchange reconstruction; the IH 43 N-S corridor study; the IH 94 E-W corridor study; IH 794 Lake Interchange; National Avenue (STH 59) between 35th Street and 1st Street; and the long-planned extension of 124th Street in the Cities of West Allis, Wauwatosa, and Brookfield, and Village of Elm Grove.

Land Use Planning

- **County Park and Open Space Plan:** At the request of Milwaukee County, and in coordination with the Milwaukee County Parks Department, the Commission has completed an update and extension to the year 2050 of the County Park and Open Space Plan. The 2050 plan 1) includes a description of existing population, households, employment, land use, natural resources, and park and open space sites; 2) addresses park system and facility use and preferences, provides composite park facility level of service information, and estimates the costs of capital maintenance of Milwaukee County parks and park facilities; and 3) includes a needs analysis for park sites and facilities, a park and open space plan for the year 2050, and the actions needed to implement the plan. The plan was the subject of a public informational meeting hosted by the Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee on December 7, 2021, was recommended for adoption by the Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee on January 25, 2022, and was adopted by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on February 3, 2022. The plan is being considered as an amendment to the Regional Park and Open Space Plan by the Commission on September 14. Final formatting, printing, and publishing of the report is anticipated to be complete by fall 2022.
- **Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan:** At the request of the Milwaukee County Department of Administrative Services, Environmental Services Unit, and under the guidance of the Milwaukee County Land and Water Resource Management Plan Advisory Committee, the Commission has completed an update of the County's land and water resource management plan. This plan, which is required by Section 92.10 of the Wisconsin *Statutes*, is consistent with the guidelines established by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), serves as a program guide for local conservation efforts in Milwaukee County, and maintains the County's eligibility to receive conservation staff funding and cost-share grant monies. The plan was the subject of a public hearing hosted by the Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee on October 26, 2021, was approved by the Advisory Committee on October 6, 2021, by the Milwaukee County Land Conservation Committee on October 26, 2021, and by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on December 7, 2021, with final approval by the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Board on December 7, 2021. The report has been published as SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 312 (2nd Edition), *A Land and Water Resource Management Plan for Milwaukee County: 2022 – 2031*, dated December 2021.
- **MKE Aerotropolis Planning:** The Commission staff continue to be involved in the efforts of the Milwaukee Gateway Aerotropolis Corporation (MGAC), a public-private partnership of business

leaders and local representatives from Milwaukee County and nine communities in the County focused on promoting economic growth around Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport. In February 2017, the Commission staff completed a development plan for Aerotropolis Milwaukee. The plan, prepared with The Gateway to Milwaukee and MGAC, establishes a shared vision and coordinated effort to capitalize on the Airport to stimulate economic investment, promote job growth, and enhance the quality of life in the nine Aerotropolis Milwaukee communities. It is designed to be used as a reference tool for local governments and agencies to aid in decision making relative to future land use changes and strategic investments. Following the plan's completion, the Commission and Gateway staffs worked to obtain endorsement of the plan from the seven of the nine communities, and requested that the plan's recommendations be incorporated into their respective comprehensive plans, as appropriate. Staff has continued to support the ongoing implementation of the plan.

- **Comprehensive Plans:** At the request of the City of Cudahy, the Commission assisted the City with an update of its Comprehensive Plan. Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes require that comprehensive plans be updated every 10 years. The City adopted the plan update in August 2021 and publication was completed in fall of 2021.

Economic Development Planning

- Provided assistance to the Village of Shorewood in managing the Village's business incentive loan fund program.
- Provided unemployment and personal income data to the City of Cudahy for their use in applying for an EDA CARES Act grant.
- Provided Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI) data to the City of Milwaukee for their use in updating *Growing Prosperity: An Action Agenda for Economic Development*.
- At the request of the City of Cudahy, the Commission is assisting the City with an update of its Project Plans for Redevelopment District #1 and Redevelopment District #2 to ensure plans are consistent with the City's recently adopted comprehensive plan update. These Project Plans are components of the City's ongoing community planning and development efforts and are being prepared under Section 66.431(5)(a)1 of the Wisconsin Statutes, which authorizes Cities to prepare redevelopment plans and implement redevelopment projects within the community, and further authorized Cities to establish redevelopment programs and create a community development authority to implement such programs in order to address blight. It is anticipated that these plans will be completed early in 2023.

