

# **RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

# **REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN**

volume three

SEPTEMBER 1, 2002 - MARCH 12, 2003

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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

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(Ex-officio)

# **RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

## **REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN**

volume three

SEPTEMBER 1, 2002-MARCH 12, 2003

March 2003

Prepared by the

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
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Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

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# **RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

## **REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN**

**volume three**

**SEPTEMBER 1, 2002-MARCH 12, 2003**

This report presents the public comment received on the Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and preliminary recommended freeway system reconstruction plan from September 1, 2002 to March 12, 2003. Previous reports, "Record of Public Comments: Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study for Southeastern Wisconsin: Volume I, February 1 – August 31, 2001" and "Record of Public Comments: Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study for Southeastern Wisconsin Volume II, September 1, 2001 – August 31, 2002," presented the public comment received on the study from the initiation of the study in February 2001 through August 31, 2002, including during the formal public comment period from March 21, 2002 to June 14, 2002.

This report presents in a series of appendices for the time period of September 1, 2002 through March 12, 2003:

- Formal actions taken on the preliminary plan by County Boards of Supervisors (Appendix A).
- Written comments received on the preliminary plan and study (Appendix B).
- Newspaper articles and editorials concerning the preliminary plan and freeway system reconstruction study (Appendix C).
- Listing of groups which the Commission staff has met with regarding the freeway system reconstruction study and preliminary plan (Appendix D).

### **COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS**

Between September 1, 2002 and March 12, 2003, the two County Boards within the Region that had not previously taken action, acted to fully approve, or approve portions of, the preliminary recommended regional freeway system reconstruction plan:

- Kenosha County: Through County Board Resolution 46 dated September 17, 2002, by voice vote, the County Board of Supervisors acted to fully support the preliminary recommended plan.
- Milwaukee County: Through County Board Resolution 02-275 dated February 20, 2003, by a vote of 17 ayes to 8 nays, the County Board of Supervisors acted to support the preliminary recommendation to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards. By a vote of 13 ayes to 12 nays, the County Board of Supervisors acted to support rebuilding with additional lanes on 108 miles of freeway, including the widening of IH 43 from Bender Road to Brown Deer Road to not more than six lanes. By a vote of 15 ayes to 10 nays, the County Board of Supervisors opposed the rebuilding with additional lanes of 19 miles of freeway within the City of Milwaukee and the City of Glendale, including the widening to eight lanes of IH 43 from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive and of IH 94 from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange. The Milwaukee County Executive vetoed the County Board Resolution expressing his support for the entire preliminary plan coupled with a request that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation design engineers find ways to limit impacts of freeway capacity expansion on surrounding neighborhoods. The County Board failed to override the veto on a vote of 16 to 9.

**Appendix A**

**RESOLUTIONS OF COUNTY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING  
THE PRELIMINARY FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION PLAN**

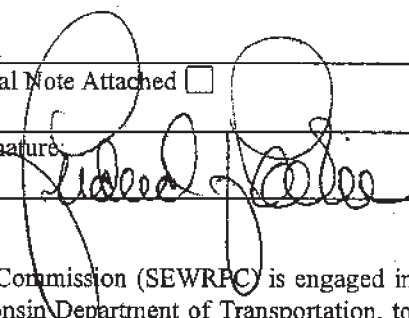
Kenosha



County

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RESOLUTION NO. 46

Subject:	
<b>RESOLUTION PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY PLAN FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF HE REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM IN SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN</b>	
Original <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Corrected <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Correction <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmitted <input type="checkbox"/>
Date Submitted <b>September 9, 2002</b>	Dated Resubmitted
Submitted By: <b>Highway and Parks Committee</b>	
Fiscal Note Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Note Attached <input type="checkbox"/>
Prepared By: <b>Frederick J. Patrie, Director of Public Works</b>	Signature: 

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is engaged in a major study, being undertaken at the request of the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, to develop a plan and program to be used to guide the efforts of the Department over the next 30 years as the deteriorating regional freeway system serving Southeastern Wisconsin is rebuilt; and

WHEREAS, an Advisory Committee created by SEWRPC, including representation from Kenosha County, has been engaged in studying the regional freeway system, in considering alternative ways in which that freeway system may be reconstructed, and in preparing a preliminary recommended regional freeway system reconstruction plan; and

WHEREAS, the regional freeway system carries on an average weekday over one-third of the daily travel in Southeastern Wisconsin and, accordingly, represents the single most important subsystem of facilities in the regional transportation system; and

WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee is seeking review of, and comment on, its preliminary recommendations in a wide variety of ways, including public informational meetings and hearings; and

WHEREAS, the reconstruction of the regional freeway system in Southeastern Wisconsin will represent a major public works program over the next several decades; and

WHEREAS, the course of action that is being charted through the current freeway study will lead to a reconstructed regional freeway system that will have to serve the Region, the State, and the Nation for the next 50 to 60 years; and

WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee is seeking specific reaction to the preliminary plan from the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors before developing a final plan that is intended to be formally adopted by each of the seven county boards in Southeastern Wisconsin and by the SEWRPC, all in an effort to demonstrate that

a substantial consensus exists in the Region as to how the Department should approach reconstruction of the regional freeway system; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary plan released by the SEWRPC Advisory Committee recommends that the freeway system be reconstructed to accomplish the following two major objectives:

1. To ensure that as the regional freeway system is reconstructed, every effort is made to meet up-to-date design standards and to thereby achieve certain safety improvements, including relocating left-hand on- and off-ramps to the right-hand sides of the freeways, eliminating lane drops at major freeway interchanges, improving driver sight lines and reducing sharp freeway curves, and providing full inside and outside shoulders for safety and refuge.
2. To provide additional capacity on 127 miles of freeways, or less than one-half of the 270-mile regional freeway system, in order to avoid a substantial increase in freeway system traffic congestion and the attendant inefficiencies, time delays, and safety and reliability problems that such increased congestion would bring; and

WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee desires formal County Board reaction on the preliminary plan as soon as possible so that that Committee can meet its charge and report its final recommendations to the SEWRPC in early fall 2002.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED:

FIRST: That the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors hereby expresses its full support for the preliminary recommended regional freeway system plan as put forth by the SEWRPC Advisory Committee and encourages that Committee to include in its final set of recommendations all of the elements of freeway system improvement that were included in the preliminary recommended plan.

SECOND: That the County Clerk transmit a certified copy of the resolution to the SEWRPC.

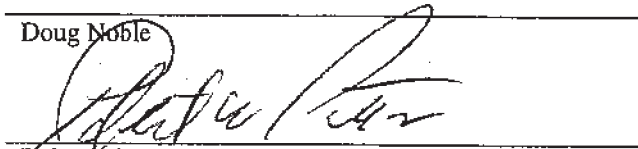
Respectfully submitted

Highways and Parks Committee

  
Dennis Elverman, Chairman

  
Darrel Haen, Vice-Chairman

  
Irv Larsen, Secretary

Doug Noble  
  
Robert Pitts



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File No. 02-275  
(Journal, May 23, 2002)

(Item 8) From Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) relative to the preliminary plan for reconstruction of the regional freeway system, by recommending adoption of the following:

**A RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is engaged in a major study, being undertaken at the request of the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), to develop a plan and program to be used to guide the efforts of the Department over the next 30 years as the deteriorating regional freeway system serving Southeastern Wisconsin is rebuilt; and

WHEREAS, an Advisory Committee created by SEWRPC, including representation from Milwaukee County, has been engaged in studying the regional freeway system, in considering alternative ways in which that freeway system may be reconstructed, and in preparing a preliminary recommended regional freeway system reconstruction plan; and

WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee is seeking review of and comment on its preliminary recommendation in a wide variety of ways, including public informational meetings and hearings; and

WHEREAS, the reconstruction of the regional freeway system in Southeastern Wisconsin will represent a major public works program over the next several decades; and

WHEREAS, the course of action that is being charted through the current freeway study will lead to a reconstructed regional freeway system that will have to serve the region, the State and the Nation for the next 50 to 60 years; and

WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee is seeking specific reaction to the preliminary plan from the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors before developing a final plan that is intended to be formally adopted by each of the seven county boards in Southeastern Wisconsin and by the SEWRPC, all in an effort to demonstrate that a substantial consensus exists in the Region as to how the Department should approach reconstruction of the regional freeway system; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary plan released by the SEWRPC Advisory Committee recommends that the freeway system be reconstructed to accomplish the following two major objectives:

- 43 1. To ensure that as the regional freeway system is reconstructed, every effort is
- 44 made to meet up-to-date design standards and to thereby achieve certain safety
- 45 improvements, including relocating left-hand on and off-ramps to the right-hand
- 46 side of the freeways, eliminating lane drops at major freeway interchanges,
- 47 improving driver sight lines and reducing sharp freeway curves, and providing
- 48 full inside and outside shoulders for safety and refuge.
- 49
- 50 2. To provide additional capacity on 127 miles of freeways, or less than one-half of
- 51 the 270 mile regional freeway system, in order to avoid a substantial increase in
- 52 freeway system traffic congestion and the attendant inefficiencies, time delays
- 53 and safety and reliability problems that such increased congestion would bring;
- 54 and
- 55

56 WHEREAS, the SEWRPC Advisory Committee desires formal County Board reaction  
 57 on the preliminary plan as soon as possible so that the Advisory Committee can meet its  
 58 charge and report its final recommendations to the SEWRPC; and

59  
 60 WHEREAS, the Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee, at a special  
 61 meeting on February 18, 2003, considered the plan and voted 6-0 to recommend approval  
 62 of certain recommendations summarized as follows:

- 63
- 64 • continue planning to address the need for improvements to address design flaws
- 65 in the system;
- 66 • continue planning to construct additional lanes on 108 miles of the system to
- 67 address capacity concerns, including segments of the freeway system in
- 68 Milwaukee County which are outside the City of Milwaukee;
- 69 • no widening beyond six lanes should occur on that segment of I-43 from Bender
- 70 Rd. to Brown Deer Rd.;
- 71 • no sound barriers should be placed on the freeway without the prior consent of
- 72 abutting municipalities;
- 73 • the WisDOT should adhere to certain conditions and undertake certain actions
- 74 as delineated later in this resolution as the plan moves forward; and
- 75

76 WHEREAS, the Committee made no recommendation by reason of a tie vote (3-3)  
 77 on a motion to support that portion of the preliminary draft plan which calls on the  
 78 WisDOT to evaluate the feasibility of constructing additional lanes on 19 miles of the  
 79 freeway system in Milwaukee County within the City of Milwaukee and the City of  
 80 Glendale, including I-43 from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive (from 6 to 8  
 81 lanes) and I-94 from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange (from 6 to 8 lanes);  
 82 now, therefore

83  
 84 BE IT RESOLVED, at the County Board Meeting of February 20, 2003, on a motion  
 85 by Supervisor Welshan, the County Board voted 15-10 to oppose that portion of the  
 86 preliminary draft plan which calls on the WISDOT to evaluate the feasibility of constructing

87 additional lanes on 19 miles of the freeway system in Milwaukee County within the City of  
 88 Milwaukee and the City of Glendale, including I-43 from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver  
 89 Spring Drive (from 6 to 8 lanes) and I-94 from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo  
 90 Interchange (from 6 to 8 lanes); and

91

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors does  
 93 hereby express its support for the preliminary recommended regional freeway system  
 94 reconstruction plan which calls for the WisDOT to evaluate and address to the extent  
 95 practicable the design and safety flaws in the current system, ultimately making those  
 96 improvements needed to address such flaws in preliminary engineering and environmental  
 97 studies in a reasonably cost-effective way which takes into account neighborhood impacts;  
 98 and

99

100 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
 101 further expresses its support for that portion of the plan which calls for the WisDOT to  
 102 evaluate in preliminary engineering and environmental studies the feasibility of adding  
 103 lanes on 108 miles of the regional freeway system, including the following segments in  
 104 Milwaukee County:

105

- 106 • I-94 from the Racine/Milwaukee County line to the Mitchell Interchange (from 6
- 107 to 8 lanes);
- 108 • I-894 from the Mitchell Interchange to the Zoo Interchange (from 6 to 8 lanes)
- 109 • I-43 from the Hale Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha County line (from 4
- 110 to 6 lanes)
- 111 • I-94 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha County line (from 6
- 112 to 8 lanes)
- 113 • USH 45 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha County line
- 114 (from 6 to 8 lanes); and

115

116 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
 117 supports no widening beyond six lanes on the segment of I-43 from Bender Rd. to Brown  
 118 Deer Rd.; and

119

120 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that no sound barriers shall be placed on the freeway  
 121 without the prior consent of abutting municipalities; and

122

123 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors does  
 124 hereby call upon WisDOT to do the following in connection with any plans for the  
 125 reconstruction of the regional freeway system:

126

- 127 1. Before Implementation of any part of the plan, all costs should be outlined for
- 128 the public including direct costs and indirect costs such as the impact the
- 129 freeway project would have on non-freeway related projects;

- 130 2. As part of preliminary engineering, WisDOT should determine if options exist
- 131 for less costly designs which would still provide for safety and modernization
- 132 improvements;
- 133 3. Request from WisDOT an examination of community impacts from the freeway
- 134 reconstruction in order to develop a mitigation plan to deal with the negative
- 135 aspects of the project resulting from the loss of homes, increased noise levels
- 136 and environmental concerns; and
- 137

138 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors does  
 139 hereby urge the WisDOT to adhere to the following conditions as the plan moves forward:  
 140

- 141 1. Planners shall adopt DBE goals similar to those used in the Miller Park Stadium
- 142 project, which is 25% DBE and 5% WBE participation and will concentrate on
- 143 meeting those goals with workers from Milwaukee County and in particular,
- 144 Southeastern Wisconsin.
- 145 2. Funding will be provided for mitigation issues such as increased mass transit and
- 146 local road aids to pay for local road improvements which may be needed before,
- 147 during and after construction of the project;
- 148 3. No portion of the cost of the project will be borne by or shifted to local property
- 149 taxpayers;
- 150 4. A noise mitigation plan which meets urban standards shall be incorporated into
- 151 the plan from its inception;
- 152 5. All counties in the region shall adopt smart growth plans;
- 153 6. Provide Milwaukee County with full reimbursement for the cost of freeway
- 154 patrol; and
- 155
- 156

157 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Clerk is hereby authorized and  
 158 directed to forward a certified copy of this resolution to the Southeastern Wisconsin  
 159 Regional Planning Commission.  
 160

161  
 162 **FISCAL NOTE:** Adoption of this resolution will not require an expenditure of funds.  
 163  
 164  
 165

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 169 WJD/ljg 2/25/03



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

# *Milwaukee County*

SCOTT WALKER • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**DATE:** March 20, 2003

**TO:** The Honorable County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** County Executive Scott Walker

**SUBJECT:** VETO OF FILE NO. 02-275

I am vetoing County Board File No. 02-275 pursuant to the authority granted to me by Article IV, Section 23(a) of the Wisconsin Constitution and Section 59.17(6) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Our county and our region face significant current and future transportation infrastructure challenges. Even with the current system, there are times when drivers face significant congestion on different parts of the freeway system and in many different directions. This congestion is a concern for more than just the travel time for commuters at the start and end of the work day, it is a real threat to businesses in our region that depend on a reliable transportation system. In turn, that congestion threatens the retention and creation of jobs in Milwaukee County.

With this in mind, it is clear that our county and our region must plan to handle the increase in traffic on the freeway system—now and in the future. Part of this plan includes support for alternatives to the freeway system, such as mass transit, and part includes support for greater capacity. At the same time, plans for greater capacity must include careful consideration of the impact on neighborhoods surrounding the current freeway system.

I believe that the message sent to regional planners should include each of the following concepts: look to meet the growing need for greater capacity of the freeway system *and* do so in a way that seeks to limit the impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

March 20, 3002

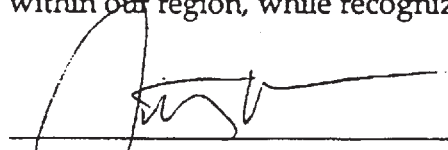
The Honorable County Board of Supervisors

**VETO OF FILE NO. 02-275**

Page 2

As amended, the resolution passed by the County Board of Supervisors does not send that message, but rather sends a conflicting view of the above priorities, and blurs the role of a governmental body in advising planners and engineers on a general policy. The amended resolution is a confusing mix of policy with very specific engineering limitations on design

Specifics on design should be left to planners and, ultimately, to engineers from the state Department of Transportation (DOT). To date, six counties have come to consensus on a majority of this plan. I urge the state DOT to take into account the areas of consensus within our region, while recognizing the impact on neighborhoods.



---

Scott Walker, County Executive

SW/SM

**Appendix B**

**WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 2002 THROUGH  
MARCH 12, 2003, FOLLOWING THE PRELIMINARY FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION  
PLAN FORMAL COMMENT PERIOD AND SINCE “RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS:  
REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY FOR SOUTHEASTERN  
WISCONSIN: VOLUME II - SEPTEMBER 1, 2001 - AUGUST 31, 2002”**



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
Milwaukee Branch  
3500 NORTH 26th STREET  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53206  
(414) 871-1000 FAX (414) 871-1091  
Jerri Ann Hamilton, President

March 11, 2003

Philip Evenson, Executive Director  
SEWRPC  
W239 N1812 Rockwood Dr  
PO Box 1607  
Waukesha WI 53187-1607

RE: Freeway Reconstruction AND Review of Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Mr. Evenson:

I am writing to you as President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Milwaukee Branch. Our organization, the oldest civil rights organization in the United States, represents the interests of African-American residents in Milwaukee.

Because of the overlap between issues involved in Freeway Reconstruction and in the Regional Transportation Plan Review, a single letter is being sent to you to be included in the comments for both proposals and to be addressed by the Commission.

With respect to Freeway Reconstruction, SEWRPC should respect and adopt the votes of the Milwaukee County Board and the City of Milwaukee against widening the freeway in Milwaukee. As you know, Milwaukee is home to three-quarters of all minorities and low-income families, and more than 85% of all African-Americans, in the SEWRPC region. Neither SEWRPC nor the Study Advisory Committee - which do not include organizations representing our communities - should be allowed to ignore or override the votes of our City and County.

We also insist that in developing, revising or amending any plan, and before sending any plan to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, you actively solicit participation from and involve low-income and minority persons. This means more than trying to "sell" a SEWRPC proposal to our communities. It means seriously involving low-income and minority communities in the decision-making process.

In addition, the Freeway Reconstruction proposal and the Regional Transportation Plan (and any other SEWRPC plans) must be amended to consider seriously the issues that affect our communities.

1) NEIGHBORHOODS: You must provide details of exactly where and how reconstruction and other transportation plans will affect our neighborhoods. We know, for example, that almost half the businesses to be torn down for freeway reconstruction are in low income neighborhoods, and many of the homes and businesses are in minority communities - yet SEWRPC has said publicly that it did not consider all options to reduce the number of homes and businesses to be torn down. We also don't know whether SEWRPC looked at the harm which could come to neighborhood businesses if traffic is diverted off our local streets and on to the freeway. Many of our communities also will be forced either to put up with the noise of increased freeway traffic or be surrounded by ugly noise barriers. SEWRPC also did not tell us what other effects of the freeway reconstruction process would be, or discuss whether and how these would affect our communities. Before the reconstruction - or any other - project goes forward, we need to know exactly how our communities will be affected and what options could have been considered to reduce those effects, and we must be involved in making decisions on how to address those issues.

2) TAXES: Any SEWRPC plan must evaluate what tax base reductions will occur - and whether, as in the case of Freeway Reconstruction, those will disproportionately effect communities like the City and County of Milwaukee, which have far more minority and low-income families than the other SEWRPC counties. Any SEWRPC plan also must evaluate what increased local taxes - such as for maintaining local roads onto which traffic is diverted during freeway reconstruction - are likely to occur, and which communities are likely to be hardest hit by those increases.

3) TRANSIT: Our communities depend on transit for access to employment, education, health care and recreation. The Regional Transportation Plan shows that almost one-third of African-Americans in Southeast Wisconsin, and many other minority persons, have no access to a motor vehicle (data which SEWRPC inexplicably left out of the Freeway Reconstruction proposal). While the proposals do discuss possible future expansions of transit, they do not guarantee that those increases will actually occur - and in fact the Regional Transportation Plan Review shows a recent decrease in bus service. The proposals do not evaluate prioritizing and implementing transit improvements before additional freeway and other road reconstruction and expansion occurs. They do not discuss what efforts are being made or are necessary to obtain dedicated funding for transit. The proposals also do not discuss whether, as we believe, spending \$6.2 billion on freeway expansion will lead to even greater reductions in mass transit funding.

4) HOUSING: There is no question that metropolitan Milwaukee - particularly the Milwaukee suburbs - are extremely segregated. However, the SEWRPC land use plan simply does not discuss race, much less the interaction of race, housing, employment and transportation. The SEWRPC plans must do more than encourage compact development. They must seriously look at Wisconsin's Smart Growth law and develop methods to require all areas, and especially suburban communities, to provide a fair share of affordable housing, and to guarantee fair housing for all the region's residents.

5) EMPLOYMENT: Any analysis of the benefits of a SEWRPC project which claims to increase jobs for low-income and minority residents must look seriously at the accessibility and type of those jobs. For example, while the Freeway Reconstruction study says that freeway widening

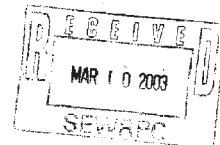
will increase jobs for low income and minority residents, it is not clear that that these jobs will be accessible by public transportation, will pay living wages or will have any benefits. Any SEWRPC plan also should make all efforts to provide road building and other construction jobs to low income and minority residents in proportion to their population in our community.

6) HEALTH AND POLLUTION: Any SEWRPC plan must look seriously at the possible health and pollution effects of any increased automobile traffic, and the planning process needs to include public health experts. For example, Southeastern Wisconsin has one of the worst ozone pollution problems in the country AND asthma rates among African-Americans that are much higher than those among whites. Although SEWRPC claims that ozone levels will decrease as cars get cleaner, the U.S. E.P.A. says that despite emissions improvements over the years, ozone pollution from motor vehicles has not gone down because people drive more. In addition, SEWRPC did not look at the issue of whether people in low-income and minority communities drive older, dirtier cars and therefore whether the problems will be worse in our neighborhoods. SEWRPC also must seriously evaluate other health effects, such as studies showing increased cancer rates and increased rates of other respiratory diseases among persons who live close to freeways - and develop ways to reduce those effects.

We urge SEWRPC to make serious efforts to obtain and listen to community input, and to address the needs of low income and minority communities, in any further actions it takes.

Very truly yours,  
*Jerry Ann Hamilton*  
Jerri Ann Hamilton  
President

WOMEN AND POVERTY  
PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVE  
3782 N. 12th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53206  
(414)265-3925



March 7, 2003

Philip Evenson, Executive Director  
SEWRPC  
W239N1812 Rockwood Dr.  
PO Box 1607  
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Dear Mr. Evenson:

We are writing on behalf of Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative. Our organization represents low-income single parents residing in central city Milwaukee.

Because of the overlap between issues involved in Freeway Reconstruction and in the Regional Transportation Plan Review, we are sending a single letter to be included in the comments for both proposals and to be addressed by the Commission.

First, we believe Milwaukee residents have spoken through the votes of the Milwaukee County Board and the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee against widening the freeway in Milwaukee. Since Milwaukee is home to three-quarters of all minorities and low-income families, and more than 85% of all African-Americans in the SEWRPC region, neither SEWRPC nor the Study Advisory Committee-which do not include organizations representing our communities-should be allowed to ignore or override the votes of our City and County.

We urge you to actively solicit participation from and involve low-income and minority persons in developing, revising or amending any plan, and before sending any plan to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. We believe this means seriously involving low-income and minority communities in the decision-making process. It also means seeking out and involving persons who speak Spanish, Hmong, and other languages besides English.

In addition, the Freeway Reconstruction proposal and the Regional Transportation Plan (and any other SEWRPC plans) must be amended to seriously consider the issues that affect our communities:

1) You must provide details of exactly where and how reconstruction and other transportation plans will affect our neighborhoods. We know, for example, that almost half the businesses to be torn down for freeway reconstruction are in low-income neighborhoods, and many of the homes and businesses are in minority

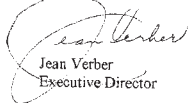


communities-yet SEWRPC has said publicly that it did not consider all options to reduce the number of homes and businesses to be torn down.

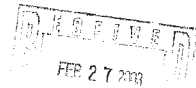
- 2) Any SEWRPC plan must evaluate what tax base reductions will occur-and whether, as in the case of Freeway Reconstruction, those will disproportionately affect communities like the City and County of Milwaukee, which have far more minority and low-income families than the other SEWRPC counties.
- 3) Our communities depend on transit for access to employment, education, health care and recreation. The Regional Transportation Plan shows that almost one-third of African-Americans in Southeast Wisconsin, and many other minority persons, have no access to a car (data which SEWRPC inexplicably left out of the Freeway Reconstruction proposal). While the proposals do discuss possible future expansions of transit, they do not guarantee that those increases will actually occur and in fact the Regional Transportation Plan Review shows a recent *decrease* in bus service.
- 4) There is no question that metropolitan Milwaukee – particularly the Milwaukee suburbs – are extremely segregated. However, the SEWRPC land use plan simply does not discuss race, much less the intersection of race, housing, employment and transportation. The SEWRPC plans must do more than encourage compact development. They must seriously look at Wisconsin's Smart Growth law and develop methods to require all areas, and especially suburban communities, to provide a fair share of affordable housing, and to guarantee fair housing for all the region's residents.
- 5) Any analysis of the benefits of a SEWRPC project which claims to increase jobs for low-income and minority residents must look seriously at the accessibility and type of those jobs. For example, while the Freeway Reconstruction study says that freeway widening will increase jobs for low-income and minority residents, it is not clear that these jobs will be accessible by public transportation, will pay living wages or will have any benefits. Any SEWRPC plan also should make all efforts to provide road building and other construction jobs to low-income and minority residents in proportion to their population in our community.
- 6) Any SEWRPC plan must look seriously at the possible health and pollution effects of any increased automobile traffic, and the planning process needs to include public health experts. For example, Southeastern Wisconsin has one of the worst ozone pollution problems in the country AND asthma rates among African-Americans that are much higher than those among whites. Although SEWRPC claims that ozone levels will decrease as cars get cleaner, the U.S.E.P.A. says that despite emissions improvements over the years, ozone pollution from motor vehicles has not gone down because people drive more.

We urge SEWRPC to make serious efforts to obtain *and listen to* community input, and to address the needs of low-income and minority communities, in any further actions it takes.

Sincerely,



Jean Verber  
Executive Director



February 26, 2003

Philip Evenson, Executive Director  
SEWRPC  
W239 N1812 Rockwood Dr  
PO Box 1607  
Waukesha WI 53187-1607

RE: *Freeway Reconstruction*

Dear Mr. Evenson:

I am writing as a follow up to the Milwaukee County Board's February 20 vote against widening certain freeway segments in Milwaukee County. As you are aware, the City of Milwaukee also voted, overwhelmingly, against widening those segments.

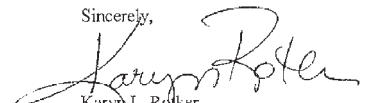
It is my understanding that you will take these opinions to the freeway reconstruction Study Advisory Committee. It is critical that the Study Advisory Committee respect the decisions of the City and County, particularly since the overwhelming majority of low-income and minority residents of the SEWRPC planning area reside in Milwaukee. We have repeatedly expressed concern over the fact that SEWRPC's Study Advisory Committee does not include any organizations representing low-income or minority communities. The lack of such participation is particularly striking since just a few years ago organizations including the NAACP, the Federation for Civic Action, the 9to5 National Association of Working Women, the 9to5 Poverty Network Initiative, the Women & Children Project, Journey House Inc., Repairers of the Breach, and Esperanza Unida Inc., among others, filed a federal complaint due to discrimination in Wisconsin's transportation programs.

It is also critical that prior to developing any revised plan or forwarding the current plan to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Study Advisory Committee and the Commission actively solicit and involve low-income and minority persons, meaningfully evaluate issues which concern or disproportionately affect those communities, and address those concerns in a comprehensive manner. Extensive details of our concerns were set out in the letter I sent you in December 2002.

207 E. Buffalo St., Suite 325  
Milwaukee, WI 53202 5774  
(414) 272-4032 • FAX (414) 272-0182  
e mail: Liberty@aclu-wi.org  
<http://www.aclu-wi.org>

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Karyn L. Rulker  
Staff Attorney  
Poverty, Race & Civil Liberties Project

cc: Gov. James Doyle  
Frank Busalacchi, Secretary, WisDOT  
Mary Peters, Administrator, Federal Highway Administration  
Scott Walker, Milwaukee County Executive  
Dan Finley, Waukesha County Executive  
John Norquist, Mayor of Milwaukee

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/22/2003 11:44:00 AM  
Name Lee Brady  
Organization  
Address  
Comments Mr. Evenson.

I understand that SEWRPC is rushing to vote next week before the no-expansion momentum overwhelms them. HOW UNDERHANDED!!

Even River Hills has asked the County Board to lay the freeway matter over while the village officials gather more information.

A much larger Marquette than is needed and billions for freeway expansion to benefit suburbanites that think a time savings of five minutes will change their lives, what a waste of money. In the long run, this will not benefit our children or their children!! I haven't even begun to mention how this will negatively impact neighborhoods like Story Hill.

Lee Brady and  
William Schaefer

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/22/2003 10:48:00 AM  
Name Sandy Folaron  
Organization  
Address  
Comments Sir;

As a resident, business owner and taxpayer, I am very unhappy that the push to expand the expressway and the elaborate plans for the Marquette Interchange seem to go without consideration for the many comments and suggestions put forth by Milwaukee's Mayor, Common Council, County Board Supervisors and certainly the PUBLIC.

You need to take into consideration these options or come up with another less invasive plan. Turning a deaf ear and continuing the "drive" for this project will not help.

Please reconsider your position and work with the residents that will ultimately pay (along with our children) for this mistake.

Sincerely  
Sandy Folaron.

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/22/2003 9:16:00 AM  
Name John Nehmer  
Organization  
Address

Comments If we don't expand the freeways from six to eight lanes, we deserve to be condemned by our children 20 years from now.

We are living with the mistakes of our fathers 40 years ago for their lack of foresight.

Anyone who drives the beltway, 94, 43, or 45 during drivetimes knows how grave the problem is.

PLEASE DO NOT CONSIDER THE OPINION OF MAYOR NORQUIST OR THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY SUPERVISORS TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THOSE OF US IN THE SILENT MAJORITY WHO ACTUALLY HAVE JOBS AND ARE TOO BUSY TO ATTEND COUNTY BOARD MEETINGS.

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/20/2003 11:59:00 PM  
Name Michael Feiertag  
Organization  
Address  
Comments

Please whatever you do EXPAND the freeways. I drive the roads all the time for my job and we need wider roads now and for our future. We are key thoroughfare for southeastern Wisconsin and for key cities around the state that rely on us for the transportation of goods. I don't care what the county board in Milwaukee votes this is something we need.

Thank you.

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/21/2003 9:01:00 PM  
Name James J. Godsil, President  
Organization Community Roofing, Inc.  
All But Dissertation(ABD), UWM Political Science  
Organizer: Milwaukee Historic Preservation Network  
Address  
Comments Dear SEWRPC Leaders Evenson and Yunker.

I live less than 1/2 mile from I94, in Bay View. My kids already have asthma. Spare my children more suffering.

I am a doctoral candidate in Political Science from UWM from the 1970s. I have done lots and lots of political work in Riverwest and the eastside and the central city in my 30 years in Milwaukee.

Please believe me when I tell you that the "feeling thermometer" around the highway widening issue as intense as any I've witnessed in years.

Please respect our opposition to the freeway widening. It will be for the good. It will spare the city a divisive conflict over the next 5 years when we had better be getting along with one another.

I don't want to become an outraged citizen.

Additional e-mail sent February 22, 2003:

Dear Mr. Yunker and Mr. Evenson,

I would appreciate being put on your e-mail list for notifications regarding transportation issues and Southeastern Wisconsin.

I have been told there are meetings this coming week, but I have also been told the information is not easily obtained by our citizens.

Do you have a web page where you might provide information about meetings, plans, and other things important to us?

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 2/13/2003 10:47:00 AM  
Name Vance Skinner  
Organization  
Address 1719 N 55th St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53208  
Comments Dear SEWRPC & County Board Supervisors.

My family and most of our friends live in Milwaukee. I work downtown, and although you are hearing loud minority opposition for the current SEWRPC plan from within the city limits, we strongly support the plan, as do many of my coworkers and neighbors. I travel from downtown and throughout Milwaukee on a regular basis. I've witnessed the traffic problems first hand, and the problem with left side on ramps in particular! A minority of those I know and work with use public transportation. However, the buses are not full, the trolleys even less to a certain degree. There is something to say about this fact, and you can throw all the money you want at public transit, it will never force someone to take the bus when it still remains convenient and the American way to drive your own vehicle. Public transit will never be similar to the likes of that in New York or Chicago. This is Milwaukee. We need to clean up the freeway congestion, support this plan, get it done right, get it done now, as the experts have proposed. Since I last heard, the mayor, nor any of the council members are experts in transportation or highway development, although the mayor is an avid urbanist. This projects increases in cost with every delay. That also something us tax payers are watching with much interest.

Please accept this email and the attached names several more folks in the majority of supporters for this plan. If your going to proceed, then do it right the first time. Remove the left hand on ramps, and widen an already overburdened system.

The Milwaukee County Board must realize that there is a large segment of tax paying voters within the city that support this plan. We read comments from those who oppose the plan and are badgered daily by the propaganda machine now in place, but we respectfully ask that they represent everyone, not just the fringe within Milwaukee. There are many reason why Milwaukee continues to decline in population, one of them is traffic, the other taxes. If this continues, my household too, will be forced to move to the suburbs.

On a final note, the Northside bypass would have been a positive alternative to widening? Consider how much that would have eased the heavy semi and commercial traffic already experienced downtown and within the city limits. Why is it this cities elected officials can never get things done right in the first place. It's time for action and enough with the inaction.

Sincerely,

Vance Skinner & Brendan Barrett  
414-453-3044  
Gina Hull  
414-332-4851

**Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records**

Date submitted 2/13/2003 10:45:00 AM  
 Name  
 Organization Riverwest Neighborhood Association  
 Address  
 Comments RIVERWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION POSITION ON FREEWAY EXPANSION

(As approved by the Association on January 14, 2003)

The Riverwest Neighborhood Association (RNA) does not approve of the current plans to rebuild and expand southeastern Wisconsin freeways at a cost of \$6.25 billion.

The Riverwest neighborhood is located in the city of Milwaukee and is east of Interstate 43 and north of downtown.

The current plan is not acceptable to our organization for the following reasons:

Does NOT have a funding plan.  
 Will fuel suburban sprawl.

Is NOT part of a comprehensive transportation plan that will:  
 Boost the mobility of those who do not own or are unable to drive automobiles.  
 Create an alternative metro-wide transit system that will efficiently move people to their destinations especially when the freeway system is ineffective during bad weather, accidents and major entertainment events.  
 Will decrease the tax base and degrade the neighborhoods next to expanded freeways.

We can only support a plan that contains the following elements:

A rebuilding of the system when necessary at current capacity levels and including carefully targeted safety improvements and good urban design.  
 A detailed, progressive funding source.  
 A comprehensive analysis which considers:  
 Land-use decisions.  
 The needs of citizens and visitors without automobiles.  
 An alternative commuter system beyond buses on concrete.

Copies to:  
 Milwaukee County Supervisors  
 Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker  
 Ald. Michael D'Amato  
 Ald. Marlene Johnson-Odom  
 State Senator Alberta Darling  
 State Representative Sheldon Wasserman  
 SEWRPC  
 Story Hill Neighborhood Association

From: R. H. Weiland Sr. and R. H. Weiland Jr.

February 11, 2003

To: Southeastern Wisconsin Region Planning Commission

We are sick and tired of constantly being told that by widening the freeways, it will eliminate the congestion. I have lived in Milwaukee since the late 50's and my son became a driver in the late 70's so we have had exposure to the system and are fairly confident when we say widening the freeway will not eliminate the congestion. The congestion will return - only greater - as we have not improved the distribution of vehicles. We have only made the roads wider up to the roads leading outwards where they are later reduced again, in other words, we have made a giant parking lot by widening the freeway. This kind of thinking is what has gotten us into problems in the past and now. Let's start to be innovative. Let's get politics and big business out of the freeway design and let the people help.

Looking at the freeways leading from downtown to the Zoo Interchange, analyze the traffic destinations. There are three distinct flow directions (to and from) during the rush hours. Traffic flow (TL) #1 is the Western communities such as Waukesha, Pewaukee, Oconomowoc and points West. TL #2 is the Southwest with Franklin, Hales Corners, Muskego, Hwy. 43 West and even parts of southern New Berlin. TL #3 is those from the Northwest communities such as Lannon/Sussex, New-rose Falls, Slinger, Hartford and West Bend among others.

Ask yourself this question. If I want to go from downtown Milwaukee to Hales Corners, why do I have to go west on 94 then south on 894 to go southwest? Yes, my other alternative route of going south on 94/43 then west on 894 is no better. If I want to go to West Bend, why do I have to go west on 94 then north on 45 before I can start going direct towards my home? There are better direct routes but we have not efficiently upgraded them. Forest Home Avenue could be a direct southwest route to the Southwest. Fond Du Lac Avenue could be a direct route to the Northwest. Picture taking both TL #2 and #3 off the 94 West route and there is no need to "widen" this section. Yes, safety issues such as left side ramps should be eliminated and also mass transit improvement should be done and I will touch on that later.

TL #2 would use an improved Forest Home Avenue by completing it with a link to the 94/43 Freeway in the area of Lapham Avenue or some point north of that. Redesign all of Forest Home Avenue from Hwy. 100 at minimum to the 94/43 ramps into a 6 lane divided Freeway with ramps at major intersections. Possibly go as far as Muskego. This would be direct route to the Southwest.

Fond Du Lac Avenue must be finished into a 6 lane Freeway from the existing ramp off of 43 N to the Northwest link into 45/41. There already is the entrance ramp and there is some completed Freeway on the west side. Finish the middle. TL #3 now has an efficient direct route to the Northwest.

ADVANTAGES

The widening design presently proposed will not be needed as a greatly improved distribution system will reduce the traffic loads on all present Freeways.

Drivers in the Southwest communities will save between 1.4 and 2.1 miles of one-way travel depending on their normally used route. 1.4 miles if they use 94 W then 894 S. 2.1 miles if they used 43 S then 894 W.

Drivers in the Northwest will save 4.4 miles of one-way travel.

Drivers heading West will benefit in better travel times by having much less congestion.

Hwy. 43 southbound will benefit and so will 894 west in better travel times.

Some traffic may be taken off Hwy. 43 northbound by those living along Sherman and 75th St. north may now take Fill Ave. then exit north to their homes instead of traveling north on 43 then west on other routes.

DISADVANTAGE

There will be displacement of people and properties along both these routes, but there also would have been some displacement relative to the "widening" idea. But, making these direct efficient routes will provide better traffic distribution and improved traffic flow on all roads.

ALTERNATIVE TO FULL PAVED NEW FREEWAYS

Both Forest Home Avenue and Fond Du Lac Avenue would still be improved as described with this concession:

They still would be improved to 6 travel lanes. During non-rush hours, they would be four travel lanes and two parking lanes. During the rush hours, there would be six lanes with NO Parking strongly enforced 1/2 hour before and thru rush hours. And I don't mean just ticketing the illegally parked vehicles, I mean towing them immediately. NO ISS, ADVIS OR BUSES.

Normal speed limits during non-rush hours and higher limits during rush hours. GET THE BEATING THEM. Lights are adjusted to the speed limits of non-rush/rush hours.

Finish extending 794 south from Layton Avenue to Oak Creek at minimum. Raise the speed limit to 30 MPH. Remove the Okeonsa ramps and direct those drivers to the Howard Avenue ramps.

Establish the truck route around Milwaukee. Good Hope should be improved to be the route connecting Hwy. 43 on the East to 45/41 on the West. All thru trucks are to use this route. This will add 11 miles of extra travel to trucks but take much congestion from the downtown interchange. Going from south to north, the route would be 94 northbound, 894 west and north, 45 north, Good Hope Avenue east to 43 Northbound.

All improvements to Fond Du Lac Avenue, Hwy. 94 West, Forest Home Avenue and 794 South should include the design and space allocation of roadways and associated transfer areas to accept Mass Transit systems even if they are not installed immediately. Planning for Mass Transit must be included now.

Our suggestion for a Mass Transit system is some variation of the following:

A bus system that extends NW to Menomonee Falls, N to Waukesha, SE to Muskego, S to Oak Creek.  
 A bus system that travels on an overhead captive roadway yet has the ability to travel at ground level at destinations for pickup and distribution.

A High Technology system. Full Electric, Diesel/Electric, Hydrogen Fuel.  
 Rubber tired buses on a captive roadway (such as Miami). Or rubber tired buses equipped with rail tracks that travel on overhead captive rails and rubber tires at ground level.  
 Also the overhead system described above.

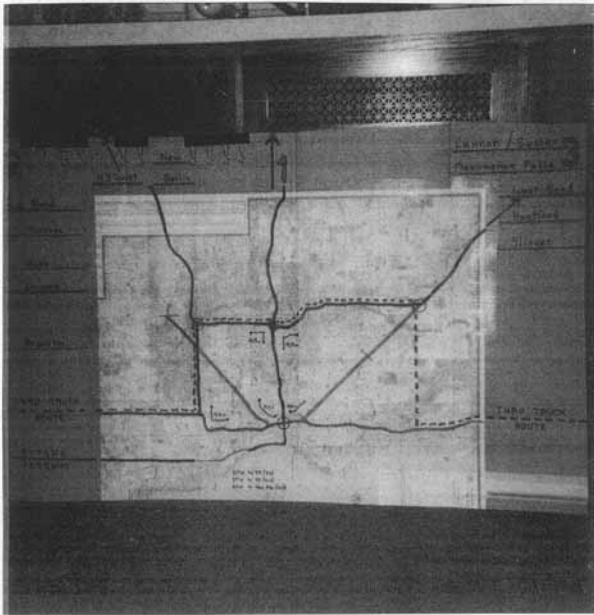
MOST IMPORTANTLY, LETS GET POLITICS AND BUSINESS OUT OF THE TOUGH DECISIONS THAT NEED TO BE MADE FOR THE PEOPLE. DESIGN AND BUILD BUSES AND MASS TRANSIT TO WHAT IS NEEDED AND EFFICIENT. DESIGN AND BUILD TO WHAT IS THE GOOD FOR THE DRIVER. MAKE MASS TRANSIT SO EFFICIENT AND APPEALING THAT PEOPLE WILL USE IT. OUR SUGGESTIONS PROMISES SUCH A GOOD PROPOSAL, FAST TRAVEL AND GOOD LOOKUP SYSTEM. ALL THIS WITHOUT HAVING TO GET OFF THE VEHICLE TO GET ON FIRST. IT CAN DROP YOU OFF NEAR WHERE YOU WORK AND NEAR WHERE YOU LIVE IN EQUAL OR LESS TIME THAN TRAVELLING A CONGESTED ROADWAY.

SRMPC's plan gives us no additional lanes of travel. This plan gives you twelve additional lanes of travel. Think of it - two versus twelve. And some of it already in place.

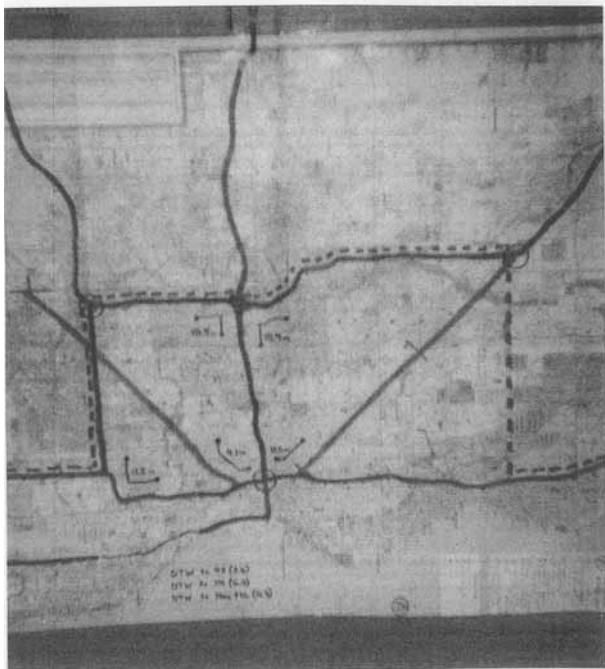
Respectfully,

Robert H. Willard Sr.  
3008 W. M. Vernon Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53208-4263  
414-341-5190

Robert H. Willard Jr.  
3303 W. M. Vernon Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53208-4264  
414-341-5191



Milwaukee Map



Closeup

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 1/22/2003 9:20:00 AM  
Name Patrick Mahoney  
Organization Direct Supply, Inc.  
Address  
Comments Dear Representative of the Department of Transportation:

Do you think the below idea could be feasible? Who (and how) should I contact individuals to get this alternate idea proposed?

Any feedback or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

-Patrick Mahoney

State and local politics, today and throughout history, have occasionally strayed from providing its citizens with solutions that would positively impact the greatest good. I would humbly like to propose a third alternative to the Freeway Expansion Project. In a phrase, create a B.E.A.M.

Build a progressive, a mutually beneficial transportation plan that will support smart growth for Wisconsin commerce and Wisconsin's natural environment. Although I cringe at the cost, cultural upset, and environmental consequences of laying down more concrete for our auto-phobic nation, I believe that compromise can be reached. Build a B.E.A.M.

My vision for the fourth lane in the Milwaukee County area, and the third lane in the suburban and ex-urban areas, would be to restrict the new expansion usage to: Buses Energy efficient vehicles (35+ mpg) Automobiles with 2 or more persons, and Motorcycles

The B.E.A.M. would constructively promote the use of cleaner transportation, mass transit and motorcycle ridership (which of course is a bastion in Wisconsin anyways)

Furthermore, for cynics and conservatives, the county (or state) could sell \$200/month "Extension Rider" memberships for automobiles that don't meet the B.E.A.M. criteria. Pardon the colloquial term, but "B.E.A.M.E.R.s" could in effect help subsidize the new freeway lanes usage and maintenance. In addition, the proceeds from the B.E.A.M.E.R. fee could be potentially divided 50% to freeway repairs and 50% to the Wisconsin Children with Asthma Foundation (the rates have risen far too steeply during the past two decades.)

This is a win-win situation. There are positive rewards for using one of the four methods within the B.E.A.M. system, revenue can be generated from the

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

"Extension Riders", and our natural environment suffers a little less.

In conclusion, I hope that someone with your public influence and respect, can bring my idea to the Milwaukee County Board. With the exception of attending school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I have lived all of my life in Milwaukee. I am proud of our community and hope that our representatives will strive to find the best possible solution that will impact the greatest possible good.

If you have any thoughts, comments or follow-up questions, feel free to e-mail me at this address. Thank you

Respectfully,

-Patrick Mahoney

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 11/7/2002 8:41:00 AM  
Name Dave Bonin  
Organization  
Address 2161 S 96th Street  
West Allis, WI 53227

Comments I recently sent Tom Barrett my opinions regarding freeway redesign in the greater Milwaukee area, per his solicitation for opinions. The form letter I received in return made it pretty clear I might as well have argued with a post, as my opinions were not what he wanted to hear. So I am now forwarding my comments to you.

