

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE: A SUCCESS STORY

In March 1964 the Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation inaugurated a type of bus service new to the Region. Appropriately termed "freeway flyer" service by the carrier, this new service, utilizing freeway facilities for nearly the entire distance of the line, provided direct nonstop service during peak commuting periods each weekday between the Mayfair Shopping Center and downtown Milwaukee, a distance of approximately nine miles (see Map 1).

Tried initially as an experimental operation, freeway flyer service achieved immediate success. Ridership increased rapidly from a daily average of 290 during the first month of service to 600 by the end of the first year of service; and by January 1967 ridership was approaching an average of 1,000 per weekday (see Figure 1).

The new service offered attractive new buses; reasonable fares; nonstop service nearly 25 minutes faster than regular bus service between Mayfair and downtown Milwaukee; and, through the cooperation of the management, 450 free parking spaces in a well-lighted, easily accessible part of the parking area of the strategically located Mayfair shopping center.

The apparent success of freeway flyer service at the very beginning was promising indeed; but to fully evaluate the service, it was necessary to determine whether a substantial

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

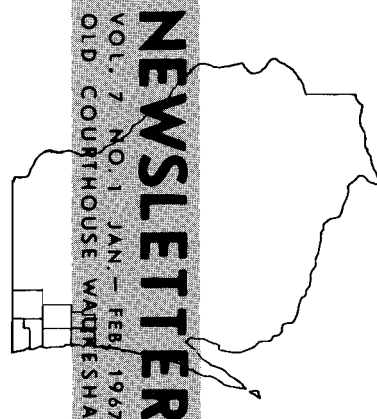
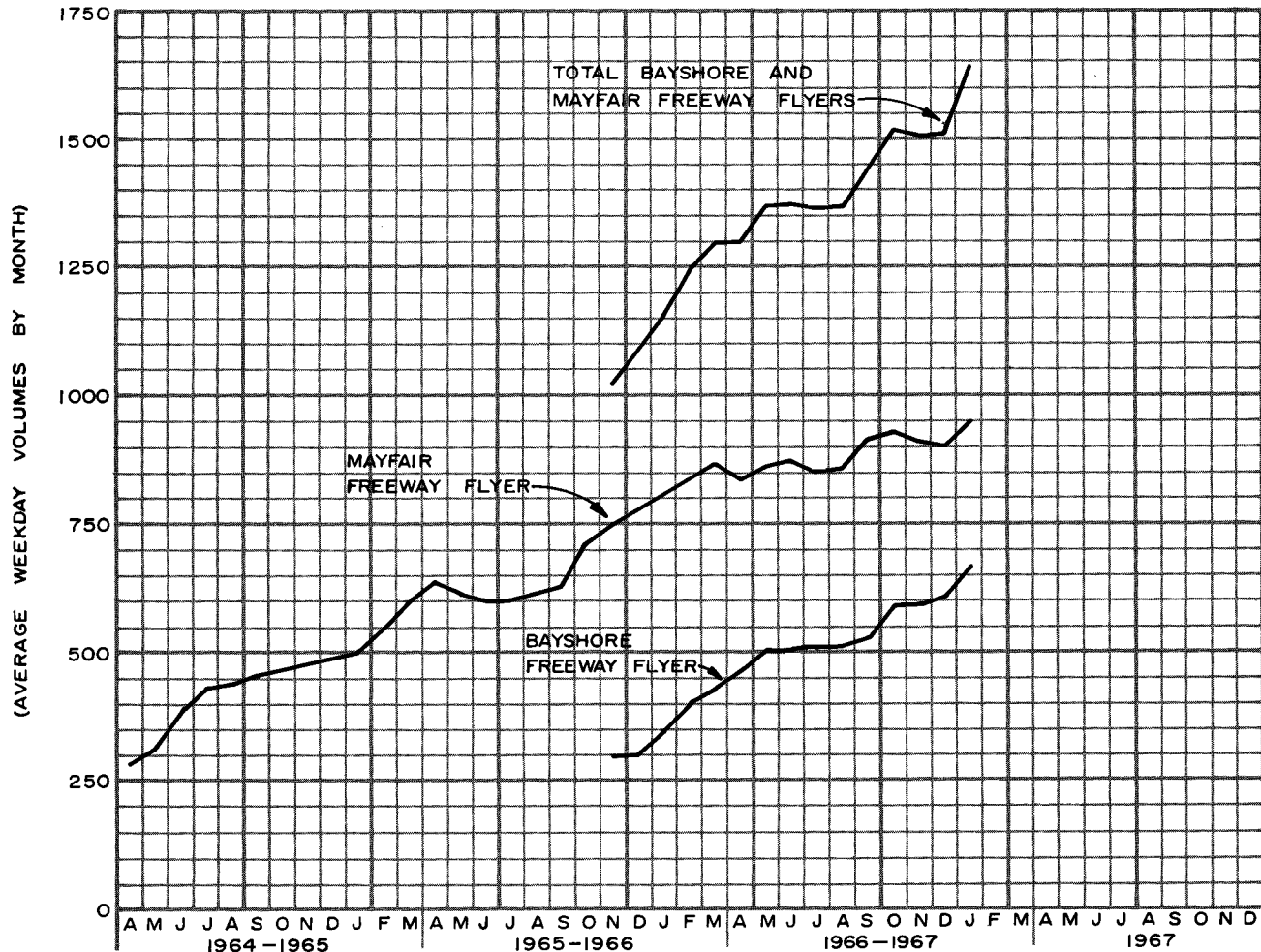


