

SEWRPC Planning Report No.55  
VISION 2050: A REGIONAL LAND USE AND  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN

**Volume II, Chapter I**

**VISIONING FOR THE REGION'S FUTURE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Volume I of this report provides a foundation for the plan through inventories of the existing and historic regional land use pattern, the existing transportation system of the Region and its use, and the travel habits and patterns of the Region. Also presented in Volume I are forecasts of the future population, households, and employment of the Region. Volume II documents the plan development process for VISION 2050, which involved a visioning and scenario planning approach aimed at developing a long-range future vision for land use and transportation for the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin Region. Visioning and scenario planning was used to create a vision that reflects how residents of the Region want their communities and the Region to develop, and how they want to be connected to the important places in their communities and the Region.

In developing the approach for VISION 2050, the Commission staff reviewed recent efforts by regional planning commissions and metropolitan transportation planning organizations (MPOs) across the nation and found that visioning and scenario planning are frequently used to enhance regional planning efforts. A primary benefit of visioning and scenario planning is public engagement and education, which aligns well with the overall purpose of the VISION 2050 effort—to develop a shared vision of future land use and transportation in Southeastern Wisconsin which is understood and embraced by the Region's residents. Using a visioning and scenario planning approach, the VISION 2050 effort was designed to obtain greater public input into the specific design and evaluation of “sketch” year 2050 land use and transportation scenarios, detailed alternative plans, and the final plan, as well as to expand public knowledge on the implications of existing and future land use and transportation development in Southeastern Wisconsin.

This chapter documents the visioning activities that were part of the outreach conducted during the early stages of the VISION 2050 process, and the results of those activities. The development and comparison of sketch land use and transportation system scenarios is documented in the second chapter of Volume II. The development and evaluation of detailed alternative land use and transportation system plans is documented in the third chapter of Volume II. The final recommended year 2050 regional land use and transportation plan is documented in Volume III.

### **Public Outreach and Involvement**

The extensive public outreach conducted as part of each step in the VISION 2050 process, began with the branding of the year 2050 regional land use and transportation system plan. Prior to conducting any visioning and scenario planning activities, the Commission staff created the “VISION 2050” concept, complete with an attractive logo and a simple slogan (see Figure I-1), to make the effort more recognizable and appealing to the public. The logo and its color scheme were used in all promotional materials, including the design of the website dedicated specifically to the plan—[www.VISION2050SEWis.org](http://www.VISION2050SEWis.org)—which served as a centralized source for up-to-date information on VISION 2050. The website included a description of each step of the VISION 2050 process, a process timeline, background information on topics to be covered during the process, informational materials, survey opportunities, schedules of upcoming public visioning workshops and events, results from each step of the process, and the VISION 2050 twitter feed (@vision2050sewis). The website also included the rules and instructions for the *Portraits of the Region* photo contest (described below) and was linked to the Commission’s website—[www.sewrpc.org](http://www.sewrpc.org)—which included the plan report chapter-by-chapter and Advisory Committee meeting agendas, materials, and minutes.

Public outreach included a regularly distributed VISION 2050 e-newsletter, periodic brochures, media contacts and news releases, and extensive public outreach to minority and low-income groups and organizations, business groups, service groups, community and neighborhood groups, environmental groups, and others. The public outreach was intended to inform, and obtain input, at each step of the process. As in past efforts, Commission staff made every effort to respond to the comments and suggestions made throughout the process so that the resulting vision and plan reflected the values and goals expressed by the Region’s residents. To broaden public outreach, the Commission staff worked with numerous organizations and groups to increase awareness of the effort and encourage participation by all groups and individuals. Representatives from these organizations and groups assisted the Commission staff in developing and executing the communication efforts associated with the VISION 2050 effort. The Commission also partnered with eight nonprofit, community organizations to conduct targeted outreach to their constituents. This outreach effort was largely designed to reach and engage minority populations, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals, thereby increasing awareness of the VISION 2050 effort and encouraging participation by all groups and individuals. The eight partner organizations included:

- Common Ground
- Ethnically Diverse Business Coalition
- Hmong American Friendship Association
- Independence*First*
- Milwaukee Urban League
- Southside Organizing Committee
- Urban Economic Development Association
- Urban League of Racine and Kenosha

Five rounds of public workshops were held across the Region during the VISION 2050 process to provide information on, and obtain input into, the development of the regional land use and transportation plan. During each round of workshops, one workshop open to the general public was held in each of the seven Southeastern Wisconsin counties. The workshops were initiated at the very beginning of the visioning process and occurred at key stages throughout the plan development process. The workshops were designed to be interactive and engage participants to obtain their feedback in nontraditional ways. The locations for all public workshops were chosen to meet Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) standards, to be accessible by public transit, and to be convenient for minority and low-income populations. Each of the eight partner organizations mentioned above was responsible for holding a workshop for their constituents during the same periods as workshops held by the Commission staff for the general public.

In addition, Commission staff provided numerous briefings upon request to groups and individuals, and offered briefings through outreach, in particular to minority and low-income population groups and elected officials. Also upon request, staff conducted visioning workshops for several groups, elected officials, or local or county staffs that were unable to attend the public workshops.

### **Portraits of the Region Photo Contest**

To support the VISION 2050 effort and increase public engagement in the process, the Commission staff held the *Portraits of the Region* photo contest between October 2013 and January 2014. The contest asked residents to show the Region as they experience it, helping to develop an image of what they would like to see in the future. Residents across the Region were encouraged to submit their favorite photos of the Region under five different themes:

- Architecture & Urban Design – plazas, buildings, boulevards, etc.
- Arts & Culture – museums, events, entertainment, public art, etc.