I am all for improving and expanding the freeway system in the greater Milwaukee area. It is clear to me as a commuter that the system has reached its capacity and is daily being pushed beyond. Rush hour keeps growing longer and it appears that the frequency of accidents is increasing. These are both sure signs that our system is overtaxed.

I am all for improving and expanding the freeway system in the greater Milwaukee area. It is clear to me as a commuter that the system has reached its capacity and is daily being pushed beyond. Rush hour seems growing longer and it appears that the frequency of accidents is increasing. These are both sure signs that our system is overtaxed.

I am also all for making sure that any improvements and expansion be sized to meet our needs for at least the next twenty years, if not beyond. It would be absolutely foolish to spend taxpayer money on this project and not do it right. I understand this will mean displacing some homes, graves and businesses, but what practical choice have we got? I think the cost and hardships involved with displacement are far smaller than the value of the aggregated lost time and lost lives caused by congestion and accidents on our freeway system. To borrow a very liberal political argument: "If we could only save one life..."

I understand that some local "leaders" would like to see more use of public transportation, possibly aided by light rail. While increased use of public transportation is an admirable goal, the facts are that public transportation use is very low and is not significantly growing, in spite of attempts to increase its use. Until very recently, I lived one house off Milwaukee Avenue in Wauwatosa and I saw how empty the buses were. It never seemed to matter what time or what day, the buses always ran empty or very nearly so. Now, if we can't get many people to ride a bus, how are we ever going to get people to ride light rail to make it worthwhile, once its novelty has worn off? So that brings me back to the Freeway system. Like it or not, freeways are our primary transportation system, and will remain so for many years to come, and we need to ensure they can do the job we need them to do.

Many would argue that we should encourage people to live close to their work so as to minimize commuting. That's also an admirable goal but not a very practical one, at least in our family's case as I commute to a job west of our home while my wife commutes to her job east of our home. In addition, I worked for a number of companies in the 1990s, seeking new jobs as several of those companies closed. For us to have moved closer to my work with every new job would have been foolish and expensive. Lets face it, our working world is quite different than that of 30 years ago or more when our freeways were first designed. Most families now have two working adults and they

**Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records**

change jobs from time to time. Our transportation system needs to meet their needs.

One common argument against freeways expansion is that they encourage urban sprawl. I would argue that they merely service the sprawl that would happen anyway as we continue to build more and more homes to handle our ever increasing number of households, brought about by increasing population and declining household sizes. The only alternative would be to somehow encourage or force people to live in higher-density housing, such as apartments, condominiums or other similar developments. That would be unfortunate as it would rapidly raise housing costs and price owner-occupied homes out of the reach of many families. As a practical matter, I do not see that farmland is some kind special use that should be preserved above all others. Converting more farms to housing seems morally, ethically and environmentally neutral to me. Also, as a pilot, I have noticed that most land in southeastern Wisconsin is actually still relatively undeveloped, even though it may not appear that way from the windows of our cars.

I understand this will all cost me money - a lot of it - but what practical choice do we have? Lets make the necessary repairs and needed improvements to keep our freeways viable, efficient and safe.

By the way, I am not engaged in any way with construction or similar industries. I am an engineer who works for Cooper Power Systems in Waukesha.

Thanks for listening.  
Dave Bonn



Midwestern Region  
Wisconsin Division

Highpoint Office Park  
367 D Onofrio Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53719-2814  
608.829.2500

WISDOT	COOP DIR	<input type="checkbox"/>
DIST 2	POS SOUTH	<input type="checkbox"/>
	POS NORTH	<input type="checkbox"/>
	POS CENTRAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
	POS MARGO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	REAL ESTATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/>
	TECH SERV.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	LIBRARY	<input type="checkbox"/>
	FILE	<input type="checkbox"/>

RECEIVED  
NOV 8 2002

November 6, 2002

Mr. Leonard C. Brody  
7933 W. Denver Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53223

Dear Mr. Brody,

Senator Russell D. Feingold requested that I respond to your September 30, 2002 letter regarding your concern about the impact that a potential expansion of Interstate 94 would have on the Wood National Cemetery in Milwaukee County.

The proposal to reconstruct Interstate 94 is still in an early planning study stage by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is following the progress of the planning study but has not established any project development project(s) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or taken other steps to determine which options will be considered for increasing capacity. However at this early stage, it is helpful to know the views that you and the Allied Veterans Council have regarding the impact of a potential expansion project on the Wood National Cemetery.

Safety, congestion mitigation, and environmental impacts are among the concerns that would have to be considered in any reconstruction project on the SE Freeway System. I can assure you that as WisDOT begins review of the proposed reconstruction of SE Freeway sections under NEPA, the Federal Highway Administration will fully cooperate with WisDOT to explore all alternatives for increasing capacity in the Interstate 94 corridor. Safety, system capacity, traffic operations, community values and environmental considerations will be key factors considered when decisions are made for the individual project development segments of the SE Freeway System.

Thank you for letting me know your concerns. If I can provide further information or assistance, please feel free to call me at (608) 829-7500.

Sincerely,  
*Bruce E. Matzke*  
Bruce Matzke  
Division Administrator

cc: WisDOT, Leslie Fafard  
FHWA Executive Secretary  
Senator Russell D. Feingold  
Ann: Cecilia Smith-Robertson

RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD  
U.S. SENATOR  
502 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-3222  
(202) 455-1800  
feingold.senate.gov

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

November 5, 2002

Mr. Philip E. Barnes  
Division Administrator  
USDOT-Federal Highway Administration  
567 Donofrio Drive  
Madison, WI 53719-2814

Dear Mr. Barnes,

I am writing on behalf of my constituent Mr. Leonard C. Brody, Secretary of the Allied Veterans Council of Milwaukee County. Mr. Brody filed a complaint with my office concerning the proposed I 94 expansion project in Milwaukee County which could have a negative impact on the Wood National Cemetery. Enclosed please find a copy of the complaint that explains his concerns in detail.

Please respond directly to Mr Brody at 7933 W. Denver Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53223 with a copy to Cecilia Smith-Robertson in my Milwaukee Office.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

*R*  
Russell D. Feingold  
United States Senator

RDF:csr

Enclosure

- 1000 Adams Commerce Center, 1000 Adams Center, Madison, WI 53703, (608) 251-1200, (608) 251-6151 (FAX)
- 6157 Wisconsin Avenue, Room 403, Milwaukee, WI 53202, (414) 274-5152
- 401 9th Street, Room 910, Wauwatosa, WI 53095, (715) 886-6600
- 425 South Street, Room 228, La Crosse, WI 64601, (608) 785-5588
- 1645 Main Street, 6th Floor, Wausau, WI 54981, (715) 849-1518

**ALLIED VETERANS COUNCIL OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

ORGANIZED 1934, INCORPORATED 1966

September 30, 2002

Russell Feingold  
U.S. Senator  
502 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear sir,

The Allied Veterans Council of Milwaukee County is comprised of 22 Veterans Organizations. At our last meeting discussion was held on the freeway expansion adjacent to Wood National Cemetery.

Back in 1993 when some graves were disturbed by freeway construction, a firm promise was made to veterans that there would be no future such action.

The Allied Veterans Council are vehemently opposed to any change in the freeway in the area of Wood National Cemetery that would adversely impact the existing grave sites.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours very truly,

*Leonard C. Brody*  
Leonard C. Brody, Secretary  
(414) 353-2092

AMVETS \* Army & Navy Union \* Catholic War Veterans \* China Burma India Vietnam Association \* Disabled American Veterans \* Fire Retirees Association \* Jewish War Veterans \* Marine Corps League \* Military Order of the Purple Heart \* Milwaukee Non-Commissioned Officers Council \* Multiple Sclerosis Veterans \* Navy Club of the U.S.A. \* Polish Army Veterans Association \* Polish Legion of American Veterans \* Polish Veterans of World War II \* Veterans Education Committee \* Veterans of Foreign Wars \* U.S. Maritime Veterans \* VAC Veterans Association \* Veterans National Council # 10 \* Wisconsin Paralyzed Veterans Association \* Wisconsin Veterans, Chapter # 1 \* United Spanish War Veterans \* National Veterans of World War One and Two \* Veterans of World War One \*

To: Kenneth R. Yunker, P. E.  
Assistant Director  
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
P.O. Box 1607  
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

cc: Richard Maslowski  
City Administrator  
5909 milw. River Pkwy  
Glendale, Wisconsin 53209

From: Todd Schroeckenthaler  
720 W. Rock Place  
Glendale, Wisconsin 53209  
Home: 414-964 4997  
Bus: 414-906-1763



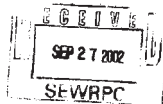
Dear Ken,

Thank you for coming into our neighborhood on July 31, 2002 to discuss the potential future freeway expansion of I-43 in our neighborhood. Your insights were very much appreciated. As you know the freeway and the noise, emissions and congestion that occur due to the freeway are very much an influence on the quality of life in this neighborhood. Milwaukee County really is only as good as the quality of life in its neighborhoods. As a neighborhood, we remain skeptical of the potential freeway expansion on this stretch of highway as increased traffic would only appear to increase the noise and congestion in this area. We believe studies have proved freeway expansion only serves to increase urban sprawl and is only a temporary fix for freeway congestion. We also hope that any further improvements on this stretch of freeway would take into consideration the noise generated by the lined pavement on the I-43 overpasses that span the Milwaukee River, Glendale Avenue and the overpass leading to Capitol Drive. These overpasses all contribute to the noise level generated by this stretch of highway.

We hope that you, the Southeastern Wisconsin Planning Commission, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation will take seriously the ideas and suggestions of our neighborhood and other neighborhoods surrounding the freeway system in Milwaukee County. Please do contact me with any further developments as they arise with regard to the freeway.

Todd Schroeckenthaler

Deb Bradley and Jim Rosenbaum  
801 East Day Avenue  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin 53217-4842



September 23, 2002

Patrick Pittenger  
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
916 N. East Avenue  
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Re: Market-based solution to freeway expansion

Dear Mr. Pittenger

This note is to repeat concerns that I expressed during a telephone conversation with you last spring. Although I believe freeways should be made safer through improved ramps and median crash-barriers, I have serious doubts that adding lanes to the freeways will provide long-lasting relief from traffic congestion.

Successful freeway renovation requires examining assumptions that have underlain freeway and transportation development, such as:

1) Is free (except for gas taxes) access via highway to downtown Milwaukee at any time of day a realistic goal? We pay for other services, sometimes even more at peak periods. I refer to telephone service, electricity, water and sewage.

2) Is there a net benefit to Milwaukee from unlimited free highway access? Is the benefit derived from access to employment in the central office district enough to offset the disincentive to settle in the city's residential neighborhoods? When far flung suburbs and rural areas have access to the downtown via freeway, they undermine the advantages provided by the city's residential neighborhoods and older suburbs.

Is there any community in the country(world) which has private busses, private rapid transit/rail, and tollways rather than freeways, and which could be used as a model for a transportation system based entirely on user fees? My own bias is that complex systems function best when decisions are guided by market-driven economics.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Rosenbaum

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 10/23/2002 2:59:00 PM  
Name Kathy Lurkus  
Organization  
Address  
Comments I am strongly against the SEWRPC freeway widening plan because:  
1) It doesn't have funding or any plan for funding.  
2) It encourages urban sprawl, creating a way for those in western suburbs to get to their homes and destinations faster at the expense of the urban residents of Milwaukee.  
3) Milwaukee cannot afford to lose homes to this project, and the tax revenue those homes provide.  
  
I find it interesting that in the discussion about urban rail, the answer many of us frequently received for it not going forward is that, "there is no funding." Yet, there will mysteriously be funding for the freeway widening project.  
  
I would like SEWRPC to present alternate transportation options. This is not acceptable to taxpayers in Milwaukee, and not acceptable because of its impact on our environment.  
  
This message has also been forwarded to my county supervisor.

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 10/8/2002 11:46:00 AM  
Name Gary W. Gussick  
Organization  
Address 6066 N. Apple Blossom Lane  
Glendale, Wisconsin 53217  
Comments Received via Wise Ride Transit Study comment form  
  
Although I received the letter in May, I want to express my feelings on freeway expansion.  
  
Some of the words I would like to use do not belong in a communication like this. Two words I can use are STUPID and SELFISH.  
  
To propose to damage as much property and land, spend tons of money, and save a tiny number of minutes of travel time is greedy. Those who would benefit the most-suburban dwellers-are generally the same upper class, high money people who will spend \$5.00 for a cup of "fancy" coffee, and sit for 10 or 15 minutes in a bank line in their vehicles rather than get out and go into the bank! Let's examine priorities!  
  
I live very close to the Silver Spring area, suggested for change to eight lanes. This area is already "tight." The intersection with S. S. and I-43 was just redone a few years ago. That did enough damage to the environment and the peacefulness of my area. Anyone who doesn't think it matters should come here and listen to the riotous braking may truck drivers do.  
  
I really do not think enough credit has been given to the effects of work-at-home/telecommuting. Perhaps longer delays would encourage more people to work in that manner. A wonderful fringe benefit of this would be less use of fuel for cars, less dependence on foreign oil!  
  
As I have aged, I have become more and more of a skeptic to the extent that I wonder how much of this expansion is really the result of wanting to sell concrete, asphalt, girders, and the like.  
  
Since the failure of the Hoan, I have stopped using the high-rise bridge. (I have always marveled at the clever name-but that's another story.) Ridding the city of that monstrosity will be a glory to behold.  
  
Please tell me of any "extra" ways to put some sanity into the project!

## Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records

Date submitted 9/27/2002 4:17:56 PM  
Name  
Organization  
Address  
Comments 194, Zoo to Marquette.  
  
A center contraflow lane should be constructed with movable barriers to add one lane in the peak AM and PM hours. (HOV/HOT lanes could be considered on the contraflow lane.)

**Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records**

**Date submitted** 9/23/2002 4:29:50 PM  
**Name** Thomas Crawford  
**Organization** Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District  
**Address** 260 West Seebach Street  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204-1446  
**Comments** Please work with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District to incorporate the regional stormwater management concerns and expectations into the design and Environmental Assessments of transportation projects. Management of the peak surface runoff created by new transportation projects is critical to avoiding even increasing peak flood runoff from new impervious surface as the MMSD Service Area approaches full build out (2050), the basic principle of new Chapter 13, MMSD Rules (see the MMSD website: www.mmsd.com);

Opportune dialogue will focus design for post-construction management of runoff from the one-percent regional flood event, which is not addressed in the minimum requirements of DOT's Facility Guidance Manual. The FGM is not one-stormwater-BMP-fits-all-situations Guidance. Community Sensitive Planning must recognize that urbanized watersheds are different.

MMSD's regional stormwater runoff rates are based on extensive watershed modeling. The modeling should be considered by DOT and transportation consultant partners.

MMSD has not been a traditional transportation stakeholder. Transportation improvements have important regional peak-flood impacts. Peak runoff concerns must be considered as the planning process moves forward.

The foregoing is a personal observation of the undersigned. MMSD is in the first year of implementing regional "do no harm" stormwater runoff management rules. Implementation is a learning process, runoff from new transportation projects even more so.

highway construction and for public transit.<sup>4</sup> By 1972, Milwaukee's mass transit system - then operated by a private company - was in financial crisis. The costs of abandoning mass transit, however, were even more serious. For the more than 90% of transit users who lacked any alternative mode of travel, the deterioration of mass transit would lead to difficulty accessing schools, jobs and medical care.<sup>5</sup> Community consequences also would be severe.

It should be emphasized that at this point there can be far-ranging consequences from ignoring or abandoning the public passenger transportation system . . . One consequence can be that for each dollar *not* spent on the mass transit system, several dollars of the public money may be required to accommodate the private automobile. For each dollar *not* spent on transit, an undefinable amount of public money may be needed to meet increased welfare costs. In addition, aside from costs measurable in terms of dollars, there can be costs incurred in terms of social and human values.<sup>6</sup>

The urban sprawl facilitated by freeway expansion was overlaid with, and related to, racial segregation in housing. Federal housing policies that tended to encourage segregation were "exacerbated by real estate steering, insurance redlining and other housing business practices in metropolitan Milwaukee intended to safeguard property values by preventing racial and ethnic mixing. Together, these practices set the pattern for and reinforced neighborhood segregation. . . .<sup>7</sup> Residential relocations caused by freeway construction compounded the problem,<sup>8</sup> while sprawl quite literally paved the way for white flight from the city.

By 1972:

the over-emphasis on the auto and the efforts to serve the public demands for eliminating congestion [had] produced some serious detrimental side effects. Contrary to the former claims of the planners that transportation facilities only serve planned land uses, there are strong indications that there exists an important feedback

<sup>4</sup>*Id.* pp. 10-12.

<sup>5</sup>*Analysis of Milwaukee's Transit Service* by Barton-Aschman Associates (April 1970), p.17.

<sup>6</sup>*Id.*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>7</sup>*Embracing Diversity: Housing in Southeast Wisconsin*, by Public Policy Forum (Feb. 2002), p. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Various relocation studies, done primarily in relation to urban renewal projects, have found that white households, on the average, migrate longer distances than black households of similar economic circumstances. Presumably, this is due to residential segregation, imposed or self-imposed." *Freeway Impact in Milwaukee, Phase I Final Report*, by Theodore K. Miller (Milwaukee Urban Observatory, March 1972), p. 14.

**Freeway Reconstruction Study Database Records**

**Date submitted** 9/2/2002 6:07:00 PM  
**Name** Stan Wroczynski  
**Organization** Milwaukee resident and freeway user since their opening.  
**Address**  
**Comments** Dear SEWRPC  
 Couple months ago I've received pamphlet from Milwaukee Department of City Development. In it was a quote: You Don't Have To Build Four Lanes Highways! To Make it Safe - said Brett Hulsey, Sierra Club's senior Midwest representative, to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel May 1, 2002. This statement represented the overall view of the authors of this pamphlet.

I could not said it better myself. Of course four lanes will not make it safe. Go with the flow, look at the trends, as I've been looking and fighting the traffic on Milwaukee freeways for the last thirty some years, and build 6 (six) lanes for today, however, 8 (eight) may not be sufficient for the day after.

Whatever will be build make absolutely sure all interchanges, i.e. Marquette, Zoo, Beloit, etc., and most busy on/off ramps are big enough for the next three or four generations of commercial and private vehicle users with a safety margin of 3 or 4. If this means relocating some businesses and private properties so be it. I'll move it necessary.

whereby the freeway is an important determinant of land use. The existing spread of costly urban sprawl has been accelerated to a large degree by the extension of the freeway system into vast amounts of formerly rural lands. The central city has also belatedly come to realize that as a result of freeway construction, it has had to bear a number of social and economic costs such as removal of needed housing, increased pollution, reduced tax base, and the loss of jobs.<sup>9</sup>

Racial and economic disparities in methods of transportation were evident by the 1990 census.

Nearly all (95 percent) of Waukesha County residents, 93 percent of Washington/Ozaukee County residents, 91 percent of northern Milwaukee County suburban residents, and 92 percent of southern Milwaukee County suburban residents used a car to commute to work. By contrast, 62 percent of central city residents used a car to travel to work, and 23 percent used the bus.<sup>10</sup>

During the 1990s, it appeared that the transportation planning process finally had begun to meaningfully consider the needs of minority and low income families. The process of developing a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Milwaukee East-West corridor "was inclusive of all residents and population groups in the study area and did not exclude any person because of income, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or handicap."<sup>11</sup> In the early 1990s, an Alternative Analysis of transit needs in the Milwaukee East-West corridor began. By 1993, an LPA had emerged. The AA then transitioned into a Major Investment Study (MIS), which was completed in 1996.<sup>12</sup>

By 1997, the LPA had been selected. It included four components: reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange in downtown Milwaukee; reconstruction of I-94 with the addition of special lanes for carpools and buses ("high occupancy vehicle," or HOV, lanes) from the Marquette Interchange to State Hwy. 164 in Waukesha; light rail transit in Milwaukee County, from downtown to the zoo with stops at key destinations (such as the medical complex on the county grounds) and consideration of a possible spur through the central city along Fond du Lac Ave. or the 30<sup>th</sup> St. rail corridor; and a 21% expansion of bus service in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties "targeted at

<sup>9</sup>*Freeway Task Force Report*, p. 12.

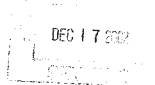
<sup>10</sup>*Removing Transportation Barriers to Employment: Assessing Driver's License and Vehicle Ownership Patterns of Low-Income Populations*, by John Pawasarat and Frank Stetzer, (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, July 1998)

<sup>11</sup>*Milwaukee East-West Corridor Transportation Study*, Major Investment Study/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Locally Preferred Alternative (Wisc. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, May 1997), pp. 2-6.

<sup>12</sup>*Id.*



December 16, 2002



Philip Evenson  
 Executive Director  
 SEWRPC  
 W2319 N1512 Rockwood Dr  
 PO Box 1607  
 Waukesha WI 53187-1607

**RE. Impact of Freeway Reconstruction on Low Income and Minority Communities**

Dear Mr. Evenson:

We are writing to express our serious concerns regarding the Preliminary Draft of the *Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin*. For decades, freeway planning failed to meaningfully involve low income and minority communities or seriously address their needs. We assume that some form of reconstruction ultimately will occur, and it is crucial to ensure that significant numbers of disadvantaged business enterprises and significant numbers of minority and low income residents benefit from any such project. However, the current evaluation simply does not remedy the long history of neglect, nor does it come close to meaningfully or adequately addressing the broad range of related needs and circumstances of low income and minority residents of the planning area.

For half a century, transportation planning in metropolitan Milwaukee has emphasized freeway construction and automobile travel. Although the original freeway plan made it clear that it was crucial to "encourage" the use of buses, mass transit never received the same support as automobile travel. During the 1960s, SEWRPC vigorously promoted a freeway plan to "provide practically unlimited capability for automobile users to drive anywhere in the Milwaukee urban area in relatively short periods of time."<sup>1</sup> At the same time, federal mandates for regional transportation planning limited the influence of the central city, thereby increasing the bias in favor of automobiles.<sup>2</sup>

Compounding the problem was the enormous financial disparity between funds available for

<sup>1</sup>*Preliminary Plan for a Comprehensive Expressway System for the City of Milwaukee*, by Ammann & Whitney (Sept. 1952), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>*Freeway Task Force Report* (Milwaukee Dept. of City Development, June 1972), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>*Id.*, p. 10.

getting workers to jobs in the two counties.<sup>13</sup> The expansion of public transit was crucial for minority and low income communities: at the time the MIS/DEIS was issued, the central city unemployment rate was 12%, while many jobs in Waukesha County remained unfilled.<sup>14</sup> Both employers and employees frequently cited public transportation problems as a major problem.<sup>15</sup>

But actual implementation of the LPA never occurred. In late 1997, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Wisconsin Governor flatly refused to allocate funding for any portion of the Preliminary Engineering/Final Environmental Impact Study dealing with light rail. These and subsequent actions, such as attempts to transfer transit authorization money to highway modernization and reconstruction, effectively prevented the use of federal mass transit funds for the locally preferred transit options.

Thus, fifty years after the initial freeway plan was developed, inadequate mass transit, the lack of affordable housing, pollution, reductions in the tax base, and job loss remain of crucial concern, especially for low income and minority communities.

Limited automobile access, and therefore limited benefit from the proposed freeway reconstruction, continues to disproportionately burden minority and low income residents. There are clear disparities in auto ownership and drivers licensure between the predominantly low income and minority residents of Milwaukee's central city and the predominantly white residents of suburban counties.<sup>16</sup> Census data from 2000 confirms that Milwaukee residents, especially those in the central city, remain far more likely to rely on public transportation than do suburban residents.<sup>17</sup> In fact, in some urban census tracts the number of people carpooling, using public transportation or even walking to get to work far exceeds the number of persons driving to work alone.<sup>18</sup> Yet, as discussed

<sup>13</sup>*Id.*, p. S-1.

<sup>14</sup>*Major Impact Study/Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (Wis. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Oct. 1996), p. 1-17. Numerous other studies and reports confirmed this mismatch, which clearly and disproportionately affected minority and low income residents of the central city.

<sup>15</sup>*Id.*

<sup>16</sup>*Removing Transportation Barriers to Employment.*

<sup>17</sup>In the city of Milwaukee - which has far greater than average percentages of minority and low income residents - 10.3% of residents rely on public transportation, while in Washington, Ozaukee and Waukesha counties fewer than 1% of residents do so.

<sup>18</sup>For example, in census tract 156 on the near south side of Milwaukee, near the freeway - which is only 13.5% white/non-Hispanic and in which 28% of residents are poor - of workers age 16 or older, 29% carpoolled, 25% drove alone, 24% took the bus, and 18% walked to work. In census

above, opposition from certain state officials, suburban officials, and their supporters undermined the Locally Preferred Alternative for corridor development, an alternative which would have meaningfully expanded the scope and capacity of the public transportation system. Now, neither HOV lanes nor light rail along the East-West corridor - both of which would significantly benefit those who lack access to automobiles - are even part of SEWRPC's plan.

The effects of inadequate access to transportation for low income and minority residents is exacerbated by the fact that Metropolitan Milwaukee remains one of the most segregated areas in the nation. About 45% of the people who live in the city of Milwaukee are white, while every local municipality except two in Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington Counties is 95% or more white.<sup>19</sup> Racial isolation is particularly severe for African-Americans.<sup>20</sup> Nor can segregation be blamed simply on income rather than race: even high-income African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to live in lower-income neighborhoods than are poor whites.<sup>21</sup>

Freeway reconstruction and expansion also will disproportionately burden Milwaukee County - where the vast majority of the region's minority and low income residents live - by resulting in a greater loss of tax base than in suburban counties.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, it is unlikely to enhance economic development opportunities in the city of Milwaukee as much as in suburban counties, because of such factors as the short supply of existing in-fill opportunities in the city. Thus, central city residents will likely be subject to the double burden of a greater decline in property tax revenue and a lesser increase in economic benefits. Further, to the extent that reconstruction facilitates

tract 140 on the near north side, where 56% of the residents are poor and only 5% are white/non-Hispanic, 45.5% of workers relied on public transportation.

<sup>19</sup>*Embracing Diversity*, p. 2. The two "less white" municipalities are the city of Waukesha, which is 87% white, and Mequon, which is 93% white.

<sup>20</sup>In metropolitan Milwaukee, African-Americans tend to live in neighborhoods that are 69% black, while whites tend to live in neighborhoods that are 87% white. Latinos tend to live in neighborhoods that are about 31% Latino and about 52% white. *Separate and Unequal: The Neighborhood Gap for Blacks and Hispanics in Metropolitan America*, by the Lewis Mumford Center (SUNY-Albany, Oct. 15, 2002), data for Metropolitan Milwaukee PMSA.

<sup>21</sup>In metropolitan Milwaukee, the median income of neighborhoods in which poor whites live was \$45,014 - higher than the median income of neighborhoods in which affluent blacks (\$35,111) and affluent Hispanics (\$43,049) live. *Separate and Unequal*, Sources of Neighborhood Inequality for Metropolitan Milwaukee PMSA.

<sup>22</sup>*Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan*, Overview pp. 15-16. Much of this loss apparently will be concentrated in the city of Milwaukee, which has even larger percentages of minority and low income residents than the county.

economic development outside of Milwaukee, many central city residents will have a difficult time obtaining and retaining those jobs due to their limited access to transportation and the lack of affordable housing in suburban communities. In addition, even with respect to employment on any reconstruction which occurs, it must be noted that for FFY 2003 the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is seeking to use a mere 7.2% of its Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for disadvantaged business enterprises meeting "race and gender conscious" goals.<sup>23</sup>

Consequently, Milwaukee's low income and minority residents will almost certainly receive fewer benefits from any increased employment due to freeway expansion - and racial disparities in earnings are already severe. An analysis of 2000 census data showed that black households in the Milwaukee area earned an average of 49 cents for every dollar earned by whites, with Milwaukee ranking 49<sup>th</sup> among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas in the size of that disparity. The median income of white households was \$50,754 while it was less than half that amount - \$24,957 - for black residents in metropolitan Milwaukee (which includes Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington counties).<sup>24</sup>

In addition, there is no question that Southeastern Wisconsin has excessive levels of ozone pollution, which is itself caused in large part by motor vehicles. The U.S. E.P.A. classifies it as a "severe" nonattainment area.<sup>25</sup> Ozone can cause childhood asthma,<sup>26</sup> a disease which affects nearly 100,000 Wisconsin children under age 18; which is far more common in southeastern Wisconsin,<sup>27</sup> and which is far more prevalent among blacks than whites.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup>*Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Plan, FFY 2003* (Wis. Dept. of Transportation), p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>*Racial gap in pay runs deep. Disparity among blacks, whites remains sharp, census shows*, by Dennis Chappman and Vikki Ortiz (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Sept. 25, 2002), citing data analysis by the Mumford Center.

<sup>25</sup>*Green Book: Classifications of Ozone Nonattainment Areas* (U.S. E.P.A., Air Quality Planning and Standards, Nov. 4, 2002). Milwaukee-Racine is one of only five communities listed in this second-most-serious nonattainment classification. (Los Angeles is the only community listed in the most serious "extreme" nonattainment classification.)

<sup>26</sup>*Study Shows Link Between Ozone and Asthma: 10 year-long IUSC study demonstrates ozone, found in smog, to cause asthma in children* (EHS, Feb. 2, 2002); see also, e.g., *Primate research shows link between ozone pollution, asthma*, by Andy Fell (Dateline UC Davis, Oct. 13, 2000).

<sup>27</sup>*Wisconsin Medicaid HMO Comparison Report: 1998/1999* (Wis. DHFS), citing *Children's Health System: Milwaukee Allies Against Asthma* (April 2000).

<sup>28</sup>*Id.*

#### A. Federal Law Requires Consideration of Freeway Reconstruction Impacts on Minority and Low-Income Persons.

Numerous federal laws, regulations and orders make it clear that transportation planners must address issues of concern to low-income and minority residents. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964<sup>29</sup> and its implementing regulations prohibit applicants for or recipients of federal funds - including transportation funds - from discriminating based on race, color or national origin. Under federal regulations, no recipient of U.S. DOT funds may, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, "[p]rovide any service, financial aid, or other benefit to a person which is different, or is provided in a different manner, from that provided to others under the program;"<sup>30</sup> "[r]estric[t] a person in any way in the enjoyment of any advantage or privilege enjoyed by others receiving any service, financial aid, or other benefit under the program;"<sup>31</sup> "[d]eny a person an opportunity to participate in the program through the provision of services or otherwise or afford him an opportunity to do so which is different from that afforded others under the program;"<sup>32</sup> or "[d]eny a person the opportunity to participate as a member of a planning, advisory, or similar body which is an integral part of the program."<sup>33</sup>

In determining the site or location of facilities, a recipient or applicant may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding persons from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any program to which this regulation applies, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the Act or this part.<sup>34</sup>

Even in the absence of prior discriminatory practice or usage, a recipient in administering a program or activity to which this part applies, is expected to take affirmative action to assure that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of the program or activity on the grounds of race, color, or national origin.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> 42 U.S.C. §2000d

<sup>30</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (1)(ii).

<sup>31</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (1)(iv).

<sup>32</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (1)(vi).

<sup>33</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (1)(vii).

<sup>34</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (3).

<sup>35</sup> 49 C.F.R. §21.5 (7).



These civil rights protections apply to programs administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).<sup>36</sup>

In addition, federal law requires that "possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects relating to any proposed project on any Federal-aid system have been fully considered in developing such project, and that the final decisions on the project are made in the best overall public interest."<sup>37</sup> Highway projects also must be consistent with implementation of a national ambient air quality standard for each pollutant for which an area is designated as a nonattainment area under the Clean Air Act.<sup>38</sup>

Federal Orders on environmental justice also must be considered. In 1994, the President issued Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations*. This Order directs all federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

The Federal Highway Administration subsequently issued its own Environmental Justice Order<sup>39</sup> to provide more extensive instructions on environmental justice requirements. As the FHWA made clear:

it is FHWA's continuing policy to identify and prevent discriminatory effects by actively administering its programs, policies, and activities to ensure that social impacts to communities and people are recognized early and continually throughout the transportation decisionmaking process - from early planning through implementation.

Should the potential for discrimination be discovered, action to eliminate the potential shall be taken.

Requirements of the transportation planning process include:

providing public involvement opportunities and considering the results thereof, including providing meaningful access to public information concerning the human health or environmental impacts and soliciting input from affected minority and

<sup>36</sup>23 C.F.R. §200.7.

<sup>37</sup>23 U.S.C. §109(h).

<sup>38</sup>23 U.S.C. §109(i)(1).

<sup>39</sup>*FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, Order: 6640.23 (Dec. 2, 1998).

low-income populations in considering alternatives during the planning and development of alternatives and decisions.<sup>40</sup>

The FHWA Order also requires data collection on, among other things:

- (1) population served and/or affected by race, or national origin, and income level;
- (2) proposed steps to guard against disproportionately high and adverse effects on persons on the basis of race, or national origin; and,
- (3) present and proposed membership by race, or national origin, in any planning or advisory body that is part of the program.<sup>41</sup>

The FHWA Order mandates not only local community involvement, but also consideration of potential adverse effects of FHWA programs and activities on minority and low-income populations.

Adverse Effects means the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, which may include, but are not limited to: bodily impairment, infirmity, illness or death; air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination; destruction or disruption of man-made or natural resources; destruction or diminution of aesthetic values; destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality; destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services; vibration; adverse employment effects; displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations; increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community; and the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of, benefits of FHWA programs, policies, or activities.<sup>42</sup>

#### **B. The Planning Process Violated the Rights of Minority Residents.**

##### 1) The Planning Process Failed to Adequately Involve Low-Income and Minority Persons.

Thirty years ago, reports made it clear that transportation planners largely ignored the concerns and needs of central city residents. The rejection of the LPA, and SEWRPC's subsequent

<sup>40</sup>*Id.*

<sup>41</sup>*Id.*

<sup>42</sup>*Id.*

inadequate evaluations mean that the situation has simply not been remedied.<sup>43</sup>

Current federal regulations explicitly require that planners "seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households which may face challenges accessing employment and other amenities."<sup>44</sup> In addition, the FHWA Environmental Justice Order requires obtaining input from low income and minority communities. Moreover, the fact that the Order requests data on the racial composition of planning and advisory boards indicates that there is an obligation for such bodies to actively seek representation from, and participation of, low-income and minority persons in the planning process.

At the time the reconstruction study was issued, every one of the 21 SEWRPC commissioners and the 71-member management team was white. Moreover, the fact that each of the seven counties in the region has three members on SEWRPC - even though Milwaukee County has nearly half the region's population and at least three-quarters of its poor and minority households, and even though all the major redesign will occur in Milwaukee - continues to dilute the voices of low income and minority families, as it has for decades.

Further, nothing in the *Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin* indicates that SEWRPC sought broad and meaningful participation from minority and low income households. The record does not show that efforts were made to request, encourage, facilitate or ensure the participation of low income and minority persons on planning committees. To the contrary, not a single representative of any organization serving minority or low income communities was included on the Study Advisory Committee.<sup>45</sup> The record also fails to show that the Commission solicited testimony or other input from low income and minority communities in such a way that

<sup>43</sup>It is also striking that SEWRPC rejected the comments it did receive at public hearings - the vast majority of which opposed widening the freeway. According to the Commission itself, of the 310 persons who provided comments specific to the preliminary freeway plan, 46 persons supported the plan; 23 persons supported a plan alternative; 19 persons commented, but did not express support or opposition; 222 persons opposed the plan; and nearly 1500 postcards opposing the plan were received. *SEWRPC Memorandum Report 153*. In addition, SEWRPC's *Model Resolution for Counties: Resolution Providing Comments on the Preliminary Plan for Reconstruction of the Regional Freeway System in Southeastern Wisconsin* included only two options: for counties to express "full support" for the plan, or for counties to "generally support[] the preliminary recommended regional freeway plan" with modifications. The Model Resolution did not, however, include an option for counties to reject the plan. The structure of this resolution clearly indicates the Commission's bias in favor of freeway expansion.

<sup>44</sup>23 C.F.R. §450.212(a)(6).

<sup>45</sup>*Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan* (Oct. 2002), p. 6.

significant numbers of these households were likely to participate (by holding meetings and public hearings in central city locations in all affected communities;<sup>46</sup> by holding those meetings at times and locations accessible by public transportation; by advertising those meetings through local community media and other methods likely to garner attention from Central City residents, etc.). Further, the Commission failed to publicize its data on the racial effects of the project prior to the time public hearings were held or provide a meaningful opportunity for public input on issues of concern to low income and minority communities.

Instead, "outreach" - which occurred after the preliminary reconstruction plan had already been issued - consisted of sending representatives to "briefing sessions" with unnamed members of the minority community, selected by a marketing firm chosen and paid by the Commission, to emphasize the benefits of freeway reconstruction.<sup>47</sup> This simply does not equate with ensuring meaningful involvement from a broad spectrum of the community at all stages of the planning process. It is critical that such participation be ensured and that such input be obtained and meaningfully considered before any further steps are taken.

##### 2) The Planning Process Failed to Involve Persons Who Do Not Speak English.

According to U.S. Census data from 2000, 5.8% of the Milwaukee County population age 5 and older - more than 50,000 people - do not speak English well. This includes more than 30,000 Spanish speakers, more than 10,000 speakers of "other Indo-European languages," and more than 8000 speakers of Asian and Pacific Island languages. This data also shows that in the city of Milwaukee, 7.5% of the persons age 5 and older do not speak English well.

<sup>46</sup>For example, no public hearings were held in the largely Latino neighborhoods on the near south side of Milwaukee.

<sup>47</sup>*SEWRPC Memorandum Report 153*, Additional Briefings to Interested Groups and Municipalities, *Agreement Governing Consultant Services for Community Outreach to be Performed for a Planning Study of the Reconstruction of the Freeway System of Southeastern Wisconsin* (May 9, 2002), which includes, *inter alia*, strategic planning to develop a "community relation's" strategy that identifies the benefits of SEWRPC's projects to the community." Further, while SEWRPC's report states that the minority persons contacted expressed support "for ensuring that there be "significant" participation of minority and disadvantaged firms on the reconstruction and that there was a need for minorities to be a significant portion of the labor force - goals which do need to be supported - no specific goals for such participation were included in SEWRPC's evaluation. Nor is it clear that these briefings mentioned the fact that Wis. Dept. of Transportation has a goal of using only 7.2% of its FHWA funds for gender and race conscious disadvantaged business enterprises, or whether such information would have affected the opinions of those who were briefed. There also is no indication that at these briefings the Commission or its consultant addressed such issues as access to mass transit, long term job development, tax base reduction in Milwaukee, the relationship between housing and transportation, community cohesion, or health and environmental issues.

Moreover, in Milwaukee, Kenosha and Racine counties disproportionate percentages of the anticipated residential and commercial/industrial relocations will be borne by persons living in census tracts with higher-than-average Latino concentrations.<sup>54</sup> In addition, in Milwaukee, Racine and Waukesha Counties disproportionate shares of the anticipated residential relocations will be borne by persons living in census tracts with higher-than-average concentrations of Asians and Pacific Islanders, and in Milwaukee County this is also true of the anticipated business relocations.<sup>55</sup>

In a letter dated June 5, 2002, the ACLU of Wisconsin specifically raised the need to provide information to persons who do not speak Spanish. Yet SEWRPC never provided information or held hearings in any language other than English. Thus, the Commission intentionally and completely failed to ensure the participation of LEP persons in the planning process.

The failure to provide proper services for limited English proficient (LEP) persons can constitute national origin discrimination. Federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Transportation, have made it clear that:

in order to avoid discrimination against LEP persons on the grounds of national origin, recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure that such persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information those recipients provide, free of charge.

Title VI and its regulations require recipients to take reasonable steps to ensure "meaningful" access to DOT recipients' programs and activities. The key to providing meaningful access to LEP persons is to ensure that recipients and LEP beneficiaries can communicate effectively and act appropriately based on that communication.<sup>56</sup>

### C. The Preliminary Recommendations Fail to Adequately Evaluate the Effects of Reconstruction on Low-Income and Minority Residents.

#### 1. SEWRPC Wrongly Asserts that Minority and Low Income Persons are Not Over-Represented Among Those Living in Proximity to the Freeways.

SEWRPC's evaluation starts with the assertion that "there is not a significant over representation of minority or low income populations in areas located in proximity to the freeways

<sup>54</sup>Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin (Preliminary Draft), (SEWRPC Planning Report No. 47), Table 11.

<sup>55</sup>*Id.*, Table 9.

<sup>56</sup>DOT Guidance to Recipients on Special Language Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Beneficiaries, 66 Fed. Reg. 6733-6747 (Jan. 22, 2001).

proposed to be widened . . ."<sup>57</sup> In defining "proximity," SEWRPC states that census blocks "within one-half to three-fourths of a mile adjacent to the freeway system, or bisected by a freeway system, were considered as located in proximity to the freeway system."<sup>58</sup> Yet nothing in the study explains or supports this method of calculating the effects of the reconstruction. Nowhere does the study identify which adverse effects were considered, why the 1/2 to 3/4 mile figures were chosen, what potential adverse effects exist in this range that do not exist in locations closer to (or more distant from) freeways,<sup>59</sup> or whether SEWRPC evaluated the effects of spending years in proximity to the actual reconstruction as well as the ultimate impact of the freeway itself.

Second, in determining who was likely to be affected by freeway widening, the study considered the full 127 miles proposed to be widened. However, the segments proposed for what SEWRPC itself defines as "Major Redesign" cover far fewer miles and are located entirely within Milwaukee County<sup>60</sup> - where 87% of the region's African-Americans, 77% of its minorities, and 75% of its poor families reside.<sup>61</sup>

Third, although most of SEWRPC's studies evaluate freeway widening segment by segment - not the 127 miles as a whole<sup>62</sup> - its assessment of the effects of reconstruction on minorities and low income families provides no such breakdown. This precludes any analysis of whether, as seems likely, minorities or low income persons are disproportionately affected by particular and/or more controversial portions of the proposal, such as the expansion of I-94 to eight lanes in the city of Milwaukee.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>57</sup>Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup>*Id.*

<sup>59</sup>The study does not evaluate, for example, whether noise pollution is a greater problem for persons living 1/4 mile from the freeway than for those living 3/4 of a mile away, nor does it address the racial or economic composition of persons living in the "1/4 mile" rather than "3/4 mile" distances.

<sup>60</sup>Design, Evaluation and Consideration of Freeway System Reconstruction Alternatives (SEWRPC Planning Report No. 47), Map 6-1.

<sup>61</sup>Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations. Calculations derived from Table 4.

<sup>62</sup>See, e.g., Design, Evaluation and Consideration of Freeway System Reconstruction Alternatives.

<sup>63</sup>Notably, the city of Milwaukee - where the largest concentration of low income and minority persons resides - opposes the freeway reconstruction plan, and especially the widening of I-94 within the city. Resolutions of County Boards of Supervisors and of Municipalities Regarding the Preliminary Freeway System Reconstruction Plan.

Fourth, even under SEWRPC's questionable methodology, 18.1% of the persons located in proximity to freeways proposed to be widened are African-American, but only 14.3% of the area's residents are African-American, and 9.2% in proximity are Hispanic, even though only 6.5% of area residents are Hispanic.<sup>64</sup> All other minority groups and poor families are also over-represented among those residing in proximity to the freeways proposed to be widened. The evaluation fails to indicate how or why the Commission decided that such disparities are not significant.

#### 2. Minority and Low Income Persons Will Be Disproportionately Affected by Relocation Caused by Freeway Reconstruction.

Factors which must be included in evaluating the effect of transportation projects on minority and low-income communities include "destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality; . . . adverse employment effects; displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations; . . . [and] isolation, exclusion or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community."<sup>65</sup> Although SEWRPC's evaluation of the effect of freeway reconstruction on minority and low-income residents includes an assessment of whether these groups will be disproportionately affected by residential and business relocations, it does not appear that the Commission adequately evaluated the data or considered the required factors in determining that minorities and low income households were not significantly affected by the reconstruction plan. Instead, SEWRPC claims that the residences and businesses "which are estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan - particularly those required for additional lanes - are not disproportionately located in areas with above county or regional averages of minority or low income populations."<sup>66</sup>

However, 82% of the total expected residential relocations and 65% of the business relocations - and 92% of the residential relocations and 100% of the residential relocations attributed to adding lanes - are in Milwaukee County, where the vast majority of the region's minority and low income families live.<sup>67</sup> At the same time, the adverse tax base effects on Milwaukee County, particularly those from adding lanes, far exceed the adverse tax base effects in the suburban counties.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>58</sup>Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations, Table 4.

<sup>59</sup>FHWA Environmental Justice Order.

<sup>60</sup>Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations, p. 8.

<sup>61</sup>*Id.*, compiled from Tables 7-13.

<sup>62</sup>The tax base will be reduced .21% in Milwaukee and .13% in the suburban counties. Of this, the tax base reduction for additional lanes is .13% in Milwaukee and .05% in the suburbs. Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan, Overview pp. 15-16. Apparently the city of Milwaukee - where even greater numbers of poor

Second, the extent of minority and low income concentration - not just the fact that it is above average - is a significant factor in determining such effects as adverse employment effects and adverse effects on such issues as community cohesion. Yet in determining that relocation poses no significant impact on minority communities, the commission compares the number of affected census blocks with "above regional average concentrations of minorities" to the total number of census blocks with "above regional average concentrations of minorities" without identifying just how far "above average" the "total" blocks are. In other words, it cannot be ascertained whether the areas with greater effects are more heavily minority or low income than the total number of areas with above average concentrations of minority and low income persons.<sup>69</sup>

Third, there is no analysis of whether construction of particular freeway segments have disproportionate impacts on particular minority or low income communities. For example, 20% of the residences to be relocated are in neighborhoods which are 93-97% minority, yet there is no analysis of whether or how relocation could affect those communities.<sup>70</sup>

Fourth, even under SEWRPC's own analysis, there is clearly a disproportionate impact on minority and low income communities. For example, 25% of the residences to be acquired are in census blocks with above regional average total concentrations of minorities. Twenty-nine percent of the businesses to be acquired and 16.2% of the residences are in regions with above average concentrations of Hispanic persons, 34.3% of the residences and 16.1% of businesses are in areas with above average concentrations of Asian/Pacific Islander persons; and 36.6% of the residences and 22.0% of the businesses are in areas with above average concentrations of American Indians and Alaska Native persons. In addition, 45% of the businesses to be acquired are in areas with above average concentrations of low income persons.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, the Commission does not evaluate whether there are likely to be adverse business, employment, community or other effects for these minority or low-income communities.

and minority families live - will be hit hardest by the tax base reduction.

<sup>64</sup>For example, SEWRPC uses as its denominator for low-income census tracts all those with "above average" - i.e., more than 7.5% - of low income persons, but does not identify which tracts in that denominator have 8% low income persons and which have 80% low income persons, and whether the tracts with greater numbers of low income persons are more likely to be affected by relocations. Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations, p. 7.

<sup>65</sup>*Id.*, p. 7.

<sup>66</sup>*Id.*, pp. 4-7.

3. The Planning Process Failed to Adequately Consider the Transportation Needs and Circumstances of Low Income and Minority Residents or to Guarantee Implementation of Mass Transit Options.