Figure 1

AVERAGE WEEKDAY FREEWAY FLYER PASSENGER VOLUMES FOR BAYSHORE AND MAYFAIR ROUTES

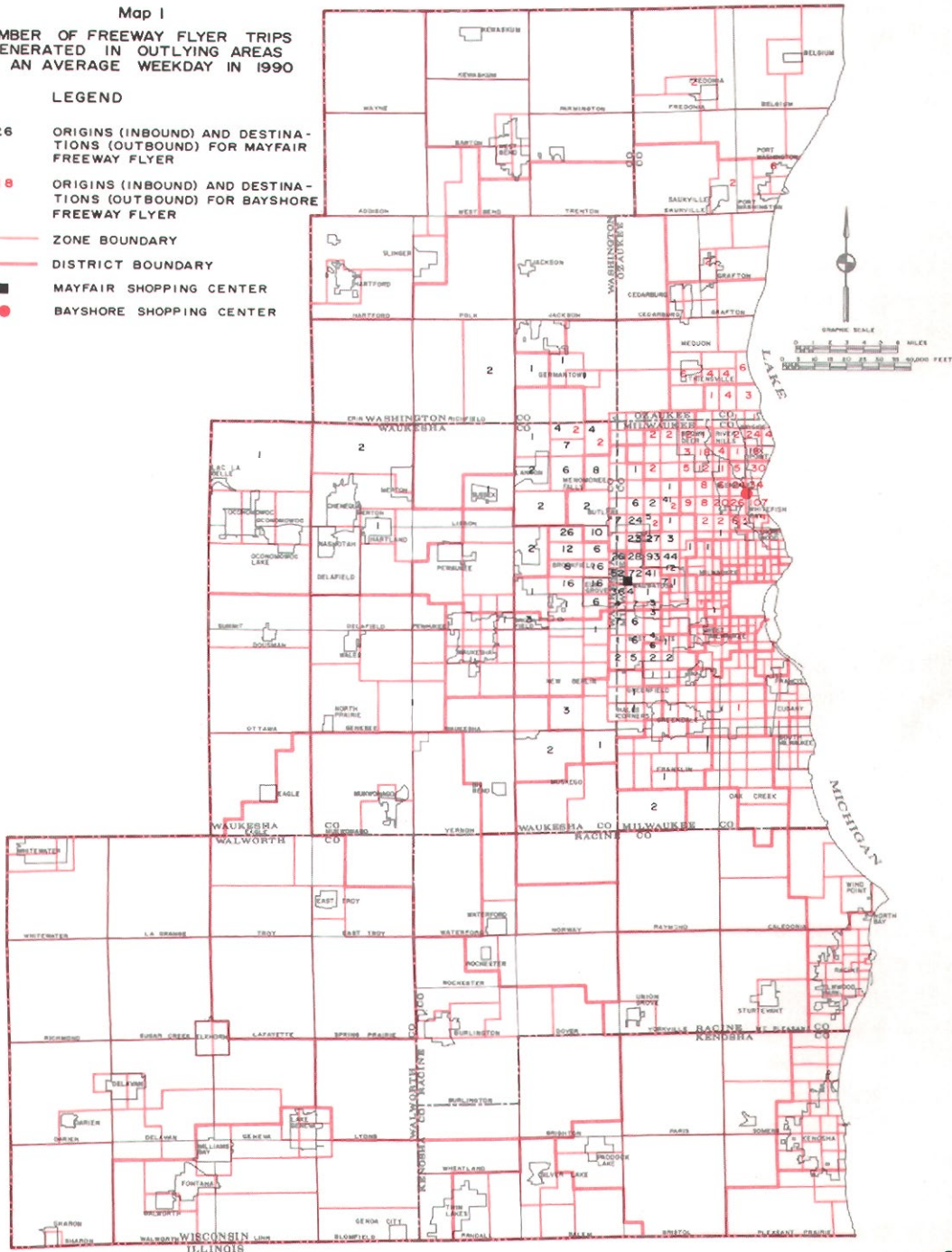


SOURCE: MILWAUKEE AND SUBURBAN TRANSPORT CORPORATION.