- Community – neighborhoods, important local places, etc.
- Natural Environment – lakes, rivers, forests, parks, wildlife, etc.
- Transportation – streets, buses, trains, bicycle & pedestrian paths, etc.

Over 50 photos were submitted to the contest, spread across the five themes. With the assistance of a panel of local judges, a “Best in Show” winner was selected (see Figure I-2), along with a winner and runner-up in each theme. All 11 recognized photos can be found in Appendix A-1 and were put on display at the Commission offices and on the VISION 2050 website. All photos entered in the contest were available to enhance VISION 2050 and other Commission publications and show the Region through the lens of some of its residents.

### **Initial Visioning Activities**

Visioning activities served as an initial step of the VISION 2050 plan development process. First, the Commission staff listened to what residents said was important to them in terms of how the Region develops its land and transportation in the future. Second, staff attempted to translate those preferences into an initial land use and transportation vision for Southeastern Wisconsin.

Implementing this approach involved public outreach techniques designed to engage members of the public and obtain their involvement at the very beginning of the process to develop a consensus vision for the plan. The intent was that by engaging the Region’s residents in visioning for the future, encouraging them to better understand land use and transportation development and consequences, and promoting discussion and understanding of the diverse transportation needs which exist across the Region, more of the Region’s residents will be aware of, understand, and support the final recommended plan, and the potential to implement the resulting recommendations will be improved.

This chapter documents the visioning activities conducted between September 2013 and February 2014, which involved a telephone questionnaire, two rounds of public visioning workshops, the photo contest, and three online survey opportunities. *Guiding the Vision* is the product of the visioning activities, presenting an initial vision comprised of a set of 15 VISION 2050 Guiding Statements. This initial vision generally describes the desired future direction of growth and change in the Region with respect to land and transportation system development.

### **LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Land Use and Transportation Preference Questionnaire involved two components: a telephone questionnaire and a companion online questionnaire. The telephone questionnaire was conducted between September 27 and October 31, 2013, by the Department of Economics and the Center for Urban Initiatives and Research at the

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). Using a random digit dial of landlines and mobile phones, UWM staff asked randomly selected residents in each of the seven Southeastern Wisconsin counties about their preferences for future types and styles of housing and development patterns, as well as their preferences for future transportation investment in the Region. For those residents that were not contacted by UWM staff for the telephone questionnaire, the Commission also created an online preference questionnaire with the same questions asked in the telephone questionnaire, allowing those residents to also provide their preferences. The online questionnaire was available on the VISION 2050 website between October 3 and November 13, 2013.

A total of 1,557 randomly selected Southeastern Wisconsin residents responded to the telephone questionnaire. Of the 1,557 respondents, 381 were residents of Milwaukee County, with respondents from the other six counties ranging from 184 to 201 depending on the county. With these sample sizes, the questionnaire results for the Region as a whole have a  $\pm 3\%$  margin of error (95% confidence level) and the questionnaire results for each county have a  $\pm 5-7\%$  margin of error (95% confidence level). A summary of the telephone questionnaire results are included in the next subsection of this chapter (see Appendix A-2 for detailed telephone questionnaire results, including county-by-county results).

The distributions of telephone questionnaire respondents' race/ethnicity and age were not representative of the actual distributions of race/ethnicity and age of the Region's population as a whole, so the Commission staff reviewed the results by race/ethnicity group and by age group. Most of the results by race/ethnicity and by age were very similar to the overall results, however a few exceptions were noted and are included in a discussion of the results on pages 17 and 18 of Appendix A-2.

An additional 331 residents completed the online questionnaire through the VISION 2050 website. While the online questionnaire was not random and so was not designed for statistical significance, the distributions of respondents' race/ethnicity and age were more closely representative of the actual distributions of race/ethnicity and age of the Region's population as a whole than for the telephone questionnaire. A summary of the online questionnaire results are included in the next subsection of this chapter (see Appendix A-3 for detailed online questionnaire results, including county-by-county results).

### ***Summary of Results***

Below are some of the highlights of the preferences expressed by responses to the Land Use and Transportation Preference Questionnaire. The figures present key results from the telephone questionnaire. The text notes where there are any differences in the preferences expressed in the online questionnaire responses, but in general the online questionnaire results were very similar.

Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that most new development in the Region should occur as redevelopment or infill development in existing cities and villages (92 percent), particularly compared to occurring away from cities and villages (13 percent), as depicted in Figure I-3. However, they were somewhat more open to employment centers being developed adjacent to existing population centers (78 percent) and to allowing new employment centers to be developed on land away from population centers (37 percent). Responses from online participants showed similar preferences, but in general were more supportive of focusing new development and employment centers in existing cities and villages.

There was not much support for additional large homes or expensive condominiums and apartments in the Region, but there was broad regional support (76 percent) for more affordable starter homes being built. Support for affordable apartments varied from county to county, with 52 percent of the Region supporting additional affordable apartments for lower- and moderate-income households. Figure I-4 displays these results.

Many respondents indicated that preserving natural areas and farmland is very important to them (see Figure I-5). About 93 percent indicated that preserving natural areas is either very important or fairly important. The results were very similar for preserving farmland, with again about 93 percent indicating that preserving farmland is either very important or fairly important.

Respondents also indicated that developing bikeable, walkable neighborhoods is important. About 87 percent indicated it is either very important or fairly important (see Figure I-6). Online questionnaire respondents were just as supportive, with about 88 percent indicating it is either very important or fairly important.