Environmental Planning

- **Milwaukee City-County Task Force on Climate Change and Equity:** Commission staff assisted the City and County on this effort through providing data, technical expertise, and policy advice as part of serving on three of the Task Force's Work Groups: Adaptation and Climate Resilience, Nature in the City, and Transportation and Mobility.
- **Floodplain Mapping Program:** Under the floodplain mapping program for the Milwaukee County Land Information Office (MCLIO) and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District (MMSD), the Commission continued work on developing the hydrologic and hydraulic models for the Root River

watershed. The project involves mapping the ten-, two-, one-, and 0.2 percent annual-probability (10-, 50-, 100-, and 500-year recurrence interval) floodplains along 28 streams in the watershed, including the main stem of the Root River. Draft floodplain mapping has been completed for Hale Creek and work continues on the West Branch of the Root River and its two tributaries. This project involves lands in Milwaukee County Parks in the Cities of Franklin, Greenfield, Milwaukee, Oak Creek, and West Allis, and the Villages of Greendale and Hales Corners.

- **Menomonee River LOMR submittal:** Began preparation of a FEMA Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) submittal for streams within the Menomonee River watershed completed under the MCLIO effort. Floodplain work is first submitted to the WDNR for their review and then the analyses can be submitted to FEMA as a LOMR. Milwaukee County streams approved by the WDNR include Dretzka Park Tributary in the City of Milwaukee; Grantosa Creek in the City of Wauwatosa; Honey Creek in the Cities of Greenfield, Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, and West Allis; Woods Creek in the City of Milwaukee; and the Menomonee River mainstem upstream of North Avenue, Little Menomonee River, and Little Menomonee Creek in the Cities of Milwaukee and Wauwatosa.
- **Fish Creek Floodplain:** Draft floodplains were completed for Fish Creek as part of the MCLIO effort and staff continue to provide support to MMSD as they have a consultant develop flood mitigation alternatives. Work impacts the Villages of Bayside and River Hills.
- **Beaver Creek Watercourse System Plan:** Revised draft staff memorandum was completed for the Beaver Creek watercourse system plan for MMSD. The plan addresses flood mitigation in the Village of Brown Deer. Alternatives investigated include daylighting of a portion of the creek, structure floodproofing, and structure acquisition and removal.
- **Oak Creek Watershed Restoration Plan:** Plan document has been completed and US EPA and WDNR has confirmed as a Nine Key Element plan. This plan provides restoration options in the Cities of Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Franklin, Milwaukee, Cudahy, and Greenfield. The plan focuses on water quality, recreational access and use, habitat conditions, and targeted stormwater and flooding issues.
- **Milwaukee County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Supported the County in a FEMA grant application to update the plan and work is anticipated to start in 2023. Also coordinated with the City of Milwaukee to combine their plan into the County plan, which should streamline future updates.
- Continued to provide technical assistance to MMSD and its consultants for watercourse work in the Kinnickinnic River watershed.
- Continued to provide technical assistance to the MMSD initiative to improve aquatic habitat and ecological connectivity within the Milwaukee River between Capitol Drive and Bender Road.
- Completed work on Schlitz Audubon Nature Center stormwater management/ravine stabilization project near the Lake Michigan shoreline. Continued to provide technical assistance and advice to Schlitz Audubon Nature Center regarding a riparian restoration project (Cleaver Property) along the Milwaukee River in the Village of River Hills.
- Continued to serve on the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern (AOC) Fish and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee.

Environmental Field Work

Upon request, Commission staff provide wetland and environmental corridor delineations for public lands, projects, and on private property (if requested by a unit of government).

