



MPOs: THE FEDERAL CONCEPT

- **MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization**
- **Goes back to the “3C’s” of the 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act: Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive metropolitan area planning for transportation**
- **Metropolitan planning area: the nation’s urbanized areas extended to boundaries of air quality nonattainment areas**
- **Feds recognized early on when it came to transportation system planning the need to examine and analyze the true “cities” of the nation, and not just the jurisdictional areas of central cities like Milwaukee**



MPOs: THE FEDERAL CONCEPT— continued

- **Metropolitan transportation plan**
 - **Minimum 20-year planning horizon**
 - **Multi-modal**
 - **Short- and long-range actions/strategies**
 - **Confirmed/updated every four years**
 - **Coordinated with transportation aspects of State air quality plan**
 - **Financial plan: “fiscal constraint”**
 - **Environmental justice considerations**
 - **Consultation/public participation**
- **Transportation improvement program**
 - **4 year programming horizon**
 - **Projects and activities to be consistent with plan recommendations**
 - **1st year constitutes projects “selected” for funding**
 - **Subject to public review and comment**



SEWRPC Basics

- **Created in 1960 under State enabling Legislation; predated any Federal metropolitan planning requirements**
- **Advisory regional planning model**
- **Governance structure: 21-member board, 3 members from each of seven counties**
- **Tied by law to the seven counties in terms of board membership, funding, and organizational stability**
- **Broad regional planning framework carried out by a multi-disciplinary staff**

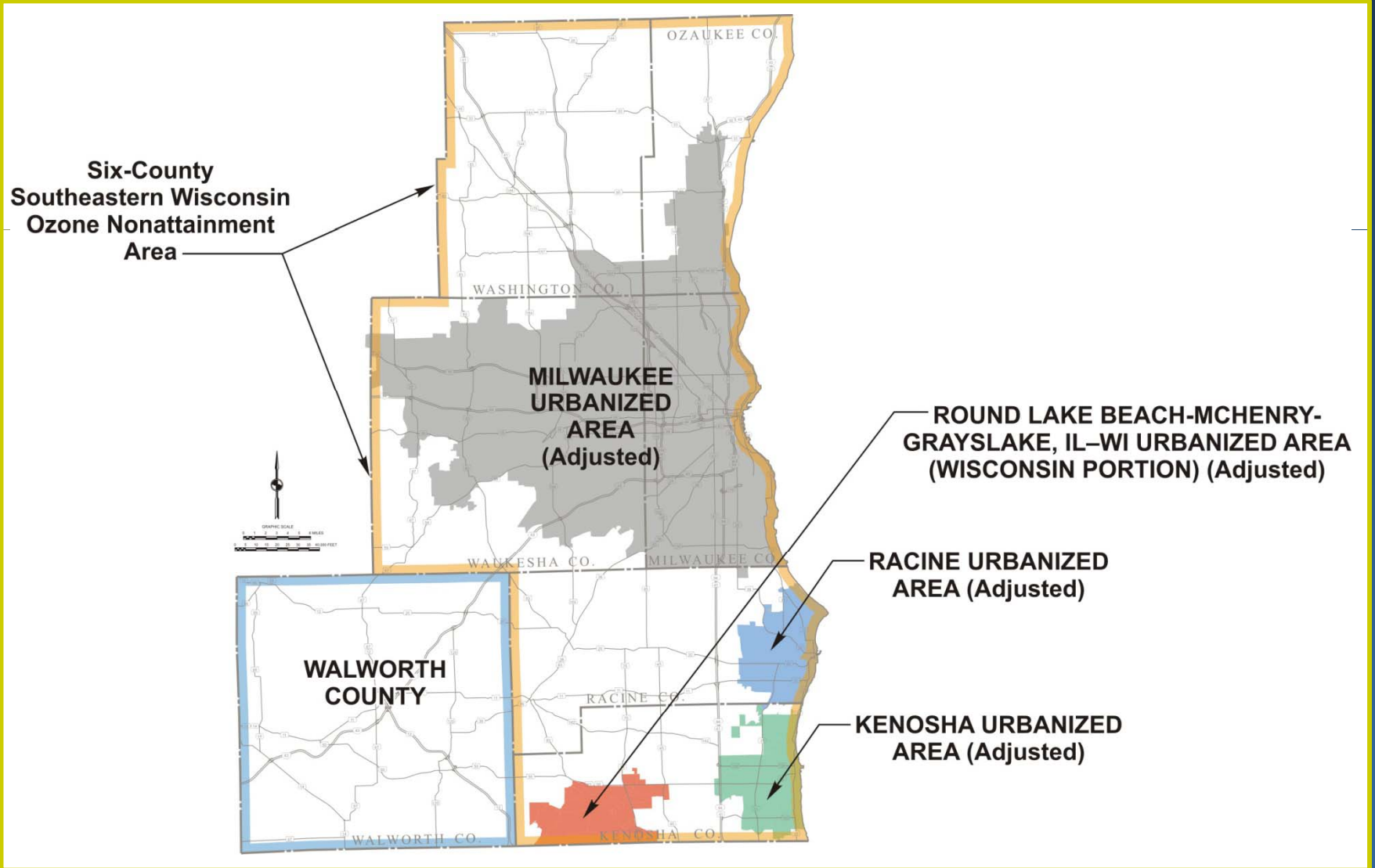


SEWRPC Basics—continued

- **While all metropolitan areas in the nation have MPOs that on the surface carry out similar functions, below the surface they can be quite different**
- **SEWRPC's model is relatively weak compared to such other regional models as:**
 - **Portland (elected regional government)**
 - **Twin Cities (appointed regional government)**
 - **Chicago (State funded regional agency)**
- **Wisconsin's budget framework relative to transportation is very prescriptive**