When asked about investment priorities for the transportation system, there was general agreement that improving and expanding public transit services should be a priority (see Figure I-7). Respondents were split on investing in improvements and expansions of State and interstate highways, with 48 percent in support and 52 percent preferring to maintain our existing system. The two options received similar levels of support for county highways and local roads, with 51 percent preferring to maintain the existing network as-is, and 49 percent preferring to improve and expand the street network. In contrast, 63 percent of respondents indicated public transit services should be improved and expanded. For bicycle and pedestrian facilities, about 54 percent expressed support for improvement and expansion. Online respondents were even more supportive of improving and expanding public transit services (78 percent) and bicycle and pedestrian facilities (82 percent).

## FIRST ROUND OF VISION 2050 WORKSHOPS

The first round of visioning workshops open to the general public was held throughout the Region (one workshop in each of the seven counties) between October 15 and October 30, 2013. These interactive workshops were designed to introduce residents to the VISION 2050 planning process, and to encourage participants to think about what they like about their community and the Region and how they would like to see it improve in the future. Each workshop contained four activities: an important places mapping exercise; a visual preference survey; a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis; and identification of land use and transportation goals.

At these workshops, the Commission staff followed the first step of the visioning approach previously described: listening to what residents said was important to them in terms of how the Region develops its land and transportation in the future. The results of the workshops, along with the results of the Land Use and Transportation Preference Questionnaire, were then used for the second step, attempting to translate those preferences into VISION 2050 Guiding Statements that describe an initial land use and transportation vision for Southeastern Wisconsin.

In addition to the public workshops, the Commission's eight partner organizations held individual workshops for their constituents between November 7 and November 21, 2013. These workshops assisted the Commission staff in reaching and engaging minority populations, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals. The partner workshops included essentially the same activities as the public workshops, with minor modifications made to the activities at the partner workshops to accommodate differences in venue space. A summary report of the eight partner organization workshops held in the fall of 2013 can be found in Appendix A-4. The Commission staff also offered to hold individual workshops by request for any interested group, organization, or local government, and held two such workshops<sup>1</sup> in the fall of 2013.

Nearly 500 residents attended one of the above workshops held in the fall of 2013—about 280 people participated in the public or requested workshops and about 220 people participated in the eight partner workshops.

A description of each activity at the first round of VISION 2050 workshops, along with a summary of the results of those activities, is presented below.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Commission staff held individual workshops for City of Wauwatosa elected officials and staff and the Waukesha County Environmental Action League in the fall of 2013.*

### **Important Places Mapping**

The important places mapping exercise assisted workshop attendees in considering the locations in their community and the seven-county Region that are important to them. As attendees arrived at each workshop, they were asked to identify their favorite places on maps of their county and of the whole seven-county Region, which were on display near the workshop entrance. They were also asked to indicate why they are important to them. Participants identified their favorite places on each map using numbered stickers, writing the corresponding number, name of each place, and why it is important to them on a form provided by the Commission staff. About 320 unique places in the Region were identified through this exercise and were mapped and included in an embedded Google map on the VISION 2050 website. The map and list of important places by county can be found in Appendix A-5.

### **Visual Preference Survey**

The purpose of the visual preference survey was to understand the land use and transportation preferences of Southeastern Wisconsin residents. The visual preference survey allowed participants to rate 45 different land use and transportation concepts based on how much they liked the concept and whether or not they thought the concept was appropriate for the Region. The images were grouped into eight themes: housing and community character, location and mix of urban development, natural resources and recreation, pedestrian accommodations, bicycle facilities, arterial street design, freeways, and transit services. During the survey, a Commission staff member displayed an image depicting a land use or transportation concept on a screen in the front of the room and provided a brief description of the image. Participants were then asked to rate each concept using an iClicker+ polling device (see Figure I-8). The rating of an “A” indicated that the participant strongly liked the concept shown in the image, while a rating of an “E” indicated that they strongly disliked the concept. After participants rated each concept, the Commission staff displayed the voting results on a screen in the front of the room, allowing participants to see how their opinion compared to the rest of the attendees at that workshop.

An online version of the visual preference survey was made available on the VISION 2050 website through November 13, 2013, for those who were unable to attend one of the fall 2013 workshops. The online version used the same rating scale and provided identical concept images and descriptions as the ones provided during the interactive workshops.

A total of 598 residents participated in the visual preference survey, either online or at a visioning workshop. To summarize the results, the Commission staff members converted the “A through E” scale to a “5 through 1” scale, with “5” representing a concept that was strongly liked and “1” representing a concept that was strongly disliked. The converted ratings from each workshop were averaged together to determine the average ratings of each image.



by county and for the Region as a whole. A summary of the visual preference survey results is presented below. Detailed results can be found in Appendix A-6.

### ***Land Use Concepts***

Each county gave a slightly different average score to each image, but there was broad agreement across a number of significant land use concepts:

- No counties favored “big box” retail with large parking lots in front of high square-footage stores (regional average of 2.3). In comparison, smaller stores with on-street parking and traditional main-street development received a favorable rating (regional average of 3.9).
- All counties preferred cluster or conservation subdivisions (regional average of 3.4), which contain smaller single-family lots paired with community open space, to conventional large lot rural subdivisions (regional average of 2.6), which consist of large single-family lots.
- Both types of open space that were included in the survey were viewed favorably, including natural resource corridors (regional average of 4.6), such as rivers and trails, and neighborhood parks (regional average of 4.4).
- Most of the Region preferred houses that were placed closer to the street with front porches and sidewalks (regional average of 3.6), to houses further back from the street with no sidewalks (regional average of 2.6).
- Nearly the entire Region preferred smaller homes on smaller lots (regional average of 3.5) to larger homes on larger lots (regional average of 3.2).
- Mixed-use, high-density neighborhoods were viewed favorably in five of the seven counties in the Region (regional average of 3.7).