Transportation – 2 Projects

- Safe Routes to School improvements at Cedar Hills, Edgewood, Meadowview, and Shepard Hills Elementary Schools (City of Oak Creek) – Wetland Delineation
- W. Lisbon Avenue improvements from N. 100th Street to W. Burleigh Street (City of Milwaukee) – Wetland Delineation

Residential/Commercial Development Parcels – 4 Projects

- Proposed Lakeshore Commons Neighborhood development (City of Oak Creek) – Primary Environmental Corridor Delineation
- Switchback Enterprises, LLC - Proposed Edgemont Estates development at 10670 S. Nicholson Road (City of Oak Creek) – Primary Environmental Corridor Review
- Chris Wiczek Property at 9978 & 9950 S. Nicholson Road (City of Oak Creek) – Wetland Delineation
- Robert Hehn Property on west side of S. 116th Street (City of Franklin) – Wetland Delineation

Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat Assessments – 8 Site Visits

- Proposed Heydey Development Site (City of Oak Creek) – Critical Species Survey
- Root River East Branch (City of Franklin) – Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- Root River Parkway Section 18 Woods (City of Oak Creek) – Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- 15th Street Woods (City of Oak Creek) – Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- Root River Riverine Forest (City of Oak Creek) – Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- Grobschmidt Park Woods and Wetlands (City of Franklin) - Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- Bradley Woods (City of Milwaukee) - Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey
- Riverton Meadows Park Woods (City of Oak Creek) - Natural Area Assessment and Critical Species Survey

Surveying and Mapping Assistance

The Commission has, since its inception, provided and supported surveying and mapping services to Milwaukee County. As a part of such services, the Commission has, since 1984, provided a County Surveyor for Milwaukee County. The County Surveyor is responsible for perpetuating corners of the U.S. Public Land Survey System that may be subject to disturbance, removal, or burial through construction or other activities, and for maintaining a record of the surveys required for such perpetuation. The U.S. Public Land Survey corners, as monumented, provide the basis for land and engineering surveys within the County. The Commission reset 23 corner monuments and an additional 102 corners that either required routine field maintenance or state plane corner validation in 2021 to ensure the USPLSS remains intact. The Commission is also on track to complete approximately the same in 2022 to ensure the resulting survey network support public works, engineering, and land surveying.

Also pursuant to State Legislation, a copy of each land survey plat prepared by a land surveyor must be filed with the County Surveyor, and through that office made available to other surveyors, engineers,

realtors, assessors, and the public in general. Approximately 900 to 1,000 such plats are filed annually with the County Surveyor.

In addition to meeting the statutory responsibilities of the County Surveyor, the Commission provides related technical assistance in survey and mapping in response to County requests. Most recently, the Commission has, at County request, provided special surveys to evaluate the horizontal and vertical accuracy of the orthoimagery and LiDAR data captured in 2020 to ensure the mapping services by the aerial contractor met the expected accuracy.

- **Orthophotography:** Since 1995, the Commission has assisted Milwaukee County in the acquisition of digital orthophotography as part of the Regional Orthophotography Program with the latest acquisition occurring this past spring of 2022. The Commission assisted the County by providing Federal planning funds for a portion of the orthoimagery, planned review of the delivered orthoimagery to ensure it is consistent with the specifications of the regional project and providing independent features to ensure the horizontal accuracy. During the past year, the Commission has coordinated with the County on the latest acquisition of aerial imagery in 2022 and has currently evaluated the horizontal accuracy using the independent features that were tested and found to exceed horizontal specifications. The Commission is currently awaiting on final imagery which is expected to be delivered in mid-September to assist the County in reviewing. The Commission is also working with County with to increase the acquisition intervals to ensure up-to-date aerial imagery and the Commission with the County has started evaluating new programs for a possible 2023 acquisition.

The Commission also worked with the County and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District in support of a supplemental contract that used the existing high-density LiDAR collected in 2020 to reprocess the above ground LiDAR points in the establishment of 3D buildings. Furthermore, the Commission provided the County 1ft Contours using the same 2020 high-density LiDAR data set.