Map 1
NUMBER OF FREEWAY FLYER TRIPS
GENERATED IN OUTLYING AREAS
ON AN AVERAGE WEEKDAY IN 1990

LEGEND

- 26 ORIGINS (INBOUND) AND DESTINATIONS (OUTBOUND) FOR MAYFAIR FREEWAY FLYER
- 18 ORIGINS (INBOUND) AND DESTINATIONS (OUTBOUND) FOR BAYSHORE FREEWAY FLYER
- ZONE BOUNDARY
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- MAYFAIR SHOPPING CENTER
- BAYSHORE SHOPPING CENTER



FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

number of new transit riders had been attracted to the service or if most patrons had merely changed to the freeway flyer service from regular bus service. If the former were true, the venture could be considered an important achievement, since it would represent a reversal of a 20-year trend. If, however, the latter were true, much of the lustre of success would be diminished, since it would mean that freeway flyer patronage consisted mostly of passengers drained from other Transport Corporation buses operating in the corridor in regular service.

To obtain the answer to this key question and to gain a more intimate understanding of the personal characteristics and commuting habits of freeway flyer users, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation, conducted a survey of passengers on April 15, 1964, a little more than two weeks after service began.

The findings of this survey were reassuring, not only to the Transport Corporation, but also to other persons within the Region concerned with achieving a better balanced transportation system for the Region. Most importantly, it was found that freeway flyer service had, in fact, attracted many new transit patrons. As indicated in Table 1, 73 of a total of 187 respondents, or 39 percent, had formerly commuted by mode of transportation other than by bus; most of them, 54, as auto drivers. It is significant also, as noted in Table 1, that only 29 respondents, or 16 percent, were captive riders in the sense that they could not have commuted as auto drivers even if an auto had been available.

Moreover, in answer to questions concerning automobile ownership and the availability of an automobile for commuting, 130 respondents, or 66 percent, as shown in Table 2, indicated that they did own automobiles and that the automobiles were available for commuting if they had chosen to drive. This represented a very important finding and a very large percentage considering that results of the 1963 SEWRPC origin-destination surveys revealed that only 9 percent of all transit riders in the Mil-

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

Table 1
MODE OF TRAVEL PRIOR TO FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE BY AUTO DRIVER STATUS
MAYFAIR - 1964

Auto Driver Status	Auto Driver	Auto Passenger	Bus	Taxi or Train	Total
Licensed	54	12	89	3	158
Unlicensed	0	4	25	0	29
Total	54	16	114	3	187 ^a

^a Does not include 8 respondents who did not make the trip before Freeway Flyer Service began nor 2 respondents who did not answer this question.

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

Table 2
AUTOMOBILE OWNERSHIP BY AUTOMOBILE AVAILABILITY
MAYFAIR - 1964

Automobile Available at Time of Trip	Automobile Availability	Automobile Owned		Total
		Yes	No	
	Yes	130	0	130
	No	49	17	66
	Not Indicated	1	0	1
Total		180	17	197

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

waukee urbanizing area had such a choice. This table also points out that automobiles, though owned, were not available at the time of commuting to 49 respondents, about 25 percent of the total, and automobiles were not owned by 17 respondents, only 9 percent of the total.

The success of the freeway flyer service was thus established. It had been accepted quickly by the public; it was financially profitable to the Transport Corporation, and now it was found that the service had attracted a significant number of new transit patrons.

By November 1966 a considerable span of time had elapsed since the initial survey. In the meantime, freeway flyer patronage had more than tripled at Mayfair; and a new similar service had been provided for

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

a whole year at Bayshore Shopping Center, located six miles north of downtown Milwaukee in the City of Glendale (see Map 1).

As at Mayfair, a convenient free parking area had been set aside without charge by the management of the Bayshore Shopping Center; and, as at Mayfair, freeway flyer service, operating over a freeway facility, saved commuters as much as 25 minutes over regular bus service notwithstanding one intermediate stop at an intersection a few blocks from the shopping center (see Map 1). As at Mayfair, also, patronage at Bayshore by November 1966 had approximately doubled the daily average recorded during the first month of operation (see Figure 1).