### ***Transportation Concepts***

The residents of each county responded differently to the transportation concepts in the visual preference survey, but a number of transportation concepts received strong support across the Region:

- Pedestrian malls, which close a street to all vehicles except emergency vehicles, were viewed favorably across the Region (regional average of 4.5).
- There was strong Regional support for bicycle facilities, with both kinds of off-street paths (regional average of 4.5) viewed more favorably than on-street bicycle lanes (regional average of 3.6).
- Freeways with dedicated lanes for transit and carpooling (regional average of 3.7) were preferred in all counties over freeways without these lanes (regional average of 2.6).
- Urban arterials with sidewalks, bike lanes, and parking (regional average of 3.8) were preferred to rural arterials with no sidewalks, parking, or bike lanes (regional average of 2.8) in nearly the entire Region.

- Nearly all types of transit services were viewed positively across the Region (Regional Averages: 3.3-4.5). The primary exception is that local rail in mixed traffic or in dedicated lanes was not rated favorably in two of the seven counties.
- Intercounty or interregional rail, such as commuter rail and Amtrak, had particularly strong support across the Region (regional average of 4.5).

### **SWOT Analysis**

Following the visual preference survey, participants at the fall 2013 workshops met in small groups to participate in a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis. During the analysis, participants were asked to write down individual strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to land use and transportation issues in the Region on sticky note pads. They then shared each of their individual SWOTs with the other participants at their small group table, posting them on large easel pads. Following discussion of their individual SWOTs, members of each small group prioritized SWOTs in order of importance under each SWOT category. After all groups had prioritized their SWOTs, the groups reported their top SWOTs to one another.

During the SWOT analysis, each participant was provided a handout with definitions and examples for strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat. A strength was defined as a strong quality or advantage—an area in which a community or region excels. Often internal, strengths are resources or capabilities that can help a community or region accomplish its goals. A weakness was defined as something vulnerable to outside factors—an area in which a community or region lacks strength or is at a disadvantage. Often internal like strengths, weaknesses are deficiencies in resources and capabilities that hinder a community’s or region’s ability to accomplish its goals. An opportunity was defined as a set of promising conditions—something that a community or region can take advantage of in order to advance or progress. Often external, opportunities are factors or situations that can affect a community or region in a positive way. A threat was defined as set of harmful conditions—something existing, upcoming, or approaching that compromises the ability of a community or region to advance or progress. Often external like opportunities, threats are factors or situations that can affect a community or region in a negative way.

The approximately 500 residents that attended a workshop participated in identifying 806 strengths, 977 weaknesses, 709 opportunities, and 665 threats—a total of over 3,100 individual SWOTs. Upon completion of all of the workshops, members of the Commission staff compiled and categorized all of the SWOTs according to common themes. While there was variation between the groups at each workshop, and between each of the seven counties, a number of SWOTs for the Region emerged as staff sorted through the SWOTs that had been identified and prioritized. The top regional SWOTs are depicted in Figure I-9. The green boxes on the graphic include

SWOTs that were prioritized by more than 10 small groups. The blue boxes include the remaining top 20 SWOTs according to the small groups' priorities.

A summary of the top SWOTs county-by-county can be found in Appendix A-7.

### **Land Use and Transportation Goals**

Participants were asked to write down some of their land use and transportation goals for the year 2050 after considering the results of their group's SWOT analysis, and their own values and priorities for developing the Region,. While they worked on their goals, participants were shown different goals published in other related planning efforts in the Region, such as community and county comprehensive plans, in a continuously-scrolling PowerPoint Presentation on display in the front of the room.

The goals activity allowed participants to discuss and describe the kind of community and Region within which they would desire to live. The results, along with results of the other activities described above, assisted in developing a draft set of VISION 2050 Guiding Statements. The Guiding Statements form the basis of an initial land use and transportation vision for the Region, and were the focus of the second round of visioning workshops discussed in the following section.

In total, 1,236 individual goals were recorded by 351 residents at the workshops. Commission staff members compiled and categorized all the goals under common goal themes. The top 10 land use and transportation goal themes that were found through this activity are below, with the number of individual goals that were included under each theme in parentheses. A listing of all goal themes with at least five individual goals can be found in Appendix A-8.

1. Create More Compact/Walkable Neighborhoods (97)
2. Improve Public Transit (74)
3. Preserve Farmland and Open Spaces (63)
4. Expand and Preserve Parks and Recreation Areas (48)
5. Renew Blighted Neighborhoods and Vacant Urban Areas (46)
6. Increase Access to Jobs (42)
7. Improve Inter-county and Inter-regional Transit Connections (40)
8. Protect Our Water Resources (40)
9. Develop a Well-Connected, Multi-modal Transportation System (39)
10. Create More Affordable Housing Options (39)

## **SECOND ROUND OF VISION 2050 WORKSHOPS**

A second round of interactive visioning workshops, again open to the general public and held throughout the Region, was conducted between December 9 and December 19, 2013. Similar to the first round, the Commission hosted one workshop in each county, with the Commission's eight partner organizations holding individual workshops for their constituents between December 12, 2013, and February 9, 2014. A summary report of the eight partner organization workshops held in the winter of 2013/2014 can be found in Appendix A-9. As in the fall of 2013, the Commission staff offered to hold individual workshops by request, and held one requested workshop in December 2013<sup>2</sup>. Staff also supported a *Community Conversation on Transportation* event held on February 6, 2014, by MetroGO, previously known as the Regional Transit Initiative (see Appendix A-10 for a summary of the results of the MetroGO event).