- **Redistricting:** Every 10 years, following the receipt of certain demographic information from the Decennial U.S. Census, local governments redraw the voting wards and districts (if applicable) for local elected offices. Known as redistricting, this process can be a complex effort involving multiple levels of government. This past year, Commission staff were pleased to assist Milwaukee County with their redistricting efforts, as well as several cities and villages within the County. Typically, local redistricting efforts for Wisconsin counties begins in April of the year following a Decennial Census (2021, in this case). However, the U.S. Census Bureau was significantly delayed in providing all states the needed data due to complications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and this data was not made available until August 16, resulting in local governments working on a significantly compressed schedule.

Under the direction of the Milwaukee County Independent Redistricting Committee (IRC) (and then the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors following the conclusion of the IRC process), Commission staff worked to develop a series of potential supervisory district maps for the Board to consider. The IRC initially laid out a series of priorities to be balanced in the development of potential maps. Using web-based software provided by the State's Legislative Technology Services Bureau, Commission staff worked with IRC and then the County Board directly to develop maps for public review and input and on October 29, 2021, the County Board adopted a tentative district map. Once adopted, Commission staff then quickly assisted cities and villages in Milwaukee County that requested it with developing voting ward and aldermanic district (if applicable) maps for their community. Changes in wards were due to changes in the tentative district boundaries along with population changes between 2010 and 2020 (the number of residents in each ward is dictated by State Statute on city or village population) then required further adjustments to the county

supervisory district maps. Final maps were approved by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on November 22, 2021.

- **Survey Datum Conversion Project:** Milwaukee County entered into an agreement with the Commission to proceed with the conversion of the legacy horizontal and vertical datums to the new Federal datums. In 2018, the Commission completed the horizontal conversion with each monumented USPLSS corner throughout Milwaukee County now containing coordinates referenced on both NAD27 and NAD83/2011, and in July 2019, the Commission completed the Region wide vertical conversion from NGVD29 to NAVD88.

The Commission continues to assist the Milwaukee Land Information Office with conversion procedures and techniques that would allow transformation of the existing base mapping data layers to the new Federal datums.

REGIONAL OR MULTI-COUNTY EFFORTS THAT DIRECTLY BENEFIT MILWAUKEE COUNTY

Transportation Planning

- **General Metropolitan Planning Functions:** Continued to serve as the Region's Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MPO), including preparing and maintaining the up-to-date, Federally-required regional transportation plan and transportation improvement program, and ensuring all necessary Federal transportation planning and programming requirements are met to permit the continued use of U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) funds on Milwaukee County streets and highways and MCTS. USDOT funding expenditures within Milwaukee County are approximately \$100 to \$300 million annually, and increased dramatically during 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-recovery aid provided to MCTS. U.S. DOT funding levels expended in the County are increasing in 2022 (compared to pre-COVID levels) from the increased funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) enacted in November 2021.
- **Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan:** VISION 2050, the long-range land use and transportation plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, was originally adopted by the Commission on July 28, 2016. The periodic (approximately every 10 years) major reevaluation of the regional transportation plan, incorporating new U.S. Census population, employment, and travel survey data and maintaining a minimum 20-year future timeframe, is required for State and local governments to continue to obtain highway and transit project funding from the USDOT. An interim review and update is also required every four years. Since the plan was first adopted, the Commission has adopted three needed plan amendments and, on June 17, 2020, adopted the 2020 Review and Update (the first interim review and update of the plan).

As updated in 2020, VISION 2050 makes recommendations to local and State government to shape and guide land use development and transportation improvement. In addition to recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streets and highways, and freight facilities, the transportation component recommends a more than doubling of transit service in the Region; recommending increasing the speed, frequency, and reach of transit services. The plan also identifies possible ways to address an ongoing funding gap for both transit and streets and highways so that VISION 2050 can be fully implemented, although State legislative action would be required.