With greatly increased patronage at Mayfair and a new service in operation at Bayshore, up-to-date information concerning freeway flyer passengers and their travel habits was very desirable. Accordingly, as before, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission jointly with the Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation conducted a survey of freeway flyer passengers at Bayshore on November 16, and at Mayfair on November 17, 1966.

The findings of the new surveys were even more satisfying to transit proponents than the findings of the first survey in 1964. First of all, the number of commuters converting to transit service at Mayfair had increased from 73 in 1964 to 227 in 1966, as shown in Table 3; and these conversions, mostly auto drivers, now represented more than 51 percent of total ridership compared to 39 percent in 1964, as shown in Table 1. Additionally, similar conversions at Bayshore, also mostly auto drivers, surveyed for the first time, numbered 186, or 58 percent of total ridership.

Another important finding in the new surveys was that, as at Mayfair in 1964, nearly two-thirds of the respondents at both Mayfair and Bayshore indicated that they had commuted by transit by choice. Of a total of

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

Table 3
MODE OF TRAVEL PRIOR TO FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE BY AUTO DRIVER STATUS

MAYFAIR - 1966					
Auto Driver Status	Auto Driver	Auto Passenger	Bus	Taxi or Train	Total
Licensed	182	34	152	7	375
Unlicensed	0	3	60	1	64
Not Indicated. . . .	0	0	3	0	3
Total	182	37	215	8	442 ^a
BAYSHORE - 1966					
Auto Driver Status	Auto Driver	Auto Passenger	Bus	Taxi or Train	Total
Licensed	140	28	88	2	258
Unlicensed	0	14	40	0	54
Not Indicated. . . .	1	1	4	0	6
Total	141	43	132	2	318 ^b

^a Does not include 109 respondents who did not make the trip before Freeway Flyer Service began nor 6 respondents who did not answer this question.

^b Does not include 57 respondents who did not make the trip before Freeway Flyer Service began nor 10 respondents who did not answer this question.

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

543 respondents at Mayfair, 343, or 63 percent, indicated that they could have commuted as auto drivers; and at Bayshore, of a total of 369 respondents, 228, or 62 percent, indicated that they could have commuted also in this manner, as shown in Table 4. Although owning automobiles, 176 respondents at Mayfair, or 32 percent, and 127 respondents at Bayshore, or 34 percent, indicated that they could not have driven because the automobiles were not available at the time of the trip, as shown in Table 4. Less than 5 percent of the respondents at both Mayfair and Bayshore did not own automobiles, also shown in Table 4.

Two very important findings of the new surveys were, therefore, that: 1) freeway flyer service had continued to attract a very substantial number of new transit riders at both Mayfair and Bayshore, and 2) most of these new transit riders had formerly commuted as auto drivers.

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

Table 4
AUTOMOBILE OWNERSHIP BY AUTOMOBILE AVAILABILITY

MAYFAIR - 1966				
Automobile Available at Time of Trip	Automobile Availability	Automobile Owned		Total
		Yes	No	
	Yes	343	0	343
	No	176	24	200
Total		519	24	543 ^a
BAYSHORE - 1966				
Automobile Available at Time of Trip	Automobile Availability	Automobile Owned		Total
		Yes	No	
	Yes	228	0	228
	No	127	14	141
Total		355	14	369 ^b

^a Does not include 8 respondents owning automobiles but not indicating availability of the automobile nor 6 respondents not indicating auto ownership.

^b Does not include 2 respondents owning automobiles but not indicating availability of the automobile nor 10 respondents not indicating auto ownership.

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

The survey results provided one piece of information very surprising to all connected with the survey. It had been commonly believed that a large majority of freeway flyer riders used the service in both directions each weekday. As shown in Table 5, however, less than 50 percent of the respondents made two-way trips on each of the three survey dates. Two reasons for the unexpectedly high numbers of one-way trips may be that: 1) freeway flyer schedules do not coincide with the times desired by many patrons, and 2) many patrons obtain rides in one direction with friends or fellow workers. If the former is true, a separate survey might indicate that an adjustment in scheduling would permit many patrons, now commuting one way, to commute both ways via freeway flyer.