During the second round of workshops, the Commission staff followed the second step of visioning: showing what residents said was important to them, and asking them to indicate whether the VISION 2050 Guiding Statements captured their preferences. The primary focus of the workshops was on a draft set of VISION 2050 Guiding Statements, intended to express a preliminary vision for land use and transportation system development in the Region. Attendees had the opportunity to review, rate, and revise the draft Guiding Statements at each workshop. The workshops also involved a review of the results of previous visioning activities conducted in the fall of 2013 (summarized in the previous section) and an opportunity for the public to provide initial input into the design of sketch year 2050 scenarios for land use and transportation.

Over 380 residents attended one of the above workshops held in the winter of 2013/2014—about 200 people participated in the public or requested workshops and about 180 people participated in the eight partner workshops. An additional estimated 120 people attended the MetroGO event.

A description of each activity at the second round of VISION 2050 workshops, along with a summary of the results of those activities and the MetroGO event, are presented below.

### **Review, Rate, and Revise Draft VISION 2050 Guiding Statements**

Following a presentation summarizing the results of the visioning activities conducted in the fall of 2013, participants at a second round workshop interactively rated, reviewed, and revised a series of 15 draft Guiding Statements. This activity was conducted using a survey method similar to the visual preference survey given

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<sup>2</sup> *The Commission staff held an individual workshop for City of Wauwatosa elected officials and staff in the winter of 2013/2014.*

during the first round of workshops. For each draft Guiding Statement in the rating survey, a Commission staff member introduced the Guiding Statement, noting some of the input that led to the development of that Guiding Statement, then displayed and read the Guiding Statement title and description aloud. Participants were then asked to rate the Guiding Statement using an iClicker+ polling device based on how well they believed it reflects their priorities for the development of the Region's land and transportation system. The rating of an "A" indicated that the participant strongly liked the Guiding Statement, while a rating of an "E" indicated that they strongly disliked the Guiding Statement. After participants rated each Guiding Statement, the Commission staff displayed the voting results on a screen in the front of the room, allowing participants to see how their opinion compared to the rest of the attendees at that workshop. Each participant also had a form which could be used to provide additional information to help staff understand why a particular rating was selected and/or to suggest any refinements to a particular Guiding Statement.

An online version of the Guiding Statements rating survey was made available on the VISION 2050 website through February 14, 2014, for those who were unable to attend one of the winter 2013/2014 workshops. The online version used the same rating scale and provided identical information on the Guiding Statements as that provided during the interactive workshops.

A total of 648 residents participated in the Guiding Statements rating survey, either at a visioning workshop or online. To summarize the results, the Commission staff members converted the "A through E" scale to a "5 through 1" scale, with "5" representing a Guiding Statement that was strongly liked and "1" representing a Guiding Statement that was strongly disliked. The converted ratings from each workshop were averaged together to determine the average ratings of each Guiding Statement by county and for the Region as a whole. A summary of the Guiding Statement rating survey results can be found in Appendix A-11.

Overall, the ratings were very positive, with average Region scores ranging from 4.1 to 4.7. There were many comments that indicated why a rating was given in support or opposition to a particular Guiding Statement, and suggestions for revisions to improve that Guiding Statement. The input received on the draft Guiding Statements was used by the Commission staff and the Advisory Committees guiding VISION 2050 to make revisions and prepare a final set of VISION 2050 Guiding Statements, which are presented later in this chapter.

### **Interactive Visioning Stations/Small Group Discussions**

The last activity of each workshop allowed participants to provide ideas to assist staff in developing sketch land use and transportation scenarios for the next step in the VISION 2050 process. Depending on the venue and attendance, this activity was conducted either through a series of interactive visioning stations set up across the room, or through small group discussions revolving around a series of questions posed by the Commission staff.

For workshops with stations, each station included a table with display boards showing information and maps related to one of five land use and transportation themes: urban areas, rural areas, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and streets and highways. Participants could then discuss these topics with staff on hand or provide input on what they would like considered in the development and evaluation of sketch land use and transportation scenarios by recording their ideas on a visioning station form. For workshops with small group discussions, participants were provided the same information and maps, but met in small groups rather than moving from station to station. One volunteer from each group posed a series of questions to the group about their land use and transportation needs and issues, and recorded the responses on large easel pads after discussion by the group. After all groups finished recording their ideas, the groups reported their top ideas to one another. A summary of the visioning station and small group discussion results related to developing and comparing the sketch scenarios can be found in Appendix A-12.

The ideas received through this activity were considered by the Commission staff during design of sketch year 2050 scenarios for land use and transportation, which were the focus of the next step in the process and were presented during the third round of workshops. The sketch scenarios are intended to be broad and conceptual, representing a range of possible futures for land use and transportation system development in the Region in the year 2050. The ideas from this activity also assisted in identifying the range of issues and challenges to be considered in the criteria developed to compare the scenarios. These criteria were intended to measure the extent to which each scenario complements the initial vision, which is expressed in the VISION 2050 Guiding Statements making up *Guiding the Vision* described in the next section of this chapter.

## **VISION 2050: GUIDING THE VISION**

The comments and ratings received on the draft VISION 2050 Guiding Statements (discussed previously in this chapter) were considered as the Commission staff developed revisions to the draft Guiding Statements. A revised set of draft Guiding Statements was initially considered by the Commission's Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use Planning and Regional Transportation System Planning at their March 12, 2014, meeting, and approved at their April 23, 2014, meeting. The resulting set of Guiding Statements is presented below, and was included in *Guiding the Vision*, which was released in June of 2014 ([www.vision2050sewis.org/GuidingtheVision.pdf](http://www.vision2050sewis.org/GuidingtheVision.pdf)).