The initial process to develop VISION 2050 was guided by the Commission's Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use Planning and Regional Transportation Planning, with input also provided by the Commission's Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF), Jurisdictional Highway Planning

Committees for each county, and VISION 2050 Task Forces on key areas of interest. Broad public input from thousands of residents was also incorporated during a three-year visioning and scenario planning process, intended to identify a long-range future vision for land use and transportation for the Region. The Commission also partnered with eight community organizations during the public input process, with these partnerships designed to reach and engage people of color, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals.

The Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use Planning and Regional Transportation Planning again guided the 2020 Review and Update process, with input from the EJTF. This 2020 Update assessed the progress in implementing the original VISION 2050 recommendations, the performance of the transportation system, year 2050 forecasts underlying the plan, and changes in recent years that impact the plan. The 2020 Update identified plan changes based on review of this information and two rounds of public input, which included engaging constituents of the Commission's now nine community partners. The 2020 Update includes an updated financial analysis for the recommended transportation system, which confirmed a funding gap for the recommended system, and a gap to continue to operate the existing transit system over the long term. It also includes updated equity analyses, which include evaluations of potential benefits and impacts to people of color, low-income populations, and people with disabilities related to the plan's updated land use and transportation components. Notably, the transportation equity analysis concluded that without additional funding to implement the VISION 2050 public transit element, a disparate impact on these population groups is likely to occur.

During the latter part of 2020, staff prepared the final 2020 Review and Update report and summary for publication, along with a second edition of Volume III of VISION 2050, which contains the full recommended plan as updated. Staff also updated the VISION 2050 website (www.vision2050sewis.org) to include the updated plan recommendations, plan report, and interactive map applications for several main elements, including land use, public transit, the bicycle network, arterial streets and highways, and freight transportation.

During the past year, staff has also continued concerted efforts to communicate the plan and its recommendations across the Region, including wide distribution of a fact sheet and *VISION 2050 Summary* report for the original plan and the new summary for the 2020 Update, and maintaining an active Facebook page and Twitter account for SEWRPC and the plan. The complete three-volume report for the original plan, published in July 2017, was sent to each affected unit and agency of government requesting their consideration and endorsement. The Commission distributed the second edition of Volume III of that report, along with the 2020 Update report and summary, in December 2020.

- **Transportation Improvement Program:** In December 2020, the Commission adopted the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP lists transportation projects intended to be undertaken by State, County, and local governments in Southeastern Wisconsin. The preparation of a TIP every two years, and amendments as necessary, is needed so that State, County, and local governments to obtain project funding from the USDOT Federal Highway and Transit Administrations. Through August 2022, Commission staff has processed an amendment to incorporate updated Federally required transit safety performance targets, 12 TIP amendments for Milwaukee County, and 125 amendments for municipalities in the County.
- **Surface Transportation Block Grants:** In March 2022, Commission staff assisted the Advisory Committee on Transportation Planning and Programming for the Milwaukee Urbanized Area (Milwaukee TIP Committee) in the evaluation, prioritization, and recommendation of candidate projects for \$42.3 million in available years 2025-2026 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Milwaukee Urbanized Area (STP-M) funding. This federal funding source can be used for transit capital and arterial street and highway capital projects, at up to 80% federal cost share. Approximately \$22.4 million of the available funds during this most recent round were awarded to fully or partially fund projects located within Milwaukee County.

In April 2022, Commission staff also assisted the Milwaukee TIP Committee in the evaluation, prioritization, and recommendation of candidate projects for \$7.3 million in additional year 2022 STP-M funding that was made available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), that was enacted in November 2021. The \$7.3 million of the available funds were awarded to fully or partially fund two projects located within Milwaukee County.

Commission staff is currently working on the evaluation of candidate projects for years 2023-2026 in STP-M funding made available from the BIL. Commission staff expect to present the results of the evaluation to the Milwaukee TIP Committee for its consideration at a meeting in late-September. In addition, the Commission staff will also be working with the Milwaukee TIP Committee in the consideration of potential changes to the process utilized to evaluate and prioritize STP-M projects beginning in the fall of 2022.