Federal regulations require that transportation planners consider "methods to reduce traffic congestion and to prevent traffic congestion from developing in areas where it does not yet occur, including methods which reduce motor vehicle travel, particularly single-occupant motor vehicle travel," as well as "methods to expand and enhance appropriate transit services and to increase the use of such services (including commuter rail)."<sup>66</sup> Civil rights regulations and the Environmental Justice Order also requires specific consideration of how such issues affect low income and minority communities. In addition, Wisconsin's Smart Growth statute requires that by 2010 local communities consider "objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including... transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, [and] walking..."<sup>67</sup>

As discussed above, in metropolitan Milwaukee minorities are far less likely than whites to have drivers licenses or automobiles, and far more likely to rely on public transportation - facts which obviously affect the benefits these communities are likely to realize from freeway reconstruction. These concerns were clearly recognized and addressed in the LPA process - but are largely ignored by the current evaluation. Instead, in stark contrast to the detailed analysis which pervades those portions of its report minimizing the effect of reconstruction on minorities and low income families, SEWRPC's comment on modes of transportation is limited to a vague statement that in the "central urban areas of the Region... many residents are of minority population and/or low income and do not have access to an automobile."<sup>68</sup> This omission occurred even though data on transportation patterns and methods from the 2000 census is publicly available. SEWRPC's failure to use available data or to meaningfully evaluate how low income and minority persons get to work, child care, school, medical care, and other locations, results in an insufficient analysis of the effects of providing - or failing to provide - expanded mass transit options on low income and minority communities.

An equally critical concern is that SEWRPC's inclusion of suggestions for increased bus service is simply insufficient to ensure actual implementation. History shows that recommendations

<sup>66</sup>23 C.F.R. §§450.208(12),(13).

<sup>67</sup>§66.1001(2)(c), Stats.

<sup>68</sup>*Evaluation of the Impacts... on Minority and Low Income Populations*, p. 11. For example, 2000 census data shows that in many census tracts in the city of Milwaukee the number of persons who commute using public transportation exceeds the number who drive their own automobiles. There is also no indication from the study as to how many people walk to work, school or other locations, and what improvements and protections are necessary for this population.

for regional rapid bus transit, which SEWRPC again suggests, were made at least 30 years ago<sup>69</sup> but have yet to occur. Many other proposals urged by low income and minority residents over the decades, such as the light rail and HOV lanes included in the LPA, are not even part of SEWRPC's current proposal, largely because of resistance from predominantly white suburban communities and their supporters. While it is a positive step that SEWRPC recommends a 70% increase in bus service,<sup>70</sup> the plan fails to guarantee full and permanent funding for mass transit alternatives. Further, the plan does no more than suggest future study - not implementation - of options such as "detailed corridor transit alternatives" including commuter rail or light rail, or "hold[ing] open the potential to restructure local transit service..."<sup>71</sup>

As it has been for decades, regionalizing and expanding mass transit remains critical to providing low income and minority residents with meaningful access to jobs and other necessary services and amenities. The evaluation's omission of final studies on transit alternatives; the failure to address the relationship between transit and non-employment needs such as medical care; the lack of specific steps and concrete timetables for mass transit expansion; the failure to incorporate the high occupancy vehicle lanes or the light rail proposal urged in the LPA as part of the reconstruction plan; and the refusal to delay a final decision on freeway reconstruction and widening until this information is available, significantly reduces the likelihood that necessary transit options will ever be implemented.

The completion of necessary studies - and the actual expansion and maintenance of mass transit - must occur before a final decision on freeway widening is made for a number of reasons. Implementation of high-quality, effective, and affordable mass transit alternatives may well reduce the need for additional freeway capacity. In addition, for the years during which the actual reconstruction is expected to occur, increased transit options will be critical to preventing even greater congestion on both freeways and surface streets.<sup>72</sup> Finally, requiring expansion of mass transit prior to any automobile-focused freeway reconstruction will help ensure that the needs and circumstances of low-income and minority residents are not shunted aside, as they have been so many times in the past.

<sup>69</sup>*Analysis of Milwaukee's Transit Service*, p. 36.

<sup>70</sup>*Evaluation of the Impacts... on Minority and Low Income Populations*, p. 11.

<sup>71</sup>*Id.*

<sup>72</sup>Notably, to date only 75 of the planned 529 miles of arterial surface street improvements have been implemented. *Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan, Overview*, p. 41.

4. The Planning Process Failed to Adequately Consider the Employment Needs and Circumstances of Low Income and Minority Residents.

SEWRPC also seeks to justify freeway expansion by asserting that the effect of expansion will be to increase the number of jobs available to central city residents by the year 2020. Once again, the analysis is simply inadequate.

First of all, even under SEWRPC's own analysis, freeway expansion is projected to lead to greater access to jobs for residents of communities which have few minority or low income persons than for those persons in communities that are predominantly minority or low income.<sup>73</sup>

Second, SEWRPC's analysis of job creation benefits is based on a projected increase in jobs accessible within one-half hour by car. As discussed above, many - and in some census tracts, most - residents do not have automobiles, a burden disproportionately borne by low income and minority families. Although this concern was recognized and addressed in the LPA, the current evaluation contains no discussion of whether, with or without freeway reconstruction, the jobs it touts will be accessible by public transportation (or other modes of transportation than automobiles) at all, or what the expected commuting times will be for persons who do not own automobiles.

Third, an analysis that a certain number of jobs will be accessible says nothing about the quality of those jobs, such as wage levels, fringe benefits, and opportunities for advancement. Nor does the study establish whether good-paying jobs will be as accessible to low income and minority households as they are to other households, with or without freeway reconstruction.

Fourth, even with respect to jobs on the reconstruction project itself, SEWRPC fails to guarantee jobs for low income and minority residents even in proportion to their prevalence in the regional population, much less in proportion to their prevalence in Milwaukee, where most of the major reconstruction work will occur.

Fifth, freeway widening will result in a significant reduction of travel on surface streets including some, such as North and National Aves., which cross through low income and minority neighborhoods.<sup>74</sup> However, SEWRPC fails to evaluate whether such a reduction in automobile travel could have adverse effects on businesses located along these corridors, or related adverse employment and community effects for these neighborhoods.

<sup>73</sup> SEWRPC's study projects a 15.9% increase of jobs accessible within 30 minutes for central city residents and a 16.9% increase for suburban residents. *Evaluation of the Impacts... on Minority and Low Income Populations*, Table 15.

<sup>74</sup>*Design, Evaluation and Consideration of Freeway System Alternatives*, p. 21.

5. The Planning Process Failed to Adequately Consider Alternate Possibilities to Address the Housing Needs - and Related Transportation Needs - of Low Income and Minority Residents.

FHWA regulations mandate consideration of the "overall social, economic, energy and environmental effects of transportation decisions (including housing & community development effects...)"<sup>75</sup> and the "effect of transportation decisions on land use and land development, including the need for consistency between transportation decisionmaking and the provisions of all applicable short range and long-range land use and development plans"<sup>76</sup> As noted above, FHWA's Environmental Justice Order also requires the planning agency to consider the social and economic effects of transportation decisions on minority and low-income populations. In addition, Wisconsin's Smart Growth law mandates that, by 2010, local governments consider affordable housing issues. This housing element:

shall also identify specific policies and programs that... provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, [and] policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing...<sup>77</sup>

As part of its regional planning, SEWRPC issued *A Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin:2020*. Yet in its 146 pages, this study fails to mention race, much less evaluate the intersection of race, income, housing and transportation planning. There is no question that this failure discriminates against minority and low income residents of the planning region.

As discussed above, residential segregation in the metropolitan Milwaukee area - especially in the suburbs - is among the worst in the nation. These hyper-segregated housing patterns are now reinforced by suburban zoning and development ordinances which preclude construction of affordable housing and therefore make it virtually impossible for many low income and minority persons to move to the suburbs.

Addressing the affordable housing issue has clear and direct implications for transportation planning.<sup>78</sup> If a decision on freeway expansion is made contingent upon the compliance of suburban

<sup>75</sup>23 C.F.R. §450.208(a)(11).

<sup>76</sup>23 C.F.R. §450.208(a)(14).

<sup>77</sup>§66.1001(2)(b), Stats.

<sup>78</sup>SEWRPC argues that freeway expansion does not cause sprawl. *Design, Evaluation and Consideration of Freeway System Reconstruction Alternatives*, pp. 22-23. Incredibly, the Commission relies, among other factors, on the claim that "travel time" has little influence on travel

governments with Smart Growth mandates for including low- and moderate-income housing in development plans, as well as with fair housing enforcement, the need for transportation capacity enhancements will likely decrease as low- and moderate-income persons (including persons of color) who work in the suburbs are able to live closer to their places of employment. On the other hand, if these issues are ignored, the tax dollars of low income and minority residents will continue to be used to subsidize freeway expansion for communities where they are unable to live.

6. The Planning Process Failed to Adequately Consider the Pollution and Health Effects on Low Income and Minority Residents.

Federal regulations mandate consideration of the environmental effects of transportation decisions, including the effects on the "human, natural and manmade environments."<sup>29</sup> FHWA's Environmental Justice Order requires the planning agency to consider the health and environmental effects of transportation decisions on minority and low income populations. Under the Clean Air Act, agency actions must be consistent with attainment of ambient air quality standards. SEWRPC's evaluation fails to comply with these requirements.

As much as half of ozone-related pollution (VOCs and NOx) is caused by motor vehicles. As discussed above, southeastern Wisconsin is classified a "severe" nonattainment area for ozone pollution.<sup>30</sup>

As also discussed above, asthma is far more prevalent among blacks than whites.<sup>31</sup> Studies also show that ozone is one of the causes of childhood asthma.<sup>32</sup> As the Wisconsin Department of

decisions. *Id.*, p. 24. If that is the case, there seems to be even less reason to spend \$6 billion to reduce commuting time from the suburbs to Milwaukee by 5 minutes. It is also striking that while in one report SEWRPC minimizes the role of travel time, in another it touts the increase in jobs which freeway widening purportedly will make available within one-half hour driving time (*i.e.*, SEWRPC itself believes that widening the freeways will make it possible for more persons who live (or "sprawl") farther away to reach more jobs). *Evaluation of the Impacts . . . on Minority and Low Income Populations*, Table 15. Moreover, SEWRPC's conclusion that sprawl is not related to freeway expansion runs counter to E.P.A. and other reports. *See, e.g., Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act: Mobile Sources* (U.S. E.P.A. Air Quality & Standards); *Freeway Task Force Report*, p. 12.

<sup>29</sup>23 C.F.R. §450.208(11).

<sup>30</sup>*Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act: Mobile Sources*.

<sup>31</sup>*Id.*

<sup>32</sup>*Study Shows Link Between Ozone and Asthma: 10 year-long USC study demonstrates ozone, found in smog, to cause asthma in children* (ENS, Feb. 2, 2002); *see also, e.g., Private research*

Health and Family Services is aware, asthma is the most common chronic childhood illness.<sup>33</sup> It affects nearly 100,000 Wisconsin children under age 18, a majority of whom live in southeastern Wisconsin.<sup>34</sup>

Not is asthma the only ozone-related respiratory problem.

Scientific evidence indicates that ambient levels of O<sub>3</sub> [ozone] not only affect people with impaired respiratory systems, such as asthmatics, but healthy adults and children as well. Exposure to O<sub>3</sub> for several hours at relatively low concentrations has been found to significantly reduce lung function and induce respiratory inflammation in normal, healthy people during exercise. This decrease in lung function generally is accompanied by symptoms including chest pain, coughing, sneezing and pulmonary congestion.<sup>35</sup>

A correlation between elevated ambient ozone levels and increases in daily hospital admission rates, as well as mortality, has also been reported.<sup>36</sup> In addition, older persons who reside in areas with higher levels of air pollution are "significantly" more likely to require medical treatment, particularly for lung ailments.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, recent research indicates a significant increase in cancer risk for those living near freeway corridors, caused primarily by mobile source (*i.e.*, vehicle) emissions.<sup>38</sup>

The preliminary evaluation, however, fails to address these issues. Instead, SEWRPC simply asserts that ozone levels will be reduced because newer vehicles emit lower levels of the compounds

*shows link between ozone pollution, asthma*, by Andy Fell (Dateline UC Davis, Oct. 13, 2000).

<sup>33</sup>Notably, neither the Wis. Dept. of Health and Family Services nor any public health organization was included in the freeway reconstruction Study Advisory Group.

<sup>34</sup>*Wisconsin Medicaid HMO Comparison Report*.

<sup>35</sup>*Green Book: Criteria Pollutants: Ozone* (U.S. E.P.A., Air Quality Planning & Standards), 40 C.F.R. §59.10.

<sup>36</sup>*1997 Air Quality Management Plan*, Chapter 2, by South Coast Air Quality Management District.

<sup>37</sup>*Bad Air Means Poor Health, Study Says*, by Associated Press (Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, Nov. 12, 2002), citing a study by Health Affairs.

<sup>38</sup>*Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study-II*, by South Coast Air Quality Management District (2000).

which create smog.<sup>39</sup> This conclusion runs completely contrary to E.P.A. studies showing that despite efforts to reduce vehicle emissions, "most types of air pollution from mobile sources have not improved significantly."<sup>40</sup> These emission problems are due largely to the continued increase in automobile travel, which is itself caused largely by the fact that people live farther from where they work and mass transit is unused or unavailable.<sup>41</sup>

The Commission fails to evaluate whether disproportionate health or environmental effects will continue to occur among low income and minority communities. Nor does SEWRPC analyze whether, as seems likely, lower-income and minority residents of the central city tend to drive older vehicles, and therefore will be more likely to continue to be subject to higher levels of vehicle-related emissions and associated health and pollution problems. It does not evaluate whether low income and minority residents tend to live closer to heavily traveled freeways (or to freeways which may become more heavily traveled as a result of widening), and thus risk higher levels of potentially associated diseases such as cancer. It does not establish a contingency plan to offset any growth in emissions from increased vehicle use if in fact induced travel or increased emissions do occur. And, as discussed above, it fails to meaningfully evaluate methods to ensure a significant expansion of mass transit use and of affordable housing in the suburbs in order to minimize these health and environmental effects in minority and low income communities.

**Conclusion**

It is clear that in developing its freeway reconstruction and expansion plan, SEWRPC has failed to meaningfully or adequately involve low income and minority communities or to address the needs of these communities. It is critical that the Commission cease any further efforts to press


<sup>39</sup>SEWRPC's own documentation indicates that NOx levels did not decrease significantly from 1990 - 1999, and it is unclear why the Commission projects a significant future decrease. *Design, Evaluation and Consideration of Freeway System Reconstruction Alternatives*, p. 13 and Figure 6-26.

<sup>40</sup>*Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act: Mobile Sources*.

<sup>41</sup>*Id.* SEWRPC argues that freeway widening will not induce increased traffic because, it claims, "transportation is one of many possible causes of decentralization, and is generally not considered a significant cause compared to rising affluence, cost of living, schools, environmental amenities, preferences for single family homes and larger lots, perceived and/or actual crime and safety, and other factors." *Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan, Overview*, p. 21. Yet it is completely unclear why SEWRPC asserts that such factors as choosing to live farther from urban centers - when commuting times remain short - do not represent travel induced or facilitated by freeway expansion, and it cites no studies or data to support a position which conflicts with the E.P.A.'s conclusions.

forward with the freeway plan unless and until these issues have been fully resolved.

Sincerely,

  
Karyn L. Rytker  
Staff Attorney  
Poverty, Race & Civil Liberties Project

COMMISSION STAFF RESPONSE TO DECEMBER 16, 2007, AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF WISCONSIN LETTER

This memorandum responds to the letter of December 16, 2007, from the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin (ACLU) which provided comments and questions regarding the Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study for Southeastern Wisconsin, and specifically with respect to the Preliminary Draft of Appendix C of the study report, entitled "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin."

The following responds to each of the principal points contained in the letter:

- A. On pages 9 through 12 of the December 16 letter, the ACLU stated that it believed the planning process for the freeway study violated the rights of minority residents of the Region. It was also stated that the planning process failed to adequately involve low income and minority persons and persons who do not speak English. Associated with those statements, the ACLU made the following specific comments:
  - The Commission has rejected the comments received at public hearings.
  - The model resolution distributed to each County Board Chair for their use in taking action on the preliminary recommended plan indicated the Commission's bias in favor of freeway expansion.
  - That the Commission is comprised of 21 members, three from each of the seven counties of the Region, and that all of whom are white, and that, therefore, "the voices of low income and minority families" are diluted.
  - The Study Advisory Committee does not include any representatives of organizations that serve low income and minority persons.
  - The Commission report prepared under the freeway reconstruction study, entitled "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin," did not document the Commission's public participation efforts for the study. Not documented in that draft report were efforts to solicit input from minority and low income communities, including the locations and times of public meetings and hearings and efforts to notify minority and low income communities about those public meetings and hearings.
  - Outreach occurred only after the preliminary plan had been issued, and consisted only of meetings conducted with the assistance of Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., to emphasize the benefits of freeway reconstruction.
  - The Commission has failed to ensure participation of limited English proficiency (LEP) persons in the planning process.

The ACLU stated in its letter that the comments received at public hearings have been rejected. That is not correct. The Study Advisory Committee, to date, has taken no action in response to comments received regarding the preliminary recommended plan. The Advisory Committee completed the preliminary recommended plan in March 2002, and directed Commission staff to solicit comments and feedback on the preliminary plan. The most recent series of public meetings and hearings was completed in June 2002, but other activities continue. Six of the seven County Boards within the

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Region acted on the preliminary plan in 2002, but Commission staff continued to meet with the Milwaukee County Board to obtain its action on the preliminary plan in February 2003. Additionally, Commission staff continues to participate in meetings to provide information about the study and the preliminary recommended plan, and to obtain public input. For example, the Commission has recently participated in meetings in the Village of Whitefish Bay and in the Cities of West Allis, Wauwatosa, and Milwaukee – including two meetings on the near south side of the City of Milwaukee, a predominantly Hispanic community. The Advisory Committee will consider all comments received on the preliminary plan prior to formulating a final recommended plan to be considered by the Regional Planning Commission.

Second, with respect to actions by County Boards within the Region, the Commission did transmit a model resolution to each County Board Chair to obtain County Board reaction to the preliminary plan. The distribution of a model resolution reflecting the preliminary plan recommended by the Study Advisory Committee – which includes County Board Chairs and Executives from each county – is standard procedure. The County Boards within the Region are under no obligation to make use of the model resolution, and can – and do – modify the model resolution or develop new resolutions as they see fit. Also, the model resolution had a section where County boards could identify changes to the preliminary plan which they desired.

Third, regarding the membership of the Commission, the representation of each county – three Commissioners from each of the seven counties in the Region – is specified in the State law which established the Commission. All of the current Commissioners are white, but that has not always been the case. The membership of the Commission is not decided by the Commissioners or by Commission staff, but chosen by the counties and the Governor. Notably, the Commission has yet to take action in any way regarding the freeway reconstruction study. The Study Advisory Committee is guiding the study, and the preliminary recommended plan reflects the action of the Study Advisory Committee, not the Commission. The Commission will not act upon the findings of the regional freeway study until after the Study Advisory Committee has considered all public comment on the preliminary plan, formulated a final recommended plan, and forwarded that final recommended plan to the Commission.

Fourth, with respect to the membership of the Study Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee includes representatives from each county of the Region. The members of the Advisory Committee are expected to represent their respective constituencies, with Milwaukee County having more representatives than any other county in the Region. In fact, seven of the 15 – almost half – of the local government representatives are from Milwaukee County, approximately the County's representation of the total population of the Region. As noted in the ACLU letter, Milwaukee County has the highest concentrations of low income and minority persons in the Region. Milwaukee County representatives include the Milwaukee County Executive; the Milwaukee County Board Chair; the Milwaukee County Board Public Works, Transportation, and Transit Committee Chair; the Mayor and Common Council President of Milwaukee; and the Mayors of Oak Creek and Wauwatosa. The representatives from City and County of Milwaukee include three African American elected officials.

Fifth, with respect to the public outreach efforts – including the involvement of low income and minority persons in the planning process, comprehensive public outreach efforts have been undertaken throughout the study. These efforts were not documented in the "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin," but rather in the first two volumes of the study "Record of Public Comments" – which are available on the study web site ([www.sewrpc.org/freewaystudy](http://www.sewrpc.org/freewaystudy)). These two reports are entitled, "Record of Public Comments: Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study for Southeastern Wisconsin: Volume One-

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February 1-August 31, 2001" and "Record of Public Comments: Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study for Southeastern Wisconsin: Volume Two-September 1, 2001-August 31, 2002." A third volume is under preparation that will include the period from September 1, 2002 to the conclusion of the study. We note that the first two reports contain detailed information regarding the public outreach efforts, and mention only some of the activities here.

- A total of 19 public meetings and hearings were held on the study. Eleven of those meetings were held after the completion of the preliminary recommended plan by the Study Advisory Committee. Of those 11 meetings, five were held in Milwaukee County, and the locations of all meetings were chosen where transit service is available. Examples of meeting locations include the Martin Luther King Community Center and Manitoba Elementary School in Milwaukee, and a Goodwill Industries Community Center in Waukesha. All public meetings and hearings were publicized through paid advertisements in numerous newspapers, including the Milwaukee Community Journal; through press releases distributed to a comprehensive regionwide media list, including the Milwaukee Community Journal, the Milwaukee Courier, the Milwaukee Star, the Spanish Journal, and the Spanish Times; and through the direct mailing of study newsletters which announced the meetings to individuals and groups, including groups that represent low income and minority persons. Examples of groups that received all study newsletters include the American Indian Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, the Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc., the African American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Milwaukee, Inc., the Hmong-American Friendship Association, the Lao Family Center, the United Community Center, and the National Association of Minority Contractors, Wisconsin Chapter. (Each of these groups received all five issues of the study newsletters distributed from March 2001 through April 2002—the media contacts received all newsletters and press releases.)
- A survey was conducted in July and August of 2002, with 55,000 of the Region's households randomly selected to receive survey forms. Of the over 15,000 completed survey forms returned, nearly half were from Milwaukee County residents.
- The Commission contracted with a firm, Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., to assist with outreach efforts to minority communities, and numerous meetings were held with minority community leaders to provide information regarding the freeway reconstruction study and receive feedback on the study.

Sixth, it was suggested in the ACLU letter that outreach occurred only after the preliminary plan had been issued, and consisted only of meetings conducted with the assistance of Creative Marketing Resources, Inc. As previously noted, and documented in the first two volumes of the study "Record of Public Comments," a comprehensive public outreach campaign was undertaken throughout the conduct of the study. This effort included numerous activities prior to the completion of the preliminary plan, including the issuance of newsletters, the conduct of a series of public meetings in 2001, the development and maintenance of a study web site, and the conduct of meetings with interested groups and municipalities. Some of these meetings were with groups that represent minority and low income communities. Examples of such groups include the African American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Milwaukee, Inc., the Business Council Inc., Congregations United to Serve Humanity (CUSH), and the Racine/Kenosha Economic Inclusion Coalition.

Regarding the involvement of Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., the Commission contracted with this firm because the Commission believed that Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., could assist the Commission in soliciting input regarding the study and reaction to the preliminary plan. The purpose of a preliminary plan is to attempt to determine what elected officials and citizens agree or disagree with so that a final recommended plan – developed to respond to the feedback received—can be supported by each of the Region's counties. Information developed by Commission staff was provided to the minority community leaders regarding costs, benefits, and impacts of the preliminary

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plan. Among those attending these meetings were State representatives, Milwaukee County Board supervisors, and City of Milwaukee aldermen that represent minority constituents; representatives of minority-owned businesses, the Hmong-American Friendship Association, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS); minority media representatives from the Milwaukee Times and the Milwaukee Courier; and representatives of the Metcalfe Park Residents Association, the Milwaukee Public Schools Board of School Directors, and the Community Brainstorming Conference. Additional information was requested of Commission staff regarding contracting and employment opportunities for minorities and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) real estate relocation and acquisition program, and provided to meeting attendees with the assistance of WisDOT staff. The minority community and business leaders, elected officials, and media expressed particularly the need for minority-owned businesses—disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) firms—to significantly participate in the reconstruction of the regional freeway system, and the building of the capacity of minority-owned and DBE firms through the work of the freeway reconstruction. Also, they particularly expressed the need for minorities to be a significant part of the labor force involved in the reconstruction of the entire regional freeway system. This input was obtained with the assistance of Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., and reported in the second volume of the study "Record of Public Comments," but recommendations regarding this issue have yet to be completed or presented to the Study Advisory Committee for its review. It is expected that those recommendations will be included in final study recommendations.

Seventh, the ACLU stated in its letter that it believed the planning process failed to involve persons who do not speak English. The Commission is aware of its obligation under Federal law to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to documents to those persons with limited English proficiency. The Commission is in the process of preparing a language assistance plan that will guide our steps in this respect, as we continue transportation planning efforts. While the Commission is developing a plan for future implementation of steps to provide language assistance, steps have been taken, and continue to be taken, with respect to the ongoing freeway reconstruction study and other transportation planning efforts. The meetings held with the assistance of Creative Marketing Resources, Inc., included participation from representatives of the Hmong-American Friendship Association and United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS). An eight-page brochure regarding the freeway reconstruction study and the preliminary plan has now been produced in both English and Spanish. The Spanish language version of the brochure includes a phone number for Spanish-speaking persons to call should they desire more information in Spanish. The Commission is currently taking additional steps to continue to work to involve LEP populations.

- B. On pages 12 through 22 of the letter, the ACLU stated that it believed there was a failure to adequately evaluate the effects of freeway reconstruction on minority and low income persons. The ACLU made numerous more specific statements within that portion of the letter, and each statement will be addressed in turn.
  - 1. On pages 12 through 14 the ACLU stated that it believed the Commission incorrectly asserts that minority and low income persons are not over-represented among those living in proximity to freeways. Associated with that statement the ACLU made the following specific comments:
    - There was no explanation included in the "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" to indicate why a distance of 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile was considered "in proximity" to a freeway, or what potential adverse impacts were considered for residents residing in proximity to freeways. Also, there was no documentation of the potential adverse effects of living in proximity to freeways during actual reconstruction, and following reconstruction.

- The "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" specifically addressed the potential impacts of the 127 miles of proposed additional lanes, but did not consider the potential "major redesign" preliminarily recommended for many Milwaukee County freeways.
- The "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" did not analyze the potential impacts to low income and minority persons on a segment-by-segment basis, but rather on a county-by-county and regional basis.
- The percentages of persons that are members of some minority groups residing in proximity to freeways proposed to be widened is greater than the regional representation of those groups – 18.1 percent of the persons located in proximity to freeways proposed to be widened are Black/ African American, but 14.3 percent of the Region's residents are Black/ African American and 9.2 percent of the persons located in proximity to freeways proposed to be widened are Hispanic, but 6.3 percent of the Region's residents are Hispanic. The Commission failed to explain why the differences are not significant.
- The ACLU also indicated in this section of its letter that it believes that the City of Milwaukee opposes the preliminary recommended plan, citing the resolution of the City of Milwaukee Common Council.

First, regarding the definition of being "in proximity to" freeways proposed to be widened of 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile from the freeway, that distance was utilized because the analysis used census block information, and this is the approximate size of census blocks that were available for the analysis regionwide. Also, the distance reflects the size of the neighborhood immediately adjacent to the freeway, with a high density neighborhood having dimensions of about one half mile by one half mile, and a medium density neighborhood having dimensions of about one mile by one mile.

With respect to the effects of living in proximity to a freeway during its actual reconstruction, the freeway system will require reconstruction, regardless of how the freeway system is reconstructed—with or without additional lanes and design improvements. The effects of the actual reconstruction itself will need to be identified and proposed for mitigation when preliminary engineering studies are conducted by WisDOT prior to reconstruction for each freeway segment.

Second, the ACLU suggested that the study has attempted to address the impacts of the proposed freeway widening on minority and low income populations, but did not address the impacts of the redesign of the freeway system to meet modern design standards. Prior to the development of the freeway reconstruction plan alternatives and the preliminary plan, the Commission staff attempted to define the physical design deficiencies of the freeway system, and prepared a qualitative summary of that work in a map which identified segments of the freeway which may require major redesign or minor redesign to address those design deficiencies. Many segments of the freeway system in Milwaukee County were identified as potentially requiring "major redesign" as those segments are among the oldest in the Region, with multiple design and safety problems along much of their lengths. The actual level of redesign and specific design improvements to be included in each segment of the freeway system upon reconstruction, will not be determined until subsequent preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies are completed by WisDOT for each segment of the freeway system.

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Moreover, the Commission staff did attempt to identify the impacts of possible redesign on minority and low income populations. The text on pages 3 through 8 and Tables 5 through 13 of the freeway reconstruction study report entitled "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" addresses the impacts of potential freeway redesign on low income and minority populations by identifying the number of residential and commercial/industrial relocations attendant to freeway redesign within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of minority populations and low income families.

Third, the ACLU noted that the "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" did not provide information on a freeway segment-by-segment basis, but rather at a county and regional level. While it may be possible to conduct some of the analyses included in the evaluation at a finer level of detail, the level of detail provided in the report is appropriate for a broad systems-level planning study as opposed to a more narrowly focused preliminary engineering study on a freeway segment. Moreover, the level of detail is sufficient to an assessment as to whether minority and low income populations are disproportionately impacted, that is, whether higher percentages of minority and low income populations are located along the freeways proposed to be widened, and whether residential and commercial/industrial building acquisitions are disproportionately located in areas with above regional or county average percentages of minority or low income populations. Subsequent multi-year preliminary engineering and environmental studies will be conducted on a segment by segment basis and will address potential impacts on low income and minority populations in greater detail and seek public input for each segment of the freeway system prior to final decisions being made as to how each freeway segment will be reconstructed.

Fourth, the ACLU noted that the percentages of two minority groups residing in proximity to proposed widened freeways are greater than the regional average percentages of these groups—African Americans and Hispanic persons. In response, Table 1 below presents the full results of the analysis of minority and low income populations living in proximity to freeways proposed to be widened. The analysis demonstrates that the percentages of the populations in proximity to the freeways proposed to be widened that are of a minority or low income population are reasonably similar to the percentages of the minority and low income populations of Milwaukee County and the Region.

**Table 1**  
Percentages of Entire Milwaukee County and Southeastern Wisconsin Populations that are Minority or Low Income Compared to Percentages of Populations that are Minority or Low Income that Reside in Proximity to Freeway Proposed to be Widened

Minority/Low Income Group	Percent of Total Population that is Minority/Low Income	Percent of Total Population in Areas Located in Proximity to Freeways Proposed to be Widened that is Minority/Low Income
Black/ African American Persons	25.5	22.4
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	1.3	1.2
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	3.1	2.9
Other Minority Persons	5.1	8.0
Hispanic Persons	8.8	11.2
Families in Poverty	11.7	11.5

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**Table 1 (continued)**  
Entire Southeastern Wisconsin Region

Minority/Low Income Group	Percent of Total Population that is Minority/Low Income	Percent of Total Population in Areas Located in Proximity to Freeways Proposed to be Widened that is Minority/Low Income
Black/ African American Persons	14.3	18.1
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	0.9	1.1
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	2.2	2.9
Other Minority Persons	3.6	4.9
Hispanic Persons	6.5	9.2
Families in Poverty	7.2	8.3

The representation of minority and low income populations along freeway corridors proposed for widening is higher than in the population as a whole in some cases, but lower in others. In all cases, the differences are modest. The two differences the ACLU chose to cite in its letter – differences of 3.8 percent for Black/African American persons and 2.7 percent for Hispanic persons at a regional level – while modest, are the biggest differences where minority or low income populations have a higher representation along freeway corridors proposed for widening than in Milwaukee County or Region.

Regarding the ACLU's comment that the "City of Milwaukee...opposes the freeway reconstruction plan..." the City of Milwaukee Common Council expressed support for most of the preliminary recommended plan including rebuilding to modern design standards and widening to provide additional lanes on 108 miles of freeway. (City of Milwaukee Common Council Resolution No. 011729 dated April 23, 2002.) The Common Council opposed the widening of 19 miles of freeway, including IH 94 between the Zoo and Marquette Interchanges, and of IH 43 between the Mitchell Interchange and Silver Spring Drive. Additionally, the Common Council indicated a lack of support for rebuilding the freeway system to meet modern design standards on the segment of IH 94 between Mitchell Boulevard and Hawley Road.

- On pages 14 and 15 of the December 16 letter, the ACLU stated that it believed that minority and low income persons will be disproportionately affected by relocations associated with freeway reconstruction. Associated with that statement the ACLU made the following specific comments:
  - The majority of estimated residential and commercial/industrial relocations are located in Milwaukee County, and the majority of the Region's low income and minority persons reside in Milwaukee County.
  - The tax base impacts on Milwaukee County, particularly those associated with the proposed additional lanes, far exceed the tax base effects in the outlying counties.
  - The data demonstrate that there is clearly a disproportionate impact on minority and low income communities. These should be an analysis of whether or how potential relocations could affect minority and low income communities, including potential business, employment, community, or other potential effects. Also, the analysis should display how much above average are affected concentrations of minority and low income populations.

With respect to the ACLU's statements that the majority of estimated residential and commercial/industrial relocations are located in Milwaukee County, and that the majority of the Region's low income and minority persons reside in Milwaukee County, those statements are true. Table 2 below indicates the amount of residential and commercial/industrial relocations in the Region and the amount of those located in Milwaukee County. Most of the relocations are

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attendant to rebuilding the freeway system to modern design standards, and not to rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes. Table 3 below displays the proportion of minority and low income residents of the Region that reside in Milwaukee County.

**Table 2**  
Estimated Right-of-Way Requirements under the Preliminary Recommended Plan

	Estimated Residential Relocations		
	Relocations Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Relocations Due to Additional Lanes	Total Relocations Under Preliminary Recommended Plan
Milwaukee County	131	46	177
Region	166	50	216

	Estimated Commercial/Industrial Relocations		
	Relocations Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Relocations Due to Additional Lanes	Total Relocations Under Preliminary Recommended Plan
Milwaukee County	12	8	20
Region	23	8	31

**Table 3**  
Comparison of Minority and Low Income Populations of Milwaukee County and the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, 2000

Minority or Low Income Group	Region	Milwaukee County	Percent of Region's Minority or Low Income Population that is Located in Milwaukee County
Black/ African American Persons	275,863	240,113	87.0
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	17,819	11,907	66.8
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	42,170	28,930	68.6
Other Minority Persons	70,385	48,227	68.5
Hispanic Persons	126,394	82,405	65.2
Families in Poverty	35,466	25,454	71.8

While the ACLU's statements regarding the locations of minority and low income populations and estimated relocations being primarily located in Milwaukee County are correct, it is not accurate to infer that a majority of the estimated relocations required under the preliminary plan in Milwaukee County or the Region as a whole are located in areas with above regional average concentrations of low income or minority populations. As may be seen in Table 4 below – and was documented in the evaluation – relocations in areas with above regional average concentrations of low income or minority persons under the preliminary recommended plan represent a minority of the total numbers of relocations – for Milwaukee County and the Region as a whole.

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**Table 4**  
**Estimated Right-of-Way Acquisition under the Preliminary Recommended Plan Located in Areas with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority and Low Income Populations**

<b>Residential Relocations- Region</b>			
Minority or Low Income Group	Total Relocations in All Areas	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average	Percent of Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average
		Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons	Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons
Black/ African American Persons	216	29	13.4
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	216	78	36.1
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	216	74	34.3
Other Minority Persons	216	39	18.1
Hispanic Persons	216	35	16.2
Total Minority Persons	216	54	25.0
Families in Poverty	216	57	26.4

<b>Residential Relocations- Milwaukee County</b>			
Minority or Low Income Group	Total Relocations in All Areas	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average	Percent of Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average
		Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons	Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons
Black/ African American Persons	177	28	15.8
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	177	71	40.1
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	177	59	33.3
Other Minority Persons	177	38	21.5
Hispanic Persons	177	31	17.5
Total Minority Persons	177	54	30.5
Families in Poverty	177	67	31.6

<b>Commercial/Industrial Relocations- Region</b>			
Minority or Low Income Group	Total Relocations in All Areas	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average	Percent of Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average
		Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons	Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons
Black/ African American Persons	31	2	6.5
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	31	7	22.6
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	31	5	16.1
Other Minority Persons	31	3	9.7
Hispanic Persons	31	9	29.0
Total Minority Persons	31	1	3.2
Families in Poverty	31	4	12.9

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**Table 4 (continued)**

<b>Commercial/Industrial Relocations- Milwaukee County</b>			
Minority or Low Income Group	Total Relocations in All Areas	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average	Percent of Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average
		Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons	Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons
Black/ African American Persons	20	2	10.0
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	20	4	20.0
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	20	4	20.0
Other Minority Persons	20	1	5.0
Hispanic Persons	20	4	20.0
Total Minority Persons	20	1	5.0
Families in Poverty	20	13	65.0

With regards to possible property tax base impacts, the majority of the property tax base impacts estimated under this study are located in Milwaukee County, as is documented in Table 5 below.

**Table 5**  
**ESTIMATED VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS TO BE ACQUIRED UNDER PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDED PLAN FOR FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION\***

Area	Estimated Value of Land and Buildings to be Acquired Under Preliminary Plan (millions)			Percent of Total County and Region Equalized Property Value Affected by Preliminary Plan Acquisitions		
	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total
Milwaukee County	\$87.0 <sup>1</sup>	\$53.5	\$140.5 <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.13	0.34
Region	\$143.3 <sup>3</sup>	\$96.5	\$239.8 <sup>3</sup>	0.13	0.05	0.18

<sup>1</sup>The estimated value of land and buildings required under the preliminary freeway system reconstruction plan does not include the estimated costs associated with the acquisition of three buildings – a Milwaukee County Sheriff's building and a Milwaukee County Zoo building with an estimated total value \$1.0 million required due to design and design related safety improvements and the Milwaukee County Courthouse Annex with an estimated value of \$16.7 million required due to the provision of additional lanes. These estimated costs were not included because the buildings are not part of the equalized property value. The total estimated value of land and buildings acquired under the preliminary plan with these excluded buildings would be \$245.5 million, rather than the total of \$140.5 million included in this table. The estimated property tax base impacts are conservative, as they include acquisition administration and relocation costs.

<sup>2</sup>Includes \$55.0 million associated with the Marquette interchange already approved through preliminary engineering.

<sup>3</sup>Total year 2001 Milwaukee County and Region equalized property value is \$40,000 million and \$112,541 million, respectively.

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While the majority of the estimated property tax base impact under the preliminary plan is in Milwaukee County, there are several important points to keep in mind, including the following:

- More than 60 percent in Milwaukee County—and over 70 percent regionwide of the estimated property tax impact is associated with the modernization of the freeway system, not the proposed additional lanes.
- A significant portion of the estimated property tax base impact in Milwaukee County—39 percent is associated with the reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, which has already been through preliminary engineering.
- The estimates of property tax base impact are conservatively high, as they include acquisition administration and relocation costs.
- The conservatively high estimated property tax base reduction for Milwaukee County under the preliminary plan of a total 0.3% percent reduction would represent an annual reduction of about 0.01 percent over the 30 or more years required to rebuild the freeway system. By comparison, the Milwaukee County tax base has been growing at about 1.5 percent annually from new construction and at about 4.0 percent annually from inflation.
- The property tax base impact may not represent an actual loss in tax base. For example, Aldrich Chemical, which will be acquired as part of the Marquette Interchange, has announced that they will be building a new plant in the City of Milwaukee.

With respect to the ACLU's comment that there is clearly a disproportionate impact on minority and low income populations, the analyses of data do not support the ACLU's comment. One of the analyses completed by Commission staff compared the percentage of census blocks located adjacent to, or traversed by, a freeway segment which had above regional average concentrations of minority populations to the percentage of census blocks throughout the entire Region which have above average concentration of minority population. This analysis, as summarized below in Table 6, demonstrated that there is not an over-representation of minority populations in areas adjacent to freeways, including those freeways proposed to be widened.

**Table 6**  
**PERCENT OF CENSUS BLOCKS WITHIN THE SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGION WITH ABOVE REGIONAL AVERAGE CONCENTRATIONS OF MINORITY POPULATIONS: TOTAL AND IN AREAS ADJACENT TO OR TRAVERSED BY A FREEWAY SEGMENT**

County/Region	Percent of All Census Blocks in County/Region with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority Populations: 2000					Total Minority Populations
	Black/African American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Asian and Pacific Islander	Other Minority	Hispanic	
Milwaukee County	25.9	24.4	22.8	18.3	20.1	33.1
Region	12.2	15.1	14.6	12.9	15.5	17.3

County/Region	Percent of Census Blocks in County/Region Adjacent to or Traversed by a Freeway Segment Proposed to be Widened with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority Populations: 2000					Total Minority Populations
	Black/African American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Asian and Pacific Islander	Other Minority	Hispanic	
Milwaukee County	10.6	15.1	15.0	11.8	13.9	17.4
Region	6.9	11.3	11.7	7.8	9.7	11.3

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**Table 6 (continued)**

County/Region	Percent of Census Blocks in County/Region Adjacent to Any Freeway Segment with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority Populations: 2000					Total Minority Populations
	Black/African American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Asian and Pacific Islander	Other Minority	Hispanic	
Milwaukee County	13.6	15.1	14.4	11.2	13.0	19.2
Region	6.7	9.5	9.1	6.3	7.5	9.5

For example, 12.2 percent of all census blocks in the Region have above regional average concentrations of Black/ African American persons, but only 6.9 percent of all census blocks in the Region adjacent to or traversed by freeway segments proposed to be widened have above regional average concentrations of Black/ African American persons. Also, while 15.5 percent of all census blocks in the Region have above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons, only 9.7 percent of all census blocks in the Region adjacent to or traversed by freeway segments proposed to be widened have above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons.

Another analysis completed by Commission staff compared the percentage of estimated residential and commercial/industrial relocations located in census blocks with above regional average concentrations of low income and minority persons to the percentage of census blocks regionwide which had above regional average concentrations of minority populations. The analysis demonstrated that the percentages of relocations in census blocks with above regional average concentrations of low income and minority persons was about the same or moderately greater than the percentages of census blocks regionwide which had above regional average concentrations of minority and low income populations. The analysis further demonstrated that the majority of the relocations—regionwide, within Milwaukee County, and within census blocks with minority and low income population concentration—are not related to the proposed additional lanes, but to the design and design-related safety improvements (see Table 7 below).

**Table 7**  
**Residential Relocations- Region**

Minority or Low Income Group	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons			Percent of Total 216 Residential Relocations Under Preliminary Plan
	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total Under Preliminary Plan	
Black/ African American Persons	21	8	29	13.4
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	69	9	78	36.1
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	52	20	74	34.3
Other Minority Persons	30	9	39	18.1
Hispanic Persons	26	9	35	16.2
Total Minority Populations	44	10	54	25.0
Families in Poverty	54	3	57	26.4

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Table 7 (continued)

Residential Relocations- Milwaukee County

Minority or Low Income Group	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons			Percent of Total 177 Residential Relocations Under Preliminary Plan
	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total Under Preliminary Recommended Plan	
Black/African American Persons	21	7	28	15.8
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	62	9	71	40.1
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	42	17	59	33.3
Other Minority Persons	29	9	38	21.5
Hispanic Persons	22	9	31	17.5
Total Minority Populations	44	10	54	30.5
Families in Poverty	53	3	56	31.6

Commercial/Industrial Relocations-Region

Minority or Low Income Group	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons			Percent of Total 31 Commercial/Industrial Relocations Under Preliminary Plan
	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total Under Preliminary Recommended Plan	
Black/African American Persons	--	2	2	6.5
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	7	--	7	22.6
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	4	1	5	16.1
Other Minority Persons	3	--	3	9.7
Hispanic Persons	9	--	9	29.0
Total Minority Populations	9	--	1	3.2
Families in Poverty	9	5	14	45.2

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Table 7 (continued)

Commercial/Industrial Relocations- Milwaukee County

Minority or Low Income Group	Relocations in Census Blocks with Above Regional Average Concentrations of Minority or Low Income Persons			Percent of Total 20 Commercial/Industrial Relocations Under Preliminary Plan
	Due to Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements	Due to Additional Lanes	Total Under Preliminary Recommended Plan	
Black/African American Persons	--	2	2	10.0
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	--	--	4	20.0
Asian and Pacific Islander Persons	3	1	4	20.0
Other Minority Persons	1	--	1	5.0
Hispanic Persons	4	--	4	20.0
Total Minority Populations	1	--	1	5.0
Families in Poverty	8	5	13	65.0

The findings of this analysis may be summarized as follows:

- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 14.3 percent of the total population) of Black/African American persons is 13.4 percent and 6.5 percent, respectively. These percentages are about the same as the percentage of census blocks in the Region—12.2 percent—which have above average concentrations of Black/African American persons.
- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 0.9 percent of total population) of American Indian and Alaska Native persons is 36.6 percent and 22.6 percent, respectively. These percentages are greater than the percentage of census blocks in the Region—15.1 percent—with above regional average concentrations of American Indian and Alaska Native persons, that is, more than 0.9 percent of the total population in the census block were American Indian or Alaskan Native persons. However, of the 78 residences estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average (0.9 percent of total population) concentrations of American Indian and Alaska Native persons, 58 residences or 74 percent would be located within census blocks with less than 3.0 percent American Indian or Alaska Native populations, 17 residences, or 22 percent, would be located within census block with between 3.0 and 6.1 percent American Indian and Alaska Native population, and three residences, or 4 percent, would be located within census blocks with 13.1 percent American Indian and Alaska Native persons. Also, of the 78 residences estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan with above regional average concentrations (more than 0.9 percent of total population) of American Indian and Alaska Native persons, 69, or 88 percent, are attendant to rebuilding the freeway system to modern design standards and only 9, or 12 percent, are attendant to additional lanes.

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With respect to the seven businesses estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan in census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 0.9 percent of total population) of American Indian and Alaska Native persons, all of the seven businesses would need to be acquired due to rebuilding the freeway system to modern design standards, and none are attributable to rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes. All of the seven businesses would be located within census blocks with between 2.0 and 4.0 percent American Indian and Alaska Native population.

- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 2.2 percent of the total population) of Asian and Pacific Islander persons is 34.3 percent and 16.1 percent, respectively. The percentage of blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons is 14.6 percent. The percentage—34.3 percent—of residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons exceeds the percentage—14.6 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons, while the percentage—16.1 percent—of businesses to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons is about the same as the percentage—14.6 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons. With respect to the estimated 74 residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons, 38, or 51 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 2.2 to 5.9 percent Asian and Pacific Islander population, 21, or 28 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 6.0 and 9.0 percent Asian and Pacific Islander population, and 15, or 20 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 10.0 and 14.0 percent Asian and Pacific Islander population. Also, of the 74 residences and 5 businesses estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 2.2 percent of total population) of Asian and Pacific Islander persons, 54, or 73 percent, of the residences and 4, or 80 percent, of the businesses would be needed to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards, and are not attributable to the proposed additional lanes on the freeway system under the preliminary plan.
- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 3.6 percent of the total population) of Other Minority persons is 18.1 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively. The percentage of blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Other Minority persons is 12.9 percent. Thus, the percentage of residences—18.1 percent—and businesses—9.7 percent—to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Other Minority persons is about the same as the percentage of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Other Minority persons—12.9 percent. Of the 39 residences and three businesses estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 3.6 percent of total population) of Other Minority persons, 31, or 77 percent, of the residences and all 3, or 100 percent, of the businesses would be needed to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards, and are not attributable to the proposed additional lanes on the freeway system under the preliminary plan.
- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 6.5 percent of total population) of Hispanic persons is 16.2 percent

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and 29.0 percent, respectively. The percentage of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons is 15.5 percent. Thus, the percentage—16.2 percent—of residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons is about the same as the percentage—15.5 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons, while the percentage—29.0 percent—of businesses to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentration of Hispanic persons exceeds the percentage—15.5 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons. With respect to the estimated nine businesses to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Hispanic persons (more than 6.5 percent of total population), 6, or 67 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 6.5 to 8.5 percent Hispanic population, 2, or 22 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 8.5 and 14.0 percent Hispanic population, and 1, or 11 percent, would be located within a census block with approximately 90 percent Hispanic population. Also, of the 35 residences and nine businesses estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 6.5 percent of total population) of Hispanic persons, 26, or 74 percent, of the residences and all nine, or 100 percent, of the businesses would be needed to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards, and are not attributable to the proposed additional lanes on the freeway system under the preliminary plan.