The following 15 VISION 2050 Guiding Statements that make up *Guiding the Vision* express a preliminary vision for land use and transportation in the Region based on the key values and priorities expressed through the visioning activities described above. These statements are intended to serve as a guide for how the Region should move forward and for developing sketch-level future land use and transportation scenarios. An overriding consideration for all of the Guiding Statements is that the benefits and impacts of investments in the Region's

land and transportation system should be shared fairly and equitably among all groups of people in the Region. The best way to ensure that the benefits and impacts are shared in such a manner is to increase racial and economic integration throughout the Region. No priority is implied by the order of the Guiding Statements.

**1. Strengthen Existing Urban Areas**

The individual character of neighborhoods, including natural, historic, and cultural resources, should be preserved and protected and blighting influences should be addressed. New urban development and major job centers should occur through infill development, redevelopment, and development adjacent to existing urban areas.

**2. Maintain Small Town Character**

Small town character is part of the Region's identity. The individual character of communities in rural areas, including natural, historic, and cultural resources, should be preserved and protected.

**3. Balance Jobs and Housing**

Links between jobs and workers should be improved by providing affordable housing near job centers, increasing job opportunities near affordable housing, and improving public transit between job centers and affordable housing.

**4. Achieve More Compact Development**

Compact development creates neighborhoods that are walkable, foster multiple travel modes, and have a mix of uses, such as housing, businesses, schools, and parks. Future growth should occur in areas that can be readily provided with services and facilities, such as transit and utilities. Infill and redevelopment should be encouraged.

**5. Preserve Natural Resources and Open Spaces**

Natural resources provide many environmental and recreational benefits that may not be replaced if they are eliminated or disturbed. Future growth and transportation investments should preserve, protect, and enhance valuable natural features, including lakes, rivers, wetlands, floodplains, groundwater, woodlands, open spaces, natural areas, and fish and wildlife habitats.

**6. Preserve Farmland**

Productive farmland is vital to the health and economy of the Region. Future growth and transportation investments should preserve and protect productive farmland.

## **7. Be Environmentally Responsible**

The quality of the environment—particularly air and water—greatly affects public health and quality of life. Sustainable land and transportation development and construction practices should be used to minimize the use of nonrenewable resources and reduce impacts on the local, regional, and global environment.

## **8. Develop an Integrated, Multimodal Transportation System**

Safe, efficient, and convenient travel in the Region requires an integrated, balanced, multimodal transportation system, which provides choices among transportation modes. This balanced system should provide an appropriate level of service for all modes to effectively serve the travel demand generated by the Region's planned land development pattern.

## **9. Develop an Expansive, Well-connected Bicycle and Pedestrian Network**

Bicycle and pedestrian travel in the Region should be encouraged as an alternative to personal vehicle travel and should complement transit travel. The network should provide on- and off-street bicycle connections and pedestrian facilities that are safe, secure, and convenient.

## **10. Achieve a Robust, Regional Transit System**

The Region's transit services should accommodate the travel needs of all residents, including travel that crosses municipal and county boundaries. Transit service should be fast, frequent, safe, and convenient in order to provide an alternative to personal vehicle travel.

## **11. Provide a High-quality Network of Streets and Highways**

The Region's streets and highways need to be well maintained in order to continue to carry the majority of personal and freight traffic in the Region. As roadways are reconstructed, modern design improvements should be included, with a focus on improving the efficiency and safety of the roadway and incorporating bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accommodations.

## **12. Ensure that Goods Move Efficiently**

The considerable needs of the Region's businesses, industries, and freight companies must be a factor in the development of a balanced, multimodal transportation system. Barriers to the efficient movement of goods within the Region and between the Region and other areas should be identified and addressed.

## **13. Prepare for Change in Travel Preferences and Technologies**

New and expected trends in travel behavior should be considered when developing the Region's transportation system. Technologies that improve the ability and capacity to travel should also be considered.



#### **14. Make Wise Infrastructure Investments**

Recognizing funding constraints, the benefits of specific investments in the Region's infrastructure must be weighed against the estimated initial and long-term costs and impacts of those investments.

#### **15. Work Together Toward Common Goals**

Cooperation and collaboration at the local, county, State, and Federal levels is necessary to address the land use and transportation issues facing the Region.

*Guiding the Vision* provided direction to staff in developing a series of conceptual, sketch-level land use and transportation scenarios and a series of criteria for comparing those scenarios, which are presented in the second chapter of Volume II. The scenarios were intended to represent a range of possible futures for land use and transportation which could achieve the Region's initial vision. *Guiding the Vision* was also valuable later in the process for the development and evaluation of detailed alternative land use and transportation plans, which are documented in the third chapter of Volume II.



Figure I-1

VISION 2050 LOGO AND SLOGAN



Figure I-2

**BEST IN SHOW FROM VISION 2050 PORTRAITS OF THE REGION PHOTO CONTEST:  
DANIEL ADAMS, "SOCCER BENEATH THE 35TH STREET VIADUCT"**



Figure I-3

TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE PREFERENCES FOR WHERE NEW DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CENTERS SHOULD OCCUR IN THE REGION