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Grants:** In Winter 2022, the Commission staff, working with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), completed the evaluation and recommendation of projects for \$24.4 million in available 2025-2026 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funding, which can be used for certain transportation projects that are intended to reduce congestion and air pollution emissions. Approximately \$21.8 million in 2025-2026 CMAQ funds during this most recent round were awarded to fully or partially fund projects located in Milwaukee County. Commission staff have initiated work with WisDOT and WDNR to evaluate and prioritize candidate projects for additional years 2023-2026 CMAQ funding made available from the BIL legislation. This work is expected to be completed in the fall of 2022.
- **Transportation Alternatives Grants:** In April 2022, the Commission staff assisted the Milwaukee TIP Committee in selecting projects for \$8.9 million in available years 2022-2026 FHWA Transportation Alternative Program – Milwaukee Urbanized Area (TAP-M) funding, including \$1.6 million in TAP-M funding made available from the BIL legislation. TAP funding can be used for bicycle and pedestrian projects, and the Commission staff working with the Milwaukee TIP Committee is responsible for project selection in the Milwaukee Urbanized Area. Approximately \$6.8 million in TAP-M funds during this most recent round were awarded to projects located in Milwaukee County.
- **Federal Transit Administration Funding:** The Commission works with the transit operators in the Milwaukee urbanized area (MUA) to distribute Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) Section 5307/5340 formula program funds among the transit operators in the Milwaukee urbanized area—Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties, and the Cities of Milwaukee and Waukesha. A total of \$27,348,688 in Section 5307/5340 funds were allocated to the area as part of the 2022 annual apportionment.

Commission staff worked with the transit operators in the Milwaukee urbanized area to distribute FTA Section 5310, FTA Section 5337, and FTA Section 5339 formula program funds among the transit operators. FTA Section 5310 funding, of which the urbanized area received \$1,783,306 in 2022, was distributed using a competitive selection process managed by the Commission staff, in collaboration with Milwaukee County. This program is intended to support transit services that are

specifically targeted at seniors and people with disabilities and go above and beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

FTA Section 5337 funding for capital projects, of which the urbanized area received \$718,275 in 2022, was distributed to Waukesha County because the funds were allocated to the urbanized area due to the exclusive bus lanes located on W. Bluemound Rd. in Waukesha County. FTA Section 5339 funding for bus and bus facility capital projects, of which the urbanized area received \$3,900,544, was distributed to operators that provide bus service.

The funds are allocated based on the distribution method selected by the transit operators in April 2021, which was considered to be the most equitable distribution of funds among the transit operators, by ensuring that no transit operator in the urbanized area receives less from the local distribution formula than the incremental amount of funding that their transit service brings to the urbanized area through the FTA formula. This distribution methodology is the same process utilized since 2007, except that it provides the City of Milwaukee, now a designated recipient of Section 5307 funds, with the increment of MUA Section 5307/5340 funds attributable to the transit services provided. The remaining funds are distributed to the other transit operators based on the most recent transit ridership and service data—revenue vehicle miles of transit service, revenue vehicle hours of transit service, revenue passengers, and passenger miles—reported by each transit operator to the FTA and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), with 25 percent of the urbanized area apportionment distributed using each criterion.