- The percentage of residences and businesses within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 24.3 percent of the total population) of minority persons (Black/African American, Asian and Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaska Native, Other Minority, and Hispanic) is 25.0 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively. The percentage of blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of the total combined minority population is 17.3 percent. The percentage—25.0 percent—of residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of minority persons exceeds the percentage—17.3 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of minority persons, while the percentage—3.2 percent—of businesses to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of Asian and Pacific Islander persons is less than the percentage—17.3 percent—of census blocks within the Region with above regional average concentrations of minority persons. With respect to the estimated 54 residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of minority persons, 16, or 30 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 24 to 34 percent total combined minority population, 16, or 30 percent, would be located within census blocks with between 35 and 67 percent total combined minority population, and 22, or 20 percent, would be located with census blocks with between 93 and 97 percent minority population. Also, of the 54 residences and one business estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 24.3 percent of total population) of minority persons, 44, or 81 percent, of the residences and the one business, or 100 percent, of the businesses, would be needed to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards, and are not attributable to the proposed additional lanes on the freeway system under the preliminary plan.
- The percentage of residences and business within the Region which will need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census block groups with above regional average concentrations (more than 7.2 percent of total families) of low income families is 26.4 percent and 45.2 percent, respectively. The percentage of census block groups within the

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Region with above regional average concentrations of low income families is 33.8 percent. Thus, the percentage—26.4 percent—of residences to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census block groups with above regional average concentrations of low income families is less than the percentage—33.8 percent—of census block groups within the Region with above regional average concentrations of low income families. While the percentage—45.2 percent—of businesses to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations of low income families exceeds the percentage—33.8 percent—of census block groups within the Region with above regional average concentrations of low income families. Of the 57 residences and 14 businesses estimated to need to be acquired under the preliminary plan within census blocks with above regional average concentrations (more than 7.2 percent of total families) of low income families, 54, or 95 percent, of the residences and nine, or 64 percent, of the businesses would be needed to rebuild the freeway system to modern design standards, and are not attributable to the proposed additional lanes on the freeway system under the preliminary plan.

It should be noted that where the percent of relocations located in census blocks with above regional average concentrations of minority or low income populations exceeded the percent of census blocks regionwide that had regional average concentrations of those populations, the evaluation specifically addressed the degree to which census blocks with relocations were above regional average.

The detailed analysis of the business, employment, community, and other impacts of relocations the ACLU suggested was not conducted as part of this systems level study – whether the relocations were located in areas with above average concentrations of minority or low income populations or not. Additional analysis of the possible impacts of any relocations – residential or otherwise – will be appropriately conducted during subsequent preliminary engineering and environmental studies that have yet to be initiated for each segment of the freeway system. Those additional studies will necessarily consider the possible impacts of relocations on the communities in which they are located in greater detail than at this systems level of study prior to final decisions being made as to how each segment of the freeway system will be reconstructed.

Not only will the potential impacts of relocations need to be evaluated in subsequent studies, the actual number and locations of relocations will need to be determined. While the regional freeway reconstruction study has included the estimation of right-of-way impacts, including possible relocations, the numbers and general locations of relocations are only systems level estimates. The evaluation of impacts on low income and minority persons conducted by the Commission is an important evaluation, but it does not document the actual right-of-way impacts that will definitely occur upon freeway reconstruction and all specific impacts that may potentially affect low income and minority persons. The actual specific right-of-way impacts of freeway reconstruction will not be determined until the completion of subsequent preliminary engineering and environmental studies for each segment of the regional freeway system. During the subsequent studies, alternatives for the reconstruction of each freeway segment will be evaluated and considered in much greater detail, and additional county, municipal, and public input will be solicited. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation will attempt to avoid, minimize, and mitigate all potential impacts associated with freeway reconstruction during those subsequent studies and during actual reconstruction.

- On pages 16 and 17 of the December 16 letter, the ACLU stated that the planning process failed to adequately consider the transportation needs and circumstances of low income and minority residents, and failed to guarantee implementation of expanded public transit service. Associated with that statement the ACLU made the following specific comments:

- The freeway reconstruction study did not address the issue of minority and low income population lack of access to automobiles and dependence on transit in the manner those issues were addressed during the East-West Corridor Study. The Commission's failure to use available data or to meaningfully evaluate low income and minority persons get to work, child care, school, medical care, and other locations, resulted in an insufficient analysis of the effects of providing – or failing to provide – expanded public transit service on low income and minority communities, and reduces the likelihood that expanded public transit service will be implemented.
- Light rail transit and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes – that were considered in the East-West Corridor Study – were not included in the preliminary freeway system reconstruction plan because of resistance from predominantly white suburban communities and their supporters. The exclusion of those possible transportation systems improvements from the freeway reconstruction study reduces the likelihood that those possible improvements will be implemented.
- The regional transportation plan recommends a substantial expansion of public transit in the Region, but fails to guarantee full and permanent funding for implementation for such expansion.
- The regional transportation plan recommends the further consideration of light rail and commuter rail service, but does not recommend its implementation.
- There is a lack of specific steps and concrete timetables for planned public transit system expansion that reduces the likelihood that the planned expansion will be implemented.
- The completion of additional transit-related studies and the actual implementation and maintenance of public transit must occur before a final decision is made regarding the proposed additional lanes included in the preliminary recommended plan. This must occur for several reasons: to reduce the need for additional freeway capacity, to prevent greater congestion during actual construction, and to ensure that the needs and circumstances of low income and minority persons are addressed. Refusal to delay a final decision on how to rebuild the regional freeway system until after additional transit-related studies and actual transit service expansion take place reduces the likelihood that expanded transit service will be implemented.

With respect to the consideration of the needs of persons without access to automobiles and persons dependent on public transit service under the freeway reconstruction study compared to under the East West Corridor Study, the different levels of consideration are directly related to the purpose and scope of each study. The focus of the East-West Corridor Study was improving public transit and the IH 94 freeway in the IH 94 East-West corridor. The focus of the freeway reconstruction study is on rebuilding an existing portion of the regional transportation system within the entire seven county Region. The Commission has conducted comprehensive planning for over 40 years, and this study is one element of that comprehensive planning. The regional transportation plan has three elements: public transit, transportation systems management, and the arterial street and highway system (of which the freeway system is a subset). The study is being conducted within the context of the regional transportation plan, and structured to consider additional lanes as a measure of last resort – to address the expected traffic volumes and congestion even if all recommendations of the regional land use and transportation plans were implemented, and even if complete light rail and commuter rail systems were implemented in southeastern Wisconsin. By structuring and conducting the freeway reconstruction study as the Commission has, it has in no way reduced the need for public transit system expansion. The final recommendations of the freeway reconstruction study will be added as an amendment to the regional transportation plan, but will not replace existing recommendations of the plan, including those related to public transit, or be of higher priority.

The Commission will continue to pursue the implementation of all elements of the regional land use and transportation plans following the completion of the freeway reconstruction study.

With respect to the comment that light rail transit and HOV lanes were considered as part of the East-West Corridor Study but not under the freeway reconstruction study, the difference again is due to the difference in purpose and scope of the studies. The focus of the East-West Corridor Study was at studying improvements to public transit and the IH 94 freeway within the IH 94 freeway East-West corridor, whereas the focus of the freeway reconstruction study is the necessary reconstruction of the freeway system of the entire seven county Region which needs to be rebuilt as it reaches the end of its useful life. The fact that light rail transit is not included in a freeway reconstruction study does not diminish its likelihood for implementation. Light rail transit and guided bus transit are currently being considered under a separate study – the Milwaukee Downtown Transit Connector Study – and the final recommendations of that study could result in an amendment of the regional transportation plan.

While the current freeway reconstruction study and the previously-completed East-West Corridor Study are fundamentally different, lessons learned from the previous study have not been ignored during the current study. One lesson learned was that when HOV lanes were proposed under the East-West Corridor study, there was very little public or political support for such lanes. Additionally, reconstruction with additional lanes operated as HOV lanes may be expected to have substantially greater right-of-way impacts – and associated costs – than reconstruction with additional “standard” lanes. That is why HOV lanes were not considered as part of the freeway reconstruction study.

Regarding the comment that the Commission's recommended expansion of public transit service in the Region is insufficient, as the regional transportation plan does not “guarantee full and permanent funding for mass transit alternatives,” the Commission cannot guarantee funding—or implementation—of any element of the regional transportation system, including the regional freeway system. By law, the plans of the Commission are advisory to State, county, and municipal government. Also, no recommendation of the regional transportation plan proceeds directly to implementation. Public transit plan recommendations are considered in short-range planning and programming by local government transit operators. Transit operators determine whether and when recommended transit improvement and expansion may be implemented. Arterial street and highway recommendations are considered in preliminary engineering and environmental studies by the responsible State, county, or municipal government, and at the conclusion of preliminary engineering and environmental studies, the responsible State, county, or local government determines whether and how each arterial street and highway recommendation may proceed to implementation.

With regard to the comment that the regional plan does not recommend the implementation of light rail or commuter rail, the regional transportation plan does recommend the consideration of the implementation of such services. The regional transportation plan recommends the substantial improvement and expansion of transit service in the Region, including major increases in the levels of rapid and express bus transit service. Light rail and commuter rail are recommended to be considered through the conduct of corridor transit alternatives analysis studies as upgrades from recommended bus express transit and bus rapid transit, respectively. Two transit alternatives analysis studies are currently underway, including the study of commuter rail in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study and of bus guideway and light rail in the Milwaukee Downtown Transit Connector Study. Upon completion of such studies, the local units of government concerned – specifically the transit operator concerned – WriDOT and the Commission would have to affirm the study findings, determine to pursue guideway

implementation, and, as necessary, amend the regional transportation plan. The preliminary recommended plan advanced by the Advisory Committee for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee study proposes the implementation of commuter rail.

The recommendation for further consideration of light rail and commuter rail service, but not implementation, does not diminish the likelihood of implementation of such services. Alternatives analysis studies would be required to be conducted prior to any project qualifying for Federal discretionary transit funding whether the project's implementation is recommended in the regional transportation plan or not. Additionally, the recommendations for further consideration in alternatives analysis studies of light rail and commuter rail in the regional transportation plan reflect the desires of the Region's transit systems and of the Milwaukee County Board.

Regarding specific steps and “concrete” timetables for the planned expansion of the Region's public transit system and whether any expansion will ever occur without definition of such steps and timetables, the regional transportation plan does recommend a substantial increase in the amount of transit service provided and significant increases have been implemented since the plan's completion. The planned public transit service expansion, implementation of the planned expansion to date, and additional steps being taken include the following:

- Planned public transit service expansion – A planned increase of about 70 percent in the amount of transit service is proposed in the regional plan from year 1995 plan base year levels of 65,000 bus miles of service on an average weekday to 111,500 bus-miles on an average weekday in the year 2020. The plan includes recommendations to increase local, express, and rapid transit services.
- Actual implementation of planned expansion - Measured in terms of bus-miles of service provided on an average weekday between 1995 and 2001, transit service increased by over 20 percent from about 65,000 to 80,000 bus-miles of service with new rapid transit service between Milwaukee County and Ozaukee and Washington Counties, expansion of rapid and express transit service between Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, and expanded local transit service provided by each operator of such service in the Region – Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties and the Cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Waukesha. However, it is expected that transit service reductions which occurred in 2002 and are budgeted for 2003 – principally associated with the Milwaukee, Washington, and Waukesha County transit systems – will result in about 72,600 bus-miles of transit service being provided in 2003. The level of service expected to be provided in 2003 represents about a 12 percent increase in transit service since 1995. The estimated level of transit service to be provided within southeastern Wisconsin in the year 2003 may be considered consistent with, and even slightly ahead of the schedule in the year 2020 plan. However, to stay on schedule in future years will require stabilization of transit service levels in the next few years and then a return to annual increases in transit service levels as did occur in the mid to late 1990s. Also, since 1995, public shared-ride taxi service has significantly increased from 1,700 vehicle-miles of service in 1995 to 7,600 vehicle-miles of service in 2001, and is expected to further increase to 8,100 vehicle-miles of service in 2003, with much of the expansion due to the implementation of countywide shared-ride public taxi service in Ozaukee and Washington Counties.
- Additional steps – planning efforts for new or expanded transit services have recently been completed and additional studies are underway. The Commission has recently completed short-range transit plans for Ozaukee and Waukesha Counties. The Commission is near completion of a short-range transit plan for the City of Waukesha and the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study, which includes the consideration of commuter rail service. Also underway is the Milwaukee Downtown Transit Connector Study, which includes the consideration of light rail transit and fixed bus guideway alternatives.

Lastly, the letter suggests that a decision regarding the proposed additional lanes to be provided on the regional freeway system as it is reconstructed over the next 30 years should be delayed until the Region's public transit system is expanded. The public transit system has expanded since 1995 and the Commission will continue to pursue implementation of the recommendations of the regional land use and transportation plans including those recommendations regarding public transit, but the reconstruction of the regional freeway system cannot be delayed further. The purpose of the freeway reconstruction study is to determine the design and capacity improvements that should be incorporated in the reconstruction of the freeway system. Any delay in freeway reconstruction will result in further deterioration of the freeway pavements and bridges, and more costly and inefficient maintenance of the freeway system. Also, reconstructing the freeway system without design or capacity improvements now, and then retrofitting the freeway system later, would mean reconstructing the freeway system twice — a waste of scarce public resources.

With respect to the potential for public transit to solve the Region's existing and forecast freeway congestion problems, the forecasts of future freeway traffic congestion assumes the full implementation of the regional land use and transportation plans, including the recommended 70 percent expansion of public transit service. The forecast year 2020 freeway traffic congestion would be nearly double year 1999 levels, even with full implementation of the plans' recommendations and even if complete light rail and commuter rail systems are implemented. This analysis has been done to make clear the choice which this Region and each County faces in rebuilding the freeway system, that is, whether to reconstruct the freeway system to its same capacity and accept substantially increased future freeway traffic congestion, or to rebuild the freeway system with additional lanes to avoid this substantial increase in traffic congestion and provide additional capacity for economic growth.

Regarding the potential of public transit service to reduce freeway traffic congestion during actual reconstruction, it may be expected that increased transit service developed to serve affected motorists will be considered for implementation during reconstruction activities. As WisDOT prepares for reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, it is considering various traffic mitigation efforts, including transit options, to reduce the effects on motorists while reconstruction takes place.

With respect to improving and expanding the Regional transit system before making a decision regarding the proposed additional freeway lanes to ensure that the needs and circumstances of low income and minority persons are addressed, the Commission is not planning the improvement of one element of the regional transportation system at the expense of another. The final recommendations of the freeway reconstruction study will not replace existing recommendations in the regional transportation plan, but will be added to the existing recommendations. The Commission will continue to pursue the implementation of all elements of the regional transportation plan following the completion of the freeway reconstruction study.

- On page 18 of the December 16 letter, the ACLU stated that the planning process has failed to adequately consider the employment needs and circumstances of low income and minority residents. Associated with that statement are the following specific comments:
  - The proposed additional lanes are expected to result in greater access to jobs for residents of suburban areas — a 16.9 percent increase in jobs accessible within 30 minutes — than for residents of central city areas with above regional average concentrations of low income and minority populations — a 15.9 percent increase in jobs accessible within 30 minutes.
  - The "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin"

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did not indicate if the estimated jobs accessible under the preliminary recommended plan would be accessible by public transit, and if so, what the travel times to those jobs would be by public transit.

- There is no discussion concerning the quality of the estimated jobs accessible. The evaluation of accessibility to jobs did not establish whether good-paying jobs will be as accessible to low income and minority persons as they are to other persons.
- The Commission fails to guarantee jobs during the freeway system reconstruction to low income and minority persons based on their representation of the Region's total population or on the population of Milwaukee County, where much of the freeway reconstruction will occur.
- The proposed additional lanes on the freeway system are expected to result in reductions in traffic volumes on selected surface arterial streets, but the Commission has failed to evaluate whether such reductions could have adverse effects on businesses located along these corridors.

While the percentage increase in jobs accessible is slightly higher for suburban locations—16.9 percent—than for central city locations—15.9 percent—within a 30 minute travel time in the year 2020, the central city locations would have the same percentage increase with respect to jobs accessible within 20 minutes as suburban locations—10.0 percent, and would have a greater percentage increase with respect to jobs accessible within 10 minutes—5.0 percent—as compared to suburban locations—0.4 percent. In addition, central city locations would have a greater numeric increase in jobs accessible within 10, 20, and 30 minutes, and would continue to have a higher number of jobs accessible. The percentage increase in jobs accessible within a 30 minute travel time of 16.9 percent for suburban locations and 15.9 percent for central city locations cited in the ACLU letter was the only case which could be used to point out a greater increase for suburban areas than central city locations. Table 8 below summarizes the finding of the analysis documented in the evaluation report.

**Table 8  
COMPARISON OF PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC ACCESSIBILITY FROM CENTRAL CITY AND SUBURBAN LOCATIONS TO JOBS UNDER THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDED PLAN AND REBUILD AS-IS ALTERNATIVE: 2020**

Location	Jobs Accessible			
	Rebuild As-Is Alternative	Total	Preliminary Recommended Plan Increase in Jobs Accessible	
			Number	Percent
Total of Central City Locations	317,850	334,000	16,150	5.1
Total of Suburban Locations	187,800	188,000	700	0.4

Location	Jobs Accessible			
	Rebuild As-Is Alternative	Total	Preliminary Recommended Plan Increase in Jobs Accessible	
			Number	Percent
Total of Central City Locations	1,427,500	1,570,800	143,300	10.0
Total of Suburban Locations	888,100	757,000	89,900	10.0

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**Table 8 (continued)**

**Jobs Accessible within 30 Minutes**

Location	Rebuild As-Is Alternative	Total	Jobs Accessible	
			Preliminary Recommended Plan Increase in Jobs Accessible	
			Number	Percent
Total of Central City Locations	2,839,800	3,299,800	461,000	16.9
Total of Suburban Locations	1,694,200	1,981,200	288,400	16.9

With respect to the comment concerning accessibility to jobs by public transit, an additional analysis was also included in the report to specifically demonstrate the expected increase in public transit accessibility to jobs in the year 2020 under the transit element of the regional transportation plan which includes a substantial improvement and expansion of the Region's public transit service. This analysis as presented on page 12 and in Maps 32 and 33 of the report indicates that a significant portion of the areas provided with improved transit accessibility — and, particularly, improved transit accessibility to jobs — under the regional transportation plan are those areas having the largest concentrations of minority and low income persons.

With respect to the comment that the analysis of improved accessibility to jobs addressed the quantity of jobs, but not the quality of jobs, an analysis of the quality of jobs is not feasible. The analysis of accessibility to jobs is for the forecast year 2020, and is not available with respect to the type or quality of jobs forecast for the year 2020. Regardless of the quality of jobs accessible, the analysis clearly showed that there would be improved accessibility to jobs under the preliminary plan compared to a rebuild as-is alternative from the central city and suburban locations considered.

It was also stated in the ACLU letter that the Commission failed to guarantee jobs for low income and minority residents during the actual reconstruction of the regional freeway system. The Commission is an advisory regional planning agency, and cannot guarantee jobs to any group or individual with respect to any element of regional transportation system. However, the Commission does intend to do what it can to support increased participation of minority-owned businesses and minority workers in the freeway reconstruction labor force, and WisDOT intends to set ambitious goals for minority participation and monitor the achievement of those goals.

During the conduct of the regional freeway study, the Commission engaged minority community leaders to seek input on the study and the preliminary plan. A primary concern raised by those minority community leaders was the need for significant participation of minority-owned businesses and minority workers in the reconstruction labor force. Commission staff will use the comments from those minority community leaders to draft a recommendation for the freeway reconstruction study regarding minority participation. That recommendation — yet to be written and forwarded to the Study Advisory Committee for its consideration — will reflect the comments of not only the minority community leaders contacted during the freeway reconstruction study, but also input from the Marquette Interchange DBE (disadvantaged business enterprise) Advisory Committee. WisDOT will be responsible for the actual reconstruction of the freeway system starting with the Marquette Interchange. As WisDOT has prepared for the reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, it has worked with a DBE Advisory Committee to ensure that minority contractors and laborers obtain a significant level of participation during that considerable

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project. Members of the DBE Advisory Committee and participants in DBE Advisory Committee meetings included representatives from the following groups:

- State legislature
- Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
- City of Milwaukee Common Council
- Minority-owned businesses
- Non-minority transportation consulting firms
- Wisconsin Association of Consulting Engineers
- Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association
- National Association of Minority Contractors
- Employment and employment training agencies including the Milwaukee Area American Indian Mangrove Council
- Milwaukee Private Industry Council
- Labor unions
- WisDOT District 2 and central office staff
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- SEWRPC

The DBE Advisory Committee has proven instrumental in WisDOT's preparations for the reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, but the Commission and WisDOT recognize that efforts to insure increased participation will not end with the reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange. Both WisDOT and the Commission recognize that the reconstruction of the regional freeway system, beginning with the Marquette Interchange, represents an unprecedented, long-term opportunity to foster growth of minority-owned business and minority participation in the labor force for reconstruction.

The ACLU letter also expressed concern that the levels of traffic on selected surface arterial streets—forecast to be reduced under the preliminary recommended plan due to the proposed additional lanes—may have adverse effects on the businesses located along those streets. The estimated reductions are reductions from forecast year 2020 traffic volumes, not from existing traffic volumes. Much of the freeway system in Milwaukee County is currently carrying traffic volumes equal to its capacity during morning and afternoon rush hours, and without additional lanes, will in the future increasingly do so as well during hours surrounding the rush hour, the mid-day, and the evening. As a result, any growth in traffic must be carried on surface arterials, which will in time result in increasing congestion on surface arterials. As surface arterials become congested, motorists may use travel routes on local residential streets and travel through neighborhoods. Increased traffic and congestion on surface arterials may negatively affect businesses where travel and parking become more difficult. Providing additional capacity on the freeway will avoid increasing traffic congestion on surface arterial streets and traffic on neighborhoods. Avoiding such increases will also address potential safety concerns of residents facing increased through traffic diverted from congested freeways.

- On pages 19 and 20 of the ACLU letter, it was stated that it believed the planning process failed to adequately consider alternative possibilities to address the housing needs—and related transportation needs—of low income and minority residents. Associated with that statement the ACLU made the following specific comments:
  - The failure of the Commission to address race—specifically the intersection of race, income, housing, and transportation planning—in the regional land use plan discriminates against minority and low income residents of the Region.

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- The affordable housing issue has clear and direct implications for transportation planning. A decision regarding how the regional freeway system should be rebuilt should be made contingent on the compliance of suburban communities with smart growth mandates and fair housing enforcement, as that will result in a decrease in the need for freeway capacity expansion.
- The Commission states—in reference to urban sprawl—that the proposed freeway expansion does not cause sprawl and travel time has little influence on travel decisions.
- If the Commission is correct that travel time has little influence on travel decisions, then there is little reason to spend \$6 billion to reduce commuting time from the suburbs to Milwaukee by five minutes.
- The Commission's conclusion that sprawl is not related to freeway expansion runs counter to United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) *Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act* and other reports (Freeway Task Force Report Milwaukee Department of City Development, June 1972).

With respect to the comment that the regional land use plan discriminates against minority and low income residents of the Region, the fact that race is not addressed in the regional land use plan—specifically the intersection of race, income, housing, and transportation planning—does not equate to discrimination. In its letter, the ACLU labeled the land use plan as discriminatory, but offered no explanation as to how the ACLU believed the land use plan discriminates. The regional land use and transportation plans are developed to address physical development in the Region with input from local elected and appointed officials from throughout the Region—including representatives of minority and low income populations—and from the general public. The Commission develops the land use and transportation plans cognizant of the relationship between land use and transportation—the transportation plan is developed to serve the land use plan.

It was indicated that the ACLU believes that mandates for smart growth land use practices and fair housing enforcement in suburban communities will reduce the need for freeway capacity expansion, but this is not the case. "Smart" land use growth at the regional and neighborhood levels—recommended in the regional land use plan—was assumed to be implemented during the forecasting of freeway traffic congestion. As previously noted in this letter, all forecasts of freeway traffic congestion assume the implementation of the recommendations of both the regional land use and transportation plans.

Regarding affordable housing, and fair housing enforcement in particular, the Commission cannot mandate the local development of affordable housing or fair housing enforcement by local governments. Moreover, the regional land use plan does recognize that residential zoning regulations may have a significant influence on housing costs and the supply of affordable housing. In order to enable the provision of affordable housing, the plan recommends that all urban communities should incorporate provisions for a full range of residential structure types—single-family, two-family, and multi-family—as well as a reasonable range of housing sizes within their zoning ordinances. Additionally, the plan recommends that urban communities should incorporate provisions for a full range of residential lot sizes and include one or more residential districts specifying lot sizes of no more than 7,200 square feet for single-family detached housing units and 8,000 square feet for two family structures. Delaying a decision regarding the reconstruction of the regional freeway system would not be reasonable, as implementation of such measures would not be expected to reduce the need for freeway widening or redesign as proposed under the preliminary recommended plan.

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With respect to the comment regarding the Commission's conclusion on the relationship between the proposed freeway capacity expansion and urban sprawl, it has been concluded that the freeway expansion proposed under the preliminary plan may not be expected to be a significant cause of, or contributor to, urban decentralization or sprawl in southeastern Wisconsin. There are two primary reasons for this conclusion:

- Studies of urban decentralization in the United States and other countries and opinion surveys indicate that a variety of other factors which have nothing to do with transportation have contributed to decentralization, including: rising affluence, preferences for single family homes and larger lots, cost of living, schools, environmental amenities, pace of life, perceived and/or actual crime and safety, societal changes, industrial restructuring, and information technology.
- While rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes may be expected to permit avoiding a substantial future increase in freeway system traffic congestion, the resultant level of future freeway system traffic congestion will only be moderately less than the existing level of freeway system traffic congestion—no significant change between current and future freeway traffic congestion and freeway travel times is expected.

The statement cited in the December 16 letter regarding the impact on travel time on urban sprawl was made by the Commission regarding induced travel, not urban sprawl. As was documented in the final draft of Chapter VI of the study report, "Design, Evaluation, and Consideration of Freeway System Reconstruction Alternatives," it would not be reasonable to expect travel to be induced by the freeway expansion under the preliminary recommended plan. The following points were made in Chapter VI to support that conclusion:

- Analyses of trip-making have indicated that the characteristics of the trip-maker—income, vehicle ownership, household size, participation in the labor force, and stage in family life cycle—are the most significant influences on the amount of travel, while travel time and cost have relatively very little influence.
- The construction of the freeway system—nearly all freeways were complete by 1972—not only alleviated nearly all existing traffic congestion within southeastern Wisconsin, but also significantly reduced both peak period and off peak period travel times due to the relatively higher travel speeds of freeway travel compared to surface arterial street travel. Between 1972 and 1991 there was an increase in traffic within southeastern Wisconsin, but only about one-quarter of the increase in traffic may be attributed to an increase in vehicle trip length. Part of this increase in vehicle trip length may be a result of the significant reduction in travel time and congestion as a result of the completion of the freeway system largely by 1972, but also contributing could be the decline over that time period in the out-of-pocket cost of operating an automobile (2.9 cents per mile in 1972 and 1.7 cents per mile in 1991—both in 1972 constant dollars), and as well changing lifestyles, including two worker households, and increases in household income.
- The proposed freeway capacity expansion under the preliminary recommended plan would not have the impact on congestion and travel time as that which was experienced with the original construction of the freeway system. The possible effect of travel time on travel decisions is not significant in this case, as the proposed additional lanes are expected to result in congestion levels and travel times similar to those that exist today.
- The analysis did indicate that more traffic would be expected to travel on freeways with expanded capacity, but that is not new induced travel. That additional traffic would result from a shift of vehicle traffic from selected surface arterial streets to freeways.

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The ACLU stated in its letter that there would be little reason to spend \$6.25 billion to reduce commuting time from the suburbs to Milwaukee by five minutes, but the estimated cost of \$6.25 referenced in the ACLU letter is for the reconstruction of the entire regional freeway system under the preliminary plan, and not the incremental cost of the proposed additional lanes. Of the total cost of \$6.25 billion, \$730 million, or about 12 percent, is associated with the proposed additional lanes. The remainder of the total cost includes the cost to rebuild the freeway system as-is and to provide design and design-related safety improvements.

The statement regarding the savings of five minutes for commuters traveling from the suburbs to the City of Milwaukee reflects multiple misconceptions—regarding both the magnitude of the expected benefits of additional freeway capacity and the users of the freeway system. The travel time reduction of five minutes—under the preliminary plan compared to an alternative without additional lanes—the ACLU quoted was for IH 94 between the Zoo and Marquette Interchanges in the City of Milwaukee, but the following should be considered as well:

- While the travel time savings provided by the proposed additional lanes may not be substantial for short freeway trips, the increase in travel delay that may be avoided for many trips with the proposed additional lanes will be much more than five minutes. For example, a trip from General Mitchell International Airport in the southeastern portion of the City of Milwaukee to the northwest side of the City of Milwaukee currently takes 17 minutes in uncongested free-flow conditions and 30 minutes during congested peak-hour conditions, but would take 39 minutes in the congested peak hour in the year 2020 if additional lanes are not provided. Similarly, a trip from southwestern Milwaukee County to northeastern Milwaukee County currently takes 24 minutes in uncongested free-flow conditions and 34 minutes during congested peak-hour conditions, but would take 42 minutes in the peak hour in the year 2020 if additional lanes are not provided. These examples are entirely within Milwaukee County. The final draft of chapter VI of the study report documents additional 1999 and forecast year 2020 travel times between ten locations throughout the Region.
- Another way to measure the expected benefit of the proposed additional lanes is through the comparison of existing and expected freeway travel delay. The total amount of travel delay on an average weekday was 11,500 vehicle-hours in 1999. By 2020, if the freeway system is rebuilt to modern design standards but without additional lanes, the total travel delay is expected to more than double to 26,200 vehicle hours. By comparison, if the freeway system is rebuilt with additional lanes on selected freeway segments, a total of 13,600 vehicle hours of delay may be expected by 2020 (the increase in vehicle-hours of travel delay from 1999 to 2020 even with additional lanes would be due to a greater number of vehicles—not new induced trips, but trips shifted from surface arterial streets—traveling at similar levels of congestion as in 1999).
- In the ACLU letter, it was depicted that the reduction in travel times would benefit only suburban residents, not residents of the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County. The freeway system is of vital importance to residents of Milwaukee County and the entire Region. About 33 percent of all travel made on an average weekday by Milwaukee County residents and by City of Milwaukee residents is made on the freeway system. Over 50 percent of the daily traffic on the Milwaukee County freeway system is made by Milwaukee County residents, and another 40 percent of Milwaukee County freeway system daily traffic is to and from Milwaukee County businesses. The Commission also documented the directional balance—a comparison of the amount of traffic moving in opposite directions on a freeway segment—for each freeway segment in the final draft of Chapter III of the study report, "The Function of the Freeway System and Its Components." For many segments—including the segment of IH 94 between the Zoo and Marquette Interchanges for which a reduction in travel delay of five minutes is forecast—there was a nearly equal amount of travel in each direction of the freeway during morning and afternoon peak hours in the year 2000. Between

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the Zoo and Marquette Interchanges, about 50 percent of travel in the morning peak hour was eastbound, and about 50 percent of travel was westbound. This balance of traffic was also achieved in the evening peak hour. This clearly indicates that there is no longer a traditional traffic pattern on this freeway segment, with commuters primarily "inbound" to the City of Milwaukee in the morning and "outbound" in the afternoon, but rather a balanced flow of traffic.

Regarding the statement by the ACLU that the Commission's conclusion regarding the relationship between the proposed freeway expansion and urban decentralization contradicted the *Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act* and the 1972 Freeway Task Force Report of the Milwaukee Department of City Development, the Commission has clearly stated in the study report and in this memorandum report the reasons for its conclusions.

- Studies of urban decentralization in the United States and other countries and opinion survey indicate that a variety of other factors which have nothing to do with transportation have contributed to decentralization, including: rising affluence, preferences for single-family homes and larger lots, cost of living, schools, environmental amenities, pace of life, perceived and/or actual crime and safety, societal changes, industrial restructuring, and information technology.
  - While rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes may be expected to permit avoiding a substantial future increase in freeway system traffic congestion, the resultant level of future freeway system traffic congestion will only be moderately less than the existing level of freeway system traffic congestion—no significant change between current and future freeway traffic congestion and freeway travel times is expected.
- C. On pages 20 through 22 of the December 16 letter, the ACLU suggested that the planning process failed to adequately consider the pollution and health effects on low income and minority residents. Associated with that statement, the following specific comments were made:
- As much as half of ozone-related pollution—Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and Nitrous Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)—is caused by motor vehicles according to the *Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act* developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).
  - Recent research indicates a significant increase in cancer risk for those living near freeway corridors caused primarily by transportation sources and studies show ozone is one of the causes of childhood asthma, but the Commission has failed to address ozone-related transportation air pollution and associated health risks.
  - The Commission's assertion that ozone-related transportation air pollution will decrease is completely contrary to findings of USEPA studies, showing that "most types of air pollution from mobile sources have not improved significantly." Emissions problems are due largely to the continued increase in automobile travel.
  - The Commission has indicated that Nitrous Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions levels did not decrease significantly from 1990 to 1999 and it is unclear why the Commission expects a significant future decrease in emissions.
  - The Commission did not evaluate if central city residents are subject to higher levels of transportation emissions and associated health and pollution problems because central city residents are more likely to own older, more polluting, vehicles.
  - The Commission did not evaluate if low income and minority persons are more likely to live in proximity to freeways, and therefore be exposed to possible health risks.
  - There is no "contingency" plan to reduce emissions if they increase due to induced travel or increased emissions per vehicle.

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First, regarding the ACLU comment that as much as half of ozone-related pollution is caused by motor vehicles, in 1999, much less than half of ozone-related emissions in the six county southeastern Wisconsin severe nonattainment area were from transportation sources based upon estimates prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) and approved by the USEPA. In 1999, about 76.9 percent of the VOC emissions were from transportation sources. Also in 1999, about 25.8 percent of the NO<sub>x</sub> emissions were from transportation sources. In the case of both VOC and NO<sub>x</sub>, transportation sources represented not only less than half of the emissions, but were not the single largest contributors to the total emissions. Also, Commission staff has been informed by the USEPA's Region 5 office that the report cited in the ACLU letter - *Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act* - is out of date, particularly with respect to the information referenced in the ACLU letter.

Second, with respect to the ACLU statement that the Commission has failed to address ozone related air pollution, the Commission staff has presented the study findings regarding the expected impact of freeway reconstruction with or without the proposed additional lanes on the level of transportation system ozone-related and other air pollutant emissions and air quality. As has previously been presented to, and reviewed by, the Study Advisory Committee and its Technical Subcommittee in the final draft of Chapter VI of the study report, reconstruction with or without the proposed additional lanes is expected to have a negligible impact with respect to air pollutant emissions - VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, carbon dioxide, and carbon monoxide - and ozone air quality. This is because similar levels of total regional vehicle-miles of travel may be expected whether or not the freeways are widened. What will vary is the amount of traffic which may be expected to travel under congested traffic conditions, and the amount of travel on the freeway system as opposed to surface arterial streets. The forecast future transportation system air pollutant emissions for the seven county Southeastern Wisconsin Region are shown below in Table 9.

Table 9

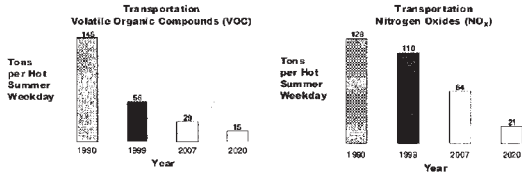
Forecast Future Year 2020 7 County Southeastern Wisconsin Region Transportation System Air Pollutant Emissions by Freeway Reconstruction Alternatives

Freeway Reconstruction Alternatives	Year 2020 Forecast Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons per Hot Summer Weekday)			
	Volatile Organic Compounds	Nitrogen Oxides	Carbon Monoxide	Carbon Dioxide
Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements Only	20.5	26.8	27.3	19,326.6
Preliminary Plan, Design and Design-Related Safety Improvements and Additional Lanes	20.5	26.8	27.3	19,218.5

Historic, current, and forecast future VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> ozone-related transportation system emissions for the six county severe ozone non-attainment area within the Southeastern Wisconsin Region have been presented by Commission staff and included in numerous study-related materials. Emissions from the transportation system have substantially declined, and are projected to continue to decline, even with increasing traffic volume, principally due to new motor vehicle

standards for air pollutant emissions. The recent forecasts (shown below) prepared by the Commission have been reviewed and approved by U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), WisDOT, the USEPA, and the WisDNR.

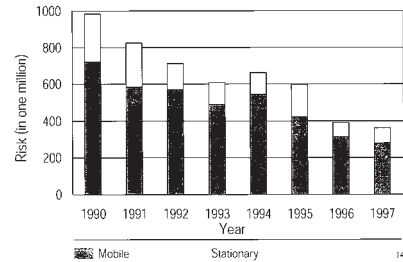
Southeastern Wisconsin—6 County Severe Ozone Nonattainment Area



Regarding recent research cited by the ACLU - *Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study-II* by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Los Angeles area) - that has indicated significant increase in cancer risk for those living near freeway corridors, that issue was not addressed in the "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" for the following reasons:

- No new freeway segments are proposed under the preliminary recommended plan, and, therefore, the reconstruction of the freeway system would not result in any change in any additional areas located in proximity to freeways.
- The impact of reconstruction with additional lanes on ozone-related transportation air pollutant emissions compared to reconstruction without additional lanes is expected to be negligible - transportation air pollutant emissions are projected to continue to decline from current levels whether or not additional lanes are provided.
- The validity of the research findings on this issue, including the results of the research cited by the ACLU, continues to be questioned. In fact, the research cited has been criticized because the study's method of inventing diesel engine emissions varies from methods used in other similar studies. Those who question the study's validity also argue that a cancer risk factor used in the study cited was not supported by the USEPA. Further, the report referenced stated that "There is considerable debate on appropriate risk values, and often the levels established by the USEPA and CalEPA differ," and "There is further debate as to the appropriate levels of risk ascribed to diesel particulates."
- The study that cited by the ACLU shows a substantial decline in air pollutant emissions and associated cancer risks compared to a decade earlier. The chart below (taken directly from a presentation regarding the study given by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the agency that conducted the study) is an example of the study findings regarding the decrease in cancer risks including those owing to transportation sources.

## Trends in Cancer Risk at Burbank



The South Coast Air Quality Management District's executive officer stated in 1999 regarding the results of this study, "Clearly we're on the right path to reducing toxic air pollution and the associated cancer risk in our area. Regulation now on the books will make cars and industries cleaner in the future and assure continued progress." That statement is consistent with the Regional Planning Commission's statements that transportation ozone-related air pollutant emissions have been declining, and are projected to continue to decline - reflecting forecasts that have been reviewed and approved by the USDOT, the WisDOT, the USEPA, and the WisDNR.

Regarding the cause of asthma and the number of asthma cases in the State and southeastern Wisconsin particularly, it has been documented that transportation system ozone-related pollutant emissions have been decreasing and are projected to further decrease in the future regardless of how the freeway system is rebuilt. If the incidence of asthma is increasing in southeastern Wisconsin, that increase is taking place during a period of decreasing transportation system ozone-related pollutant emissions-not during increases that could be blamed for health effects.

Third, regarding the statement by the ACLU that the Commission's forecast that transportation air pollution will decrease in southeastern Wisconsin is contrary to USEPA studies, this issue has previously been addressed in this letter in two ways. First, as was previously stated, the Commission has been informed by USEPA Region 5 staff that the document cited, *Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act*, is out of date and the statements referenced by the ACLU are not valid. Second, as was also previously stated, the USEPA is among the agencies that has reviewed and approved the Commission's transportation system ozone-related emissions forecasts.

Fourth, with respect to the statement by the ACLU that transportation system NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in southeastern Wisconsin did not decrease significantly from 1990 to 1999 and it is unclear why a significant future decrease is forecast, the forecast future decrease is largely related to governmental standards set for new vehicle emissions and low sulfur fuels. It was only in recent years that the USEPA concluded that NO<sub>x</sub> is an ozone-related pollutant and motor vehicle standards for that pollutant were established. The forecast future decrease reflects the implementation of those standards and operation of vehicles that meet these standards. It is important to note that these forecasts assume no further advancements in technology beyond what is already mandated by the U.S. Congress.

Fifth, regarding the comments in the ACLU letter of the possibility that central city residents are subject to higher levels of transportation system or potential associated health problems due to the age and/or type of vehicles operated by central city residents, WisDNR ozone monitoring data indicates higher ozone levels along the shoreline of Lake Michigan from Kenosha to Door County than in the central city. Also, the reconstruction of the freeway system - however it is reconstructed - would not affect the age and/or type of vehicles operated in any area of southeastern Wisconsin.

Sixth, with respect to the statement by the ACLU that the Commission did not evaluate if low income and minority persons are more likely to live in proximity to freeway and therefore exposed to possible health risks, the Commission did conduct such an analysis of whether higher than regional average minority and low income populations live in proximity to freeways. It is documented in the "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin." In fact, the ACLU made numerous comments regarding that analysis on pages 12 through 14 of the December 16 letter, and the Commission staff has provided responses to those comments in this memorandum.

Seventh, regarding the ACLU statement that the Commission does not have a "contingency" plan to reduce emissions if they increase due to induced travel or increased emissions, the Commission did not develop a "contingency" plan. The Commission did evaluate the potential for reconstruction of the freeway system with or without the proposed additional lanes to affect transportation system ozone-related emissions. The results of that evaluation, as noted previously in this letter, were that reconstruction with the proposed additional lanes would have a negligible effect on transportation system ozone-related emissions and emissions would be expected to decrease significantly - by 70 to 80 percent - from current levels. The Commission's responsibility - under the direction of the USDOT, WisDOT, the USEPA, and the WisDNR - for preparing transportation system ozone related emission forecasts extends beyond the freeway reconstruction study. The Commission will continue to work with the aforementioned agencies in the future, as it has in the past, to ensure that appropriate forecasts are developed and maintained.

In addition to the principal points of the ACLU letter addressed above, the letter began with introductory text that contained statements not yet addressed in this memorandum. The additional statements are identified and addressed below:

- A. On pages 1 and 2 of the ACLU letter, it was suggested that transportation planning in metropolitan Milwaukee has emphasized freeway construction and automobile travel, and there has historically been an enormous disparity between funds available for highway construction and for public transit.

Public transit has historically been, and continues to be, an emphasis of transportation planning in southeastern Wisconsin. This is demonstrated in the long- and short-range plans developed by the Commission and in the actual implementation of public transit system expansion. As was noted previously in this letter, the historic expansion of public transit service in the Region includes recent expansion - about a 12 percent increase in service provided from 1995 to 2003. A significant portion of the annual expenditures on the overall regional transportation system have been - and continue to be - allocated to public transit. Trips made on the Region's public transit system represent about 3 percent of all trips on an average weekday. During the period of 1995 through 1999, on average, about 30 percent of transportation expenditures in the Region were for the public transit system. The Commission agrees that investment in public transit is important, but even implementation of the planned substantial increase would not eliminate a substantial increase in freeway traffic congestion.

B. On page 5 of the ACLU letter, it was suggested that freeway reconstruction and capacity expansion will disproportionately burden Milwaukee County due to a greater loss of tax base than suburban counties, and there will be fewer economic benefits for the City and County of Milwaukee because of factors such as the short supply of existing in-fill opportunities.

The issue of estimated tax base impact was previously addressed in this letter, but the potential economic benefits for Milwaukee County, the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, and the entire State need to be addressed. The freeway system is of vital importance to residents of the entire Region and to Milwaukee County. About 33 percent of all travel made on an average weekday by Southeastern Wisconsin residents and by Milwaukee County residents is made on the freeway system. Over 50 percent of the daily traffic on the Milwaukee County freeway system is made by Milwaukee County residents, and another 40 percent of Milwaukee County freeway system daily traffic is to and from Milwaukee County businesses. The freeway system must serve the economy of Milwaukee County, the Region, and the State for 50 to 75 years in the future – the expected useful life of the reconstructed pavements and bridges.

C. On page 6 of the ACLU letter, it was noted that WisDOT is seeking to use "a mere" 7.2 percent of its FHWA funds in Federal fiscal year 2003 for disadvantaged business enterprise firms through "race and gender conscious" goals, so City of Milwaukee minority and low income persons will receive fewer benefits from increased employment due to freeway expansion. It was also pointed out the disparity in average incomes of White and Black/African American households in metropolitan Milwaukee – Black/African American households earn on average about 49 percent of the average annual earnings of White households.

The notation regarding WisDOT's "race and gender conscious" goal of 7.2 percent of FHWA funds for disadvantaged business enterprise firms was correct, but the ACLU failed to note several important points regarding that goal – including the following:

- The overall goal for disadvantaged business enterprise firms is actually 9.5 percent, including 7.2 percent race and gender conscious and 2.3 percent race and gender neutral.
- The goal set by WisDOT does not include the reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange or the reconstruction of the remainder of the regional freeway system.
- The goal is an overall, statewide goal, not a goal for southeastern Wisconsin, Milwaukee County, or the City of Milwaukee.
- The process for goal-setting (which was described in WisDOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Plan cited in the ACLU letter) is one that includes the National Association of Minority Contractors, the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association, and the FHWA.

In upcoming years, as the southeastern Wisconsin regional freeway system is rebuilt, additional funds will be invested in the area of the State with the greatest concentrations of minority residents and disadvantaged business enterprises. It is expected that WisDOT will be able to reach higher discretionary or voluntary goals, with area firms having increased opportunities to participate.

The ACLU further mentioned that there would be fewer opportunities for minority and low income persons during freeway expansion. First, a final recommendation has yet to be made regarding how the freeway system will be rebuilt, the Advisory Committee has yet to formulate a final recommended plan. Second, there will be opportunities for participation regardless of how the freeway system is rebuilt – modernization and widening is estimated to cost \$6.25 billion, but at \$5.5 billion, the investment to rebuild the freeway system with modernization only still

represents substantial expenditure. Third, reconstruction with the additional lanes would actually result in greater expenditure – and opportunities – than reconstruction without the additional lanes.

Regarding the disparity in earnings between White and Black/African American households in metropolitan Milwaukee, the disparity is obviously not related to the reconstruction of the freeway system as it has not yet occurred. The reconstruction of the regional freeway system should not be portrayed as potentially exacerbating existing disparities – there is no evidence that it will, and as discussed above, the substantial expenditure will provide for additional opportunities for participation and the economic benefits associated with that participation.

D. On pages 7 through 9 of the ACLU letter, it was stated that Federal law requires consideration of impacts on minority and low income persons, noting Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964, Executive Order 12898, the FHWA Environmental Justice Order, and the Clean Air Act.

The Commission is aware of its responsibilities under Federal law, and has conducted the freeway reconstruction study mindful of those responsibilities. The "Evaluation of the Impacts of the Preliminary Recommended Freeway System Reconstruction Plan on Minority and Low Income Populations in Southeastern Wisconsin" commented on in the ACLU letter provides extensive documentation of analyses of impacts, and the first two volumes of the study "Record of Public Comments" have documented the public involvement efforts (with a third volume yet to be prepared). This memorandum is a continuation of the Commission's efforts, responding to comments regarding the study. Moreover, the freeway reconstruction study is only the beginning of studies prior to reconstruction taking place. Much more detailed, multi-year preliminary engineering and environmental studies will be completed prior to reconstruction. Those studies will include the continuation of study of impact on minority and low income populations of the Region. Attempts to address - avoid, minimize, and mitigate – impacts will not end with the freeway reconstruction study.