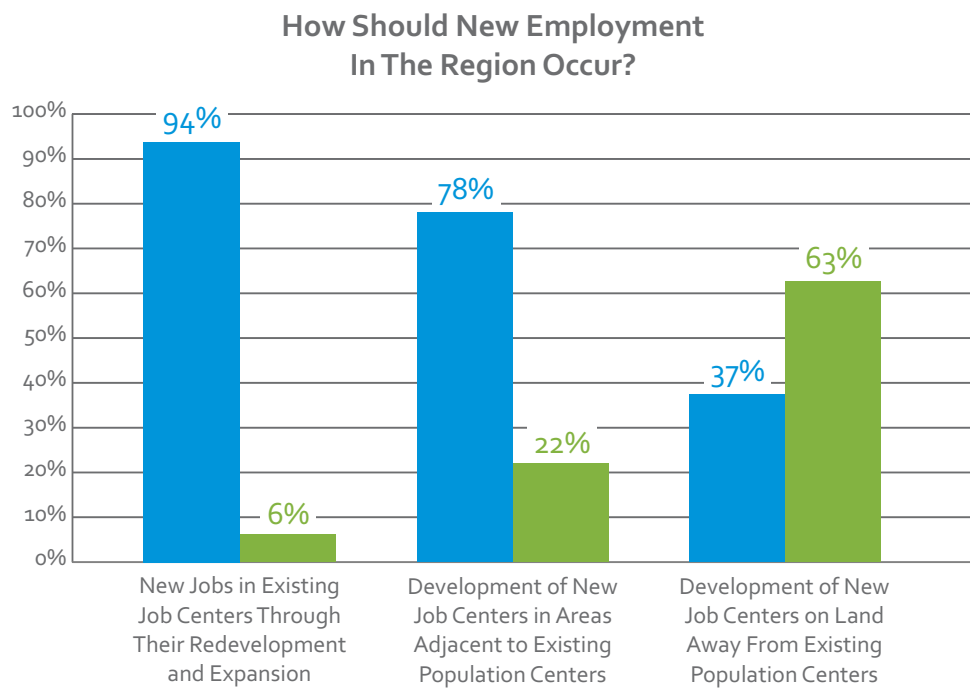
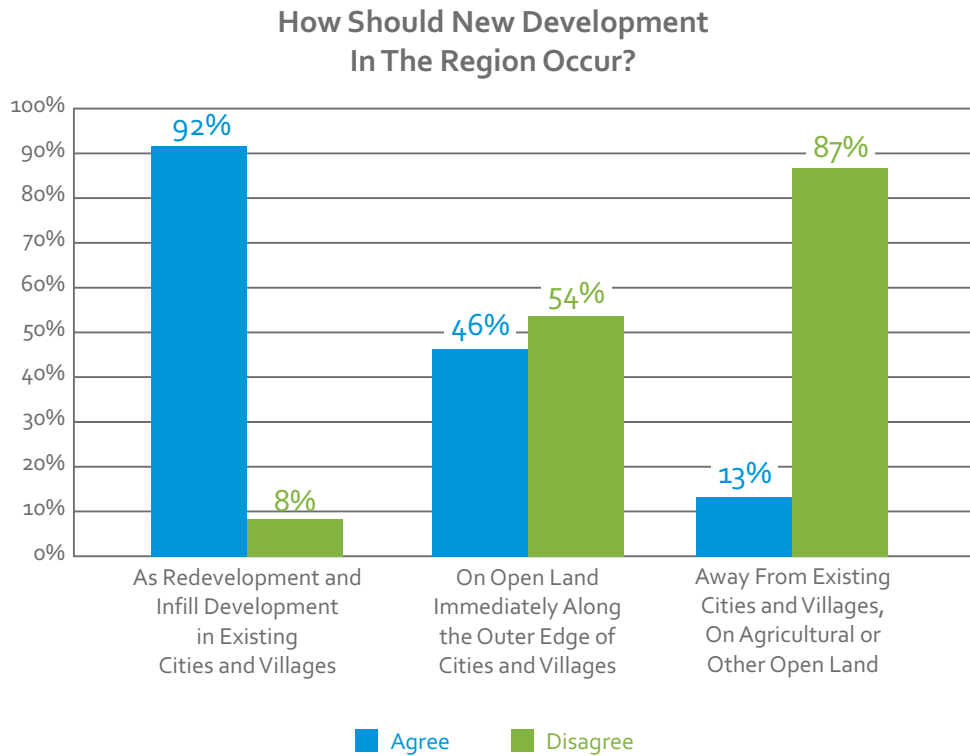