The SEWRPC MPO Geography





The SEWRPC MPO Organizational Structure

- **The 21-member SEWRPC board is the formal governing body of the MPO for the 6-county Southeastern Wisconsin transportation management area**
- **However, not once since the MPO concept came into being in the 1970's has the SEWRPC board overturned a position taken by its standing advisory committees that oversee the MPO decision-making processes**



The SEWRPC MPO Organizational Structure—continued

- **Technical Coordinating and Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning**
 - 20 members representing county and local government on a population proportional basis (Milwaukee County has 9 representatives, including 4 selected by City of Milwaukee)
 - 7 ex-officio, nonvoting members representing Federal and State agencies
 - Responsible for overseeing regional transportation system plan preparation
 - Latest plan (including freeway improvement proposals) unanimously approved by committee in May 2006 (Planning Report No. 49); adopted by SEWRPC board shortly thereafter.
- **A similarly structured companion committee oversees the regional land use plan**



The SEWRPC MPO Organizational Structure—continued

- **For each of the three smaller (<200,000 population) urbanized areas wholly or partly in the SEWRPC region, there is an advisory committee responsible for overseeing preparation of the transportation improvement program as it pertains to their respective area.**
- **Committees consist of representatives of each local government and county concerned, together with personnel representing Federal and State agencies.**
- **WISDOT “brings to the table” Federal highway and transit fund sub-allocations to these smaller urbanized areas. These allocations come from larger categorical fund allocations made available to Wisconsin for this purpose.**
- **About every two years, each of these committees meets to discuss the use of available funds and reach agreement on projects “selected” to be placed in the regional transportation improvement program.**



The SEWRPC MPO Organizational Structure—continued

- **For the large, more complex Milwaukee urbanized area, there are more complex programming responsibilities that dictate a different advisory committee structure.**
- **The Milwaukee urbanized area presently consists of all or part of five counties, 19 cities, 31 villages, and 15 towns**
- **Federal transportation funds of about \$16 million annually for highways and \$20 million annually for transit are directly allocated to the Milwaukee urbanized area in care of the MPO**
- **It is SEWRPC's responsibility to see that:**
 - **The funds are wisely spent on projects and activities identified in the regional transportation plan**
 - **The funds are fairly shared among the 57 highway agencies and five transit agencies that serve the urbanized area.**
 - **Consideration is given as appropriate to transferring available funds between the highway and transit categories to meet identified needs**



Structure of Milwaukee Urbanized Area MPO Committee

- **Formally known as the Intergovernmental Coordinating and Advisory Committee on Transportation System Programming for the Milwaukee Urbanized Area**
- **A 28-member committee, including nine ex-officio, nonvoting representatives of Federal and State agencies, transit operators, and SEWRPC staff**
- **The 19 voting members are selected on a population-proportional basis taking into account the need to have both county and local government representation**
- **The result is the following representational structure:**

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Number of Representatives</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Milwaukee County | 5 |
| City of Milwaukee | 5 |
| North Shore Suburbs | 1 |
| South Shore and Southwest Suburbs | 2 |
| Western Suburbs | 2 |
| Waukesha County | 1 |
| City of Waukesha/Waukesha Suburbs | 2 |
| Ozaukee/Washington Counties | 1 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 19 |



Allocating Milwaukee Area FHWA STP Funds—Highways

- **Agreement reached that Federal funds should be spent only on facilities identified as arterial streets or highways in the adopted regional plan**
- **Consideration early on of proposals for regional project selection based on “need”.**
- **Consensus reached that all highway agencies should be annually “credited” their fair share of the Milwaukee area’s STP funds based on each agency’s proportionate share of the total number of planned arterial lane miles**
 - **The City of Milwaukee, with 27 percent of the lane miles, would receive an annual allocation (currently about \$4.1 million) and would “select” one or more projects annually for inclusion in the transportation improvement program**
 - **All other agencies would compete about every two years for project selection based upon a ranking system that takes into account each agency’s “credit” balance in the project year and the amount of Federal funds being requested for the project.**



Allocating Milwaukee Area FHWA STP Funds—Highways—continued

- **Some Federal STP funds for highways have been reallocated to transit, but remain unused.**
- **This allocation system has worked well and without significant controversy for several decades. The currently proposed “stimulus” funds will slide right into this process.**



Allocating Milwaukee Area FTA Section 5307 Funds—Transit

- **Only gubernatorially “designated recipients” or their approved subdesignees are eligible to receive Section 5307 funds. In the Milwaukee area this presently includes Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties and the City of Waukesha as a subdesignee of Waukesha County.**
- **The annual transit fund allocation of \$20 million to the Milwaukee area derives from a national formula that takes into account population, population density, and certain reported transit service and ridership data.**
- **For many years the SEWRPC convened meetings of the transit agencies where negotiated divisions of funds were achieved. These agreements at times reflected use of the national formula in part, which favored outlying counties that provide little service relative to Milwaukee County.**



Allocating Milwaukee Area FTA Section 5307 Funds—Transit— continued

- **In 2006 Milwaukee County indicated that it would agree to a division of funds only if based entirely on actual measures of transit service provided. Waukesha County, in particular, strenuously objected.**
- **The issue ultimately reached SEWRPC as the MPO governing body. Based on a staff recommendation, SEWRPC decided that , unless the transit agencies all agree to something else, the FTA funds would henceforth be suballocated to the transit operators based on four measures of transit service provided, weighted equally: revenue passengers, passenger miles, revenue vehicle miles, and revenue vehicle hours.**



Some Final Thoughts

- **The transportation improvement program:
Is public participation meaningful?**
- **SEWRPC's changing role (?)**
- **The Region's biggest transportation
challenges**
- **Funding transportation needs—a personal
bias**