In all three surveys, trips directly between home and work accounted for the very large majority of all freeway flyer travel, as shown in Table 6. Such trips at Mayfair accounted for 87 percent of the total trips in 1964 and 88 percent in 1966, and at Bayshore such trips were 83 percent of

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

Table 5
NUMBER OF PERSONS MAKING ROUND TRIPS AND NUMBER
OF PERSONS MAKING ONE - WAY TRIPS

Number of Persons Making:	MAYFAIR - 1964	MAYFAIR - 1966	BAYSHORE - 1966
Round Trips	90	255	183
A. M. Trips Only. . . .	49	151	122
P. M. Trips Only. . . .	58	151	80
Total	197	557	385

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

Table 6
TRIP PURPOSE "TO" BY TRIP PURPOSE "FROM"

MAYFAIR - 1964					
Trip Purpose	Work	Home	School	Other	Total
Work	1	117	0	12	130
Home	132	0	3	6	141
School	2	3	0	0	5
Other.	1	6	0	2	9
Total	136	126	3	20	285 ^a
MAYFAIR - 1966					
Trip Purpose	Work	Home	School	Other	Total
Work	17	353	3	10	383
Home	345	0	39	9	393
School	2	13	0	0	15
Other.	1	3	1	0	5
Total	365	369	43	19	796 ^b
BAYSHORE - 1966					
Trip Purpose	Work	Home	School	Other	Total
Work	8	212	2	8	230
Home	224	0	50	2	276
School	5	5	0	1	11
Other.	0	1	1	7	9
Total	237	218	53	18	526 ^c

^a Does not include 2 respondents who did not indicate one or both trip purposes.

^b Does not include 16 respondents who did not indicate one or both trip purposes.

^c Does not include 42 respondents who did not indicate one or both trip purposes.

Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE (continued)

total trips. Trips between school and home were the only other major trip purposes of freeway flyer patrons.

The 1966 origins of inbound trips and the destinations of outbound trips, which represent in most instances the residences of freeway flyer passengers, are shown for both Mayfair and Bayshore routes on Map 2; and similar information is shown for Mayfair in 1964 and 1966 and for Bayshore in 1966 in Table 7. As shown in Table 7, on the Mayfair route in 1964, 84 percent of these trip ends were located within three miles of the shopping center, another 21 percent were located within 3 to 6 miles, and only 5 percent were located beyond 6 miles. By 1966 these percentages at Mayfair had changed to 74 percent within 3 miles of the shopping center, 18 percent within 3 to 6 miles, and 8 percent beyond 6 miles. On the Bayshore route in 1966, 69 percent of these origins and destinations were located within 3 miles of the shopping center, 21 percent were located within 3 to 6 miles, and 10 percent were located beyond 6 miles.

Table 7

INBOUND TRIP ORIGINS AND OUTBOUND TRIP DESTINATIONS
BY DISTANCE FROM SHOPPING CENTER

Miles	MAYFAIR - 1964		MAYFAIR - 1966		BAYSHORE - 1966	
	Trips	Accumulated Percent	Trips	Accumulated Percent	Trips	Accumulated Percent
0 - 1.0 . .	103	37.1	124	15.8	133	26.2
1.1 - 2.0 . .	84	67.3	266	49.8	169	59.6
2.1 - 3.0 . .	46	83.8	192	74.2	47	68.8
3.1 - 4.0 . .	23	92.1	77	84.1	71	82.8
4.1 - 5.0 . .	6	94.3	51	90.6	20	86.8
5.1 - 6.0 . .	2	95.0	9	91.7	16	89.9
Over 6.0 . .	14	100.0	65	100.0	51	100.0
Total . . .	278 ^a	---	784 ^a	---	507 ^a	---

^a Does not include 9 respondents at MAYFAIR in 1964, 28 respondents at MAYFAIR in 1966, and 61 respondents at BAYSHORE in 1966 who did not indicate precise locations of inbound trip origins and/or outbound trip destinations.

*Source: Milwaukee and Suburban Transport Corporation and SEWRPC.

AROUND THE REGION

FOURTH COUNTY ADDED TO MILWAUKEE SMSA

The U. S. Bureau of the Budget announced on March 7, 1967, that Washington County has been added to the Milwaukee Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The Milwaukee SMSA, which includes Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties, now ranks as the 17th largest metropolitan area in the nation, with a population of 1,324,000 according to U. S. Bureau of the Census population figures. This action by the U. S. Bureau of the Budget means that more Bureau of the Census data relating to employment, resident labor force, and marketing statistics will be available for Washington County.