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**Appendix C**

**OPINION/EDITORIAL PIECES AND NEWS ARTICLES CONCERNING  
THE REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY INCLUDING  
THE PRELIMINARY FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION PLAN**

# FREEWAY EXPANSION YIELD BY COUNTY BOARD

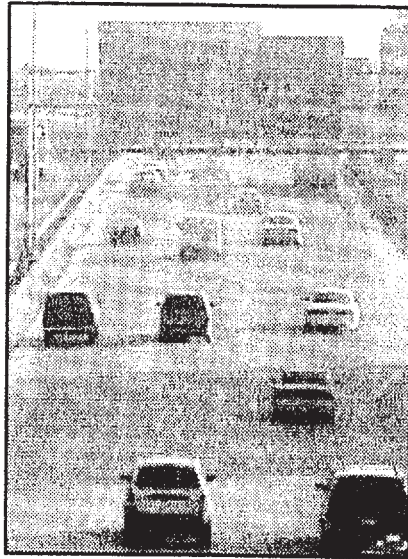
By H. Nelson Goodson  
El Conquistador. LNS

Milwaukee - On Thursday, February 20th, The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors in a vote of 15-10 decided not to increase any county freeways from 6 to 8 lanes. The freeway I-43 from Silver Spring Drive to I-894 will not be widened into an eight lane, according to the public officials.

Their latest vote is only a recommendation to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) not to widen county freeways. The commission wants to upgrade about 127 miles of county freeway by adding new lanes at a cost of \$6.25 billion.

The area mostly affected would have been the south side where the majority of the Hispanic population resides. The affected area could have been from I-94 to Layton Blvd. and from S. 4th St. to S. 8th St. The I-43 freeway would be expanded on both east and west sides destroying and displacing a large part of the community.

The widening of lanes would have destroyed historical churches, businesses, residential homes, shops, restaurants and would also displace the United Community Center (UCC), a multi-million dollar community based organization. The UCC owns



about three square blocks alongside the I-43 freeway.

Last month, the SWRPC drew criticism from the Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, the Wisconsin's American Civil Liberties Union and south side residents for their failure to inform and include the Hispanic community in all aspects of the planning process. Only 3 of the 21 members of the commission are from Milwaukee County.

The opposing groups alleged that the SWRPC never provided information in Spanish to the community concerning the expansion of public transportation, access to equal employment, the tax base reduction, effects on the fair and affordable housing, the

health and environmental effects of freeway expansion and the effects it would have on the ozone pollution in the city of Milwaukee.

Milwaukee County supervisors who voted against widening the I-94 and I-43 freeways are: Lee Holloway, Lynne DeBruin, Sheila Aldrich, Tom Bailey, Gerry Broderick, Elizabeth Coggs-Jones, Joe Davis Sr., Willie Johnson, Robert Krug, Lori Lutzka, Michael Mayo, Richard Nyklewicz Jr., Jim Schmitt, John Weishan and T. Anthony Zielinski.

Supervisors who voted to widen the I-94 and I-43 freeways are: James White, Peter Agnos, Mark Borkowski, Paul Cesarz, Dan Diliberti, Alvin Endries, Tim Johnson, Ryan McCue, Rob McDonald and Roger Quindel.

The Milwaukee and Glendale Common councils have previously rejected a plan to widen the freeways in their vicinity. Currently, both Common Councils and the Milwaukee County Board have urged the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission not to widen the freeways in the county.

The SWRPC held a south side "open house" community meeting on February 27th, at the UCC Middle School Gymnasium to receive feedback from the Hispanic community concerning the freeway controversial expansion.

Milwaukee Latino News, THE CITY  
February 28 - March 6, 2003

## Commuters zipping both ways on I-94

As jobs spread out, more workers are heading out of Milwaukee County

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journal-sentinel.com

Last Updated: March 5, 2003

I-94 is becoming more of a two-way street for commuters, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures being released today.

In 2000, the census found, 19% of Milwaukee County workers, or nearly one in five, were commuting to jobs outside the county, up from 14%, or about one in seven, in 1990.

The top destination for those commuters was Waukesha County, drawing 57,291 workers from Milwaukee County, up 29% from 44,584 in 1990. At the same time, nearly one-third of Waukesha County workers - 61,038 - reported to Milwaukee County jobs in 2000, up 6% from 57,518 in 1990.

"It's not unexpected, because there has been a big trend in terms of jobs moving to the suburbs and people moving to the suburbs," said Ed Beimbom, director of the Center for Urban Transportation Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"If you were to stand at the Waukesha-Milwaukee county line in the morning, you would see about the same amount of traffic going each way," Beimbom added.

For commuters such as Annette Craig, it's just a matter of following the jobs.

Craig, who lives in Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood, has been teaching music in Brookfield for the past three years. She said she previously worked in Milwaukee and could do so again.

"Teaching is a take-along skill," Craig said. "I may soon take it with me and work again in the city, as I once did. It is better to have the commute and the evening errands all in the same neighborhood."

While Craig said her morning drive is easy, she said her afternoon commute home on southbound U.S. Highway 45 "is more unpleasant."

### Long commute

Other commuters are more willing to put up with the long drive across county lines.

"I enjoy commuting to work," Yolanda Rosales said of the 45-minute trip from her home on Milwaukee's south side to her West Bend job. "It gives me time in the morning to think about the tasks that need to be done, and on the way home, I get a chance to unwind."

Rosales admits "commuting has its disadvantages." But as a state Department of Corrections employee, she adds, "I have no intentions of transferring to Milwaukee, where I live. I do not want to run into individuals that I am required to supervise in the community."

While the commuting figures could become fodder in the debate over whether to add lanes to I-94 and I-43, Beimbom warns that they don't tell the whole story.

The Census Bureau asks only about trips to and from work, which represent just 25% of all travel, Beimbom said. Most trips are for other purposes, such as recreation, shopping or errands, he said.

Ken Yunker, assistant director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, declined to comment on the census figures until he could study them. The planning commission periodically conducts its own surveys on travel within its seven-county region.

A preliminary recommendation from a planning commission advisory committee calls for expanding most of the region's major freeways from six to eight lanes as they are rebuilt over the next 20 or 30 years. That recommendation has been endorsed by six county boards and the Racine, Brookfield and Cudahy common councils.

However, the Milwaukee County Board, the Milwaukee and Glendale common councils, the River Hills Village Board and the Nicolet School Board have joined freeway neighbors, environmentalists and Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist in opposing eight lanes on I-94, from Wauwatosa to downtown Milwaukee, and on I-43, from I-894 to Brown Deer Road.

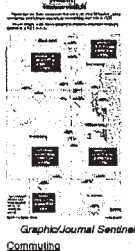
### Crossing Borders

#### Quotable

"The biggest growth in travel in the last 20 years has been in suburb-to-suburb travel," both regionally and nationally.

- Ed Beimbom, director of the Center for Urban Transportation Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

#### Commuting



## JS Online Milwaukee Journal Sentinel March 5, 2003

Planners are trying to sort out the conflicting opinions to forge a consensus.

Not all of the commuters who leave their home counties are heading to or from Milwaukee County, the census figures show.

### Suburb traveling

"The biggest growth in travel in the last 20 years has been in suburb-to-suburb travel," both regionally and nationally, Beimbom said.

For example, 14,528 Washington County residents commuted to jobs in either Waukesha or Ozaukee counties in 2000, up 50% from 9,658 in 1990, the Census Bureau reported.

Shannon Duby is part of that trend. She and her fiancé, Scott Miller, live in Hartford, a 30-minute drive from their jobs at the Quad/Graphics plant in Sussex.

In picking a place to live, their top priority was staying close to Miller's family and friends in Washington County, said Duby, whose own family lives in Michigan.

"He plays softball in Allenton," Duby said. "All his friends live in the Slinger, the West Bend or the Hartford areas. His family lives in Richfield, Slinger and Hubertus. We are 20 minutes from his father and stepmom, 10 minutes from his brother and sister-in-law, five minutes from his stepbrothers, and 30 minutes from his mother's home."

Also, Duby said, she and Miller were attracted by the affordable housing prices in Hartford and by the small-town atmosphere.

Besides, they had invested years in their Quad jobs and could not transfer together to the company's Hartford plant, Duby added.

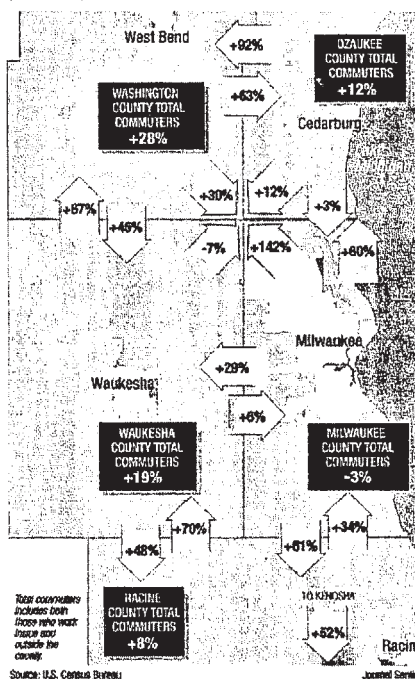
"To be honest, it never crossed our mind when house-hunting" to try to find work closer to home, although neither would want to commute more than half an hour each way, Duby said.

"In the perfect world, a person would be close to family, friends and their job," Duby said. "However, how many of us live in a perfect world? Knowing that at least part of our lives is near our home . . . is more important than having our home near our job."

### COMMUTING CROSSING BORDERS

Figures from the 2000 census show that nearly one in five Milwaukee County workers was commuting to a job outside the county, up from 14% in 1990.

The percentages below reflect changing southeastern Wisconsin commuting patterns from 1990 to 2000.





## CASH applauds supervisors' vote

By Sean Ryan  
Daily Reporter Staff

The Daily Reporter  
February 24, 2003

Feb. 24, 2003

The Milwaukee County Board's recommended changes to the freeway-reconstruction proposal drew applause from local expansion critics and concerns from the Advisory Committee that will consider them.

The Milwaukee County Board's recommendations Thursday make it the only county board out of seven that asked the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to modify its proposed \$6.2 billion freeway-expansion proposal. The board approved the plan's design and safety upgrades and made three recommendations to SEWRPC's proposals:

- Interstate 94 from the Zoo Interchange to the Marquette Interchange should remain at six lanes;
- I-43 from Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive should also stay with six lanes;
- The four-lane stretch of I-43 from Bender Road to Brown Deer road should expand to six, not the proposed eight, lanes.

The board recommendations would mean that instead of widening 127 miles of highway, 53 in Milwaukee County, SEWRPC should propose widening about 108 miles, 34 in Milwaukee County. County Executive Scott Walker could veto the recommendations but wouldn't comment until his staff has more time to review the resolutions.

SEWRPC considered this approach in an earlier proposal before submitting the \$6.2 billion plan to its county boards for comment, said Kenneth Yunker, SEWRPC assistant director. The plan was rejected because it would lead to local congestion on the highways and surface streets, he said.

### More congestion

"We evaluated the costs and the impacts, including congestion, and yes, there would be more," Yunker said. "It was concluded that the rest of the system would work even if you didn't widen those segments."

The largest opposition group to the expansion proposal, Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, applauded the recommendations. Gretchen Schuldt, CASH co-chairwoman, said she would've preferred Supervisor Lynne DeBruin's plan to oppose all expansion in Milwaukee County, which lost by a 12-13 vote.

"I thought it was a good decision, but would they'd had one more vote," Schuldt said. "I want to see (SEWRPC) heed it."

Yunker said he would present all the information gathered from the past seven county board meetings to SEWRPC's Advisory Committee, which may meet this week.

After the committee redrafts its plan, he said it could make another round to the seven boards before it's passed to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

"It wasn't sent out with the idea that everyone is going to endorse it," Yunker said. "It was to see if they could endorse it and to see what they agreed with and what they disagreed with. Why would they ignore it?"

The recommendations drew concern and criticism from some of the Advisory Committee members, including Milwaukee Supervisor James White, Robert Cook, Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin executive director, and Kenneth Leonard, director of WisDOT's Bureau of Planning. On the other hand, it was supported by Advisory Committee members Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway.

### Regional development hurt?

Leonard said he was worried that not expanding the segments of I-94 and I-43 would lead to traffic jams and increased accidents, which may impede commercial traffic traveling through the area. However, he said he would need to consider the recommendations more before knowing how he would handle them in the committee.

"Obviously, over the life of the planning period, congestion is going to get much worse in those sections, and accidents will get much more frequent," Leonard said.

"One of my concerns is what it's going to do to through traffic, to regional development to the area."

Cook said the recommendations were a bad idea that would lead to traffic backups that would extend beyond the local Milwaukee area. He said that the County Board was swayed by a very vocal minority but was confident WisDOT would make good decisions about the expansion.

"In order for the system to flow efficiently, traffic must be allowed to flow throughout the whole system," Cook said. "DOT will do what they always do, which is weigh the benefits of their project for the state against its impact to the people around it."

With approval from SEWRPC's six suburban counties and criticism from Milwaukee County, Yunker said his commission and its Advisory Committee would sit down to "try and shape a plan that can be endorsed by each of the seven county boards."

# Milwaukee County Board resists more freeway lanes

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
February 21, 2003

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journal-sentinel.com

Milwaukee County supervisors came out Thursday against widening key stretches of I-94 and I-43 to eight lanes, after narrowly defeating a move to oppose widening any freeway in the county.

With that decision, the County Board joined the Milwaukee and Glendale Common Councils in urging the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission not to recommend eight-lane freeways in the city and North Shore suburbs.

A preliminary recommendation from a planning commission study committee called for rebuilding all of the area's aging freeways with design upgrades, and with 127 miles of new lanes, at a cost of \$6.25 billion.

Planners say expansion is needed to prevent traffic congestion from growing and to stimulate economic growth. Six suburban county boards have backed the preliminary recommendation, along with the Brookfield, Racine and Cudahy Common Councils.

But freeway neighbors and environmentalists have resisted freeway expansion in Milwaukee and nearby suburbs, arguing that it would take too many homes and businesses, increase air pollution and encourage urban sprawl.

Planners now will consider all of the public reaction as they try to shape a regional consensus on the issue, said Phil Evenson, the planning commission's executive director. He declined to speculate on what the study panel will do when it meets in about a month, but he noted that "consensus means bringing everybody on board."

However, Supervisor James White said he was not sure the study committee needed to revise its recommendation to take the County Board vote into account. White, a panel member who supports freeway expansion, said the committee could send its plan to the full commission and the state Department of Transportation with local governments' comments attached.

But the planning commission's position on adding lanes could determine whether those lanes are built. Although the commission's recommendations are not binding, the federal government won't give the state the money to build new lanes unless the commission endorses adding lanes.

Mayor John O. Norquist, who also sits on the study committee, and Gretchen Schuldt, co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, the coalition of neighborhood groups fighting freeway expansion, applauded the County Board vote and said they hoped the study committee would not ignore the wishes of city and county residents and officials.

Supervisors voted, 15-10, against widening I-94 from six to eight lanes from Wauwatosa to downtown Milwaukee and against widening I-43 from six to eight lanes from I-894 to Silver Spring Drive.

Separately, the board backed widening I-43, from Bender Road to Brown Deer Road, from four to six lanes, as planners have long recommended, but not to eight lanes, as the study panel wanted.

But Supervisor Lynne DeBruin lost, 13-12, in an attempt to oppose widening any freeway anywhere in the county, and the board supported freeway widening in neighboring counties.

Freeways that would be widened from six to eight lanes are U.S. Highway 45, from Greenfield to Richfield; I-894; and I-94, from I-894 to the Illinois border and from Highway 45 to Waukesha. Freeway stretches that would be widened from four to six lanes are I-94, from Oconomowoc to Waukesha, and I-43, from Mukwonago to Greenfield and from Brown Deer Road to state Highway 57.

"Milwaukee won, but there's clearly no consensus in other parts of the county," said Schuldt, a Milwaukee Public Schools budget analyst.

County Executive Scott Walker will review the board's actions before deciding whether to sign or veto the resolution, Walker spokeswoman Sadhna Lindvall said.

Voting against widening I-94 and I-43 were Board Chairman Lee Holloway, DeBruin and Supervisors Sheila Aldrich, Tom Bailey, Gerry Broderick, Elizabeth Coggs-Jones, Joe Davis Sr., Willie Johnson, Robert Krug, Lori Lutzka, Michael Mayo, Richard Nyklewicz Jr., Jim "Luigi" Schmitt, John Weishan and Tony Zielinski.

Voting to support widening I-94 and I-43 were White and Supervisors Peter Agnos, Mark Borkowski, Paul Cesarz, Dan Diliberti, Alvin "Bud" Endries, Tim Johnson, Ryan McCue, Rob McDonald and Roger Quindel.

Voting against widening any Milwaukee County freeway were Aldrich, Bailey, Broderick, Coggs-Jones, Davis, DeBruin, Holloway, Willie Johnson, Mayo, Nyklewicz, Weishan and Zielinski. Voting to support widening at least some freeways were Agnos, Borkowski, Cesarz, Diliberti, Endries, Tim Johnson, Krug, Lutzka, McCue, McDonald, Quindel, Schmitt and White.

# Milwaukee board votes against freeway plan

Impact in doubt as Walker mulls veto

The Waukesha Freeman  
February 21, 2003

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

WAUKESHA - The Milwaukee County Board voted narrowly Thursday to oppose widening the interstate system anywhere in the city of Milwaukee.

But the impact of that vote seems anything but certain.

A preliminary recommendation from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Advisory Committee calls for rebuilding the freeways with 127 miles of new lanes, for \$6.25 billion.

The board voted 15-10 against widening Interstate 94 from six to eight lanes between the zoo and Marquette interchanges and from Interstate 894 to Silver Spring Drive.

The board did vote to support a widening from four to six lanes between Bender Road and Brown Deer Road along Interstate 43.

## Walker could nix vote

Whether that vote becomes the official Milwaukee County statement on the matter is what is confusing the picture.

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker is considering a veto of the board action.

Sadhna Lindvall, Walker's communications director, said today, "The county executive has been supportive for some time of widening the system. But he wants to take his time considering the board's vote."

The advisory committee will probably meet again in about a month now that all seven member counties have voted on the plan, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Phil Evenson said today.

County boards from the other six counties voted to support the plan, offered by the state Department of Transportation

"We have lost a lot of months in this process because of the recall

situation in Milwaukee County," Evenson said.

And Gov. Jim Doyle's state budget calls for starting the reconstruction in 2005 instead of 2004 as originally sought by the advisory committee.

If the entire project is undertaken, it would take about four years to complete.

The confusion over who speaks for Milwaukee might water down the board's opposition. Even if Walker does not veto the plan, there are five Milwaukee area representatives on the advisory committee - three from the county and two from the city.

## Doyle compromise

Doyle said Wednesday he is seeking a compromise on redesigning the Marquette Interchange, a major sticking point in the plan and the first part to be

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"(Walker) indicated to me that a veto was a distinct possibility. And I will urge him to veto it."

- Daniel Finley  
Waukesha County Executive

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constructed.

The committee has taken a preliminary vote to support the \$947 million DOT plan. But Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist has called for a much less extensive plan, costing an estimated \$550 million.

Doyle said rebuild may have to be a compromise in the two plans.

The DOT plan would move all left-hand on- and off-ramps to the right and expand most one-lane ramps to two lanes. Norquist

wants a design that would be limited to fixing only the biggest safety hazards, largely in the northwest section of the interchange.

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley said today he recently discussed the possibility of a Milwaukee County Board against the freeway plans.

"(Walker) indicated to me that a veto was a distinct possibility," Finley said. "And I will urge him to veto it."

Finley said the interchange and lane widening work in the east/west corridor were important to the county and the region.

"And the state Legislature is firmly supportive of our position," Finley said.

Finley said Norquist's proposal "is out of left field."

He added that changing the plan now "would be interference in what the advisory committee has done so far. If Norquist is serious about his plan he should submit it to the committee so it can be subjected to the planning process. Right now, too much credence is being given to the Norquist plan."

The advisory committee will ultimately make a recommendation on the proposal to the SEWRPC board, based on a consensus vote by representatives from all seven counties. That recommendation then goes to the SEWRPC board."

Only three of the 21 SEWRPC members are from Milwaukee County.

The secretary of the state Department of Transportation will consider SEWRPC's recommendation before making its recommendation to the governor and the state Legislature.

SEWRPC construction ban narrowly defeated

By Candace Doyle  
Editor

Feb. 21, 2003

Milwaukee County supervisors Thursday denied by one vote a proposal to oppose the construction of any additional lanes on the freeway system within the county.

The board, in a 12-13 vote, rejected the proposal advanced by Supervisor Lynne DeBruin -- a request that would have rejected the bulk of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's \$6.2 billion plan to expand 127 miles of the freeway system.

The board also denied a request by Supervisor Thomas Bailey to delay until March acting on SEWRPC's plan to overhaul the freeway. Bailey asked to postpone the matter because River Hills, which is in his district, asked for additional time to consider the impact of the regional planning commission's plan on the village.

But a majority of supervisors, including Supervisor Daniel J. Diliberti, rejected that idea.

"I think there is a consensus of the board to move forward," Diliberti said. "I think it's important that Milwaukee not delay it any further."

### Decision uncertain

Both Bailey's and DeBruin's requests were amendments to a resolution before the board that the county's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee recommended on Tuesday.

That resolution is a multifaceted proposal that the board was planning on voting on in a piecemeal fashion. As of press time, though, the board had not acted on any of the resolution's individual elements, including a key and controversial piece that would add 108 miles to the system on the following segments by increasing by two the number of lanes from:

- Interstate 94 from the Racine-Milwaukee county line to the Mitchell Interchange;
- I-894 from the Mitchell Interchange to the Zoo Interchange;
- I-43 from the Hale Interchange to the Milwaukee-Waukesha county line;
- I-94 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee-Waukesha county line; and
- Highway 45 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee-Waukesha County line.

Another element that stirred up public dissent was a part of the resolution that would add 19 miles of freeway by increasing the number of lanes from six to eight on I-43 from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive and on I-94 from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange.

### Opposition continues

Two meetings had been held before the County Board's meeting Thursday to listen to the public's concern that the SEWRPC plan was too costly and would harm the environment, destroy homes and result in lost tax base. Among those opposed to the plan are Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, the Sierra Club and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Before Thursday's meeting, CASH issued a statement saying the County Board's vote backing SEWRPC's proposal would be "a breach of public faith, a broken promise to voters."

The group said a vote in favor of the plan would necessitate higher property taxes.

"These supervisors know that more freeways would mean a reduced tax base and much, much higher property taxes," said Gretchen Schuidt, co-chairwoman of CASH. "Who do they think is going to pay for additional freeway patrols and storm-water management?"

The transportation panel, in amendments to the resolution now before the board, tried to answer some of those worries by recommending that:

- Milwaukee County be reimbursed for the cost of additional freeway patrols;
- No portion of the project's cost be borne by or shifted to local property taxes;
- Sound barriers not be placed on the freeway without prior consent of abutting municipalities;
- Disadvantaged-business goals similar to those used in the Miller Park project be set;
- A noise-mitigation plan be established; and
- All counties in the region adopt Smart Growth plans.

## The Daily Reporter February 21, 2003

## Board opposes widening of key freeway segments

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journalssentinel.com

Last Updated: Feb. 20, 2003

Milwaukee County supervisors came out Thursday against widening key stretches of I-94 and I-43 to eight lanes after narrowly defeating a move to oppose widening any freeway in the county.

With that decision, the County Board joined the Milwaukee and Glendale common councils in urging the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission not to recommend eight-lane freeways in the city and North Shore suburbs.

A preliminary recommendation from a planning commission study committee called for rebuilding all of the area's aging freeways with design upgrades and 127 miles of new lanes at a cost of \$6.25 billion.

Six suburban county boards have backed the preliminary recommendation, along with the Brookfield, Racine and Cudahy common councils. But freeway neighbors and environmentalists have resisted freeway expansion in Milwaukee and nearby suburbs.

Planners will consider all public reaction as they shape a regional consensus on the issue, said Phil Evenson, planning commission executive director.

However, Supervisor James White said he was not sure the study committee needed to revise its recommendation to take the County Board vote into account. White, a panel member who supports freeway expansion, said the committee could send its plan to the full commission and the state Department of Transportation with local governments' comments attached.

The planning commission's position on adding lanes could determine whether those lanes are built. While its recommendations are not binding, unless the commission endorses adding lanes the federal government won't give the state the money to build them.

Mayor John O. Norquist, who also sits on the study committee, and Gretchen Schuidt, co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, a coalition of neighborhood groups fighting freeway expansion, applauded the County Board vote and said they hoped the study committee would not ignore the wishes of city and county residents and officials.

Supervisors voted, 15-10, against widening I-94 from six to eight lanes from Wauwatosa to downtown Milwaukee and against widening I-43 from six to eight lanes from I-894 to Silver Spring Drive.

Separately, the board backed widening I-43 between Bender and Brown Deer roads from four to six lanes, as planners recommend, but not to eight lanes, as the study panel wanted.

Supervisor Lynne DeBruin lost, 13-12, an attempt to oppose widening any freeway in the county, and the board supported freeway widening in neighboring counties.

Freeways that would be widened from six to eight lanes are U.S. Highway 45 from Greenfield to Richfield; I-894; and I-94, from I-894 to the Illinois border and from Highway 45 to Waukesha. Widened from four to six lanes: I-94 from Oconomowoc to Waukesha, and I-43, from Mukwonago to Greenfield and from Brown Deer Road to Highway 57.

County Executive Scott Walker will review the board's actions before deciding whether to sign or veto the resolution, Walker spokeswoman Sadhna Lindvall said.

Voting against widening I-94 and I-43: Lee Holloway, DeBruin, Sheila Aldrich, Tom Bailey, Gerry Broderick, Elizabeth Coggs-Jones, Joe Davis Sr., Willie Johnson, Robert Krug, Lori Lutzka, Michael Mayo, Richard Nyklewicz Jr., Jim "Luigi" Schmitt, John Weishan, Tony Zielinski.

Voting to support widening I-94 and I-43 were White, Peter Agnos, Mark Borkowski, Paul Cesarz, Dan Diliberti, Alvin "Bud" Endries, Tim Johnson, Ryan McCue, Rob McDonald and Roger Quindel.

Voting against widening any Milwaukee County freeway were Aldrich, Bailey, Broderick, Coggs-Jones, Davis, DeBruin, Holloway, Willie Johnson, Mayo, Nyklewicz, Weishan and Zielinski. Voting to support widening at least some freeways were Agnos, Borkowski, Cesarz, Diliberti, Endries, Tim Johnson, Krug, Lutzka, McCue, McDonald, Quindel, Schmitt and White.

JS Online Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
February 20, 2003

# Freeway work is fast lane to recovery

Hartford News  
February 20, 2003

One of the roads we hope Gov. Jim Doyle does not go down is the road that leads to delay of the rebuilding of the Marquette Interchange and the interstate system in southeastern Wisconsin.

Lately there have been some disparaging words from politicians and officials who believe they are not part of the rest of the state and are opposing spending the money it will take for the rebuild.

Yet a Transportation Development Association study released recently claims that every \$1 spent on transportation yields \$3 in economic benefits.

That relationship might be even more important with the Marquette Interchange.

The overall freeway rebuilding project cost is estimated at about \$6.25 billion, of which about \$900 million will be invested in rebuilding the Marquette Interchange.

That interchange will be the first project done as it is the heart of the system, based on the recommenda-

tions by the state Department of Transportation and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

That interchange work is proceeding along the lines of starting the reconstruction in 2004 and is projected to take four years to complete.

The heart of the freeway system in southeastern Wisconsin, at the crossroads of Interstate 94, Interstate 43 and Interstate 794, handles 300,000 vehicles a day, many of them bound for the Twin Cities, Chicago, Madison and Green Bay.

The work along the entire region will proceed outward in most directions once that central hub is finished.

From 2004 to 2010, 113 miles of the freeway is to be reconstructed.

That is the phase most likely to include the controversial six-mile stretch between the Zoo and Marquette Interchanges

Another 96 miles of work is coming between 2011 and 2020, with another 56 miles of reconstruction from 2021 to 2030.

The best hope for ensuring that the work actually gets done may lie in the fact that Brookfield resident Frank Busalacchi is now the secretary of the state Department of Transportation.

As a former truck driver and area resident, he understands how important the work is - particularly the Marquette.

The best thing for the governor to do would be to heed his advice and recognize the unique importance of the freeway system to the vitality of the state's central economic area.

By all means, start with the Marquette and do the other work in the years to come. But the state must rebuild the interchange to the level being proposed by the state DOT so it is safe and lasts through Wisconsin's tough winters.

Half-hearted measures on the freeway rebuilding will bring about anemic results. With the state's economy already in the doldrums, this kind of investment must be made.

## Panel backs lane limits

By DAVE UMHOEFER  
dumhoefer@journalsentinel.com

A County Board committee on Tuesday unanimously endorsed limits on a proposed freeway expansion in Milwaukee County, but kept alive a chance for the full board to back a bigger road project.

The Transportation, Public Works and Transit committee supported adding lanes, but only outside the city of Milwaukee, where officials and residents have expressed strong opposition to widening. That vote was 6-0.

The panel deadlocked 3-3 on a separate resolution that sought to endorse a proposal by regional planners to widen I-43 and I-94 from six to eight lanes from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive, and from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange.

But the tie still sends the second resolution to the full County Board on Thursday, with no recommendation. The board will consider both resolutions.

In addition to supporting the existing freeway width in Milwaukee, the resolution approved in committee also backed

widening I-43 to no more than six lanes in suburban Glendale from Bender Road to Brown Deer Road.

The votes came on a multi-pronged resolution by Supervisor James White, the committee's chairman.

The resolution expresses support for planners' recommendations to fix design and safety flaws in the freeway system.

Counties in southeastern Wisconsin, including Milwaukee, have been asked by the state Department of Transportation to respond to the preliminary freeway plan drawn up by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

The committee voted down an amendment proposed by Supervisor Lynne DeBruin that would have put supervisors on record against any plans for additional freeway lanes anywhere in Milwaukee County. Supervisors approved another DeBruin amendment calling on the DOT to develop plans to deal with "negative aspects" of any freeway recon-

struction, including the loss of homes, increased noise levels and environmental concerns.

Also attached to the committee's recommended resolution was an amendment by Supervisor Thomas Bailey that called for no widening beyond six lanes on I-43 north from Bender Road. That amendment also declared that no sound barriers be erected on the freeway without the prior consent of abutting municipalities.

An additional amendment, included in the unanimously approved resolution, called on DOT to adopt the same disadvantaged-business hiring goals as those used in the Miller Park project.

White did not allow testimony from audience members, noting the lengthy testimony at two previous meetings.

On the vote to endorse the SEWRPC plan that calls for eight-lane freeways, supervisors White, Ryan McCue and Lori Lutzka voted in favor; supervisors Michael Mayo, Willie Johnson and John Weishan were opposed. Supervisor Jim Schmitt was not present.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
February 19, 2003

## Committee split on key portion of freeway plan

By Candace Doyle  
*Editor*

The Daily Reporter  
February 19, 2003

Feb. 19, 2003

A Milwaukee County panel Tuesday morning failed to make a recommendation on a key portion of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's freeway-expansion plan.

The Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee, in a 3-3 vote, made no recommendation on a part of a resolution made by County Supervisor James White that, had it passed, would have been strong encouragement for the full County Board to essentially approve SEWRPC's \$6.2 billion plan in its entirety.

The County Board is to meet Thursday morning to consider the committee's actions. SEWRPC serves as the planning agency for Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties, and the six suburban county boards have already endorsed the plan.

White said his substitute resolution took a "regional perspective" on transportation issues and essentially supported the main tenets of SEWRPC's plan, which involves incorporating design upgrades and adding lanes to 127 miles of freeway, primarily in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

That plan has been widely criticized by Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and other city officials, Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Sierra Club of Wisconsin. Among the objections to the plan is that it is too costly and that Milwaukee County residents have the most to lose in terms of homes and tax base. Critics also say the plan did not take into account alternate modes of transportation.

### Piecemeal approach

But the transportation panel did not accept White's entire proposal as presented, deciding instead to vote separately on a portion of the resolution that called for adding two more lanes on 19 miles of the freeway, expanding the following stretches from six to eight lanes wide:

- Interstate 43 from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive;
- I-94 from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange;
- I-43 from Bender Road to Brown Deer Road.

A vote on that measure ended in a tie, meaning it moves on to the full board without recommendation. Supervisors White, Ryan McCue and Lori Lutzka, chairwoman, voted in favor of the measure, while Supervisors Michael Mayo Sr., Willie Johnson Jr. and John Weishan Jr. voted against it.

However, the committee recommended the remainder of White's resolution, with a few amendments.

Specifically, the panel is proposing that the County Board on Thursday approve addressing safety flaws in the current freeway system and adding two lanes on 108 miles of the freeway system along:

- I-94 from the Racine/Milwaukee county line to the Mitchell Interchange, increasing that stretch from six to eight lanes;
- I-894 from the Mitchell Interchange to the Zoo Interchange, increasing the freeway from six to eight lanes;
- I-43 from the Hale Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha county line, making that interchange a six-lane freeway;
- I-94 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha county line, increasing the number of lanes to eight;
- Highway 45 from the Zoo Interchange to the Milwaukee/Waukesha county line, upping the number of lanes to eight.

Additionally, committee members accepted an amendment by Supervisor Thomas Bailey that supports "no widening beyond six lanes" on I-43 from Bender Road to Brown Deer Road and recommends that no sound barriers be placed on the freeway "without the prior consent of the abutting municipalities."

The committee also recommended Supervisor Lynne DeBruin's amendment calling for the state Department of Transportation to outline all direct and indirect costs of the project, including the impact the project would have on "nonfreeway-related projects." Her amendment also requires WisDOT to determine if there are less costly design options and to develop a mitigation plan that would deal with "the negative aspects of the project resulting from the loss of homes, increased noise levels and environmental concerns."

By Mark Kass  
Special to The Daily Reporter

Feb. 12, 2003

Milwaukee Alderman Michael Murphy is requesting that Gov. Jim Doyle consider changing the governance of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to give Milwaukee County greater representation because it is the county that has the largest population and provides the most funding to the regional agency.

In a letter to Doyle, Murphy, whose district includes the Story Hill Neighborhood that would be impacted by SEWRPC's proposed freeway-expansion project, said the agency's 21-member commission is "not reflective of our community's diversity and contrary to the principal of fair representation."

The SEWRPC Commission consists of three representatives from each of the seven member counties - Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington, Ozaukee, Racine, Kenosha and Walworth. One commissioner from each county is appointed, or confirmed by the county board in those counties where a county executive appoints, and is usually an elected county board supervisor. The remaining two from each county are appointed by the governor, one from a list prepared by the county.

"SEWRPC's core structure is inherently biased against urban dwellers, minorities, low-income persons and nonautomobile-owning citizens - the very people who are most in need of comprehensive planning," Murphy said in the letter. "Regional planning needs to be comprehensive and promote discussion that doesn't focus on transportation issues that ignore options other than automobiles or land-use policies that exclude low-income housing in the suburbs."

#### Audit requested

The request is the second attack on SEWRPC in the last week by opponents to the agency's freeway-expansion plan.

State Reps. Jon Richards and David Cullen requested a state audit by the Legislative Audit Bureau of SEWRPC, alleging the regional planning commission has failed to "adequately reflect the needs of the citizens it's supposed to represent." SEWRPC has proposed a \$6.2 billion, 127-mile freeway expansion plan that Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and Milwaukee area community and environmental groups have been working hard to block.

**That request will be considered by the Legislature's Joint Audit Committee in March and is expected to be approved.**

Norquist and other Milwaukee area environmental and community leaders have objected to SEWRPC's freeway-expansion plan, saying it falls most heavily and negatively on the densely populated city and county of Milwaukee.

The freeway-expansion plan, endorsed by a SEWRPC study committee, would require 658 additional acres of land and the razing of 216 homes, 31 businesses and three government buildings in the affected seven-county region. Milwaukee County would bear the brunt: 184 acres, 118 homes, 17 businesses, the Courthouse Annex and two smaller county buildings.

The plan has been approved by six of the seven counties that SEWRPC serves. The Milwaukee County Board is currently considering the plan. SEWRPC officials have said that after Milwaukee County acts on the proposal, it will be submitted to the state Legislature and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.



"SEWRPC's demography clearly does not reflect our community's diversity and has consciously or unconsciously biased SEWRPC's decision-making process."  
Milwaukee Alderman  
Michael Murphy

#### Unfair share?

According to Murphy, SEWRPC's governance is imbalanced when smaller counties such as rural Ozaukee County, which has a population of 83,555, has the same number of votes as Milwaukee County with a population of 932,012. In addition, Murphy said Milwaukee County taxpayers contributed 36 percent of SEWRPC's 2002 budget, while Ozaukee County contributed 6.5 percent.

"That logic is akin to allowing the residents of North Dakota (to) dictate what is best for the United States," he said. North Dakota's population is 542,000 and the country's, 281 million.

Murphy said many of the decisions made by SEWRPC regarding freeway expansion and management of the region's water supply will impact the city of Milwaukee most.

"The city's 596,974 residents outnumber the combined population of the other six counties in SEWRPC, yet the city's representation in SEWRPC is disproportionately negligible," he said.

Additionally, all of SEWRPC's 21 commissioners and 11-member senior staff are white, Murphy said.

"SEWRPC's demography clearly does not reflect our community's diversity and has consciously or unconsciously biased SEWRPC's decision-making process," Murphy wrote. "Recently, a SEWRPC representative was asked why they had not provided written information in Spanish or Hmong on the east-west proposal. The response was very telling: 'No one asked us.'"

A spokesperson for Doyle could not be reached for comment.

#### Attempt to control

However, Washington County Executive Kenneth Miller, a member of the SEWRPC board, said Murphy's idea was just another attempt by Milwaukee officials to have control over regional authorities.

"This is one of the organizations that work, unlike others that are controlled by the mayor (Norquist)," he said. "Milwaukee may have the most population and may contribute the most to SEWRPC, but does that mean they get to buy their votes? I'm sure the mayor would like to rule SEWRPC, but the days of Milwaukee County ruling the metropolitan area are over."

Miller dismissed Murphy's allegations that SEWRPC does not adequately serve the city's minority population, saying the agency was attempting to put together a freeway-expansion plan that would make it easier for people to get to jobs that are located in the suburban counties.

"We're trying to make the freeway system better, and what are they doing?" he said. "Tearing down freeways. How does that improve the transportation system?"

Motor vehicle transportation is here to stay, and we have to take steps to make sure that as a region we can accommodate it."

## Opposition to state's largest projects formidable

By Sean Ryan  
Daily Reporter Staff

Feb. 12, 2003

Two broad-based coalitions of community and advocacy groups have become key players in debates that will chart the course for the largest projects Wisconsin has ever seen.

The proposed projects are the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's \$6.2 billion freeway reconstruction and expansion and Wisconsin Energy Corporation's \$3 billion coal-burning power plant in Oak Creek.

The coalitions are Citizens Allied for Sane Highways and Responsible Energy for Southeastern Wisconsin's Tomorrow. Both came together in October and have 12 and 22 official member organizations, respectively.

Since October, both groups have secured microphone time at the government meetings that will decide the fate of their causes. CASH members followed SEWRPC representatives to the podium at two recent Milwaukee County Board meetings, and RESET has four members officially registered to testify at Public Service Commission of Wisconsin hearings on Oak Creek.

### Goodwill but no cash

CASH's co-founders, Gretchen Scholdt and Robert Trimmier, live in Milwaukee's Story Hill neighborhood adjacent to Interstate 94. The two are requesting an outright rejection of the SEWRPC proposal to reconstruct freeways in seven of Wisconsin's southeastern counties so further studies can be done.

Scholdt said the coalition operates on small private donations and is organized by her and Trimmier, whenever they're not working their full-time jobs.

"We have no budget, we have no money, we have a couple of donations and the goodwill of people," Scholdt said. "We're the worker bees of CASH, but it's no longer just CASH. These people at the committee hearings are doing it on their own. It's just not CASH. It's huge. It's far beyond that."

On Thursday, the Milwaukee County Board referred SEWRPC's proposed plan back to its Transportation, Public Utilities and Transit Committee, which deferred it to the complete board a month ago. County staffers are drafting proposed amendments to the SEWRPC plan that the complete board may consider at its Feb. 20 meeting.

RESET's goal is to encourage Wisconsin Energy to burn natural gas rather than coal in its proposed Oak Creek plant. The three-member PSC will make a final ruling on the proposal based on information from public hearings.

The coalition began with a \$150,000 grant from member S.C. Johnson & Son Inc., Racine, and its members operate without any formal leadership structure. The organization's most outspoken members are S.C. Johnson and Madison-based Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, whose agents speak for RESET in the course of their jobs.

"When the coalition came together it formed very quickly and has functioned very smoothly," said Rich Bogovich, energy campaign director for the Environmental Decade. "Clearly the types of coalitions like CASH and others have raised concerns among certain political realms."

### Credibility through diversity

Both RESET and CASH pulled together a band of diverse members and combined their various reasons for opposing the projects into one voice.

Half of CASH's membership is neighborhood associations, but the other half includes environmental groups, a business association and a student organization from Marquette University. The diverse membership lends credibility to CASH because its business associations lend an air of professionalism while its grassroots neighborhood groups keep it in touch with average citizens, said Chris Ahmuty, executive director of American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin.

"They may be a different model than all the planners at SEWRPC and their consultants, but that doesn't mean that the grassroots model on its own terms isn't sophisticated," he said. "It's wide, and it has several different components, and it is grassroots through institutions. It is a potent force and SEWRPC and (the Wisconsin Department of Transportation) will, I predict, pay attention to it."



Chris Ahmuty, executive director of American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin, says RESET and CASH will be hard for elected officials to ignore.

Photo by Sean Ryan

## The Daily Reporter February 12, 2003

Traditionally, the credibility of single-issue advocacy groups improves as their ranks grow more diverse, Bogovich said. RESET, for instance, hasn't yet been stamped with the NIMBY-Not In My Backyard-moniker because of its geographical diversity.

"The notion that groups like CASH and RESET are much more sophisticated than the typical NIMBY group has gotten certain business interests concerned," Bogovich said. "There will definitely be a characterization of (CASH) as a NIMBY group. RESET has gotten a little bit of that too."

### Show the flag

Both groups are trying to show widespread public support for their causes in order to sway the decision-makers.

Scholdt said CASH was trying to gather enough voices and bodies at the Milwaukee County Board meetings to show the elected officials their constituents' misgivings about the SEWRPC proposal.

"They're elected, so (public opinion) damn well better play a big one," she said. "It should play a major role. The people who are going to be affected should have their say."

RESET, on the other hand, is trying to appeal directly to Wisconsin Energy by showing support among its customers for a natural gas plant, Bogovich said. The organization last week released a poll it commissioned last year that showed 80 percent of polled Milwaukee County and Racine County residents said they think natural gas plants are better for public health than coal plants.

"We want to be able to give them the incentive, and also the assurance, that they do have the support for taking that big step," Bogovich said. "We hope to pursue them directly. If we don't succeed in moving them much, we'll certainly turn to the PSC."

Even if the shows of strength aren't successful, both coalitions have backup plans in the legal system.

The Environmental Decade and S.C. Johnson filed a PSC complaint that its decision saying Wisconsin Energy's application was complete was incorrect. If the commission agrees after reading comments from registered participants, the utility would need to re-apply.

The ACLU, which isn't a CASH member but is working with the group on SEWRPC's proposal, is also ready to file a lawsuit against the commission for not meeting federal requirements for analyzing the social impact of the project, Ahmuty said. If the ACLU opens a case and is successful, it could bar any reconstruction from receiving federal funds.

"We don't want to sue," he said. "What we bring is the possibility of litigation."

Even though both groups are standing across the ring from SEWRPC and Wisconsin Energy, both stress that they aren't trying to stop the projects from happening. RESET wants a plant to be built in Oak Creek, but it wants a natural gas plant, Bogovich said.

Likewise, CASH realizes southeastern Wisconsin's freeways need rebuilding, but it wants more community involvement in the planning process, Scholdt said.

"We have to find a point where we can sit down and say, 'This community needs a decent freeway system, what can we afford?'" she said. "Eventually, we are all going to get to a point where we're all working together. It's just getting there."



Sides shared up about freeway expansion  
2/12/2003  
Andrew Johnson  
Tribune Staff

Some Milwaukee County supervisors are opposed to Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's plan to repair the area's freeway system by adding lanes to Interstate 43 and Interstate 94 in Milwaukee County.

County Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. said he is in favor of freeway repair for the seven county region, which includes Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties, but is opposed to any widening. Widening would displace homes between the Marquette and Milwaukee County Zoo interchanges and add to pollution problems, he said.

Johnson said the majority of those present at a special meeting called by the county board last Thursday at the Washington Park Senior Center were also opposed to widening.

Supervisor John Weishan Jr. said he is opposed to widening portions of I-94 and I-43 near Wood National Cemetery and the Story Hill neighborhood. He said widening would be disrespectful to veterans' graves and destroy nearby neighborhoods.

While he did not say he was against widening stretches of the freeway, Supervisor Ryan McCue did say any proposals made need to be analyzed carefully.

"It's going to be the biggest public works project in the history of the state of Wisconsin, McCue said. "I think we need to carefully look at the proposals. I don't want to make a mess. So far I like what I see."

According to Ken Yunker, assistant director of SEWRPC, the cost of rebuilding the 272 miles of the regional freeway system as is would be \$3.4 billion. Rebuilding using modern design standards would cost \$5.5 billion, and rebuilding using modern design standards with additional lanes on 127 miles of the freeway system would be an additional \$700 million.

Supervisor Lori Lutzka, vice chairman of the County Board's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee, said she is in the midst of taking input from her constituents and has not decided whether freeway widening would be good or bad.

Supervisor Michael Mayo Sr. said he does not see the benefits of expanding parts of the freeway to eight lanes.

The Marquette Tribune  
February 17, 2003

"I really don't know why," he said. "No one has given me a valid reason why."

Cost is another reason to oppose widening, said Citizens Allied for Sane Highways co-chair Gretchen Scholdt.

Scholdt said storm water that runs off roads is highly polluted and would have to be captured, treated and stored, which is "incredibly expensive." Upkeep costs would also run high, she said.

She said she hopes the Milwaukee County Board will respond in a fashion similar to the Waukesha County Board in 1997, when area counties were proposing light rail transit. While other counties wanted light rail, Waukesha County did not, and residents felt they should not have to pay for it if others still wanted it.

"What was fair for Waukesha County in 1997 is fair for Milwaukee County in 2003," Scholdt said.

Scholdt also said she hopes more groups get involved, including Marquette. The possibility of adding lanes carries great environmental risks, and she is surprised Marquette has not spoke out against it.

Ben Tracy, director of university communication, said Marquette has not taken a stance because the additional lanes would not be near campus.

Marquette realizes it is a sensitive issue to those who will be affected by it, Tracy said, but is not an issue in which the school feels it should be involved.

Yunker said all plans discussed now are only options, not actual proposals. The advisory committee to the SEWRPC board - which includes County Executive Scott Walker, County Board Chairman Lee Holloway and Transportation, Public Works & Transit Committee Chairman James White - needs to propose recommendations.

## Norquist charges brush back SEWRPC

Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist has been beamed many times in recent years by some serious political curve balls thrown at him.

The infamous Marilyn Figueroa sexcapade and the flubbed location of the Harley-Davidson museum are key and notable among them.

But Norquist showed Wednesday he is still capable of playing political hardball at its toughest.