Figure I-4

TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE PREFERENCES FOR NEW HOUSING TYPES IN THE REGION

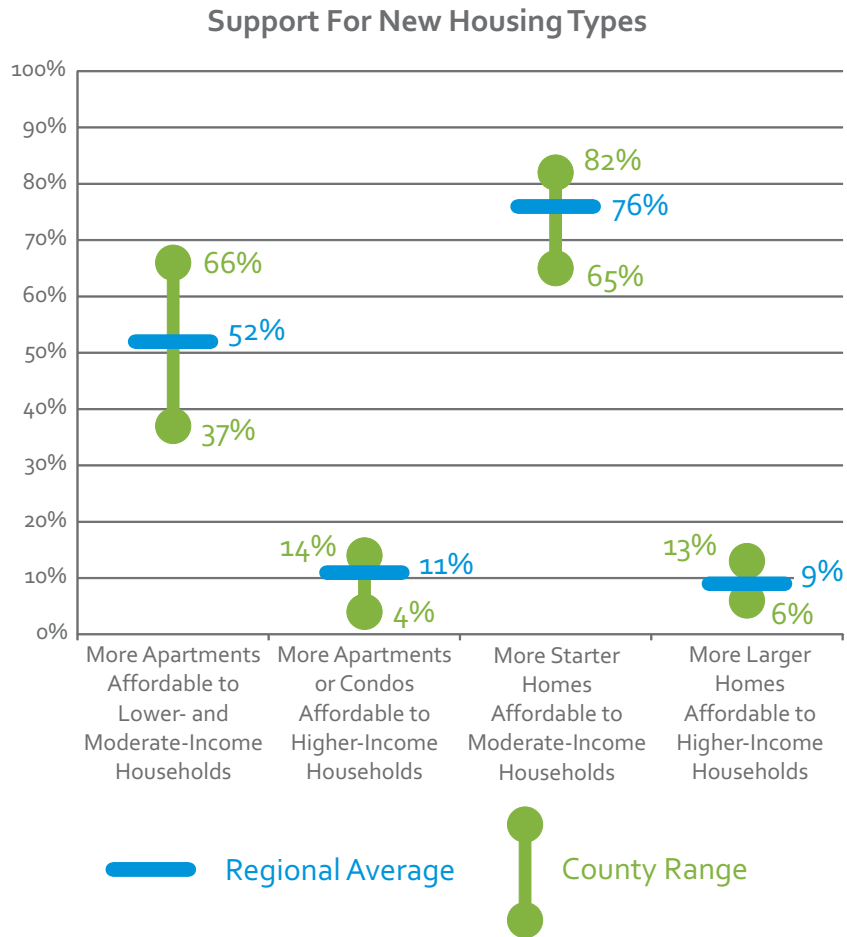
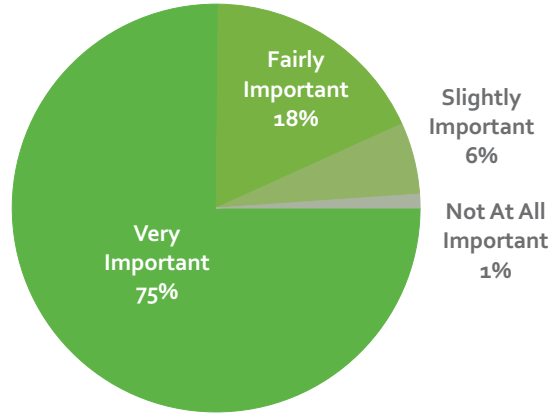


Figure I-5

TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE PREFERENCES FOR  
PRESERVING NATURAL AREAS IN THE REGION

Importance of Preserving  
Natural Areas



*Note: Residents' preferences regarding preserving farmland were very similar to the above results for preserving natural areas.*

Figure I-6

TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE PREFERENCES FOR  
BIKEABLE/WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE REGION

Importance of Bikeable,  
Walkable Neighborhoods

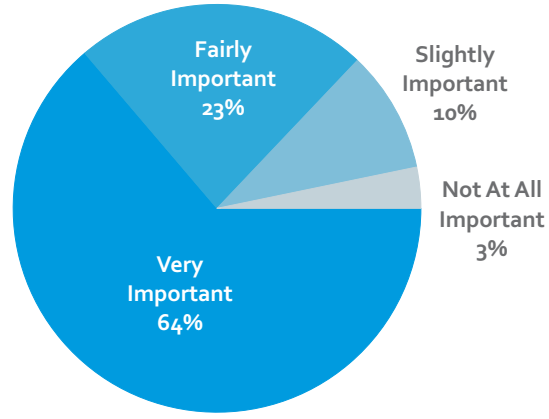
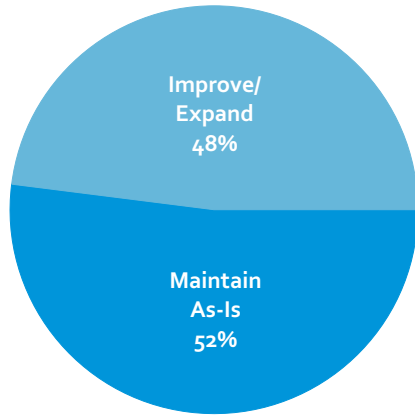




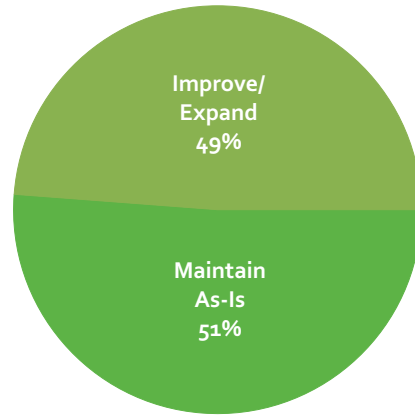
Figure I-7

**TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE PREFERENCES FOR INVESTMENT IN TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ELEMENTS IN THE REGION**

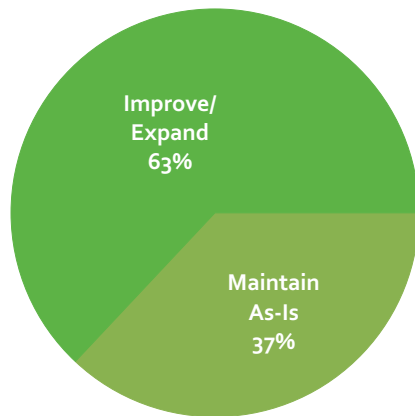
**Transportation Elements:  
Improve/Expand or Maintain As-Is?**



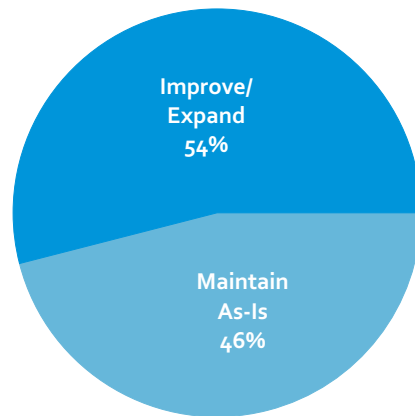
*State and Interstate Highways*



*County Highways and Local Roads*



*Public Transit*



*Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities*

Figure I-8

IClicker+ KEYPAD POLLING DEVICE



Figure I-9

**SUMMARY OF TOP STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOTs) IN THE REGION**