The general concept of a metropolitan area is one of an integrated economic and social unit with a recognized large population nucleus. To serve the statistical purposes for which metropolitan areas are defined, its parts must themselves be areas for which statistics are usually collected. Thus, an SMSA is defined as a county or group of contiguous counties which contain a central city of at least 50,000 persons. In addition to the county containing such a city, contiguous counties are included in an SMSA if they are essentially metropolitan in character and are socially and economically linked with the county containing the central city. A contiguous county is considered metropolitan in character if at least 75 percent of the labor force of the county is nonagricultural and if it meets certain population density or certain labor force criteria. Determination of a contiguous county's social and economic linkage with the county containing the central city is based upon the extent of commuting between the counties by the labor force. If the extent of labor force commuting is not conclusive, other factors relating to the contact between the outlying county and the central county may be considered. These factors include such things as telephone calls, newspaper circulation, charge accounts in retail stores of the central county by residents of the outlying county, and joint operation of planning groups and civic organizations.

Map 2

AREAS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN
WISCONSIN REGION INCLUDED IN
THE STANDARD METROPOLITAN
STATISTICAL AREAS - 1967

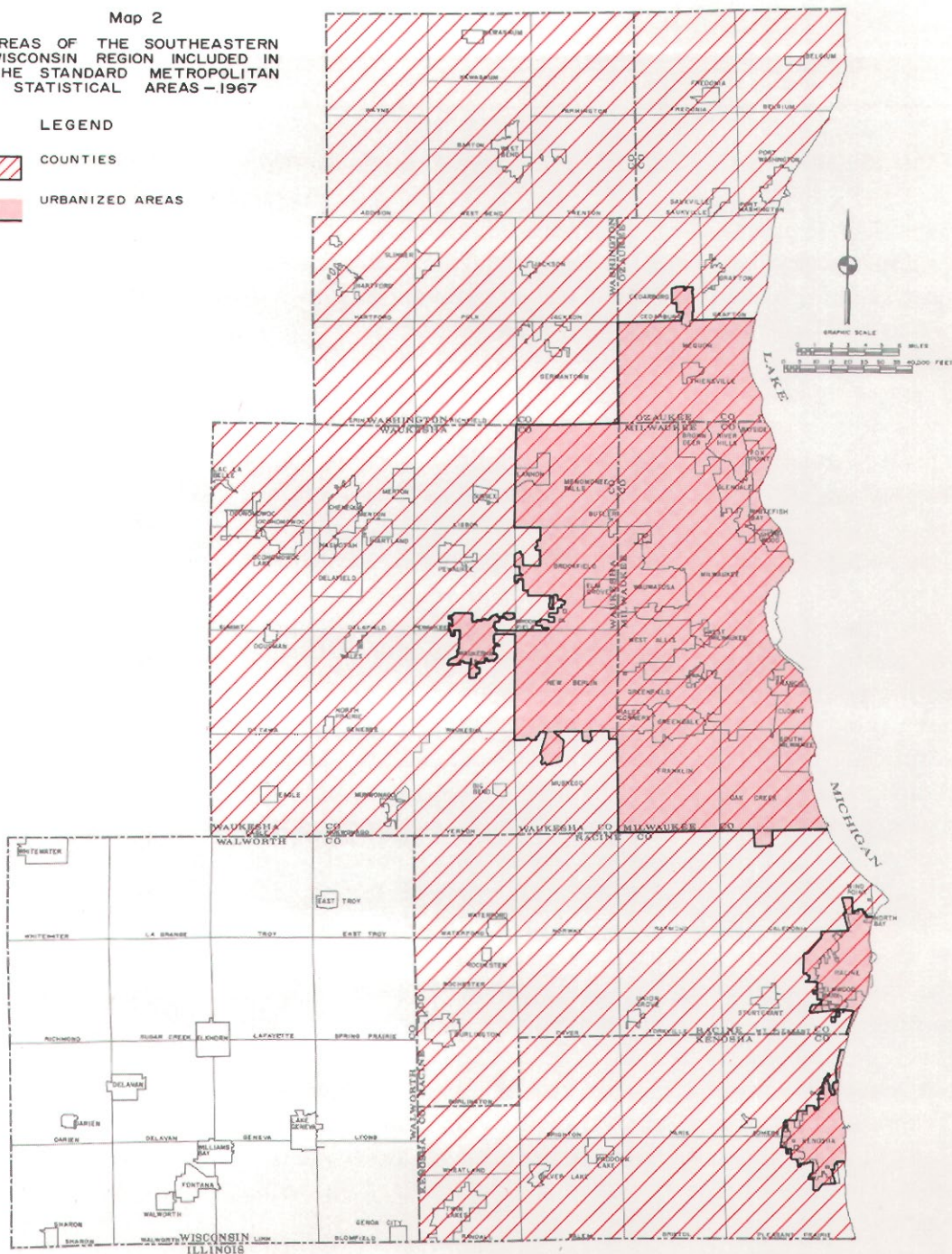
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COUNTIES