It was really Norquist calling for the state Legislature to audit the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, albeit using two Milwaukee Democrat legislators as messengers.

In a letter to the state Legislature's Joint Legislative Audit Committee, state Reps. David Cullen and Jon Richards called for the audit of the seven-county planning group.

It was clear in the body of the

letter to the committee that the message was the one being championed by Norquist. Much of the points already made by Hizzoner and Norquist policy director Jim Rowen admitted he gathered much of the information and shared it with the legislators.

The legislators' chief criticism in the letter centered on the agency's role as "a leading voice for the expansion of our freeway system. The public needs to know that their tax dollars are being used with their best interests in mind and this audit is necessary to make certain SEWRPC is doing just that."

SEWRPC Executive Director Phil Evenson could see Norquist's hand behind the message. He told the Freeman, "(The call) is obviously sympathetic with the (freeway) opposition and that opposition begins in the mayor's office."

The legislators' letter said a

recent survey on support for the freeway expansion project opposed by Norquist "came with an obviously biased cover letter and questions that were leading in an attempt to get the response they desired."

Then he pointed out the survey cost \$900,000.

But that was just the mayor's money pitch. He had some other potential hardballs he wanted to toss at the legislators, hoping that some of them stick to the planning agency.

Key among them were the absence of any minority people on the 21-member SEWRPC board and the 11-member staff; the relocation of the SEWRPC headquarters from its urban setting in downtown Waukesha to suburban City of Pewaukee; and budgetary items like a \$60,000 annual auto budget.

Rowen asked in an interview, "How many people even know about SEWRPC? And how many

taxpayers know part of their tax dollars goes to fund it?"

It seems to us that SEWRPC has long ago established its value in planning for the future, even if its version is not always accepted by the local governments that have the real power.

If the state Legislative Audit Bureau is asked to assess SEWRPC simply because it dared to support freeway expansion, it also ought to assess whether they are being used by Norquist as a bat to bludgeon the agency instead of really exercising its evaluative function.

Yet SEWRPC might well wish for the audit to give it a chance to refute these charges by Milwaukee's politicians and Evenson said as much.

"We welcome any and all audits," Evenson said. "We are proud of the work we do and the way we do it."

The Waukesha Freeman  
February 10, 2003

# County may block freeway plan

## Board expected to vote against adding lanes in some areas

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journalssentinel.com

The Milwaukee County Board appears poised to oppose widening key stretches of I-94 and I-43 to eight lanes, supervisors on both sides of the issue agree.

By joining forces with Milwaukee and Glendale officials, the board's opposition could make it difficult for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to recommend widening those freeways. And without the commission's endorsement, the state Department of Transportation could not obtain the federal money it would need to add the lanes.

But after a four-hour meeting dominated by freeway expansion opponents, the board was not ready to take formal action Thursday night. Instead, supervisors asked the board's transportation committee to hammer out a position in time for a final vote by the full board Feb. 20.

"I really do believe there's a strong consensus coming that says no widening" of I-94 from downtown to U.S. Highway 45 and of I-43 from I-894 to Brown Deer Road, said Supervisor Lynne DeBruin, a freeway expansion opponent.

Supervisor James White, a supporter of freeway expansion, and Phil Evenson, executive director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, agreed that the board likely would follow the Milwaukee Common Council's lead to oppose widening those stretches and double-decking I-94 just west of Miller Park.

"We got the message," after hearing strong public opposition to eight-lane freeways, White said.

About 200 residents showed up for the board's rare committee-of-the-whole session at the Washington Park Senior Center on the west side. Among the nearly 60 speakers

who addressed the board, foes of freeway widening outnumbered supporters about 6 to 1.

At issue was how to rebuild the area's aging freeways as they wear out. A preliminary recommendation from a study committee of the planning commission calls for rebuilding the freeways with 127 miles of new lanes, at a cost of \$6.25 billion. Even without widening, planners say design upgrades, such as eliminating left-hand ramps, would cost \$5.5 billion.

Opponents focused on the homes, businesses and other buildings that would be razed, as well as the cost of the plan, the potential increase in air pollution and the impact on other property that would be closer to freeways.

Jerry Papa, a bus driver and Catholic activist, held up a picture of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, demolished to build I-43, and asked, "What are we going to lose this time?"

"Freeways are not friends of neighborhoods," said Dennis Sell of Milwaukee.

Gretchen Schuldt, a Mil-

waukee Public Schools budget analyst and co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, told supervisors that supporting the plan meant "you will be sacrificing Milwaukee County for the benefit of suburban commuters and road-builders."

Among expansion proponents was Russ Retzack of West Allis, who told supervisors: "We built this freeway system wrong in the first place, and the reason we did is because of people like you. ... Let's not do it wrong again."

And Bob Cook, a former Transportation Department official who is now executive director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin, said, "A vote against this plan is a vote against economic growth in Milwaukee County," because businesses want convenient freeway access.

All six suburban county boards have endorsed the plan, along with the Brookfield and Racine Common Councils. In addition to the Milwaukee Common Council vote against widening I-94 and I-43, the Glendale Common Council has opposed widening I-43 from four to eight lanes in the North Shore suburbs.

Evenson said the freeway system could be viable with additional lanes only in the suburbs, but it would mean additional congestion on the stretches that were not widened, as well as shifting more traffic to city streets.

### PUBLIC FORUMS

**Freeway-widening opponents** have set two public forums: one at noon today at the United Community Center, 920 S. 9th St., organized by activist Ramona Puentes, and one at 7 p.m. Feb. 19 at Marquette University's Cudahy Hall, 1313 W. Wisconsin Ave., sponsored by the Sierra Club and Students for an Environmentally Active Campus.

### BY THE NUMBERS

Statistics on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's freeway plan:

**\$6.25 billion:** Cost of rebuilding freeways with new lanes in the seven-county area.

**127:** Miles of new lanes that would be added.

**19:** Miles of new lanes that city officials oppose adding on I-94 and I-43.

**658:** Acres that would be taken areawide.

**216:** Homes that would be razed areawide.

**177:** Homes that would be razed in Milwaukee County.

**31:** Businesses that would be razed areawide.

**20:** Businesses that would be razed in Milwaukee County.

**3:** Government buildings that would be razed, all in Milwaukee County.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
February 8, 2003

Source: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Cullen, Richards call for SEWRPC audit

By Mark Kass  
Special to The Daily Reporter

Feb. 7, 2003

Another battle on the proposed expansion of Milwaukee-area freeways has broken out as two Milwaukee state legislators have requested an audit of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Democrat Reps. Jon Richards and David Cullen requested the state audit by the Legislative Audit Bureau this week, alleging that SEWRPC has failed to "adequately reflect the needs of the citizens it's supposed to represent." SEWRPC has proposed a \$6.2 billion, 127-mile freeway expansion planning that Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and Milwaukee-area community and environmental groups have been working hard to block.

"SEWRPC's role in our community has never been larger," said Cullen, who is a member of the audit committee. "SEWRPC has become a leading voice for the expansion of our freeway system. The public needs to know that their tax dollars are being used with their best interests in mind, and this audit is necessary to make certain SEWRPC is doing just that."

Added Richards, "The breadth and scope of the questions surrounding SEWRPC are significant and demand clarification and answers."

#### SEWRPC 'welcomes' audit

Phil Evenson, executive director of SEWRPC, said given the recent clashes on the freeway expansion plan, he is not surprised by the audit request.

"The freeway-expansion proposal has stirred up an uncommon interest in the commission and is likely at the root of everything that is asked to be addressed in the audit," he said. "The (SEWRPC) Commission welcomes an audit of our operations. We are proud of what we do and how we do it. If the committee decides to approve the request, we look forward to working with the staff of the state audit bureau."

State Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz, a Menomonee Falls Republican who is co-chair of the Legislature's Joint Audit Committee, said the request will likely be considered at the panel's March meeting. She said she would likely support the request.

"I have to wait to get more information, but there probably is good reason to support it," she said.

Norquist and other Milwaukee area environmental and community leaders have objected to SEWRPC's freeway-expansion plan, saying it falls most heavily and negatively on the densely populated city and county of Milwaukee.

The plan, endorsed by a SEWRPC study committee, would require 658 additional acres of land and the razing of 216 homes, 31 businesses and three government buildings in the affected seven-county region. Milwaukee County would bear the brunt: 184 acres, 118 homes, 17 businesses, the Courthouse Annex and two smaller county buildings.

#### SEWRPC move scrutinized

##### Agency's purchase of Ruckert-Mielke building questioned

Did the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission cut a sweetheart deal for a Pewaukee engineering firm that had done extensive work for the agency by acquiring its office building? Or did SEWRPC luck into finding the right building at the right time and save taxpayers money?

The answer to those questions is likely to be determined by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau as it is one of the main contentions against SEWRPC by two Milwaukee-area state legislators, who have requested a state audit of the regional planning agency.

State Reps. Jon Richards and David Cullen questioned SEWRPC's 2002 move to the office building near Highway J and Interstate 94 in Pewaukee, which the agency purchased for \$3.4 million from Ruckert-Mielke, a well-known Pewaukee firm that has had multiple contracts with SEWRPC over the last decade.

"Should SEWRPC and public agencies buy buildings and take them off the tax rolls?" Richards and Cullen asked in their letter requesting the audit. "Was this an arms-length transaction, given that SEWRPC did not issue a (request for proposals) or bids for the new offices and because Ruckert-Mielke has multiple contracts with SEWRPC?"

The audit request also stated that the actual cost of the acquisition, which was financed by industrial-revenue bonds issued by Pewaukee, will be \$5 million, including interest.

"The move raises legitimate questions because it was a no-bid purchase that moved SEWRPC to an isolated location farther from where most of its consultants live," said Jim Rowen, policy director for Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, who has blasted SEWRPC for its \$8.25 billion freeway expansion plan.

##### Move defended

Phil Evenson, executive director of SEWRPC, said the agency's move has already received scrutiny from its 21-member board, which consists of three members from each of the seven counties that are served by the agency.

SEWRPC, which had been located in the old Waukesha County Courthouse in downtown Waukesha, made the decision to move, Evenson said, because of the need for more space and the desire of the building's other tenant, the Waukesha County Historical Society, to expand.

"There were a lot of inefficiencies in that old building," Evenson said. "Our transportation people were located in another part of the building. A week would go by sometimes and I would not see or talk to them. We need space that was more up to date and a more modern building to address our communications and technology needs."

When SEWRPC began looking at alternatives, it came across Ruckert-Mielke's desire to sell its building and move to a new location. Because Ruckert-Mielke did similar engineering, planning and surveying work, the building was a perfect fit for SEWRPC.

"It was just sheer happenstance," Evenson said. "The building was already outfitted and designed for our purpose. We were able to negotiate a deal that was fair to everybody, most importantly the taxpayers."

The audit request questions whether SEWRPC should have issued a request for proposals or accepted bids because it receives public operating funds from the seven counties it serves. Evenson said SEWRPC did not explore other buildings, but the Ruckert-Mielke building was just what it were looking for. In addition, Evenson said he discussed the purchase with the seven county leaders and none objected.

"We did look at other things including what it would cost to build a new building," he said. "No place else could offer the location and the building that we were looking for. And we will end up with an asset after 20 years, rather than continuing to pay rent for the next 40 years."

- By Mark Kass

## The Daily Reporter February 7, 2003

#### Milwaukee County considering plan

The plan has been approved by six of the seven counties that SEWRPC serves. The Milwaukee County Board is currently considering the plan. Evenson said after Milwaukee County acts on the proposal, it will be submitted to the state Legislature and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

"One way or another, we would like to send a proposal to Madison that most everyone can reasonably agree on," he said.

Jim Rowen, policy director for Norquist, said the mayor supports the audit request because the agency "is running roughshod over city residents."

"It ignored public sentiment expressed at its hearings," Rowen said. "Its highway-expansion planning will force major tax increases and accelerate sprawl -- into areas where it acknowledges there is already a water shortage. It seems to be accountable only to itself, making audit scrutiny justified."

In their audit request, Richards and Cullen asked the state audit bureau to specifically look at:

- SEWRPC's decision to relocate from its office in downtown Waukesha to a building in Pewaukee it purchased for \$3.4 million from Ruckert-Mielke, a well-known Pewaukee engineering firm that has done extensive work for SEWRPC.
- SEWRPC's recurring \$60,000 budget for vehicle purchases and decide if it is an appropriate use of taxpayers' dollars. The audit request letter states that the agency recently purchased a \$26,000 Buick primarily for Evenson's use. It also asked the state agency to review the renewable \$42,000 contract SEWRPC has with its former executive director, Kurt Bauer, that includes an office and "appropriate vehicle," which is currently a \$22,000 Ford Crown Victoria.
- Whether SEWRPC, which has an all white senior staff and commission, is adhering to an affirmative action plan.
- SEWRPC's regional freeway-expansion plan and the additional \$40,000 on a survey asking for more input, which Cullen and Richards alleged was biased and contained leading questions.

#### Closer look needed

"The public deserves a closer look ... in the face of substantial local opposition decrying the project as fiscally and politically irresponsible and harmful to the neighborhoods in the Interstate 94 corridor," Cullen and Richards stated in a letter to the audit committee.

Gretchen Schuldt, co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, a coalition of neighborhood groups formed to oppose the freeway expansion, said an audit of SEWRPC was appropriate.

"This agency has run a long time without any real oversight, and I think it's gotten into some bad fiscal habits," she said. "Self-dealing with consultants and buying luxury cars for the top brass is certainly questionable. And it's no secret that CASH has concerns about the way SEWRPC conducted the freeway study. It clearly was designed to get to a predetermined outcome. Billions of dollars are at stake here; the Legislature should be very, very concerned."

# Milwaukee legislators seek audit of SEWRPC operations

## Commission head says audit may be politically motivated

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

CITY OF PEWAUKEE - The freeway expansion battle may be taking a detour through Waukesha County with a call for an audit of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Two Milwaukee legislators are asking the state Legislature to audit the SEWRPC. In a letter to the state Legislature's Joint Legislative Audit Committee, state Reps. David Cullen and Jon Richards, both Milwaukee Democrats, called for an audit of the seven-county planning group.

In the letter dated Tuesday, the legislators criticize the agency's role as "a leading voice for the expansion of our freeway system. The public needs to know that their tax dollars are being used with their best interests in mind and this audit is necessary to make certain SEWRPC is doing just that."

SEWRPC Executive Director Phil Evenson said Wednesday the audit call might well be politically motivated by freeway expansion opponents, particularly Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist.

"(The call) is obviously sympa-

thetic with the (freeway) opposition and that opposition begins in the mayor's office," Evenson said.

Evenson added that Jim Rowen, Norquist's policy director, had recently been at SEWRPC headquarters asking for various documents on staff and operations.

Rowen said Wednesday he shared information he gathered with Richards and encouraged the legislators to seek the audit.

"We welcome any and all audits," Evenson said. "We are proud of the work we do and the way we do it."

The letter said a recent survey on support for the freeway expansion project opposed by Norquist "came with an obviously biased cover letter and questions that were leading in an attempt to get the response they desired."

Evenson denied any attempt to somehow guide the response.

"I think no matter how you ask the questions you would get the same response," Evenson said. "There is about three-quarters (of those polled) support for rebuilding the freeway."

### Vehicles, personnel questioned

The legislators also criticized

the move of the SEWRPC offices from downtown Waukesha and the need to spend \$60,000 annually on vehicles.

Evenson said the move to a City of Pewaukee building purchased by the commission will eventually save taxpayers money.

As for the cars, he said SEWRPC has a fleet of nine vehicles because the staff travels to the seven counties in southeastern Wisconsin regularly.

"We serve 147 municipalities," Evenson said.

The legislators also said they had concerns about the lack of minority people on the 21-member board and the 11-member staff of SEWRPC.

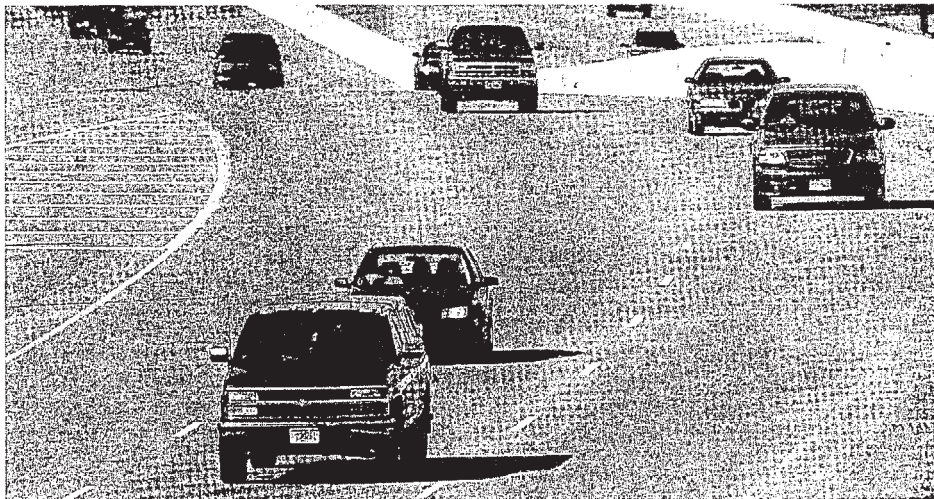
Evenson said the appointments are made by the governor and the member counties and there have been minority board members in SEWRPC's 40-year past.

"As for staff, we would be delighted to be able to get minority staff," he said. But he said the jobs are in areas that minorities have not sought training in.

Evenson said SEWRPC is working in Milwaukee minority neighborhoods to increase interest in the various planning fields.

### Brief study possible

State Rep. Suzanné Jeskewitz, R-Menomonee Falls, a committee co-chair, said she was unsure whether the items mentioned in the letter would rise to the level of needing an audit. She said she



Freeman file photo

Traffic on Interstate 94 travels eastbound through City of Pewaukee recently. Two state lawmakers from Milwaukee want an audit of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Some believe the audit request is a result of the commission's recommendation to expand I-94.

would discuss the request with her co-chair state Sen. Carol Roessler, R-Oshkosh.

"I don't know if that will be appropriate," Jeskewitz said Wednesday. "If so, we will probably request a scope at our meeting in late March."

A scope is a brief study by the state Legislative Audit Bureau to determine if a more detailed and

thorough look is warranted. Such scopes generally take a week or two, Jeskewitz said. If the larger audit is deemed necessary, such studies generally take about six months, she said.

Gov. Jim Doyle said recently that construction on the state Department of Transportation's plan on freeway expansion would start in the next biennium. Besides using federal funds, much of the trans-

portation funding account would be devoted to the project, delaying other road projects throughout the state.

Doyle recently declined to support a cheaper plan being touted by Norquist for rebuilding the Marquette Interchange, slated to begin in 2004.

## Changing lanes SEWRPC awaits resident feedback on...

Feb 6 2003 12:00AM By Jane Ford Staff Writer  
Changing lanes

SEWRPC awaits resident feedback on whether to widen Interstate 43

By Jane Ford  
Staff Writer

Anybody trapped in an almost daily traffic jam on Interstate 43 would no doubt welcome the liberation that widening the freeway would offer.

Indeed, proposals are in the works to widen I-43 to as many as eight lanes from downtown to West Brown Deer Road and to six lanes north of there.

But that proposed widening would come at a price, and citizens and decision-makers will start deciding right now whether the price is worth it.

In the North Shore, the price includes razing as many as 20 homes; erecting proposed 30-foot-tall noise barriers on both sides of the interstate from Bender Road north to the Milwaukee County line; losing Nicolet High School athletic fields east of I-43; losing Jean Nicolet Road; losing part of Manchester East's parking lot; razing the now-closed Shores Transitional Care and Rehabilitation Center in Glendale; increased noise that may or may not be muffled by the sound barriers; and possibly trimming parts of the RiverPoint Village rear parking lot for interchange improvements at West Brown Deer Road.

Tonight and Wednesday, residents will have an opportunity to review the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's preliminary plans. While the eight-lane freeway option is the recommended plan, SEWRPC also suggests a six-lane option from downtown.

Other options are available, too, including eight lanes coming out of downtown and narrowing to six somewhere along the route, such as at Silver Spring Drive or Bender Road, said Kenneth Yunker, SEWRPC assistant director.

The entire interstate system, built in the 1950s and '60s is wearing out, Yunker said. Because it will need to be rebuilt virtually from the ground up, officials are trying to correct problems that have developed in the intervening decades and bring the road up to current design standards, he said.

But construction probably would not start until 2015 at the earliest, he said.

Glendale takes stand

Already, Glendale is on record as being against the eight-lane proposed expansion and expressed serious concerns about the six-lane proposal. The Common Council noted the North Shore Water filtration plant is in the way of the expansion, and increasing the number of lanes would increase pollution, noise and trucking and would interfere with community life.

Even if the Milwaukee County Board endorses expanding I-43 to eight lanes, the door is not shut on the other alternatives, Yunker said. Preliminary engineering studies will explore the six-lane options and even keeping the freeway the same, he said.

The alternative the County Board prefers, however, might have whatever advantage that confers.

A decision will not be made until studies are completed, he said. "The door will close at the conclusion of the preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies, which have not even been scheduled at this point," Yunker said.

But Milwaukee County Supervisor Thomas Bailey, who represents much of the North Shore, was not so sure. "I would say the door is 95 percent closed," once the County Board approves a plan in the next few weeks, Bailey said. "Once they have local approval, that's the key thing."

Even though nearly all of the buildings that would be lost in the proposed widening are in Glendale, the freeway project would affect all other North Shore communities, even Brown Deer, where motorists heading for I-43 would encounter a redesigned freeway interchange.

The rest of the North Shore would have an easier ride downtown and the potential for sound barriers.

Sound barriers draw debate

Bayside Village Manager Frank Sherman said sound barriers were requested by a group of residents four or five years ago, but the state denied them because of cost.

Fox Point Village Manager Susan Robertson said more needs to be known about sound barriers. "There is a difference of opinion about sound barriers. Some people think it protects the people close to the freeway but lifts the sound, affecting the rest of the community," she said.

River Hills Village Manager Thomas Tollaksen said the proposed widening might endanger one house, would make the Department of Public Works garage inaccessible and would encroach on one of the cell towers on the Village Hall grounds. But, he said, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has been reassuring that these wrinkles would be ironed out.

"The DOT reps felt confident that changes would be made when this is fine-tuned," Tollaksen said.

## Whitefish Bay Herald February 6, 2003

He also said some kind of sound barrier would be needed, but favored berms instead of walls. "Berms deal with sound better," he said. Walls tend to reflect more noise than berms, he said, although berms do need somewhat more land than walls.

Of course, road noise also could be reduced by lowering the level of the road, Tollaksen said, and by using new, quieter pavement.

Although Whitefish Bay is "one step removed" from the freeway, Village Manager James Grassman said, it will be affected by increased traffic and noise. He said the village will be anxious to review any proposal for a noise barrier.

Shorewood Village Manager Edward Madere said, "The biggest thing for us would be the effect during the construction period."

"There will probably be a lot more vehicles coming from the north using Lake Drive," he said.

Madere predicted that there is probably a natural limit to growth in Ozaukee County, which is fueling the need for widening. "You can only live so far away from work to commute," he said. Already, there is a resurgence of people moving back into the city of Milwaukee for convenience to downtown, he said.

Seek different solution

Glendale City Administrator Richard Maslowski said Glendale recognizes the transportation problems but supports exploring a different solution. There could be enough land in the median to provide an additional lane in each direction, Maslowski said, and no homes, businesses or road would be lost. The median could be narrow like it is closer to downtown, he said.

Glendale officials also have noted serious concerns about the North Shore Water Utility on Jean Nicolet Road at Bender. Yunker agreed the water plant presents a design problem. But because the plant would not be moved, he said, it would have to be engineered around, perhaps by moving the freeway over, by erecting a retaining wall or by narrowing the freeway shoulder at that point.

Bailey, too, expressed doubts about any widening. For one thing, sound barriers are generally unsightly, he said. But more importantly, "Why should we spend huge amounts of money to facilitate the exit of cars from Milwaukee County? We've already lost huge amounts of tax base, and making it easier to move to Ozaukee perpetuates the exodus."

But some North Shore residents clearly favor widening. That is why Bailey said he wants to hear from constituents at the hearing or over the phone, (414) 278-4275. Bailey represents all of Whitefish Bay, Fox Point, Bayside, River Hills and parts of Glendale and Shorewood.

MEETINGS SET

n PUBLIC HEARING

WHAT: Residents are invited to a public hearing about the proposal to widen Interstate 43 up to eight lanes. The \$6.25 billion preliminary plan will be presented by SEWRPC representatives. Public comment will be accepted and the Committee of the Whole may take action afterward.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. tonight

WHERE: Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St.

n PUBLIC FORUM

WHAT: State Rep. Sheldon Wasserman, D-Milwaukee, who represents much of the North Shore will hold a public forum on the plan. Representatives of SEWRPC will give a presentation to be followed by questions.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

WHERE: Whitefish Bay Library, 5420 N. Marlborough Drive

CNI Photos by John O'Hara

ns 206 xway1 raw jo m.tif

Brake lights abound on Interstate 43 northbound as the freeway bottlenecks north of the Silver Spring on-ramp.

ns 206 xway bailey raw jo m.tif

County supervisor Tom Bailey stands on the Green Tree bridge over I-43 in Glendale, where the current two lanes could change to four lanes each way. Bailey wants to hear from his North Shore constituents about the proposal. Residents can call (414) 278-4275.

## Audit Requested of Freeway Planning Commission

SEWRPC may have to answer to legislature

Two Milwaukee lawmakers asked for an audit this week of the Southeastern Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), in light of the commission's recent activity concerning freeway expansion plans around the city of Milwaukee.

State Rep. David Cullen and Jon Richards, both Democrats, have asked Joint Audit Committee co-chairs Sen. Carol Roessler (R-Oshkosh) and Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz (R-Menomonee Falls) to look at the commission in terms of its governing powers, who is its oversight authority and questions about the commission's accountability.

SEWRPC has come under fire from City of Milwaukee officials over the freeway plan, its cost (\$6.2 billion) and the overall impact it will have on city property and urban sprawl. They claim that the commission has given a deaf ear to criticism and hasn't sought out enough public input on the plan.

"SEWRPC's role in our community has never been larger," says Cullen, the Assembly's ranking member of the Audit Committee. "And it doesn't appear to be an objective group in making recommendations for the freeway."

He says he wants to make sure the commission is not making decisions that ben-

efit it monetarily.

Questions have arisen over SEWRPC's spending decisions, including personal car leases, consulting contracts and its decision to move its offices to Pewaukee.

Richards also questions the fact that SEWRPC's 11-member senior staff is all white and it has an all-white 21-member board, raising concerns about whether it is adhering to an affirmative action or diversity plan.

"The breadth and scope of the questions surrounding SEWRPC are significant and demand clarification and answers," says Richards. (Doug Hissom)

The Shepherd Express  
February 6, 2003

## Milwaukee may not be able to stop freeway expansion

### DOT plan already endorsed by six of seven area counties

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

WAUKESHA - Milwaukee may be unable to block freeway expansion even if that is the goal of some of its top city and county political leaders.

But blocking or significantly altering the project has been on the minds of many of those leaders. The first test will come at the Feb. 20 Milwaukee County Board session, when the board will likely consider whatever recommendation its transportation committee eventually makes.

### Walker agrees with DOT

If the Milwaukee County Board decides to oppose the project to rebuild the Marquette Interchange and widen freeway corridors based on state Department of Transportation plans, the board vote would then go before Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker.

Walker has made it clear he supports the DOT recommendation and he has the power to veto the board's action, a spokesman said Monday.

Just as importantly, Walker has a seat on the Southeastern Wisconsin Freeway Advisory Committee that will ultimately make a recommendation on the proposal to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

"Six of the seven counties on the advisory committee have voted to support" the DOT plan, SEWRPC Executive Director Phil Evenson said Monday. "If the consensus of the advisory committee is not to change its mind, then it goes to the SEWRPC board."

Evenson pointed out board members do not always vote based on the stands their counties take. But only three of the 21 members are from Milwaukee County.

"The secretary of the state Department of Transportation asked for a consensus from southeastern Wisconsin," Evenson said. He said that consensus appears to have already been reached even if Milwaukee formally objects.

Milwaukee and Glendale city councils have passed resolutions opposing the plan but have no formal vote in the process.

The plan calls for \$911 million for the Marquette Interchange rebuild and \$6.25 billion to rebuild freeways and add new lanes in the seven county southeastern Wisconsin area.

The most controversial stretch has been the six-mile, east/west corridor between the Marquette and zoo interchanges.

### Finley optimistic

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley, who also serves on the advisory committee, said he was disappointed but not surprised at Milwaukee's opposition, based on past comments.

"But this is not the United Nations Security Council where one county has a veto," Finley said Monday. "I am optimistic that this project will proceed and the state will step in if it needs to."

Finley said he was hardly surprised that Milwaukee has stalled the process into 2003 even though the other six counties voted for it last year.

"This was being discussed in the Metro 2020 plan," Finley said. "I remember when it became part of that plan - on March 1, 1989 - because my son David was born on March 2, 1989. And David turns 14 next month."

Evenson said Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and other city opponents of the plan should remember the SEWRPC board voted unanimously to allow Milwaukee to remove the Park East freeway spur to help accommodate a museum for Harley-Davidson, which has since been cancelled.

"We deferred to the position of

the city and the county on that issue," he said.

Gov. Jim Doyle has said the work on the interchange will begin sometime in this next biennium and acknowledged that may mean other highway projects throughout the state might have to be delayed.

The Waukesha Freeman  
February 11, 2003

## Freeway passing lane

The freeway expansion proposal is about to take several key steps:

- 7 p.m. Feb. 19 - Marquette University, Cudahy Hall, 1313 W. Wisconsin Ave., public hearing on plan sponsored by Sierra Club
- Feb. 20 - Milwaukee County Board expected to vote on recommendation on freeway plan
- Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker could veto board vote and two-thirds of supervisors would have to vote to override him.
- Southeastern Wisconsin Freeway Advisory Committee makes final recommendation to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- SEWRPC makes final recommendation to state Department of Transportation
- State DOT asks Gov. Jim Doyle to fund plan, beginning with the Marquette Interchange in the 2003-05 biennium.



This is an aerial view of the Marquette Interchange. Some Milwaukee officials are working to block freeway expansion that would include work on the interchange. The first test to that effort will come at the Feb. 20 Milwaukee County Board session.

County delays decision on freeway plan

By Candace Doyle  
Editor

Feb. 10, 2003

Milwaukee County supervisors on Thursday night failed to make a recommendation on the proposed \$6.2 billion freeway-expansion plan.

Instead, the supervisors, meeting as the Committee of the Whole at Washington Park Senior Center in Milwaukee, referred the matter back to the county's Transportation, Public Utilities and Transit Committee for further review.

That vote was made after a motion to reject the plan was tabled in a 10-13 vote. Now, a special meeting of the transportation committee will need to be held, possibly before the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors meets Feb. 20, when the board was expected to make a final decision on the plan proposed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. SEWRPC serves as the planning agency for Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties, and the six suburban county boards have already endorsed the plan.

Milwaukee County supervisors' decision to refer the matter back to committee followed a lengthy public hearing attended by more than 300 people, most of whom opposed SEWRPC's proposal.

Those opposing the plan did so for many reasons, and they rebutted comments made by SEWRPC's executive director Phil Evenson, who acknowledged that Milwaukee County residents would have the most to lose if the plan is given the OK.

Evenson, in his presentation preceding the hearing, also conceded that the county would no doubt initially suffer a tax-base loss. However, he said that loss would be "relatively small," and he urged supervisors to approve the plan to send "a unified voice to Madison."

"It's not a system we can do without," he said.

SEWRPC's proposal calls for incorporating design upgrades and adding lanes to 127 miles of freeway, primarily in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.



Robert Cook, executive director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin, tells Milwaukee County supervisors that "a vote against the plan is a vote against economic growth in Milwaukee County." Cook made those remarks Thursday night as supervisors, meeting as the Committee of the Whole, took public comment on the proposed \$6.2 billion freeway-expansion plan. He was among the few attending the hearing who spoke in favor of the plan.

Photo by Candace Doyle

Cost a factor

At the hearing, among those who spoke against the plan was Michael Maierle, long-range planning manager for the city of Milwaukee, who said the proposal was too costly.

"A lower cost alternative has not been offered or discussed," said Maierle, who questioned how what SEWRPC called "design improvements" could add \$2.1 billion to a freeway-replacement plan estimated to cost \$3.4 billion. "We need a higher level of discussion."

Maierle also criticized Evenson's presentation that evening.

"Somehow this proposal turned into a sales pitch for highway builders," he said.

Also speaking out against the plan was Gretchen Schuldt, co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, a group formed in opposition to the proposal.

Schuldt called the plan, which would cost the county 177 homes and 20 businesses, a "lose-lose."

"Milwaukee County will pay and pay and pay," she said.

She also questioned how the plan would be paid for.

"If you approve this plan without a funding source, you'll be delivering massive tax increases to your constituents," she said, "and sacrificing Milwaukee County to suburban counties and road builders."

Bill Moore, representing the Sierra Club in Wisconsin, said the plan "will result in the largest tax increase in Wisconsin history" and asked that a revised proposal including other transportation options, such as commuter and light rail, be considered.

"The Sierra Club asks the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors to request a study of all alternative transportation modes," he said.

## IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF EXPRESSWAY EXPANSION

Milwaukee Latino News, The City  
January 31 - February 6, 2003



By Preston Cole, Milwaukee's Superintendent of Environmental Services and MMSD Commissioner

As state officials continue to debate rebuilding and expanding the Interstate highway system in Milwaukee, their principle focus has been moving vehicles in, out, and through the city. But, for those of us who live right here in Milwaukee, there are some important concerns that have not received much attention.

I am particularly concerned about the negative impacts expanded expressways have on our neighborhoods, our property, and our people.

We're all too familiar with the traffic noise and traffic jams that back up onto city streets from expressway on-ramps. But that's the least of it: Expressways have encouraged employers to move jobs out of the center of the metropolitan area and in to office parks built up in farm fields in formerly rural counties.

As a commissioner of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), I have significant concerns about how expanding expressways will affect pollution, flooding, and sewage system capacity. Think of it; large expanses of asphalt or concrete capture enormous amounts of rainwater. That rainwater then rushes into the sewer system, quickly filling it to capacity. The more solid surface we add, the more rainwater becomes a problem.

The water that washes off the expressways is loaded with pollution. Oils, salt and toxic metals are some of the most damaging components of roadway runoff. Much of those contaminants go into our rivers and, ultimately, into Lake Michigan. So, as MMSD makes major new investments to reduce pollution, increasing amounts of contaminated runoff undermine some of that effort.

Flooding, another big concern of MMSD, is also worsened as more surface area is paved over. When rain falls on grass or other surfaces that are not solid, the water is slowed, absorbed, or even evaporated. Unfortunately, on paved surfaces, the rush of water immediately moves to creeks and rivers increasing the likelihood of flooding. On the recently completed Lincoln Creek flood management project, two miles of concrete was removed for just that reason. To protect homes from flooding, we need less pavement throughout our community, not more.

We need to make sure the interests of people here in Milwaukee are fully considered as expressway expansion is debated. Corporate transportation demands get a lot of attention; traffic delays for suburban commuters get a lot of attention; but very little discussion has focused on

the potential negative impacts of expressway expansion on the people in the center of Milwaukee.

Before final decisions are imposed from Madison, the voices and concerns of people in Milwaukee need to be heard.

### COMMUNITY ALERT MEETING

### FREWAY EXPANSION!

### How Will It Effect You?

- HOW MUCH WILL IT COST US?
- WILL OUR HOUSE BE TORN DOWN? HOW ABOUT OUR CHURCHES, COMMUNITY BASE ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR BUSINESSES?
- DOES THIS MEAN MORE JOBS FOR OUR COMMUNITY? OR LESS?
- WILL THIS EXPANSION REALLY HELP RID TRAFFIC CONGESTION? OR CREATE MORE?
- WILL THERE BE MORE TRAFFIC NOISE IN OUR COMMUNITY?

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ary 31 - February 6, 2003

# Planners oppose Norquist interchange plan

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journal Sentinel.com

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has urged Gov. Jim Doyle to reject Mayor John O. Norquist's \$550 million plan to cut back on Marquette Interchange reconstruction.

Instead, the commission called on the governor to stick with the state Department of Transportation's original plan for the interchange, at a cost that could top \$940 million.

In a letter to Doyle, commission Chairman Thomas Buestrin said the department's plan "fulfills the promise of ensuring a truly modern, efficient interchange."

Norquist fired back Tuesday with a letter to Doyle, saying the Transportation Department plan was "guaranteed to raise taxes" and threatens funding for local roads, Amtrak service and other highway projects, because the state has not come up with the money to pay for it.

The current state plan would move all left-hand on- and off-ramps to the right and would expand most one-lane ramps to two lanes in the downtown crossroads of I-94, I-43 and I-794. Preliminary work on the four-year job would start late this year.

Norquist's plan would scrap most design upgrades. How-

ever, city engineers say the less-extensive redesign would still fix top safety problems.

Doyle and Administration Secretary-designate Marc Marotta have said Norquist's plan is under serious consideration, but that final decisions won't be announced until Doyle unveils his 2003-'05 state budget next month.

Both interchange plans are linked to the commission's broader study of how to rebuild the rest of the region's aging freeway system as it wears out over the next 20 to 30 years. The study's preliminary recommendation would add lanes to major freeways, bringing total reconstruction costs to \$6.25 billion.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 31, 2003

## SEWRPC blasts Norquist interchange plan

### Board sends letter to Doyle supporting DOT proposal

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

WAUKESHA - The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist are having a heated exchange about the Marquette Interchange.

SEWRPC reacted Monday and Tuesday with criticism of the interchange plan being touted by Norquist that would significantly downsize the project plan developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

At a meeting of the Waukesha County Board on Tuesday, SEWRPC Executive Director Phil Evenson said of the Norquist plan, "We don't think it's a good alternative and we wrote a letter to the governor that it should be rejected."

#### A cheaper option?

The letter - sent to Doyle on Monday - said the Norquist plan "falls short" of the interchange needed.

SEWRPC Chairman Thomas Buestrin wrote in the letter, "We understand that the present financial situation is a very difficult one. As we begin to rebuild the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system, however, we need to be forward looking and ensure that the investments made over the next few years serve the region and the state well for many years to come."

Norquist made the proposal recently and a cabinet secretary for Gov. Jim Doyle said over the weekend that the governor was considering the scaled-down plan.

But in an interview with the Freeman on Monday, Doyle said the short-term budget deficit would not necessarily mean he will look to downsize the project.

The Norquist plan is projected to cost \$550 million, or about half the current state transportation agency proposal.



The so-called "City Affordable Improvement Plan" would allow for reconstruction of the interchange, most notably the rapidly deteriorating box girders that frame the interchange.

"This is a plan that was developed at the District Two office" of the state Department of Transportation "a few years ago," Norquist said in an interview with the Freeman. "It is a low cost option that has never been offered to the public."

Norquist said the lower cost option is needed because of the state's inability to show it can afford the \$911 million project cost of the plan being proposed by DOT and SEWRPC.

DOT officials have claimed the project would cost \$760 million to \$890 million.

In a response Tuesday to Doyle on the SEWRPC letter, Norquist said, "It's time SEWRPC paid attention to budgets. And time for SEWRPC to think of the taxpayers by getting into line with every other public agency in Wisconsin and making fiscal constraint its top priority."

The mayor urged Doyle to continue reviewing the city's plan, which he said is based on an earlier DOT "proposal that the city has expanded and improved."

#### Finley backs DOT

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley said Tuesday the Norquist plan "has come out of left field. The advisory committee has n't even considered it yet."

Finley was referring to the SEWRPC Freeway Study Advisory Committee which gave a preliminary recommendation to the DOT plan in 2002.

"The DOT plan is clearly the preferred alternative," Finley said. "Any other plan, at a bare minimum, needs to go to the advisory committee."

Finley did say he was "intrigued" by another aspect of Norquist's plan, which was to renumber the freeway system around Milwaukee to encourage traffic to avoid the Marquette Interchange in favor of the 200 interchange.

But Evenson also blasted that idea before the board session.

"We do not believe that changing the number of Interstate 94 and 894 would change travel patterns one bit," Evenson said. "We are not a cross country interstate of any significance like Chicago. The idea that you can magically reroute traffic around Milwaukee has no credibility to me."

The Milwaukee County Board is the only one of seven regional county boards that has yet to approve a plan.

Evenson said a Milwaukee County Board Committee of the Whole meeting has been scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Feb. 6 at the Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St., to discuss the DOT plan and allow for public input.

Evenson said he expects the county will act on the plan within a month or two after that.

#### NEXT STEP

**What:** Milwaukee County Board Committee of the Whole meeting on the Marquette Interchange rebuild plan

**Where:** Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St., Milwaukee

**Why:** to discuss the plan and allow for public input

**When:** 6:30 p.m. Feb. 6

The Waukesha Freeman  
January 29, 2003



# Wrong way

## Traffic snarls will drive people to suburbs, beyond

**D**ave Anderson is one of those classic American stories. He's making a fortune by understanding what appeals to mainstream Americans. I'd love for him to talk to John Norquist and the other local leftists who fail to understand how people today live.

Anderson, a native American Choctaw/Chippewa, is the founder of the Famous Dave's restaurant chain. He took the company public a few years ago and it is rapidly expanding across the country. The newest one is going up on Moreland Boulevard in Waukesha, not far from the Interstate 94-Highway 18 interchange between Waukesha and Brookfield.

Anderson understands that Americans are now looking for more upscale fast food than the McDonald's and Burger King items we've been chowing on for the last three decades.

Famous Dave's isn't overly expensive but offers quality barbecue food in appealing settings. But this column isn't about the Famous Dave's. It's about a separate project Anderson is planning for Kenosha and that's where Norquist and his ilk of car-hating tree huggers comes in.

Anderson has just announced plans for a major hotel, convention center and water park at a complex to be located at the booming I-94 intersection with Highway 50 in Kenosha County. The huge development will also include two new theme restaurants that Anderson will take national if they are successful here. The Kenosha location was chosen because of its prime freeway location and its midway point between the booming northern Illinois suburbs and the Milwaukee-Waukesha metro area. Anderson figures that nearly four million people live within an hour of his location.

It seems simple, doesn't it? If you want to attract economic development, you choose a site that is easily accessed by automobile traffic and is clearly visible from the freeway. There are no Metra commuter train stations or light rail lines at the site. But there is lots of room for parking and a very convenient freeway interchange. The rules that led Anderson to his site aren't any different in urban areas. If we want our area to fully develop its economic potential, we must upgrade the freeway system.

Norquist and his Luddite acolytes actually think cars and freeways drive people away from an area. It's exactly the opposite. If the freeway system is kept modern everywhere but Milwaukee County, all of the development will occur outside the county. Likewise, if the entire region's transportation network gets gridlocked, new residential and commercial development will continue to sprawl even farther outward.

Bud Selig wanted Miller Park on the freeway for the same reason that Anderson is putting his new Famous Dave's near Highway 18 and I-94 and his hotel and convention center complex right next to the interstate in Kenosha. It's the same reason that the Grafton area is seeing explosive growth near the I-43 interchange with Highway 60 and that the area near Delafield at I-94 and Highway 83 has developed so strongly. Why is there so much residential development in the West Bend-Slinger area and in southeast Mequon? Same answer. If Norquist succeeds in blocking improvements of the Marquette Interchange and kills plans to widen I-94 to four lanes, he will be guaranteeing that all new economic development in southeastern Wisconsin will be pushed farther and farther away from Milwaukee.

That's the great irony about the anti-car zealots. In their zeal to stop sprawl, they instead guarantee that more sprawl will occur. Just ask Famous Dave.

One of the best-planned pockets of economic development in our region is the Hartland area. Highway 16 is a divided four-lane highway that essentially functions as an interstate. It funnels people off I-94 and toward the lake country in northern Waukesha County. The area is booming with upscale residential development without detracting from the older homes and businesses in the area.

The existence of Highway 16 has no doubt helped drive the growth of the region by making the beauty of the area accessible to people who, for reasons of work or pleasure, still want to be close to the Milwaukee area. The anti-car people therefore presume that the existence of the road is the sole reason for the people sprawling to Hartland.

They've got it all wrong. The people in the Hartland area, because they aren't stupid, will insist on a good highway system. If Milwaukee doesn't follow that lead by keeping its own freeway network modernized, the folks that have gone to Hartland will simply stop frequenting Milwaukee.

They'll look elsewhere for work and shopping. They'll make fewer trips in for sports, cultural attractions and restaurants. Employers will likewise move outward to where the people are. (It's not a coincidence that most Quad/Graphics plants are outside of Milwaukee.) The only way for Milwaukee to remain viable is to follow the lead of the suburbs and exurbs and keep the city as accessible by car as are the other regions.

A silly Milwaukee County board member named Ryan McCue recently said that if we succeed in jamming up the freeways that people would stop moving out to the burbs.

He's got it all wrong. They're already out there. They'll just never come back.

*(Mark Belling is the host of a daily WISN radio talk show and a Sunday television show. His column runs Wednesdays in the Freeman.)*

### The Waukesha Freeman

January 29, 2003

## Doyle administration considers Norquist interchange proposal

**MILWAUKEE (AP)** - Gov. Jim Doyle's administration has reviewed Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist's proposal to scale back the planned reconstruction of the Marquette interchange and is "seriously considering" it, a cabinet member said.

But officials have not come to a decision yet, said Marc Marotta, secretary of the state Department of Administration. He made the comments Saturday at a Community Brainstorming Conference at St. Matthews Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

It was the strongest statement yet from the Doyle administration on the plan, which the

mayor says would save at least \$361 million by diverting more traffic onto what is now I-894.

The Norquist plan also scraps the idea of double-decking I-94 on Milwaukee's west side.

The state had expected to spend \$760 million to \$890 million to rebuild the deteriorating interchange, the downtown crossroads of I-94, I-43 and I-794.

Doyle has said he will reveal his intentions for the interchange Feb. 18 when he unveils his budget bill.

Marotta also said Saturday that Doyle's administration would try not to reduce shared revenue to local governments, but shared revenue cuts were still possible.

### The Waukesha Freeman

January 27, 2003

Doyle campaigned against former Gov. Scott McCallum's plan to end shared revenue.

The administration also might raise UW System tuition and would develop ways to "counteract" truth in sentencing, he said.

As attorney general, Doyle proposed a truth-in-sentencing plan and was an early proponent.

But Marotta said that didn't mean the program wouldn't be revisited.

"Sometimes people make decisions that they look at again," he said. "We are going to try to do things that counteract truth in sentencing."

By Gregg Hoffmann

MILWAUKEE -- Road rage of a different kind is brewing over the Marquette Interchange and a proposed expansion of the freeway system through the metropolitan area.

Mayor John Norquist proposed an alternative last week to the plans that have been circulated by SEWRPC and the Department of Transportation. Norquist's plan would route truck and other through-traffic via an enhanced Zoo Interchange, thus cutting down on the traffic that runs through the Marquette.

Norquist claims the alternative could save as much as \$361 million in tax money. His plan also cuts back on planned lane expansion past the so-called Story Parkway area, near Miller Park, in the east-west corridor of the freeway system.

Citizen groups in that area have a well-organized opposition campaign to the SEWRPC and DOT plans. They claim numerous homes would have to be sacrificed, and they raise safety issues about parts of the freeway that would be partially raised.

The DOT has maintained that a survey of users of the freeway and others show support for the expansion plans.

You basically are looking at two different projects. The Marquette Interchange would be the biggest highway project in state history -- no matter which plan is adopted. It is linked with the lane-expansion project only in that the freeway system is indeed just that -- a system. If you pinch traffic in one area, it likely will have an effect on traffic elsewhere in the system.