- **Air Quality Standards:** Continued work with local governments and counties along the lakefront in response to a new lower national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for ozone. This work includes assisting with the development of data regarding the sources of ozone-causing pollutants, which largely are generated outside of the Region and the State of Wisconsin, and briefing local officials on the impacts of US EPA decisions regarding attainment or nonattainment of NAAQS standards.
- **Workforce Transportation:** Commission staff continued to support the work of MobilISE (formerly the Regional Transit Leadership Council, or RTLC), which formed in November 2016 to address regional connectivity challenges and achieve a multimodal transportation system. Staff serves on MobilISE's Executive Advisory Committee and continues to coordinate with MobilISE to assist Southeastern Wisconsin employers in identifying ways to better connect workers to jobs through the Workforce Mobility Team.
- **FlexRide Milwaukee:** In 2022, Commission staff, in partnership with UW-Milwaukee professors and multiple partners, launched a pilot on-demand transportation program called FlexRide Milwaukee (www.flexridemke.com). The pilot's goal is to address first/last-mile transportation challenges between the City of Milwaukee and locations with high job densities in the Menomonee Falls area in Waukesha County. Key partners include Employ Milwaukee, Waukesha County Business Alliance, Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce Development Board, Milwaukee County Transit System, MobilISE, and the service provider Via. In June 2022, FlexRide partners, led by MobilISE, were awarded a \$4.2 million Workforce Innovation Grant from the State to continue and expand FlexRide after the pilot ends in fall 2022. Commission staff has continued assisting MobilISE to develop an RFP for the future on-demand services, including researching additional vendors and service options.
- **Bridging the Last Mile:** In addition to working with UW-Milwaukee on the FlexRide Milwaukee pilot to transport Milwaukeeans to jobs in the Menomonee Falls area, Commission staff assisted MobilISE on a study to identify last-mile mobility solutions for accessing jobs at employment

centers in eastern Waukesha County and southern Milwaukee County. Like the areas served by FlexRide, these are places with many jobs beyond the reach of fixed-route transit service. The final report is available on MobilisE's website (www.mobilisewi.org).

- **Transportation Demand Management:** Commission staff continued to develop a commute program to advance TDM strategies that encourage multimodal transportation options, including ridesharing, biking, and transit. Staff also researched workforce mobility options in support of ongoing transit planning and Workforce Mobility Team efforts. In addition, staff continued to collaborate on multiple TDM-related initiatives, including working with partners at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Greater Madison MPO to improve the statewide Rideshare Etc. online platform, and supporting the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center as they implemented TDM strategies for their campus. Future outreach will include employers in Milwaukee County and staff at the Milwaukee County Transit System to help coordinate marketing.

Land Use Planning

- **Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan:** VISION 2050, the long-range land use and transportation plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, was adopted by the Commission on July 28, 2016. More information on the plan, including a description of efforts completed over the past year, is included in the previous section titled Transportation Planning.
- **Inventories:** On a regular basis, Commission staff work on updating the Region's inventory files of land uses and environmental features. This past year, staff continued working on the creation of digital files for use in evaluating historic trends. These files include environmental corridors for the years 1963 (completed) and 1980 (completed) and historic urban growth (underway). In addition, during 2021, Commission staff initiated work on the year 2020 regional land use inventory, which is anticipated to be completed in 2023.
- **Regional Food System Plan:** Work has continued on a Regional Food System Plan. The Plan, the development of which is a recommendation of VISION 2050, will address the food system from a regional planning perspective and is aimed at identifying how to achieve several objectives concerned with ensuring accessible and affordable healthy and fresh food options for all residents, reducing economic and health disparities, supporting locally owned and sustainable farming operations, and preserving productive agricultural land and sensitive natural resources. Virtual Kick-Off meetings were held in August 2021 to introduce attendees to the regional food system and obtain input on topics that should be included in the plan. Online and handout surveys were also conducted in conjunction with the Kick-off meetings. During 2022, SEWRPC staff has compiled information about the different stages of the Region's food system. This includes information about the Region's farms, food and beverage manufacturers, stores and restaurants, consumers, and food waste. Staff is using this information to write the next chapters of the plan and conduct outreach to residents in Milwaukee County and throughout the seven-county Region.