URBANIZED AREAS



AROUND THE REGION (continued)

The precise definition of Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas has evolved out of a necessity to establish uniform criteria for reporting statistical information primarily by government agencies. Before 1949 when the first standards were established, various federal agencies collected and published statistics to satisfy their own needs. As the metropolitan areas grew in population, area, and complexity, the need to relate statistics on population, industrial production, labor force, and housing became apparent. This meant that the old definitions of "metropolitan districts," "metropolitan counties," "industrial areas," and "labor market areas" needed to be replaced. A federal interagency committee under the direction of the U. S. Bureau of the Budget agreed upon such criteria and thus made it possible for all federal statistical agencies to utilize the same boundaries in collecting and publishing their data. The term initially used to describe this standard area was "standard metropolitan area" (SMA). However, in order to describe more accurately the objective of the definitions, the name was changed to Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The new terminology with minor revisions of the criteria for defining areas was issued in March 1958 by the Federal Committee on Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas and the Director of the U. S. Bureau of the Budget.

Under these concepts and definitions, the Milwaukee SMA in 1950 included only Milwaukee County; then in November 1956 it was expanded to include Waukesha County. Ozaukee County was added to the Milwaukee SMSA after the 1960 census. Both Racine and Kenosha counties were first classified as SMA's in 1950. In the 1960 census, in which 212 SMSA's were defined for the nation, the Racine and Kenosha SMSA's ranked 156th and 190th, respectively (see Map 2).

The action to include Washington County in the Milwaukee SMSA was initiated by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce following an evaluation of the criteria for the inclusion of contiguous counties described above. The recommendation to the U. S. Bureau of the Budget by the Association was supported by resolutions from both the Washington County Board of Supervisors and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

QUESTION BOX

HOW DOES THE SUCCESS OF THE FREEWAY FLYER SERVICE RELATE TO THE ADOPTED REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN?

In order to provide a balanced transportation system for the Region, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has proposed, in addition to major freeway and parkway facility recommendations, the construction of an expanded modified rapid transit and an entirely new rapid transit system.

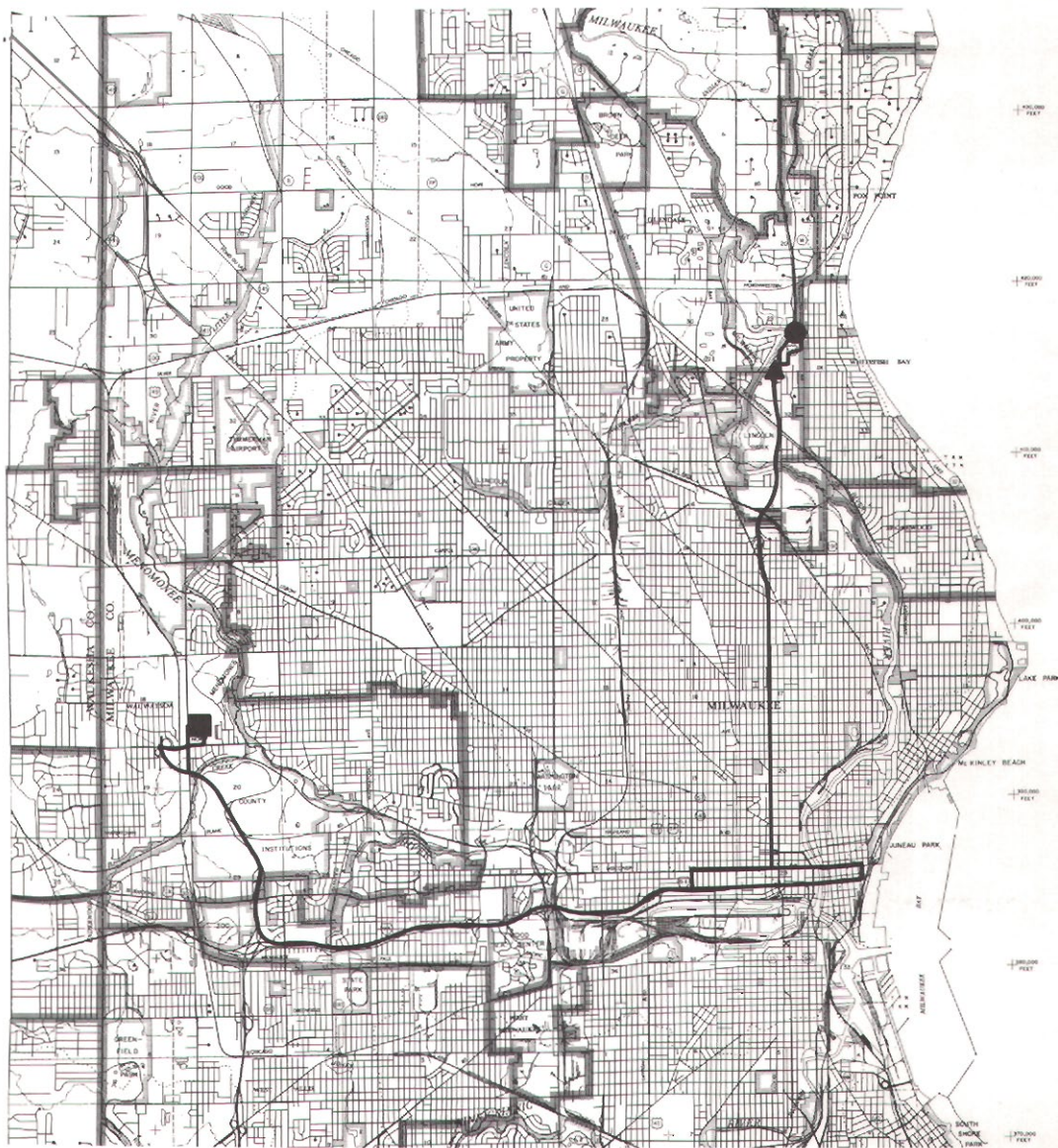
Under the modified rapid and rapid transit system proposal, motor coaches would operate partly over freeway facilities in mixed traffic and partly over a connecting fully grade-separated private right-of-way paralleling the East-West Freeway. The proposed transit system would provide fast, regular, one-seat, and nearly door-to-door transit service to a maximum number of residents in the most highly urbanized portions of the Region. The proposed system would serve not only to reduce peak freeway loadings, thus alleviating traffic congestion, but also to reduce parking demand in the central business district of Milwaukee.