Nobody disputes that something must be done with the Marquette. Engineers already are monitoring the aging structure for flaws. Let's just hope we don't have another Hoan Bridge incident -- or something worse.

Norquist emphasizes that his plan would allow the start of the Marquette project in this year. He says the DOT plans are so expensive that the project would be delayed for a year and increase the possibilities of structural problems. DOT officials dispute that claim.

Gov. Jim Doyle now says that funds for the project will be included in his upcoming budget proposal, even if he has to take funds from highway projects elsewhere in the state. That will likely turn a regional transportation issue into a statewide issue.

Marc Marotta, secretary of the Department of Administration, also said this weekend that Doyle is seriously considering elements of Norquist's plan as an alternative to the DOT plans. The main disagreement is over costs, the amount of debt the state should take on for the project and whether the goal of the project should be to move traffic through the downtown Milwaukee area as quickly as possible, or to make downtown business and entertainment venues more accessible.

Norquist estimated the DOT plan would cost \$911 million and his plan \$550 million. State officials have said their plan would cost \$760 million to \$890 million. But they added that estimate was based on 2001 dollars and that inflation could push the costs as high as \$940 million.

Lane expansion in the east-west corridor is another project. Certainly, Waukesha County has grown larger than ever projected by those who originally designed the corridor. Somehow traffic must be moved through the area.

SEWRPC planners say if the freeways are not expanded, Milwaukee traffic basically will be in gridlock by 2020. Opponents to the SEWRPC and DOT plans question those projections and say there are other ways of moving east-west traffic without taking homes and reducing the tax base of the city.

Both sides have presented their arguments. Some have been almost ludicrous. One opponent of freeway expansion said if we make it inconvenient enough for commuters they will decide to stop commuting and move back into the city. That's not likely to be the case. They are more likely to move elsewhere, where traffic is not as bad.

But Norquist's plan might be able to help the city and traffic flow. His proposal showed a real vision for the city, while also recognizing that you still have to make it convenient for traffic to move through the metro area.

Why not route travelers that have no plans for stopping in the city toward the outskirts of the metro area, while maintaining the Marquette and its feeder lanes primarily for people who want to come into the city -- for work, entertainment, shopping, and other downtown activities?

Norquist's vision sees downtown Milwaukee as fitting the "new urbanism" concept, in which the downtown and surrounding areas are vital hubs for people actually living there and not necessarily only those commuting in from the suburbs.

It might be better fitted to the city in a decade or two, if gas prices have required all of us to be less dependent on our automobiles, and actually live closer to our jobs.

Some legitimately ask why Norquist came up with a grand alternative only now, seemingly in the 11th hour of decision-making?

But that should not stop decision-makers from looking at some very solid proposals within the mayor's alternative -- proposals that might actually end up better for the city.

Once you put up a freeway, it's expensive to tear it down. You need only look at the Park East freeway for an example. Let's make sure we do the Marquette, and the entire freeway renovation, right.

The goal should not just be to get traffic through the metro area as fast as possible. It should balance ease of travel with some of the things Norquist is saying about the development of downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

--Hoffmann is a veteran journalist and senior lecturer in journalism and mass communication at UW-Milwaukee.

# DISINVESTMENT, CONCRETE & PAVEMENT TO REPLACE LATINO COMMUNITY?

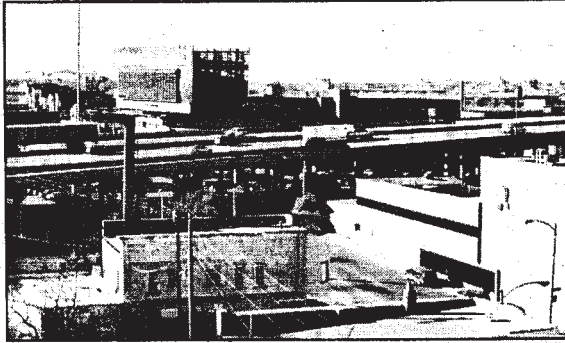
By Geary Morales

"Well somebody has to make sacrifices for progress," and Milwaukee's Latino and Southside community could be the one that takes the hit!

Those sentiments were once voiced by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Committee (SEWRPC) representative, and soft-pedaled by SEWRPC, Assistant Director Kenneth Yunker, at a recent community meeting that debated the wisdom of devastating the quality of life as well as the economic, social and residential fabric of certain Milwaukee neighborhoods, including Milwaukee's predominately Latino Southside, in favor of a widened freeway, more concrete, pollution and community disinvestment.

However many attending a January 16th meeting that was held at the Esperanza Unida International Building's on 6th & National were both skeptical and not buying Yunker's assurances.

Very direct and no-holds barred and challenging questions came from residents and community leaders, including El Conquistador Newspaper Publisher, Victor Huyke; Milwaukee County Supervisor Anthony Zielinski; MPS School Board Member Jennifer Morales; Wisconsin State Senator Tim Carpenter; City of Milwaukee Policy Director Jim Rowen; ACLU-Wisconsin Attorney Karyn Rotker; Citizens Allied for Sane Highways (CASH) Gretchen Scholdt, and Walkers Point community activist and resident



Ramona Puente. Other notables attending the meeting included Ernesto Chacon, Executed Director of the Federation For Civic Action, and Jack Szymborski of the Southside Organizing Committee.

Organizations like Atlanta-based Environmental Justice Center (EJC) have joined the ranks of communities like Milwaukee's near Southside, in challenging freeway expansion and urban sprawl in its breakthrough report entitled: "Race, Equity, and Smart Growth: Why People of Color Must Speak for Themselves." (See <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/raceequity-smartgrowth.htm>).

The SEWRPC recommends a reconstruction plan to widen I-94 and I-43 freeway, from 6 lanes to 8 lanes. Both ways could have a devastating effect between 4th and 8th streets (East and West) and South Oklahoma and Pierce Streets.

The preliminary SEWRPC Freeway Expansion Plan has already been approved by six of the seven

counties that are affected by it. Milwaukee's County Board of Supervisors will be voting on it sometime in February of 2003.

SEWRPC is the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. It was established in 1960 by the State as the planning agency for the seven counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. SEWRPC's operations are funded through Federal, State and local taxes.

WisDOT commissioned SEWRPC to undertake a "Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study." The study looks only at the reconstruction of the existing freeway system. A brief mention is made of the need to upgrade other transportation options.

According to SEWRPC, all "major reconstruction" will be in Milwaukee County. Although they discuss economic impacts to some

Continued on page 20

Conquistador, Latino News Source  
January 24-30, 2003

extent, i.e., claiming that widening the freeway will increase access to jobs. Many in the Latino community are asking, "at whose expense" and "what jobs if the freeway expansion bulldozes down portions of Milwaukee's Latino Southside community?"

According to SEWRPC, even if Milwaukee County Board vote yes on the plan, it does not represent final approval, or conclusion of the study of freeway reconstruction within Milwaukee County and the Region. Each segment of the freeway will need to undergo preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies by WisDOT.

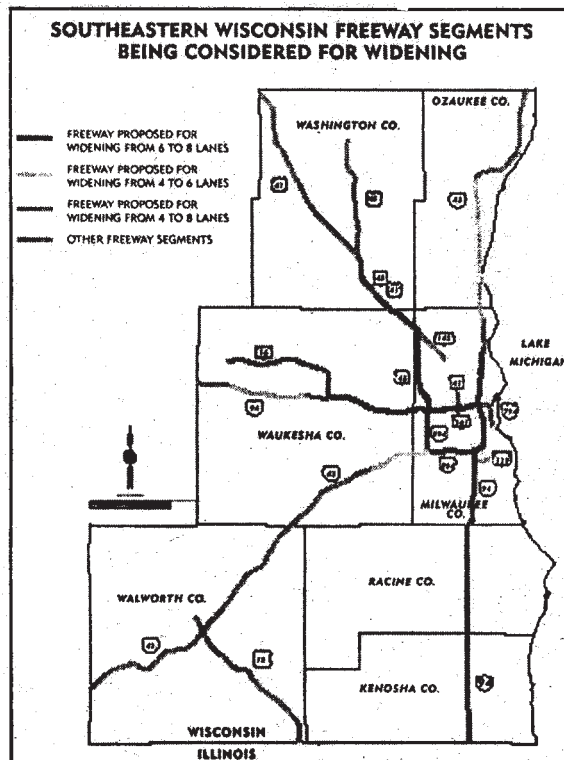
These preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies will consider again reconstruction alternatives, and impacts at a greater level of detail. Milwaukee County review and input will again be solicited, and final decisions as to reconstruction are only made at the conclusion of preliminary engineering.

But two opponents of the plan, "Citizens Allied for Sane Highways" (CASH) and Wisconsin's American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) think differently.

"SEWRPC's planning process has been unfair and illegitimate," said Robert Trimmier, co-chair of CASH, a coalition of groups opposed to the freeway expansion plan. "SEWRPC excluded from the planning process people and organizations that would be hit hard by any expansion plan. SEWRPC itself is shamefully unrepresentative of the region and its composition is an insult to representative government."

Staff Attorney, Karyn Rotker of the ACLU noted, "Among the problems raised by the ACLU-Wisconsin is SEWRPC'S failure to make meaningful efforts to comply with federal laws and rules requiring the Commission (SEWRPC) to involve low income and minority communities, including residents who do not speak English, in all aspects of the planning process.

For example, SEWRPC never provided any information in Spanish to the Latino Community, even though reconstruction will have a significant impact on Latino neighborhoods. SEWRPC also failed to address many issues of concern to low income and minority communities... such as the need to guarantee the expansion of public transportation, the need for equal access to employment for central city residents; the tax base reduction which will be caused by widening the freeways and which will hurt Milwaukee taxpayers more than those in suburban communities; the need for fair and affordable housing in hyper segregated suburban communities; and the health and environmental effects of freeway expansion, particularly in light of Milwaukee's severe ozone pollution problem."



Continued on  
Page C-22

# DISINVESTMENT, CONCRETE & PAVEMENT TO REPLACE LATINO COMMUNITY?

Continued from Page C-22

The SEWRPC study team came up with three options, including simply replacing the existing system in-kind, replace with design improvements and replace with design improvements and more lanes.

Replacing in-kind would carry a price tag of \$3.4 billion and require no additional right of way. The two other options include the condemnation and acquisition of hundreds of acres of land, hundreds of homes and dozens of businesses. Most of this property earmarked for removal from productive use (and the tax roles) would be taken from Milwaukee County.

The preliminary plan calls for work to be done in segments over 30 years time, with the estimated overall cost at \$6.25 billion dollars, or \$208 million annually over 30 years. But where will the money come from? The State of Wisconsin still has a \$500 million deficit for the Marquette Interchange Project set to begin in late 2003, and the State is still unable to say how that project is going to be paid.

The Wisconsin Taxpayer's ([www.wistax.org](http://www.wistax.org)) August, 2002 article "Transportation Financing in Wisconsin," reported: "In November 1999, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) adopted a comprehensive, long-term state highway plan, which calls for spending \$20.4 billion (in 1999 dollars) through 2020 to maintain and improve the state trunk highway system.

Under the plan, through 2020, state and federal revenues are expected to generate around \$15.3 billion (in 1999 dollars), leaving an estimated \$5.1 billion shortfall. Over \$5.3 billion of the \$20.4-billion total is projected for the reconstruction of the aging southeast Wisconsin freeway system, including the Marquette Interchange. Traditionally state highway funding is generated through the gasoline tax and vehicle licensing fees."

Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, who opposed the freeway expansion in the 1970's, and is still opposing it today said, "A breathtaking lack of vision! (referring to SEWRPC \$6.25-billion freeway expansion recommendations). You've heard of the Boston Tea Partys "no taxation without representation," well SEWRPC's Advisory Committee to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is a prime example of "taxation with under-representation." Of the seven counties affected by SEWRPC's freeway expansion plan, Milwaukee County is hit the hardest, both in the loss of acreage and tax base. However of the 21 person SEWRPC committee, only three represent Milwaukee County's interests. It's also amazing that there are no African-Americans and Latinos

on the SEWRPC committee whose communities could be the most affected by this SEWRPC recommended freeway expansion plan. Although it is good to hear that MPS School Board member, Jennifer Morales has taken a position against this freeway expansion plan that could negatively affect MPS area students and the neighborhoods they live in."

School Board member Morales has serious concerns about the proposed expressway expansion's likely impact on Milwaukee's Latino community and on all low-income residents and school children of Milwaukee. "First of all, as a school board member I have to oppose any voluntary loss of property tax base in the city. Our schools are dependent on our ability to raise revenue through property taxes. If the expressway expansion requires destruction of houses and businesses, that means less property to tax, which will mean more tax burden on fewer property owners. SEWRPC consultants have suggested that expanding the expressway will promote development of businesses and residential areas along the road, creating new property tax base. But it won't be in the city of Milwaukee, so it doesn't do Milwaukee's children any good.

"Second, I'm very frustrated that once again road-building is getting all the attention to the

detriment of our mass transit system. Low-income workers of Milwaukee need inexpensive, efficient public transit to get to work, not to mention the transportation needs of the many Milwaukee Public Schools students who take the county bus to and from school every day. This expressway expansion proposal doesn't do anything to help the most vulnerable people in the city. I will also be introducing a resolution to the school board next week," said Morales.

On Tuesday, January 21st Mayor Norquist gave his state of the City address which included the plan that Milwaukee will be presenting to WisDOT on how to save the state \$361 million in rebuilding the Marquette Interchange.

In a resolution passed almost unanimously in April 2002, Milwaukee Alderman agreed that none of the alternatives presented by SEWRPC addresses the needs of the City of Milwaukee. The Council supported a modified plan with "design and design related safety improvements" but stated it will not back adding lanes in affected areas when there is only minimal reduction in travel time. It specifically stated no support for double-decking of I-94 from Miller Park to Hawley Road, because of the negative impact on the Story Hill Neighborhood.

Excerpts from a June, 2002, 3-page scathing letter to SEWRPC's Executive Director, Philip Evenson said, "The (SEWRPC) plan would harm economic development in Milwaukee County, especially in the City of Milwaukee neighborhoods, where there is the largest concentration of minority and low-income jobs, residents and businesses.

"The insensitivity is further reflected in the absence of a transit component in the plan to serve the concentration of low-income households without vehicles in Milwaukee County. Exclusion, not inclusion, seems to be SEWRPC's guiding principal and operational procedure.

"The entire process is rigged to reinforce a discriminatory status quo. It should be brought to a halt until the commission, its staff, and its outlook are modified to reflect the demographic differences in the region, and to plan for the many, not the already privileged few.

"SEWRPC needs to address and help wipe out Jim Crow, not facilitate it. SEWRPC is a planning agency that needs to reform itself internally before exercising its considerable influence on the outside world."

But as more people become aware of the expansion, many are beginning to wonder of SEWRPC intentions including State Senator Tim Carpenter who is asking several key questions, "I have many concerns regarding the SEWRPC developed freeway expansion plan: 1) Concern about loss of city and county property tax base due to taking of property needed for expansion; 2) Concern about huge costs, lack of funding and potential for tax increase due to 6.2 billion dollar price tag of this proposal; 3) Concern about proposed additional 37 miles of sound barriers, in effect, walling off and separating additional neighborhoods and communities; 4) Concern about lack of balanced approach to transportation needs that this proposal embodies; 5) Concern about lack of information presented to the Latino community in Spanish; 6) Concern about health problems and issues for citizens raised by City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner Seth Foldy that increased traffic and pollution would bring and 7) Concern about urban sprawl and land use issues that this major expansion would precipitate."

State Representative Pedro Colon, who has received several calls from his constituents said, "Many people are concerned and haven't been heard. Until everyone is heard concerning the issues of displacement, cost, environmental impacts and explanations that are clear and forthright, then SEWRPC does not have a legitimate plan as far as I'm concerned. And when it eventually

comes across my desk from WisDOT for funding approval, I will certainly not be in favor of it until every concern is addressed and resolved. By the way, you're talking about a plan that will affect my own house in Milwaukee's Walkers Point neighborhood."

"I'm very displeased that SEWRPC will not release specific details concerning this State highway project and also has failed to inform and include homeowners and citizens that will be affected," Alderman Angel Sanchez.

While others will wait, "My decision on the freeway vote which is scheduled to come up in early February will be determined by feedback that I am getting from my constituents," Milwaukee County Supervisor; Anthony Zielinski.

SEWRPC is continuing to solicit public input on its freeway expansion plan. Despite the fundamentally flawed manner in which this planning process was developed Milwaukee County residents can still voice their opinions, either way, at two upcoming community meetings that will be open to the public including: Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet, Milwaukee (414) 933-2332, Thursday, February 6, 6:30 p.m. - All Milwaukee County Supervisors will be attending this event.

United Community Center (UCC) Middle School Auditorium, 920 So. 9th Street, (414) 649-4404 Milwaukee, Saturday, February 8, 12 noon - Spanish Translator will be available at this panel discussion and question and answer meeting. The panel will include representatives from the following organizations: El Conquistador - Latino News Source, SEWRPC, CASH, Sixteenth Street Community Health Clinic, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), City of Milwaukee Health Department, Physicians from Milwaukee Children's Hospital, MPS School Board.

To voice your concerns about SEWRPC's freeway expansion recommendations, one can contact SEWRPC at (262) 547-6721. To contact your Milwaukee County Supervisor concerning your views and concerns on freeway expansion and how it will affect your neighborhood, you can contact them at (414) 278-4222.

**Conquistador, Latino News Source  
January 24-30, 2003**

# Freeway plan deserves scrutiny

## Public Forum:

It seems that my "opinion" on the freeway expansion proposal has created a lot of controversy, and I would like to set the record straight seeing that the media put their own spin on my "opinion."

On Jan. 8, Milwaukee County's Transportation, Public Works and Transit committee, of which I am a member, met to discuss the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's proposal for a \$6.25 billion freeway expansion. This is a big-ticket item, and I want it to be done right so that future generations don't have to pay for our mistakes.

When I ran for county supervisor, I promised to look at all sides of an issue and not be afraid to ask tough questions. This meeting was the time and place to ask the tough questions and that is exactly what I did. I asked questions for and against the proposal, and even played the devil's advocate.

I know my constituents expect me to scrutinize a \$6.25 billion project paid for by the taxpayers. I spent three months scrutinizing Milwaukee County's 2003 \$1.1 billion budget, and I will take the necessary time to scrutinize the \$6.25 billion proposal.

I agree we need to improve the Marquette and zoo interchanges and other

congested areas. One of my concerns, which I expressed at the committee meeting, is that the 794 expansion is not part of the proposal. The proposed expansion may also disturb some veterans' graves, which concerns me.

In last week's CNI newspaper, Charlie Sykes wrote the editorial "Freeway plan based on illogic."

"We've already paid for a stadium whose roof doesn't work, a bridge that falls down, a too-small convention center and a deep tunnel that's not quite deep enough," wrote Sykes. I'm surprised he left out the pension fiasco. I wish the people who gave their stamp of approval for the projects and proposals would have taken a closer look and scrutinized them better. I have learned from other people's mistakes, therefore I am going to be tough.

As I stated at the committee meeting, and it continues to be true today, I am neither for nor against the proposal because I still have questions that need to be answered and I am still waiting for additional information.

The next public meeting on this matter is at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 6 at the Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St., Milwaukee.

**Ryan McCue**

*24th District supervisor*

# Norquist freeway plan diverts traffic

By LARRY SANDLER and GREG BOROWSKI  
lsandler@journalsentinel.com

Mayor John O. Norquist launched a new attempt Tuesday to scale back the state's planned reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange and stave off a separate future plan to widen I-94.

In his "state of the city" address, Norquist said his latest plan — at least his fourth bid to slash spending on the biggest public works project in Wisconsin history — would save the state \$361 million, divert more traffic onto what is now I-894 and scrap the idea of double-decking I-94 on Milwaukee's west side.

"This is much more likely to fit within the long-range budget" than the state's plan, Norquist said. "It does all the other one is supposed to do and does it more efficiently."

But the \$550 million plan developed by city engineers would move only one of the Marquette Interchange's left-hand on- and off-ramps to the right side, dismissing state engineers' claims that safety demands more such changes. And the Norquist plan would eliminate the 13th St. on- and off-ramps that Marquette University and Potawatomi Bingo Casino fought to keep.

By contrast, the state Department of Transportation's plan for the downtown crossroads of I-94, I-43 and I-794 would turn all left-hand ramps into right-hand ramps, expand most one-lane ramps into two-lane ramps and keep the 13th St. ramps.

Norquist's plan "would just be completely unacceptable," said state Rep. Jeff Stone (R-Greendale), a member of the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee. "There's no way the state would spend half a billion dollars and still have it be the kind of poor interchange it is now."

Later Tuesday, Norquist was seen in Gov. Jim Doyle's office. When asked during a news conference about Norquist's alternative, Doyle said that they had discussed the project more than once, and that he appreciated Norquist's view, but that no decision had been made.

Although Doyle has promised to cut costs without raising gas taxes or license fees, given the state's budget crisis, the governor said a less-costly alternative might not be in the state's long-term interests.

"We have to scale back on everything, but this is a very difficult call," Doyle said. "I can't be making a decision that in the short term saves us some money, but maybe in the long term provides a road that doesn't meet the transportation needs of the state or isn't safe. I'm listening to a lot of different people on that issue."

Doyle said he would make his decision known when he presents his 2003-'05 budget to the Legislature next month. Transportation Department officials Randy Romanski and Don Reinbold declined to react to details of Norquist's plan.

## Differing cost estimates

State transportation officials have said their plan for Marquette Interchange reconstruction would cost \$760 million to \$890 million and would take four years, starting late this year.

However, Norquist said the state plan would actually cost \$911 million. It was not immediately clear where that cost estimate came from, but it apparently includes inflation. State officials said their original estimate was in 2001 dollars and inflation could boost it past \$940 million by the time construction ends.

Paying for either plan remains a major challenge for the cash-strapped state. Current gas taxes and license fees would not generate enough money. After Doyle rejected a license fee increase, former Acting Transportation Secretary Tom Carlsen suggested cutting aid for local roads and transit systems and highway maintenance, but that idea also drew opposition.

Norquist said his plan should be welcomed by cities and towns throughout the state, which rely on the same pot of transportation money.

In his speech to about 200 people at the Central Library, Norquist suggested his plan could proceed on schedule.

Carlsen had suggested extending construction work by one year, to five years, to reduce costs in the 2003-'05 budget. Public Works Commissioner Mariano Schifalacqua said that would disrupt traffic too much.

It was unclear how much engineering work would be required on the alternate plan or whether that would delay the overall project. Schifalacqua said the plan was based on ideas previously considered by state and regional planners.

Stone, the former chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, said he was concerned that Norquist's plan would unravel the consensus the Transportation Department built for its plan.

Part of that consensus was keeping the 13th St. and Plankinton Ave. ramps, under pressure from Marquette University, the Potawatomi tribe and the business community, after an earlier version of the plan eliminated them. David Windsor, a city project engineer, said city officials would consider options for keeping the 13th St. ramps intact.

## Renumbering interstates

In addition to cutting back on Marquette Interchange reconstruction, Norquist said that I-894 should be renumbered as I-94 and the east-west stretch of I-94 in Milwaukee County should be renumbered as I-794, to encourage drivers to avoid the interchange, if they're just passing through.

Norquist and the Milwaukee Common Council have opposed plans to expand I-94 and

I-43 from six lanes to eight lanes within the city, but the council has not objected to adding lanes on I-894, which is almost entirely in the suburbs.

Adding the lanes is part of a separate Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study of how to rebuild area freeways as they wear out over the next 20 to 30 years. Including the current interchange plan and the new lanes, full freeway reconstruction would cost \$6.25 billion, under the study's preliminary recommendation.

Norquist's plan drew support from several environmental groups and other foes of the freeway-widening plan, which could result in double-decking a one-mile stretch of I-94 west of Miller Park, near the Story Hill neighborhood, to avoid moving graves in adjacent cemeteries.

Milwaukee Ald. Michael Murphy, whose district includes Story Hill, hailed the Norquist plan as "a fresh approach, in that you try to deal with it by trying to move traffic not through the city, but around it. Not only does it save tax dollars, it saves Milwaukee neighborhoods."

Norquist said it was important to complete the interchange work in a way that enhances the city, rather than one that treats Milwaukee as "a truck route."

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker said Norquist's plan was interesting. He pointed out that even if the alternate plan moved forward, the interchange would still carry significant traffic, including local residents who use it to get around the Milwaukee area.

The mayor has long questioned the need for complete Marquette Interchange reconstruction. In 1996, city public works officials presented a plan for repairing the interchange to delay rebuilding. Last year, Norquist's administration suggested rebuilding the interchange in its current form, without the design upgrades sought by the state.

And in 2001, city officials pushed for a bypass connecting I-43 and Highway 45, as a way of completing the partial bypass now formed by I-894 and Highway 45. They hoped that would divert enough traffic from the Marquette Interchange to avoid widening I-94 and I-43 in the city. But regional planners rejected the idea.

Richard P. Jones of the Journal Sentinel staff contributed to this report from Madison.

# Plan called 'unacceptable'

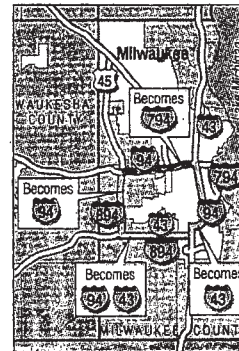


RICK WOOD / RW000@JOURNALSENTINEL.COM

Mayor John O. Norquist delivers his "state of the city" address Tuesday at Centennial Hall in the Central Library.

## FREEWAY PROPOSAL NUMBERS GAME

In addition to scaling back Marquette Interchange reconstruction, Mayor John O. Norquist wants to renumber freeways to guide drivers away from the downtown interchange. I-894 would become I-94 and part of I-94 would become I-794.



Journal Sentinel

## Freeway widening hearing planned

The Milwaukee County Board will hold a public hearing on a proposal to widen Interstates 94 and 43 to eight lanes. At 6:30 p.m. Feb. 6 in the Washington Park Senior Center, a board spokeswoman said Tuesday.

In a rarely used procedure, all supervisors will meet as a committee of the whole to hear residents testify on a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study of how to rebuild all area freeways as they wear out over the next 20 to 30 years.

A planning commission study committee's preliminary recommendation would expand most of the region's six-lane freeways to eight-lane freeways, boosting the reconstruction cost to \$6.25 billion. All six suburban county boards have supported the plan, leaving only the Milwaukee County Board to weigh in.

Larry Sandler

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 22, 2003

**The Daily Reporter**  
January 21, 2003

By Sean Ryan  
Daily Reporter Staff

Jan. 21, 2003

Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist Tuesday suggested the Department of Transportation reconsider a scaled-back plan to reconstruct the Marquette Interchange that it scrapped in the project's early planning phase.

"The affordable plan does all the things the other one is supposed to do, but it does it less expensively," Norquist said in his State of the City speech. "At issue is the state wants to build a plan that's too big. The plan was developed with no cost constraints whatsoever."

Milwaukee officials said WisDOT's current proposal, which the agency estimates would cost between \$760 million and \$890 million, would require either an immediate tax increase or project delays to secure the funding. When they shared these concerns with WisDOT, the agency welcomed ideas for a cheaper plan, said Mariano Schifalacqua, Milwaukee commissioner of public works.

"They may start delaying the project, and we think that's a mistake because the bridges are failing," he said. "Being that they don't have the money, now might be the time to start looking at cost constraints."

**Old plan revisited**

Milwaukee planners dusted off a rough plan WisDOT drafted in the interchange's early planning stage and rejected, said city Long-Range Planning Manager Mike Maierle, who worked with the state agency before coming to Milwaukee.

"I think that was a mistake, and we are trying to correct that mistake," he said. "I think we are reopening the question of what is the best way to improve our transportation system. We need to look at options and alternatives."

The mayor's \$550 million proposal would route most Illinois motorists through Interstate 894, which loops around Milwaukee's downtown, rather than direct them through the Marquette Interchange. Maierle said rerouting interstate travelers would allow for lower traffic speeds on the interchange, enabling engineers to scale back the size of the redesigned interchange.

"That would make it easier to argue for lower design speeds on the Marquette Interchange," he said.

"WisDOT wanted to build everything to current interstate standards, but it's very expensive to do that."

Norquist was critical of WisDOT in his speech, saying the agency mismanages its funds and neglects public opinion while planning jobs. Norquist said he sent letters about the proposal last week to Gov. Jim Doyle and his appointed transportation secretary Frank Busalacchi, who was in the audience.

"Wisconsin would be making a terrible mistake if they would try to rip Milwaukee apart and turn it into a truck route," Norquist said. "The state needs to totally rethink how it plans and funds transportation projects. It needs projects that are sensitive to its context and delights the people around them instead of making them angry."

**SEWRPC criticized**

Norquist also criticized the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's proposed \$6.2 billion plan, which would add two lanes to every highway in Milwaukee County. The plan would encourage commuter traffic and sprawling developments such as Pabst Farms in Oconomowoc, conflicting with the city's efforts to encourage businesses and people to relocate downtown.

"We're going to have tax increases so we can have luxury homes out in a cornfield in Oconomowoc," Norquist said. "They don't have anything like this in Berlin; they just have billions and billions of real estate value and thousands of jobs."

Within hours of the speech, two environmental groups, 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin and the Sierra Club, applauded Norquist's proposal. But Rep. Jeff Stone, Greenfield, chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, disapproved of Norquist's suggestion in a public letter because it rejected past planning efforts and didn't expand the interchange.

WisDOT representatives couldn't comment on the plan before press time because they were waiting for Doyle's take on the idea.

Maierle and Schifalacqua said they didn't know what the city's next step would be but hoped the resurrected Marquette Interchange proposal would spark new discussions.

"We want to see this project move forward," Schifalacqua said. "It's a good point to start the discussion at."



Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist gives his State of the City speech Tuesday morning at the Central Library's Centennial Hall. The mayor celebrates Milwaukee's high-tech economy, architecture, ethnic diversity, population growth and urban atmosphere, which he called the city's strongest hand.  
Photo by Sean Ryan

## Freeway plan based on illogic

We've already paid for a stadium whose roof doesn't work, a bridge that falls down, a too-small convention center and a deep tunnel that's not quite deep enough.

But that was just a warm-up for the mother of all boondoggles — a massive freeway reconstruction project that will actually give us twice as much congestion as we have now, longer commutes, more frustrating delays, more rear-end collisions and nastier smog. All for \$5.5 billion.

This is a good idea, explains County Supervisor Ryan McCue, because if we were to limit the amount of expansion, "people would get sick of the drive" and move into Milwaukee County.

No doubt summoning all of his restraint, planner Phil Even-son responded to McCue: "It's more likely, supervisor, that the jobs would move out of the county instead."

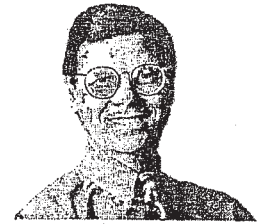
But this is pretty much the party line among the opponents of freeway expansion. The McCue/Norquist logic runs something like this: If we make traveling in and out of Milwaukee inconvenient enough, more people will want to live here.

As God is my witness, that is the argument that some policymakers are actually making: If you annoy them, they will come.

The opponents of expanding the freeway may actually get their way. They want to rebuild the freeway system with some design and safety improvements, but without any new lanes, at a cost of \$5.5 billion.

Without new lanes, by 2020, some parts of the freeway would be congested for as long as 16 hours a day.

To avoid that traffic nightmare, planners from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission are proposing



**SYKES WRITES**  
Charlie Sykes

new lanes on 127 miles of the system. Even with the new lanes, congestion would worsen by about 18 percent.

But without the new lanes, the \$5.5 billion freeway will be a monument to gridlock and road rage. Now, motorists waste an average of 11,500 hours a day sitting in traffic delays, according to SEWRPC. Without new lanes the delays on the shiny new system will more than double to 26,200 hours a day.

Avoiding that would cost about \$700 million, or 13 percent more. The environmental impact of the new lanes would be negligible, affecting less than .002 percent of the region's primary environmental corridors and only .001 percent of the wetlands.

Even so, opponents are mobilizing, trying to convince the public that if we make it harder to move goods, services and people in and out of Milwaukee, this will encourage people to move here.

The alternative, of course, is for policymakers to make decisions grounded in reality. They might even take into consideration the choices people have already made about where to live and work, and how they want to drive.

After all, \$5.5 billion is a lot of money to pay just to frustrate people into doing what McCue wants them to do.

**West Allis Star**  
January 16, 2003

By Candace Doyle  
Editor

Jan. 15, 2003

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker supports the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's freeway expansion plan, which the County Board is expected to vote on next month.

"I believe that you have to have ... a transportation plan that meets our needs," said Walker, adding that SEWRPC's \$6.2 billion plan may not be foresighted enough. "There has to be a way to have a transportation system that meets our transportation needs and economic needs."

And contrary to those who oppose the plan, including Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, Walker said he believed the 20-year road project would not drive people and businesses away from the county.

"We need more of a tax base, not less," said Walker, who added that he still wanted "to be sensitive" to those residents and groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, that oppose the plan.

Walker made those remarks Tuesday night as guest speaker at the Associated General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee's annual meeting, held at the Wisconsin Club in Milwaukee.

He also said that he has yet to decide whether he backs the building of coal-fire power plants in Oak Creek by We Energies as part of the company's \$7 billion Power the Future plan. That plan, too, has had its detractors, including a group that calls itself Responsible Energy for Southeastern Wisconsin's Tomorrow and, again, Norquist.

**Position uncertain**

Walker, though, said the plan, already approved by the Milwaukee City Council, has not yet come before the County Board, although the county's development department is reviewing it.

"We really haven't taken an active role," he said. "(But) I'm assuming before that's resolved, they'll come to me for some opinion on that."

Walker did, though, stress the importance of maintaining and upgrading General Mitchell International Airport, which supports the entire southeastern portion of the state and is vital to the state's economy. For that reason, he said, the County Board will, when it meets with Midwest Airline officials, do what it can to help the ailing air carrier stay afloat.



"It's exciting to see cranes all over the place. I think that's a good sign where we're headed."

Scott Walker  
Milwaukee County Executive

"We're looking at ways to ... continue to ensure Midwest Airlines is a primary carrier at our airport," Walker said. "We want to stabilize those avenues and put in place a world-class airport."

Beyond that, Walker said the construction market in the county looks promising in 2003 and that opportunities for contractors were available in the Menomonee Valley, the County Grounds in Wauwatosa, the Research Park in Wauwatosa and under the Park East freeway spur.

"It's exciting to see cranes all over the place," he said. "I think that's a good sign where we're headed."

**Changes inevitable**

Walker said the county pension and sick-leave scandal -- and the state's budget deficit -- would likely force changes in how all levels of government in Wisconsin operate.

However, he said he doesn't foresee consolidating city and county services as a realistic cost-cutting measure.

"I don't think it's going to happen in my lifetime, which means it's not going to happen for a long time," said Walker, 34.

But Walker, who before being elected last year as county executive served in the state Assembly since 1993, said he could envision a more regional approach to providing services, such as having one transit system serving both Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

"I do believe there is real potential for regional service delivery," he said.

Candace Doyle can be reached at 414-276-0273, Ext. 125, or by email.

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**C-TOOLS**  
Mentioned in this Article

American Civil Liberties Union

Associated General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee

General Mitchell International Airport

Midwest Express Airlines

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

We Energies

Contact Resources

E-mail this Article to a Friend  
Send an e-mail to the Editor



The Daily Reporter  
January 15, 2003

# The metro area's big roads

Regional planners last week carefully laid out their rationale for adding 127 miles of lanes to the freeway system. Most of the people who packed a hearing room in the Milwaukee County Courthouse were unconvinced. We weren't persuaded, either.

Many of the points made by representatives of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission were valid. It seems logical that if freeways are congested already, they need to be expanded to accommodate traffic growth in decades to come.

But we believe — as do most of the people who spoke at the Milwaukee County Board Transportation Committee hearing — that widening I-94 and I-43 will not significantly reduce future traffic congestion. But it will exact a heavy toll on the county economically, environmentally and aesthetically and encourage more urban sprawl.

Some recent national studies have shown that widening roads simply creates more traffic by encouraging additional driving — after three years or more, traffic can increase by as much as 100%. Those studies do not invalidate the need to add lanes, but they do strongly suggest that additional pavement does not necessarily translate into less congestion. It's been estimated that widening I-94 will shave only five minutes, at best, from the commute time in 2020 between the Marquette Interchange and the Zoo Interchange.

Most Milwaukee-area freeways were built 30 to 50 years ago, and about \$5 million is spent each month on resurfacing and repairs. There is no question that they

need major changes in design to improve safety and traffic flow. Those improvements alone will help to ease future congestion. Rebuilding the freeways with design improvements will cost \$5.5 billion and require the displacing of homes, businesses and buildings. Rebuilding the freeways and adding 127 miles of lanes will cost \$6.25 billion.

Perhaps the biggest disadvantage, though, isn't the additional cost, but the need to acquire even more land, homes and businesses to accommodate the expanded system. The freeway expansion plan, endorsed by a SEWRPC study committee, would require 658 additional acres of land and the razing of 216 homes, 31 businesses and three government buildings in the affected seven-county region. Milwaukee County would bear the brunt: 184 acres, 118 homes, 17 businesses, the Courthouse Annex and two smaller county buildings.

Milwaukee community groups as well as the state Department of Natural Resources also insist that expanding the freeways will mean more air pollution. That, in turn, will contribute to added cases of asthma and adult respiratory illnesses, which disproportionately affect poorer neighborhoods.

SEWRPC planners and others dispute those claims and argue that freeway widening will promote economic expansion. Good roads are important to the economy, and the rebuilt highways certainly will be state of the art. But we're not convinced that adding 127 miles of lanes will more than offset the loss of tax base and the other adverse effects of freeway expansion.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 13, 2003



# Time to make room for wider freeway

I'm trying to decide which is worse — being stuck in freeway traffic or being stuck for four hours in a meeting about freeways with no exit ramp in sight.

But I came out of that meeting at the courthouse last week with this opinion: If we're going to tear down all the freeways in this area right to bare ground — which everyone seemed to agree is necessary — it doesn't make sense to rebuild them the same size they were built in the 1960s. Adding one lane in each direction is the way to go.

If adding lanes does nothing to ease congestion, as expansion foes claim, then why don't we just build them one lane narrower than they are now. That could save money and shouldn't add more than a few hours to our commute time.

C'mon, everyone, catch freeway fever. We're going to be fighting about this for the next 30 years. City vs. suburbs. Metro Milwaukee vs. the rest of the state. Environmentalists vs. SUV drivers. Concrete freaks vs. mass transit nuts. Pick a side and join in.

If you're reading this article in one of the houses that would need to be knocked down to make room for the project, you may be calling me a few unpleasant names right now. Or

maybe you're thinking it will be good to have government come along and buy your house so you can finally go live somewhere quieter and less polluted.

As long as we're already planning to spend \$6.2 billion on this extravaganza, I think we should give you twice what your house is worth. That way you can build another house somewhere in the county and we don't lose tax base.

People always lament the overall loss of tax base. It's the all-purpose political argument. But I pay property taxes and I'm trying to remember a time when they went down noticeably because of something that was built or up because something was torn down.

Here's something I learned at the meeting, if we can believe the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and its plan for freeway reconstruction. Rebuilding the freeways to modern safety standards *without adding any lanes* would result in 191 houses, businesses and government buildings being leveled. Adding extra lanes kills off 59 more.

Here's something else I didn't know before. I thought widening the freeways was driving up the cost of the project. It turns out that rebuilding *without adding any lanes* would cost \$5.5 billion. For a mere \$700 million more, we could add the lanes and give us a little room to spread out on the freeway until flying cars are invented.

## Fun with numbers

The Planning Commission likes to say the feds and the state will find a way to split the cost. This always gets a laugh from the main opposition group, which calls itself Citizens Allied for Sane Highways. I'm pretty sure *sane highways* is an oxymoron, but these expressways are still the way most people get around here.

You're probably thinking, sure, Jim, but what about urban sprawl? Isn't it true that wider freeways that move traffic more efficiently make people want to live way out in the sticks? And aren't suburbanites inherently evil?

This seems to argue that we should make sure the new freeways are undersized and hellishly crowded so no one gets the damn fool notion of moving out of Milwaukee or beyond the county limits. I live in Milwaukee County, and it would take more than one extra lane to get me to move out in the country. Freeways that work well benefit people living in the county, out of the county, and those just cutting through our area on the way to somewhere else.

Now we just need a plan to get every woman, man and child on the globe to send \$1 to Madison to help us pay for it.

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Call Jim Stingl at (414) 224-2017 or e-mail at [jstingl@journalsentinel.com](mailto:jstingl@journalsentinel.com).



JIM STINGL

# Forces against freeways lining up

Supervisors express  
reservations about  
widening the system

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journal-sentinel.com

Milwaukee County supervisors voiced strong reservations Wednesday about widening I-94 and I-43 to eight lanes within the county, providing the first hint of how the County Board might deal with a \$6.25 billion freeway reconstruction plan.

Supervisor Lori Lutzka raised the possibility that the board could follow the lead of the Milwaukee Common Council, which urged the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission not to recommend widening those two freeways within the city limits.

And Milwaukee School Board member Jennifer Morales said she and fellow board member Peter Blewett would ask the School Board to oppose additional freeway lanes as well, based on possible property tax base loss within the city.

Opponents of freeway widening dominated a County Board committee meeting called to consider the county's position on how the seven-county area's aging freeways should be rebuilt as they wear out over the next 30 years. A standing-room-only crowd of more than 100 people showed up, although that dwindled to about 20 by the end of the four-hour meeting.

A preliminary recommendation from a planning commission study committee calls for adding 127 miles of new lanes, boosting the region's biggest freeways from six lanes to eight and doubling I-43 from four lanes to eight in the North Shore suburbs. About half of the new lanes would be in Milwaukee County, said Ken Yunker, the commission's assistant director.

Before the County Board's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee, supervisors grilled planners about the cost of the plan and its impact on houses, businesses, property taxes, air pollution and urban sprawl. Only the planners and Supervisor James White, the panel chairman, voiced support for adding lanes.

"I think it's going to encourage urban sprawl ... and encourage people to live farther away," cutting into the county's tax base, Supervisor Ryan McCue said. "If we were to limit the amount of expansion, people would get sick of the drive" and move into Milwaukee County.

"It's more likely, supervisor,

## POINT / COUNTERPOINT

"I think it's going to encourage urban sprawl ... and encourage people to live farther away."

Ryan McCue,  
Milwaukee  
County supervisor

"It's more likely, supervisor, that the jobs would move out of the county instead."

Phil Evenson,  
executive director  
of the Southeastern  
Wisconsin Regional  
Planning  
Commission

that the jobs would move out of the county instead," retorted Phil Evenson, executive director of the planning commission.

Supervisor John Weishan also questioned whether widening the freeways would help suburban counties at Milwaukee County's expense. All six suburban county boards have endorsed the plan.

"What is good for Milwaukee County?" Weishan asked, pointing to trends of population growth outside the county. Since the freeways were built, he said, "We've paid a horrible price, and who has gotten the advantages of the growth?"

Evenson and Yunker said holding down traffic congestion would aid development within the county and let residents live and work wherever they chose. Without adding lanes, they said, congestion would double by 2020.

Lutzka said she had received 50 e-mails from constituents concerned about the cost of the plan and the number of houses to be razed. Milwaukee County would account for 177 of the 216 homes and 20 of the 31 businesses that would be razed, as well as all three of the government buildings, according to the planning commission and freeway widening opponents.

Supervisors Michael Mayo, Robert Krug and Willie Johnson Jr. also raised questions about costs, in light of a state Department of Transportation budget proposal to pay for rebuilding the Marquette Interchange by cutting aid for local roads and bus systems.

## MORE LANES

A preliminary recommendation from a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee calls for adding 127 miles of new lanes.

Evenson said he trusted Gov. Jim Doyle's promise to rebuild the interchange — the first piece of the 270-mile freeway system to be re-

without raising taxes.

Johnson said he was also concerned about the impact of air pollution on asthma in minority communities, and about the commission's failure to translate its documents into Spanish and Hmong.

Those points were also raised by three groups opposing widening: the neighborhood coalition called Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, the Sierra Club and the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin.

And in a not-too-subtle reference to the pension scandal that led to the ouster of seven supervisors and former County Executive F. Thomas Ament, Supervisor Lynn DeBruin urged her colleagues to "learn from our past mistakes," demand complete information about the plan's impact and think about how they will answer constituents' questions in future years.

"Will we say that we just didn't know, that we received inadequate information, that we trusted the Department of Transportation not to stick it to Milwaukee?" DeBruin challenged her fellow supervisors.

White said after the meeting that he believed his colleagues were being swayed by a public relations campaign coordinated by Mayor John O. Norquist, who opposes wider freeways.

Mike Materle, the city's long-range planning manager, testified against the plan, and Ald. Michael Murphy read a letter from Health Commissioner Seth Foldy voicing concerns about asthma.

But CASH, the Sierra Club and the ACLU all presented detailed cases as well.

The planning commission "wants to make our county dirtier and noisier and pump more harmful fumes into our schools and homes ... so people in suburban counties can get home a few minutes faster," argued Gretchen Scholdt, co-chairman of the neighbors' coalition and a Milwaukee Public Schools budget analyst.

Scholdt, who lives in the Story Hill neighborhood overlooking I-94, urged the commission to start over and involve the public more in its plans.

White said the entire board would convene as a committee of the whole to hear more testimony on the issue sometime in February. As a result, White's committee took no action Wednesday.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 12, 2003

# Freeway expansion helps city too

The Waukesha Freeman

January 11, 2003

**M**ilwaukee County officials are once again showing their narrow-minded parochialism rather than a more positive regionalism in their opposition to the expansion of the interstate system.

That was evident after a meeting Wednesday of the Milwaukee County Board's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee. Supervisors and citizens jammed into the session to blast the recommendation for adding 127 miles of new freeway lanes in southeastern Wisconsin. The plan is being presented by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and has been supported by all the regional counties except Milwaukee.

The key target at the meeting was the widening of the six-mile east/west corridor of Interstate 94, from the Marquette to the zoo interchanges. The proposal calls for the possibility of elevating part of the freeway near the Story Hill neighborhood – just west of Miller Park – so neighborhood residents have been outspoken in their opposition.

Supporters of mass transit have criticized the plan because it would cost \$6.25 billion for the roadwork, leaving scant funding for any mass transit alternative.

Groups like the American Civil Liberties Union have called the plan discriminatory against minorities who may not have personal vehicles while the Sierra Club is against the project, claiming it will add to local air pollution.

The city points to the loss of 177 homes, 20 businesses, and three government buildings in Milwaukee. They would be razed to accommodate the expansion.

The great unspoken truth lurking just behind all this contention is that Milwaukee leaders view regionalism as a one-

way street – that is, the entire region must evolve around Milwaukee. While Milwaukee is a vital part of southeastern Wisconsin and the entire state, it is not the only part.

What the Milwaukee politicians fail to realize is that the freeway doesn't just take away residents who desire to live in more open areas with less crime. That same freeway also facilitates those same people coming into Milwaukee to work, shop and attend sports and cultural events.

Milwaukee officials seem to think that by squeezing the freeway into a bottleneck that they can influence people to return to the city. What is more likely is they will discourage people from coming into Milwaukee.

Proof of that is the fact that the freeway system has been congested for more than a decade and yet the suburban migration continues.

The best approach for Milwaukee planners is to try to develop a more meaningful and symbiotic relationship with its suburban and exurban neighbors rather than trying to force them into an environment they fled for compelling reasons.

Any plans to oppose freeway widening in an effort to stem the urban exodus will have the exact opposite effect. Businesses and people will opt for working away from the city – not just living away from it.