Economic Development Planning

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:** In 2020 and 2021, the Commission and Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Partnership (M7) prepared the 2021-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Region, which was completed in late spring 2021. The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires regions to update their CEDS every five years. The new CEDS includes an Action Plan with five goals, each with a set of strategies and actions to achieve the goals, along with ongoing and proposed economic

development projects from across the Region. Numerous public and private stakeholders contributed to the plan, including guidance and input throughout the process from M7's Regional Economic Partnership (REP) working group. Milwaukee County's representative on the REP is Aaron Hertzberg, Director of the Department of Administrative Services, who provided valuable input along with Donna Brown-Martin, Director of the Department of Transportation. The new CEDS was presented to each of the seven Southeastern Wisconsin counties for consideration over the summer of 2021. Milwaukee County considered and adopted the CEDS on July 29, 2021. The new 2021-2025 CEDS replaces the previously adopted 2015-2020 CEDS and was submitted to the EDA following Commission adoption on September 15, 2021. County Board adoption of the CEDS makes the County and local governments in the County eligible to apply for EDA funding for infrastructure projects, revolving loan funds, and other business assistance programs that benefit economically distressed areas. EDA identifies economically distressed census tracts based on unemployment rates of 1 percent or more above the national average, or per capita incomes 80 percent or less than the national average. About 57 percent (168 of 296) of the census tracts in Milwaukee County meet these criteria. Adoption of the CEDS by each county and the Commission also enables the Region to apply to EDA for designation as an Economic Development District (EDD). Preliminary materials for EDD designation have been submitted to the EDA and are currently under review.

- **Business Park Inventory:** In late 2014, the Commission initiated work on an inventory of existing and proposed business parks in the Region for use in Commission land use, comprehensive, and economic development planning. The information compiled by Commission staff was provided to planning or engineering staff in each city and village in the county for review in coordination with staff meetings on the MMSD facilities planning work described in the following Environmental Planning section. The final inventory has been posted on the Commission website.
- **EMSI Development Tool:** The Commission, in cooperation with WEDC, has made Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI) Developer software available to County and local governments and economic development organizations. EMSI Developer is a web-based economic development tool that includes extensive industry, occupation, and workforce data, and is used in business and industry analysis and attraction. County and local economic development organizations and units of government can request SEWRPC staff to apply the software to conduct analyses. The Milwaukee 7 made two requests consisting of six reports and MobilISE made one request consisting of two reports during the last year..

Environmental Planning

- **Regional Chloride Study:** The Commission has completed the field portion of the study, which collected real-time 5-minute interval water level and conductivity data among seven sites within the County, including periodic seasonal chloride grab samples during melting/runoff events. The streams in Milwaukee County monitored for this effort include Honey Creek, Menomonee River, Oak Creek, Lincoln Creek, Underwood Creek, the Root River, and the Milwaukee River (at the Estabrook dam). The regional chloride study is a multi-year effort to determine the amount and proportion of chloride (salt) entering the Region's lakes, rivers, and streams from different sources, determine the impacts of that chloride on the Region, and to evaluate state-of-the-art practices that might decrease chloride use without decreasing safety or quality of life.
- **Region Natural Areas Plan Update:** The Commission is in the process of updating the Regional Natural Areas Plan, which identifies areas of the Region that are of particularly high environmental quality and are believed to represent the pre-European habitat and environment of the area. This

year, the Commission staff continued to collect new information and conducted 8 site visits to natural area and critical species habitats within the County (see Environmental Field Work section for more details).

- **Sewer Extension Review:** As the areawide water quality management planning agency, the Commission staff reviewed and recommended approval of 14 public sewer service extension projects, all of which were determined to be consistent with the regional water quality management plan. Those projects were located in the Cities of Franklin (3), Greenfield (2), Milwaukee (2), Oak Creek (4), South Milwaukee (1), and Wauwatosa (1), and the Village of Bayside (1). The Commission staff also reviewed 21 private sanitary sewer extensions. Those projects were located in the Cities of Franklin (5), Greendale (1), Greenfield (3), Milwaukee (1), Oak Creek (4), St. Francis (1), South Milwaukee (1), Wauwatosa (1), and West Allis (1), and the Villages of Shorewood (1) and West Milwaukee (2).

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