

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Staff Memorandum

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION CONSULTATION PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Federal Statute and regulations require the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission as the metropolitan planning organization for southeastern Wisconsin to consult with agencies and officials within the metropolitan planning area who are responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation, transit operators for public and other transit services, Indian Tribal governments, and Federal land management agencies. Federal Statute and regulation also require that the consultation process to be followed is documented. This memorandum documents this consultation process. The consultation process was followed during the preparation of the year 2035 regional transportation plan completed in June, 2006.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The regional transportation plan is developed under the guidance and direction of the Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning. This Advisory Committee reviews and approves each step of the regional transportation planning process, and is responsible for proposing to the Commission, after careful study and evaluation, a recommended regional transportation system plan. The Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning includes representatives from: each of the seven counties – Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha; from selected municipalities in the Region; the Wisconsin Department of Transportation; the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration; the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration; and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Advisory Committee structure is intended to promote intergovernmental and interagency coordination, and to serve as direct liaisons between the SEWRPC planning effort and the local and State governments that are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the regional transportation plan.

The development of the regional transportation plan also includes consultation with each of the seven jurisdictional highway planning Advisory Committees – one for each county. These Advisory Committees on jurisdictional highway system planning include representatives from each of 147 municipalities – cities, villages, and towns – in southeastern Wisconsin, as well as representatives from each of the seven counties, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. These Advisory Committees are involved throughout the planning process, including early in the process to contribute to the development of alternative regional transportation system plans, and later in the process to review and comment on preliminary and final recommended regional transportation plans.

These Advisory Committees on Regional Transportation Planning and County Jurisdictional Highway System Planning include the units of government, agencies, and officials in southeastern Wisconsin responsible for land use planning and growth, economic development, environmental protection, airports, ports, freight movement, and transit operations – both public and specialized service for the elderly and disabled.

The transportation improvement program includes projects from the regional transportation plan, and its preparation is guided by Advisory Committees for Transportation System Planning for each of the four urbanized areas of the Region and includes units of government, agencies, and officials responsible for land use planning and growth, economic development, environmental protection, airports, ports, and transit operators – both public and specialized service. Also, as part of the transportation improvement programming process, the Commission solicits projects from transit operators and local units of government and agencies.

OTHER CONSULTATION EFFORTS

The Commission conducts a series of other consultation efforts during the preparation of the regional transportation plan. One such effort is conducted with the objective of linking regional transportation planning with the National Environmental Policy Act and project preliminary engineering, resulting in improved understanding of the data and alternatives considered and recommended in regional planning, and enhanced consideration and evaluation of the environmental impacts of regional plan alternatives. This consultation effort involves Federal and State environmental resource agencies, as well as transportation agencies. The consultation occurs throughout the planning process, including during review of existing conditions, development of regional transportation plan objectives, principles, and standards,

as well as during alternative transportation plan development and evaluation, and development of the preliminary and final recommended plans. The agencies and groups involved include: the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; the Wisconsin Historical Society; the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service; the U.S. Coast Guard; the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service; the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council – a coalition of 12 Native American Tribes of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan – Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Forest County Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk Nation, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Lac Vieux Desert Tribe of Michigan, Menomonee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Nation, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Sokaogon Chippewa (Mole Lake), St. Croix Chippewa, and Stockbridge-Munsee Indians of Wisconsin.

Another consultation effort is with groups, organizations, and officials representing minority and low-income populations. The consultation is initiated at the beginning of the planning process and continues throughout the process, including at key steps in the planning process – inventory, alternative plan development, preliminary plan recommendation, and final plan recommendation. Materials including newsletters are sent, personal contacts are made, and meetings are held with groups or group staff and leadership. These groups and organizations representing low-income and minority populations in the Region include: African American Chamber of Commerce; American Indian Center; American Indian Chamber of Commerce; Association for Rights of Citizens with Handicaps; Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, Inc.; The Business Council, Inc.; CNI/Fondy/North Business Association; Community Brainstorming Conference; Congregations United to Serve Humanity; Council for the Spanish Speaking; Esperanza Unida; Federation for Civic Action; Goodwill Industries of Southeast Wisconsin and Metro Chicago; Harambee Ombudsman Project, Inc.; Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Wisconsin; Hispanic Roundtable; Hmong-American Friendship Association; Independence First; La Casa de Esperanza; La Causa, Inc.; Lao Family Community; Merrill Park Neighborhood Association; Metcalfe Park Residents Association; Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council; Milwaukee Branch National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Milwaukee Careers Cooperative; Milwaukee Inncercity Congregations Allied for Hope; Milwaukee Minority Chamber of Commerce; Milwaukee Urban League; National Association of Minority Contractors, Wisconsin Chapter; Racine Interfaith Coalition; Racine/Kenosha Economic Inclusion Coalition; Repairers of the Breach; The Salvation Army/Greater Milwaukee; The Salvation Army/ Kenosha; The Salvation Army/Oak Creek; The Salvation Army/Racine;

The Salvation Army/Waukesha; Spanish Centers of Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth Counties; United Community Center; United Indians of Milwaukee; United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc.; and Urban League of Racine and Kenosha.

Other consultation efforts are conducted with groups representing business and industry, freight, transit operator, and transportation operations interests. These consultation efforts also occur at key junctures in the planning process. The business and industry group includes the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, Inc., Milwaukee Metropolitan Association of Commerce, Ozaukee County Economic Development Corporation, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, Racine County Economic Development Corporation, Waukesha County Chamber of Commerce, and Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation, Greater Milwaukee committee and Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Council.

The freight group includes air, rail, and highway freight movement interests. The intent in consulting with this group is to identify freight transportation problems and needs in the Region, and to identify potential improvements for consideration in the regional transportation plan. These groups and organizations include the Port of Milwaukee, General Mitchell International Airport, freight and parcel express companies, bulk freight transportation interests, railroads, trucking companies and associations, and major industries.

Another group the Commission consults with includes the operators of public transit services in the Region. The objective of consulting with this group is to identify existing public transit problems and needs, and to identify potential public transit improvements for consideration in the regional transportation plan.

Another group the Commission consults with includes transportation system operations professionals. The intent in consulting with this group is to identify existing transportation systems operations actions and systems and to identify alternative operations actions and systems to be considered for inclusion in the regional transportation plan. Involvement in this group includes: Highway Commissioners and Directors of Public Works from the Region's seven counties; City Engineers and Directors of Public Works from selected representative municipalities; the Wisconsin Department of Transportation State Traffic Engineer; the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Traffic Incident Management Enhancement (TIME) Program Manager; and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Southeast Region Systems Operations Manager.

Additionally, in conducting other transportation planning activities such as preparing coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans for each of the seven counties in the Region, the Commission has consulted with representatives of governmental agencies and non-profit organizations that receive Federal assistance to provide non-emergency transportation services from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation. These groups will be consulted during regional transportation planning efforts, building upon the contacts made during the preparation of the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans.

SUMMARY

The Commission's consultation efforts during regional transportation planning and programming include consultation with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation – land use planning and growth, economic development, environmental protection, airports, and freight traffic – transit operators (both public and specialized service), environmental resource agencies including Federal land management agencies, and Indian tribes. This consultation occurs throughout the planning process and particularly at key junctures of identifying existing conditions, review of previous plans and extent of implementation, identification of potential alternative plans, evaluation of alternative plans, and review of preliminary recommended plan. The consultation includes briefings and solicitation of input for consideration during the planning process.

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