The freeway flyer service now operating between each of two regional shopping centers and downtown Milwaukee are true prototypes of the modified rapid transit lines proposed as a part of the regional transportation plan. The successes achieved by these freeway flyer prototypes in gaining public acceptance in attracting new transit riders and particularly in converting auto-driver commuters to mass transit users have, therefore, provided strong support and encouragement to the plan proposals.

In view of the survey findings, the SEWRPC forecast of an increase in average weekday transit trips within the Region from 324,000 in 1963 to 353,000 in 1990 appears easily attainable if the recommended regional land use and transportation plans are implemented. Under the regional transportation plan, the proposed transit system would consist of an integrated network of ordinary surface lines, modified rapid transit (freeway flyer) bus lines, and a true rapid transit bus line. Implementation of the plan would increase the number of modified rapid transit lines from 2, totaling approximately 15 route miles at present, to 11, totaling approximately 84 route miles by 1990 (see Map 3).

Support and encouragement of another sort have recently come from another source, the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, which has announced that consideration of financial assistance under the Interstate Highway Program will be given to proposals for the construction of separate through traffic lanes for the exclusive use of buses. Thus, it is possible that as much as 90 percent of the construction costs of the proposed rapid transit line may be financed with federal moneys.

Map 3
 FREEWAY FLYER ROUTES
 MAYFAIR - BAYSHORE
 1966



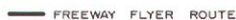
LEGEND



MAYFAIR SHOPPING CENTER



BAYSHORE SHOPPING CENTER



FREEWAY FLYER ROUTE



INTERMEDIATE STOP

QUOTABLE QUOTE.....

"....the urban public has two modes of transportation at its disposal: the private automobile and public transit. These two modes are basically adapted to performing passenger travel tasks of an entirely different nature under essentially different conditions.

Transit is essentially oriented to central business districts and ideally adapted to worker travel, downtown shopping trips, ... It handles peak volumes of passengers which usually occur over two short, sharp periods of the day. It provides such peak capacity at a high ratio of utilization to capacity. It does so more efficiently and effectively than any other urban transport mode. But transit cannot be, and was never intended to be, self-supporting in sparse, outlying areas.

The automobile, on the other hand, is sub-urban-oriented and ideally adapted....to areas in which space for its movement and storage is abundant. It is useful in getting to and from rural or suburban places of residence and places of work, or transit stations....

In achieving community values in transportation, urban planners and public officials might well concentrate on the complementary uses of these two travel modes in a balanced system which makes optimum use of the characteristics of each and the relationships of these characteristics to the travel needs of the entire metropolitan area."

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