What urban advocates deride as "sprawl" is really the exercise of free choice. Making the Milwaukee experience a more pleasant one is much more likely to lead more people to choose Milwaukee rather than some scheme designed to place roadblocks up along the Milwaukee County lines to the west, north and south.

# Freeway debate to hit on hot topics

## Race, sprawl, housing among issues raised over reconstruction

By LARRY SANDLER  
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Racism, housing, jobs, urban sprawl, air pollution and traffic jams all will be part of the debate when a \$6.25 billion freeway reconstruction plan faces a key vote Wednesday.

It won't be the last word, both sides agree, but supporters and opponents of widening I-94 and I-43 are likely to turn out in force when the Milwaukee County Board's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee debates the plan at 1 p.m. in Room 203R of the courthouse.

That panel's recommendation will set the stage for the full board to decide its position on how to rebuild all of the region's aging freeways as they wear out over the next 20 to 30 years. And the board position, in turn, will influence regional, state and federal decisions.

A preliminary recommendation from a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee calls for adding 127 miles of new lanes to the freeways, which would expand most of the busiest freeways from six lanes to eight lanes and would boost I-43 from four lanes to eight lanes in the North Shore suburbs.

### WHAT'S NEXT

■ A Milwaukee County Board committee will debate the freeway reconstruction plan at 1 p.m. Wednesday in Room 203R of the courthouse.

■ The panel's recommendation will set the stage for the full board to decide its position on how to rebuild all of the region's aging freeways as they wear out over the next 20 to 30 years.

Without widening the freeways, planners say, traffic congestion will double by 2020. Opponents, however, point out that widening I-94 would save commuters only five minutes in rush-hour traffic from downtown to Wauwatosa.

But the debate is ranging far beyond transportation to include:

**Racism:** The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin is urging supervisors to reject the plan as unfair to minorities and the poor. ACLU attorney Karyn

Rotker said the process lacked "meaningful involvement" from black, Hispanic and Hmong residents who could lose their homes from freeway widening but wouldn't benefit because they don't have cars.

Supervisor James White, the transportation committee chairman and a member of the study panel, disagreed. White, who is black, said minorities would benefit from construction jobs and from other jobs created by the long-term economic growth that improved freeways would allow.

The ACLU and freeway neighbors also attacked the planning commission for not translating its reports into Spanish and Hmong. Gretchen Schuldt, co-chairwoman of the neighborhood coalition called Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, said, "The lack of translations is unconscionable. It is saying that people who do not speak English do not count."

Ken Yunker, the planning commission's assistant director, said the commission didn't translate its reports because no one had asked for a translation. Rotker said the ACLU had requested translations six months ago.

**Land use:** Most of the opposition to the plan has been concentrated in Milwaukee and its closest suburbs, while much of the support has come from surrounding counties.

The Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, Racine, Kenosha and Walworth county boards all have adopted resolutions supporting the plan, as have the Brookfield and Racine common councils.

By contrast, resolutions of partial opposition have come from the Milwaukee Common Council, which opposes widening I-94 and I-43 to eight lanes within Milwaukee; the Glendale Common Council, which opposes expanding I-43 to eight lanes in Glendale; and the Hales Corners Village Board, which opposes expanding state Highway 100 to eight lanes as an offshoot of expanding the Hale Interchange, where Highway 100 connects with I-43, I-894 and U.S. Highway 45.

Mayor John O. Norquist, aldermen and environmentalists have joined the ACLU and the neighbors in taking aim at the number of homes and businesses that would be razed in the city, the amount of money that the project would cost a cash-strapped state, and the impact of freeways on encouraging urban sprawl.

The neighborhood coalition was born in the Story Hill area overlooking Miller Park, where planners have suggested double-decking a nearby section of I-94 to avoid moving graves in several cemeteries. But other neighborhoods would be affected more than Story Hill, which wouldn't lose any homes, stressed Schuldt, a Story Hill resident.

Throughout the seven-county region, the plan would take 658 acres of land, 216 homes, 31 businesses and three government buildings. Of that total, the parts of I-94 and I-43 in Milwaukee and the northern and western Milwaukee County suburbs would ac-

count for 184 acres, 118 homes and 17 businesses, as well as the courthouse annex and two smaller county buildings.

In addition to the property taken, other homes, offices and schools would end up much closer to freeways, lowering property values and the quality of life, Schuldt said.

"Even the houses they don't tear down would have huge negative impacts," said Schuldt, a former Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter who now works for the Milwaukee Public Schools.

White said economic growth would more than compensate for the lost tax base. He pointed out that I-43 was built through what was then a thriving black neighborhood, but today, "there isn't anyone who questions the validity of that I-43 stretch, the value to the state's economy."

Neighbors who oppose freeway widening, White said, are "individuals who see their own personal inconvenience as more important than the economic needs of the region."

**Environment:** The ACLU, the Sierra Club and the state Department of Natural Resources argue that wider freeways would carry more traffic, causing more air pollution and triggering more respiratory diseases, which disproportionately affect minority neighborhoods. The planning commission disputes that view.

Instead, environmentalists and the ACLU argue, planners should be encouraging expansion of public transit, including commuter trains. White and Yunker say they support commuter rail and other forms of expanded public transit, but that doesn't relieve the need to expand the freeways.

After the committee votes on its recommendation, the full board will consider the issue, most likely at its Jan. 23 meeting.

However, because of the importance of the issue, White said he and County Board Chairman Lee Holloway are discussing whether the matter should also be considered by a committee of the whole before the regular board meeting. That's a rarely used tactic that would let all supervisors hear testimony and question witnesses.

"I'm hoping for the highest possible profile" for discussions on this issue, White said.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 6, 2003

# Brookfield's Busalacchi named DOT secretary

Former truck driver  
will oversee  
Marquette  
interchange work

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

BROOKFIELD - Frank Busalacchi has been in the public eye for his work on the Miller Park baseball stadium project.

But he will soon be working under quite another dome - in the state Capitol - with his appointment Monday as secretary of the state Department of Transportation by Gov.-elect Jim Doyle.

Compared to Miller Park, his new work might seem more like being in a fish bowl.

But the longtime Brookfield resident told the Freeman on Monday, "I'm psyched."

Busalacchi, 58, will have to resign as the secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 200, one of the largest Teamster locals in the state. He began with the Teamsters as a business agent in 1979 and was elected president in 1991 and secretary-treasurer in 1994.

"I will miss the Teamsters because I grew up with them and they have been very good to me," he said.



Busalacchi

Busalacchi is also president of the Summerfest Board of Directors and served as chairman of the negotiating committee responsible for the lease between Milwaukee World Festivals and the city of Milwaukee. Appointed by Gov. Tommy Thompson in 1994, Busalacchi is the construction committee chairman for the Miller Park baseball stadium construction project.

Now he will have the opportunity to oversee another major construction project in the rebuilding of the Marquette interchange.

"The Marquette interchange is the lifeblood of the entire state, not just Milwaukee," he said. And as a former truck driver who traveled frequently through the downtown area, he understands that as well as anybody, he said.

The plans call for work on the \$1.5 billion project to begin in 2004 and take about four years. If Doyle is re-elected and Busalacchi were to stay on, he would probably also oversee the start of the six miles of work in the east/west corridor between Milwaukee and Waukesha as well. A member of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Busalacchi has shown support for rebuilding Interstate 94.

"But I think the new governor wants to take a fresh look at exactly what it is we are going to do," he said. The project now calls for expanding that portion of the freeway from six to eight lanes.

Doyle said of his appointee, "Frank Busalacchi is a Milwaukee community leader, labor leader and an experienced large projects manager who knows how important transportation is to the economic growth of Wisconsin. Frank has shown time and time again that he can accomplish big things while balancing competing interests."

The DOT is responsible for planning, promotion and protection of all transportation systems around the state. Responsibilities include highways, motor vehicles, motor carriers, traffic law enforcement,

railroads, waterways, mass transit and aeronautics.

The department employs about 3,000 people.

Busalacchi will succeed current DOT Secretary Thomas Carlsen.

Busalacchi and his wife, Robin, have lived in Brookfield for 17 years and have two sons. Robin Busalacchi is the daughter of former Brookfield Police Chief Jerome Wolff and Waukesha County Supervisor Sandra Wolff.

Doyle also made two other appointments Monday. He appointed Madison attorney Scott Hasset as secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources and Madison resident Burnie Bridge as chair of the Public Service Commission.

*(Dennis A. Shook can be reached at dshook@conleynet.com)*

Waukesha Freeman  
December 23, 2002

# Doyle, don't be a pavement pusher

Governor-elect Jim Doyle hasn't asked me for advice on shaping transportation policy, but I'm going to offer some anyway. Here it is, in a nutshell:

Rethink everything.

I'm serious. It would be a huge mistake for the new governor to repeat the pavement-pushing policies of the Department of Transportation under Governors Tommy Thompson and Scott McCallum. Those policies have left us with oversized corridors of concrete at the expense of existing roads, shortchanged transit and worsened sprawl. The current state budget crisis presents Doyle with a great opportunity to craft a more balanced, cost-effective, environmentally sensitive approach to transportation.

The urgency of doing so is underscored by the ruinous, \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild (read: widen) the metro area's aging freeways over the next 20 years. Forget for a moment that the plan, pushed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, would destroy 658 acres, 216 homes and 31 businesses and degrade even the neighborhoods it leaves intact.

Forget, too, that by the planners' own estimates, expanding I-94 would shave only a few minutes off the average commute between Milwaukee and Waukesha County. Or that experience elsewhere suggests that these wider roads would be filled up almost as fast as they're built.

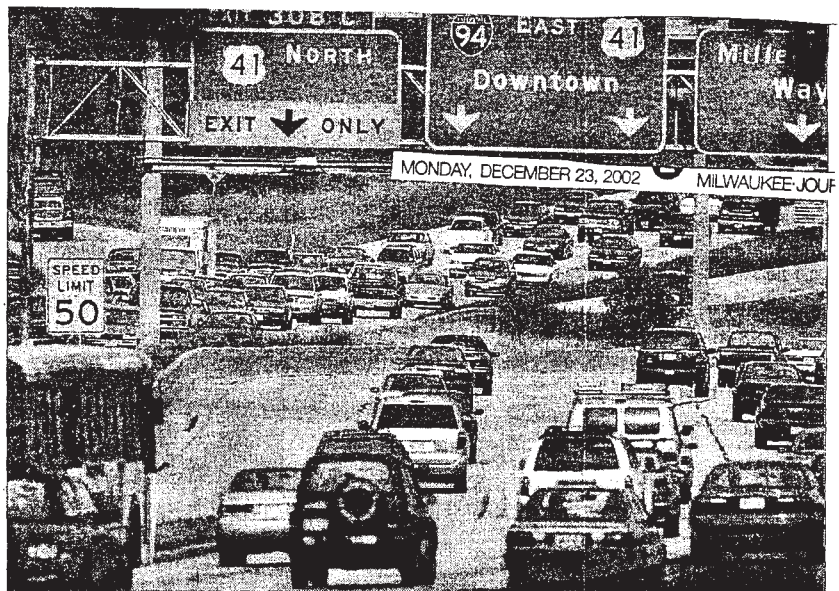
Even if you are prepared to write off those losses as a cost of "progress" — something I'm certainly not willing to do — how are we going to pay for this massive undertaking, which the DOT's own budgeters say would cost \$250 million a year for the next two decades? The non-partisan Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance suggests that if the plan goes ahead, it would leave a \$5 billion shortfall in transportation funding statewide — a conservative estimate. Yet Doyle has ruled out tax increases, presumably including a rise in vehicle registration fees or gasoline taxes.

Clearly, a more realistic approach is in order, one that combines carefully targeted safety improvements with land-use reform and regional cooperation on transit, including commuter rail. But to get from here to there will require an overhaul of the DOT.



SPACES

WHITNEY GOULD



I-94, seen from a footbridge near Miller Park, is packed going both ways about 4 p.m. on a weekday in September 2001. State transportation policies in recent years have done little to alleviate traffic congestion.

## State transportation policies should be junked, rethought

For starters Doyle needs to appoint a transportation secretary with a clear head, a steely-eyed approach to budgeting and absolutely no ties to the pave-everything gang of road builders. No old-boy political hacks, no revolving-door consultants, no under-qualified loyalists, please.

Then, let the Legislative Audit Bureau or some other credible outside group look closely at the way DOT spends its money. Ed Beimborn, who is as thoughtful about these issues as anyone around, recalls an old saying from his father: "Never ask a barber if you need a haircut." Beimborn, who directs the Center for Urban Transportation Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, says an objective analysis would examine such things as whether the state is getting the greatest possible return on its investment; whether services to boost the mobility of the disabled are properly factored in; and whether so-called safety improvements are actually that.

The land-use reform group 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin says an honest accounting of the real costs of highway construction would also factor in such things as maintenance, resurfacing, policing and plowing.

The group has some other good suggestions: Repeal gas tax indexing, which automatically increases gas taxes every year — and hence road building — with no accountability; raise the share of aid that goes for maintaining local roads and transit; and peg auto registra-

tion fees to the weight of vehicles, so that pavement-pummeling gas guzzlers would pay more.

The other piece of the puzzle, too long ignored by the highway crowd, is the link between transportation and land use. Unbridled highway development fuels sprawl. And numerous studies, including a recent one by researchers at Rutgers and Cornell universities, show that sprawl — sparse, spread-out growth beyond the boundaries of urban services — increases driving times, air pollution and traffic deaths. Others — including the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin — have documented the connection between sprawl and racial segregation.

Yet the state's new Smart Growth law promotes more compact development, which would enable people to live closer to their jobs and be less dependent on their cars. That's evidently a foreign idea to the DOT, which behaves like a full-employment agency for road builders.

"We have never had a DOT secretary who got the transportation-land use connection," says Dave Cieslewicz, director

of 1,000 Friends. It's time we did. It's also time we had a DOT that carefully coordinated its plans with the state Department of Natural Resources and with reform-minded citizens around the state.

A good model on this front is Envision Utah, a partnership among citizens, business leaders and government officials (including state transportation staffers) in the Salt Lake City region. The 5-year-old group works to coordinate transportation decisions with land and water preservation and housing diversity. According to its executive director, Stephen Holbrook, the group played a key role in developing a regional transportation system that balances highways with commuter rail and other transit. (The Web site is [www.envisionutah.org](http://www.envisionutah.org).)

The thing to remember above all is that transportation is not just about moving cars. It's about the health of neighborhoods. It's about our quality of life, our sense of place, our pocketbooks.

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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
December 23, 2002

# Freeway plan blasted by advocacy groups

Wauwatosa, *Express News*  
December 23, 2002

By Jason Blazina  
Staff Writer

Speakers representing a pair of activist groups chastised the proposed reconstruction of southeastern Wisconsin's freeway system during a presentation to Wauwatosa officials last week.

The proposal by Waukesha-based SEWRPC (Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission) entails both design modifications and expansion of key corridors within the 272-mile system – including eight freeway lanes along segments of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County – at a cost of approximately \$6.2 billion.

Presentations were conducted by both Citizens Allied for Safe Highways (CASH) and the Sierra Club during the Wauwatosa Committee of the Whole meeting Dec. 17, with a barrage of criticism directed at the proposal.

Robert Trimmier, CASH co-chair, stated that his group opposes the plan for several reasons, including: erosion of the tax base; loss of quality of life; lack of meaningful public input; no funding source; cost; etc.

"This process has been one of arrogance, with using two PR firms to sell before the public," said Trimmier. "This plan is '1950s thinking dressed in a 21st-century suit' – pave your way out of anything. Because this plan primarily affects Milwaukee County, we believe the proposal represents taxation without representation."

SEWRPC will be afforded a like opportunity to present their stance to Wauwatosa officials Jan. 21. Among the organization's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option which would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but does not add highway capacity. A \$6.2 billion option which adds capacity to 127 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic-flow concerns – especially to address traffic congestion projected on the system over the next 20 years.

According to [www.sewrpc.org](http://www.sewrpc.org): "...much of the freeway system (built in stages beginning in 1953) is approaching the end of its economic and functional life, and the reconstruction of the freeway system will be required over the next 30 years. The deficiencies of the freeway system are widely acknowledged, including traffic accidents and safety, increasing traffic congestion, and the physical geometric design deficiencies of the freeway system, including lane drops at interchanges, left-hand entrance and exit ramps, inadequate merging and diverging lane lengths, and inadequate shoulders and lateral clearance."

The preliminary plan recommends adding lanes to the segments of I-94 between the Milwaukee County Zoo and Marquette interchanges, and I-43 between the W. Brown Deer Road and Mitchell interchanges.

Gretchen Schuldt, CASH co-chair, stated that the group "is not anti-freeway, but SEWRPC doesn't understand all that the plan involves."

"They want to widen 127 miles of freeway without a funding source," she said. "With the Zoo Interchange, it includes 52 acres and 19 destroyed homes – this plan would have a major impact in Wauwatosa."

According to Schuldt, the plan entails a total of 216 razed homes – including 177 residences in Milwaukee County alone – while "taking out" a Milwaukee County Sheriff's substation at 10190 W. Watertown Plank Rd.

"Much of Swan Boulevard would be merged with the freeway, and we'd lose some of the County Grounds," she said. "SEWRPC failed to include the additional land that will be needed in the plan, and utility lines must be relocated."

According to SEWRPC Assistant Director Ken Yunker, "acquisitions" may be necessary in regard to the substation and County Grounds.

"It's not possible to do everything within the right-of-way, and improved safety and access will determine that," he said. "With the County Grounds – between where Swan Boulevard crosses over US 45 to Watertown Plank Road – there may be strips of land adjacent to the freeway purchased to improve access."

Also, CASH's Schuldt reiterated the "lack of a funding source" in regard to recent ideas such as tolls or the doubling of license fees.

"Both of those went over like a flat tire," she said, "and it's time to start over – it's time for SEWRPC to listen to the public. It would take a huge tax increase to fund this plan....the freeways need work but not expansion."

Also, Wauwatosa resident Rosemary Wehnes of the Sierra Club cited freeways as a "top cause" of sprawl.

"There's an environmental cost of highways, and 80 percent of cancer-causing agents are from mobile sources such as cars and trucks," said Wehnes. "We're losing more tax base in Wauwatosa, and this plan would increase the barriers between the east and west sides of the city."

Wehnes added that cities such as Kenosha "have seen an infusion of money into their downtown area" with the implementation of commuter rail.

Milwaukee County Supervisor Jim "Luigi" Schmitt (20th District) – in attendance last week – characterized the SEWRPC plan as, "If you build it, they will come."

"If we don't increase the capacity of the freeways, then what will happen with congestion?" he asked rhetorically. "This is my first time of hearing that the sheriff's substation will be taken, though."

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, Waukesha County Executive Dan Finley and Racine County Executive Jean Jacobson have expressed their support for the SEWRPC proposal, which may proceed without formal approval by respective county boards. However, SEWRPC official Yunker stated that a "consensus" is desired by the organization.

"We want a final plan which will be endorsed by the county boards," he said.

The Milwaukee County Board is expected to address the matter in January.

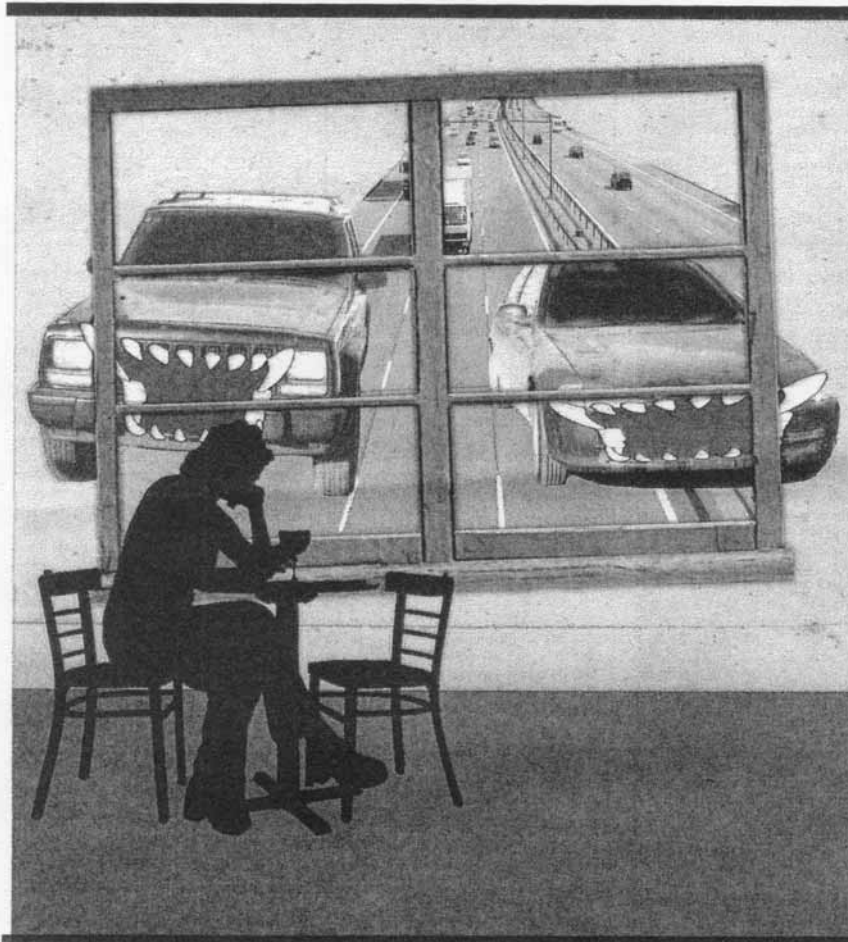
SEWRPC – established in 1960 as the official area-wide planning agency for the southeastern region of the state – serves the seven counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha. The Commission consists of 21 members – three from each of the seven member counties.

Also included on the aforementioned Web site: "The Commission was created to provide the basic information and planning services necessary to solve problems which transcend the corporate boundaries and fiscal capabilities of the local units of government comprising the Southeastern Wisconsin Region."

# The Highways That Ate Milwaukee!

Tempers flare over a road-heavy transportation plan

By Doug Hissom  
doug@shepherd-express.com



**S**itting in the living room of a Tudor home in the picturesque Story Hill neighborhood, listening to the rumble of freeway traffic flowing through the open windows on a late fall day, the uninitiated listener can't help but wonder how the noise could get any more intrusive. Nor fathom why this neighborhood filled mostly with middle-income homes could be in such an uproar over a proposed freeway-expansion project.

After all, a solid three lanes of Milwaukee rush-hour is heading home to the suburbs on I-94 less than a quarter-mile away, and voices already have to be raised for casual conversation on the front porch. How much worse could it be?

But this neighborhood, a good stone's throw north of the Miller Park parking lot, has become the bunker for a civilian-led freeway opposition movement the city hasn't seen since the 1970s, when freeways were stopped by activists from further dissecting Milwaukee—despite the fact that plans were on the books to build them.

Gretchen Schuldt, a co-leader of the group Citizens for Sane Highways (CASH), says this is more than your standard "not in my backyard" movement: "It's about taxpayers paying \$17.2 million a month for 30 years."

What started Schuldt and the Story Hill Neighborhood Association on their quest with CASH

was a document detailing plans for the metro-area interstate system. The plans call for the system that will be rebuilt with new on- and off-ramps, and more importantly, 127 miles of additional lanes—where existing four-lane sections will be six lanes, and six lanes, eight.

All that new concrete will cost about \$6.2 billion, enough tax dollars to build more than 15 Miller Parks.

Not only that, the project would destroy 216 homes and 34 other buildings, swallowing up 658 acres for more freeways and taking more than \$160 million in property off the tax rolls. Lanes would be added in all the major counties, including taking I-94 from six to eight lanes all the way to the state line. Homes would be torn down in the most urban areas lining the interstate—177 in Milwaukee County—along with 20 businesses.

The purpose is to reduce freeway congestion and commuter times, say planners with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), which was commissioned to do the study by the state Department of Transportation. The plan's anticipated results? Commute times would be five minutes less to Waukesha from downtown Milwaukee, and freeway congestion would be about the same as it is now in 20 years. And that's with a corresponding 70% increase in expanding mass transit offerings. A dollar figure for that has yet to be figured out.

The Story Hill perspective can be seen in the "No freeway expansion/No double-deck" signs that have sprouted on the neighborhood's well-kept lawns—referring to part of the plan that includes elevating the freeway through the narrow gap between two veterans' cemeteries just west of Miller Park.

The neighborhood lies in one of the more building-intensive areas of the plan. It also is home to a state representative, an alderman, a district attorney and several otherwise "connected" citizens.

A new on-ramp near the neighborhood would add the noise of vehicles speeding up into traffic while now the sound is pretty much a constant rumble of road noise, says Schuldt. The elevated section of the freeway would only add to the din, while also bringing dirt and litter into the homes and yards.

"And I have enough fine particulate matter to clean up now, thank you," Schuldt says.

She also cites health concerns. A study in Atlanta noted a correlation between freeway location and asthma cases.

In the process of looking into the project, how it was put together and how it's being pushed to the public, Schuldt, a former journalist, has turned the Story Hill Neighborhood Association's "webteam" into the Woodward and Bernstein of the freeway expansion plan. The group has found that:

- Lawmakers like former Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen, who supports the plan, received no calls or letters to sway him one way or the other, but he did get \$23,000 in campaign funds from roadbuilders. New Speaker John Gard also supports the plan, but admits he received no public input to make a decision either way.

- SEWRPC is downplaying the cost of maintenance for the expanded freeway, which would mean an extra \$1.8 million in taxes each year.

- SEWRPC cannot provide any connection

WWW.CASHMILWAUKEE.ORG

Continued on Page C-35

The Shepherd Express  
December 12-18, 2002



between accidents on the freeway and its design.

■ No estimate has been provided on how much it will cost to move power lines along the corridors.

■ SEWRPC has not talked to the National Cemetery Administration about a plan to hang a portion of the freeway over the Miller Park-area graveyards.

■ Opinion surveys and copies of the plan were not available in Spanish or Hmong-language versions, thus preventing affected residents from participating.

■ WE Energies may not be compensated for rerouted utilities and will likely pass the cost on to ratepayers.

■ SEWRPC has refused to release a list of 40,000 to 50,000 residents who were reportedly sent a survey. SEWRPC Executive Director Phil Evenson says the list is owned by the survey company, A.B. Data, and is not a public record.

■ SEWRPC spent \$70,000 for public relations consultants to sway public opinion for the project—while SEWRPC was surveying the public. One of the firms also went over the survey to smooth over the questions and advised the commission to keep any mention of

the project's cost out of the questionnaire. SEWRPC officials say cost wasn't as important as residents' attitudes about the proposed freeway system.

CASH has used these findings to enlist 11 member groups, including: Historic Concordia Inc.; Martin Drive Neighborhood Association; Merrill Park Neighborhood Association; Neighbors of Historic Walker's Point; Sierra Club; Select Milwaukee; Story Hill Neighborhood Association; Washington Heights Neighborhood Association; Water Tower Landmark Trust; and the West End Vliet St. Business Association.

**The Policy Back-and-Forth**

While CASH has emerged this year as the main citizens opponent of freeway expansion, other major voices include Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist and various planners who suggest the SEWRPC plan is shortsighted or overstated.

Clearly, city officials are concerned that freeway expansion causes sprawl—a point conceded by nearly every planner on the planet, except for SEWRPC right now. And in the 1970s and early

**"THIS IS ABSOLUTELY THE BEST PLAN," SAYS SEWRPC'S EVENSON. "WE'VE LOOKED AT ALL THE ALTERNATIVES, AND THE FACT IS THAT THE FREEWAY SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE REBUILT."**

1980s, the only state lawmakers emphasizing this fact were then-Sen. John Norquist and Rep. Mordecai Lee, who later became a state senator.

The two combined to form an anti-freeway coalition that was surprisingly effective. Norquist's efforts helped stop the stadium freeway for good at National Avenue. Lee helped slow the widening of I-43 into Ozaukee County by many years.

Lee summed up his philosophy in a 1998 e-mail to longtime SEWRPC board member Richard W. Cutler, whose book, *Greater Milwaukee's Growing Pains, 1950-2000: An Insider's View*, provides an account of past freeway wars: "Surely,

anyone had the right to choose to live in (say) Mequon, but the government didn't have the obligation to those populations to expand freeways to assure that the commute would remain at 20-30 minutes. Maybe the 'price' of living in Mequon would be freeway congestion and a 40-minute commute. Maybe some people would decline to move to Mequon because of that calculus."

Cutler calls Lee naive and his opposition to freeways "fanatical."

Norquist's view is a tad more direct than Lee's. As the mayor told *The New York Times* in 1999, "The urban superhighway should be relegated to the scrap heap of history... there is no greater form of subsidized social engineering than the interstate highway, which hasten flight out of the city without doing much to ease traffic congestion."

Adds city long-range planner Mike Maierle: "Travel time is a huge factor in deciding where to live. That's why people live in cities, to reduce the time it takes to get to their resources, like groceries."

Maierle says most research shows that 20 minutes is the maximum tolerable commute time. "Why not start with the idea to get people around Milwaukee

COVER STORY continued on next page >>>

**SEWRPC: What Is It, Anyway?**

Is it a highway-happy planning commission that wants to encourage suburban sprawl with concrete thoroughways outside the urban area? Or is it a big-picture deliberative body with a seven-county metropolitan area at heart, taking pains to preserve green space and urge reasonable growth policies?

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) has been referred to as many things: an example of the old Soviet-style bureaucracy "totally out of control," a public body spending tax dollars "accountable to no one but themselves," and as an objective think tank that settles wars, coming up with "monumental," nationally recognized land-use plans.

We're talking about a group of engineers and planners housed in a Pewaukee office building, charged with coming up with land-use plans for most of southeastern Wisconsin.

And, while their presence isn't likely to be the topic of regular bar conversations, the results of some of their work certainly is.

SEWRPC was created in 1960 by then-Gov. Gaylord Nelson "to provide the basic information and planning services necessary to solve problems which transcend the corporate boundaries and fiscal capabilities of the local units of government." All but five Wisconsin counties use similar commissions to draw up their long-range plans. The idea is that this saves municipalities and counties the cost of having their own planning departments. It's also supposed to bring a regional cohesiveness to the whole table. For example, one of SEWRPC's first jobs was to help with border disputes between southeastern Wisconsin towns and cities.

Since its creation, the commission has weighed in on:

- Watershed planning of area riverways
- Library locations
- Sewer issues
- Housing studies
- Water supplies
- Recreation
- Transit alternatives
- Work time rescheduling in the Milwaukee area
- Emergency energy plans
- Open-space plans
- Air and water quality issues
- Waste management
- Airport location
- Economic development

**Decision-sharing**

SEWRPC's recommendations are advisory, subject to the approval of the local municipalities. In the case of the latest freeway flap, the go-ahead decision rests with county boards.

For this service, SEWRPC gets 0.003% of the equalized real estate value of the counties it serves—Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Ozaukee, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha. For its 2003 budget, that means \$2.31 million from taxpayers in the seven counties, plus various state and federal grants—for a total budget of \$6.6 million for 79 employees. The commission's first-year budget was \$75,000.

The seven-county area that SEWRPC plans for includes about 5% of the total land area of Wisconsin, as well as 1.94 million people, about 36% of the population.

Its highly controversial plan to spend \$6.2 billion to rebuild and add lanes on 127 miles of the freeway system is causing a lot more people to look at what's going on at the SEWRPC's Pewaukee offices. And there is strong sentiment that the commission favors suburban, sprawl and development, critics say, insisting that the highway plan is being done solely to relieve congestion and speed commuter times to the suburbs.

Reinforcing that bias for critics, SEWRPC recently announced that it wants to do a \$1 million study on how to get more water to the western fringes of the metro area—it's not ruling out using Lake Michigan water either, which would require changing international treaties.

Since one of the main opponents of the freeway plan is Milwaukee Mayor Norquist, he's put forth more than just a passing effort to attack the project, and he's going after the SEWRPC operation itself.

"It's the only public agency where no one's accountable," says Jim Rowen, Norquist policy director.

Like the furor the mayor's office caused when it challenged former Gov. McCallum's plane flights after he announced that he wanted to cut shared revenue to municipalities, Rowen is leading the effort to highlight questionable spending in the SEWRPC office—from cars to the SEWRPC building.

He calls the commission's 24% 2002 budget increase "the kind of spending that can get you recalled these days."

**The Budget Numbers**

SEWRPC has a \$60,000 annual transportation budget, which in the past has funded a \$25,812 2000 Buick Le Sabre for Executive Director Phil Evenson and a

\$22,839 2000 Crown Victoria for former staffer-turned-SEWRPC consultant Kurt Bauer.

The new building, bought for \$3.3 million, also was sold to the commission from a contractor that does work for SEWRPC. The commission moved from the old Waukesha County Courthouse.

"The entire arrangement is another sweet deal for this network of consultants and contractors with SEWRPC at the center," says Rowen.

Each of the seven counties has three representatives on the commission's board, serving six-year terms. It's been noted that the entire 24-member board is white and has only three women on it, and the average length of service for members is about 9.25 years, with one commissioner holding a 30-year tenure. Little turnover leads to fewer innovative ideas and, with an all-white make-up, a lack of understanding of minority needs in the area, which is largely the City of Milwaukee.

"Is it any surprise that what has evolved in the region is de facto apartheid?" asks Rowen.

Evenson correctly notes that the make-up of the commission is determined by nominations from each county boards and the governor. He says that SEWRPC's staff has tried to encourage more-representative appointments, but he views that as somewhat meddling and calls it presumptuous.

Still, Evenson doesn't seem thrilled with the latest round of scrutiny.

"I find it curious the mayor didn't raise these same questions when we voted to demap the Park East Freeway," Evenson observes about the now-destroyed freeway north of Downtown, where the land will be developed in the coming years.

Milwaukee County Supervisor Dan Diliberti, who's been on the commission since 1993, admits "more minorities would be advantageous" and points out that SEWRPC has set up minority internship programs. Diliberti adds that the new building is much more efficient for the staff and gives the commission ownership equity instead of just paying rent. He also says buying the cars like SEWRPC does is easier for SEWRPC than state fleet purchases, as Rowen suggests.

Despite representing parts of the city, Diliberti says Milwaukee has to remember that seven counties are involved in the commission.

Norquist has a consistent history of not being the best buddy to the commission—he had some say about it in the state Legislature. Between 1979 and 1983 Norquist tried several times to raise the number of City

SEWRPC continued on next page >>>

County quicker?" he asks. "Why is SEWRPC looking at developing urban areas on the periphery?"

The mayor also challenges the plan's cost and, more importantly, who's going to pay for it. One indication of state DOT thinking came out in late November when it pitched an idea to double the cost of auto registration to \$90. It fell flat immediately. Some county officials say they've been told that Gov.-elect Jim Doyle would take resources from road projects in other parts of the state to go to freeways around Milwaukee.

### The Court of Public Opinion

Another area of contention is in the court of public opinion. Opponents point to the turnout at the 11 public hearings on the plan to date: 222 spoke and wrote in opposition to the plan, and 46 supported it. The Sierra Club also canvassed for viewpoints and sent in 1,438 post-cards opposing highway expansion.

SEWRPC stands by its survey, which was returned by 15,000 area residents, overwhelmingly in support of additional freeway lanes and rebuilding the system to modern standards. But CASH and Milwaukee city officials quickly point out that no mention of price was included, and there are numerous lingering questions about the process from city analysts and residents.

Shepherd Express asked SEWRPC's top directors, Phil Evenson and Ken Yunker, to explain it to us. Since the Marquette Interchange rebuild has been approved, it made sense to look at the whole system, which is coming to the end of its 30-year lifespan, they say.

"This is absolutely the best plan," says SEWRPC Executive Director Evenson. "We've looked at all the alternatives, and the fact of the matter is that the freeway system needs to be rebuilt."

In response to criticism that this is simply a car plan and not a mass transit plan, Assistant Director Yunker notes that an expected increase of 70% in mass transit is already factored in.

Yunker says SEWRPC is already implementing some of the transit plans, including a study of a high-speed rail connection from Racine to Chicago; more

bus routes in Ozaukee and Waukesha counties and some rail between Milwaukee and Madison.

"It's not fair to say we just looked at roads," Yunker says.

"Widening is the measure of last resort," he adds, noting that Portland and Denver—two cities known for good mass transit—are also considering widening their freeway lanes.

And Evenson issues a reminder that this is just a plan—and nothing ever goes as planned.

"Will all the highway projects planned here happen? No," Evenson explains. "But one way or the other, we're going to spend billions of dollars doing it."

However, some city officials, like long-range planner Mike Maierle, say from experience that SEWRPC's road plans tend to be implemented more often than not.

While the City of Milwaukee is vehemently opposed to lane widening, Yunker notes that the rest of the plan—supported by the Milwaukee Common Council—will still cost \$5.5 billion and displace homes. The breakdown is like this:

- It would cost \$3.37 billion to reconstruct the freeways as they are now.

- An additional \$2.15 billion is needed to improve the freeways to so-called modern design standards, which include: taking out left-lane off- and on-ramps; lengthening off-ramps; creating fewer lanes that end in traffic, forcing cars to switch from one lane to the other; and adding shoulders to both sides of the freeway. Of that, \$600 million is earmarked for rebuilding the Marquette Interchange.

- The additional 127 miles of lanes will cost about \$750 million.

Maierle notes that the Marquette Interchange, if rebuilt to new design standards, still will have 11 more miles of freeway lanes than it does now—a 50% increase.

"It's the price we're going to have to pay to build it right again," offers Evenson.

Story Hill neighbors' questions about the elevated freeway could be premature,

Evenson adds, since final design won't be done until the engineering starts. "We're going to improve the current situation."

Maierle admits that the freeway needs to be replaced, but his concern is that alternative solutions were not adequately studied or mentioned in the SEWRPC plan.

Scott Bernstein, president of the Chicago-based Center for Neighborhood Technology, agrees that SEWRPC could have done more, commenting, "Nobody ever builds their way out of congestion."

Evenson and Yunker, however, staunchly defend the plan's public-input process, citing public hearings along the way. As for questions about the allegedly smoothed-over survey,

"It was a pretty simple and pretty straightforward survey," says Evenson. "And there isn't a freeway driver around that doesn't know rebuilding freeways doesn't cost a lot of money."

### An Opposition Groundswell

The opposition isn't just coming from affected residents and City Hall. Even the American Civil Liberties Union has weighed in, considering legal action on behalf of poorer residents who might not have a say in the plan.

The state Department of Natural Resources also is opposed to more lanes, expressing concerns about air pollution, since southeast Wisconsin is already under air-quality constraints.

But concerns about increased air pollution should be minimal, Yunker suggests, since advancements in auto technology should level off emissions. And the air quality would be the same with or without a wider freeway, since the number of vehicle miles traveled will be the same.

State Rep. Jon Richards (D-Milwaukee), who questions the cost and scope of the plan, says he will introduce a bill calling for a referendum on expanding freeway lanes, similar to past referendums supported by state Rep. Jeff Stone (R-Greenfield) and then-state Rep. Scott Walker (R-Wauwatosa) on light rail.

For its part, CASH doesn't have an alternative to what SEWRPC and the state DOT are talking about, Schuldts admits. "We're not saying 'no' to improvements in the highway system; we're saying, 'Start over and do something we can afford.' Sometimes you can't have the best." And that seems to echo among many opponents.

The decision now rests with the Milwaukee County Board, the last body to weigh in—the six other counties in the region have approved the plan. The cities of Glendale and Milwaukee oppose any freeway widening. CASH is hoping to get other municipalities to pass resolutions in opposition as well. Wauwatosa, for example, heard CASH's arguments late last month.

James White, chairman of the Milwaukee County Board's transportation committee, says he expects a vote by the board in January. He also sat on the SEWRPC advisory committee that put the plan together and gives it his seal of approval.

"It's clear if we do not widen the freeway we'll be cutting ourselves off from economic development in the region," White argues.

As for the hardship for some of those living near the proposed extra lanes, he points to what I-43 did to a substantial portion of African-American-run businesses in the city when it was built—businesses that still haven't been recovered. White says he didn't like it at the time, but sees the overall benefit now: "How can you say the neighborhood's concerns outweigh those of the region? Go out to the airport, those folks make sacrifices all the time."

And White, an African American, adds this when confronted with arguments that the freeway hurts opportunities for blacks by encouraging sprawl for whites who live in cities where housing is limited for blacks:

"We have the highest African-American unemployment rate in the country," White says. "And it's not because we have a difficult time buying a house in the suburbs." ■

SEWRPC continued from previous page

of Milwaukee representatives on the commission in order to counter the pro-freeway, pro-suburban bias he saw on the board. And in 1995, the mayor wanted the federal government to decertify SEWRPC as a transportation planning group, stripping away its planning budget.

A high-water mark in the anti-freeway movement in Madison, as viewed by longtime former SEWRPC commissioner Richard W. Cutler, was in 1983, when Norquist's top transportation ally in the state Legislature, Mordecai Lee, was able to pass a moratorium against expanding I-43 into Ozaukee County.

"All too often we encourage the abandonment of our cities in favor of outlying suburbs by constructing expensive, fast new highways that make commuting long distances easier," Lee stated at the time.

Retorts Ken Yunker, SEWRPC's assistant director: "It's a lie to say we're focused on freeways. Nothing could be further from the truth." Nonetheless, transportation has been the bulk of the commission's workload, this year accounting for about 40% of the entire SEWRPC budget, with 64% coming from the state DOT.

"I know the mayor's stand on freeways," adds Evenson. "I've read his book. The mayor has made it

clear he doesn't like freeways. He wants the European model here, and you can't do that."

### The Norquist Factor

Evenson, who's been with the commission since 1967, relates his first meeting with Norquist in the 1970s. "He wanted to meet on a Sunday morning, which I thought was rather odd."

It's not just plans for more concrete in the Milwaukee area that are causing people to throw darts at SEWRPC. In Waukesha and Washington counties, fierce opposition has come from residents fighting to prevent an expansion of state Highway 164 to connect I-94 to Highway 60 with a four-lane road.

A citizens group has sued the state to stop the project, arguing that its environmental impacts haven't been fully studied.

Jeff Gonyo, a leader of the opposition, notes a major similarity between SEWRPC's involvement in Highway 164 and the proposal for extra freeway lanes surrounding Milwaukee—and massive opposition at public hearings that seemingly falls on deaf ears. "They simply do not listen," Gonyo says.

The citizens group has won resolutions opposed to various parts of the project from the Waukesha and

Washington county boards and the towns of Richfield, Erin, West Bend, Barton and Big and Little Cedar Lake.

"It's been over three years and they have been nothing but a mere puppet agency for the Department of Transportation. They've certainly not been independent," says Gonyo. "They have this paternalistic attitude that they are going to impose their will."

Evenson says the entire picture can be found in the commission's plans and that most special interests views are too narrow: "We try the best we can to take a balanced approach."

In its 2001 annual report, SEWRPC's transportation studies included bikeway recommendations, rapid transit plans and bus-route analysis.

The SEWRPC spending issue and the road plan have caught the attention of state Rep. Jon Richards (D-Milwaukee), who represents the city's East Side.

"It's certainly worth taking a deeper look, who's on it and how they're funded," says Richards. "We need to see if it's heavily slanted towards the suburbs, and if it is, that's not right for our region."

Richards says he will ask for an audit of SEWRPC when the Legislature convenes in January.

—Doug Hissom

By Jeremy Harrell  
Daily Reporter Staff

**The Daily Reporter**  
December 18, 2002

Dec. 17, 2002

Geographic tensions boiled over Tuesday as out-state lawmakers unsuccessfully fought for major road projects near Green Bay and Prairie du Chien.

"When (my constituents) see a project the size of the Marquette Interchange knock us out of the ballgame once again, they're going to go nuts," said state Rep. Phil Montgomery, R-Ashwaubenon, a member of the Transportation Project Commission at meeting in the state Capitol. "Somewhere in this room it says 'Forward,' but today we went backwards. I'm extremely upset."

Shortly after, Montgomery left the meeting in frustration. His frustration centered on the state Department of Transportation's funding shortage, which kept the TPC from enumerating any of the four major projects up for consideration, including a \$225 million overhaul of Highway 41 in Brown County.

The TPC meets every two years to determine the slate of major projects around the state. Construction on the projects typically starts within six years of approval.

WisDOT Secretary Tom Carlsen told the commission members that, by law, the state has to have a funding scheme in place before the panel can approve major projects.

In June, WisDOT reported that there was a sliver of funding available, but Carlsen said that by December the money had evaporated because of cost overruns on major projects now under way and because the state expected to receive less federal assistance for transportation projects.

"All four candidates are worthy projects," he said. "In order to recommend projects, funds must be available to begin construction in six years. That makes it difficult, if not impossible, to recommend these projects."

Montgomery and Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay, pointed a finger at southeastern Wisconsin, which is awaiting a \$1 billion reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange in Milwaukee. Hansen also singled out the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's preliminary \$6.2 billion proposal to rebuild region's freeways - a plan that includes the Marquette project.

"I have a problem with the southeast expansion," Hansen said. "That would cover the four projects under (consideration Tuesday.)"

Carlsen said that WisDOT's major projects draw on a separate account from the southeast freeways and therefore aren't in any competition for funding.

"It has no impact on funding for the rest of the state," Carlsen said. "The Marquette Interchange does not impact the decisions we're making today."

**Second opinion**

Montgomery disagreed and said the state has to do a better job of capturing federal funds. He said he refused to believe WisDOT's funding shortage for the Marquette had no relation to WisDOT's recommendation not to enumerate the \$225 million Highway 41 project or a \$205 million overhaul of Highways 41 and 26 in the Fox Valley.

"The idea that the Marquette Interchange is not going to affect things down the road is not very plausible," Montgomery said.

He proposed that the TPC enumerate the four projects and raise the funding cap that WisDOT officials said prevented the panel from giving the jobs a green-light. That motion failed on a 6-4 vote.

The failed vote also meant there was no action on a \$41 million project in Vernon County and a \$29.2 million job in Grant County.

But the road is not closed to the four major projects. The last time the TPC decided not to enumerate a project, the Legislature went ahead and authorized it, said Mark Wolfgram, WisDOT program development and analysis chief.

Sen. Dale Schultz, R-Richland Center, who supported Montgomery's proposal, said the TPC should therefore tell the Legislature what the priority list is for major projects.

"What we're doing now isn't preventing the Legislature from enumerating projects," he said. "But they're not going to know which projects to enumerate if we don't tell them. It seems to me there's nothing fiscally irresponsible to state what we believe."

Because the TPC did not approve any of the projects, the jobs go back into the planning process for the panel's approval in 2004, assuming the Legislature doesn't give them the go-ahead. Schultz said WisDOT would have to retrace its steps and spend more money to duplicate its work.

"I can't imagine going back to my constituents and saying we're starting this process all over again," he said.

Sharing Montgomery's frustration, Schultz called for an audit of the major programs to find out how the cost overruns occurred.

"We're going to get to the bottom of this," he said. "We're ignoring our responsibility."

Carlsen and Gov. Scott McCallum, however, said the TPC could approve these same projects in 2004 and still have construction begin by 2009.



Gov. Scott McCallum, left, and Wisconsin Department of Transportation Secretary Tom Carlsen present the agency's recommendation Tuesday that the Transportation Projects Commission not approve any major road projects this year. The panel, in a vote split along geographic lines, agreed.

Photo by Jeremy Harrell

**2-TOOLS**  
Mentioned in this Article

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Representatives

Rep. Phil Montgomery, R-Ashwaubenon

Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay

Sen. Dale Schultz, R-Richland Center

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# Marquette toll way proposed by nonprofit policy group

## Officials differ on ways to fund multibillion-dollar project

The Waukesha Freeman  
December 12, 2002

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

WAUKESHA - Should the state pay for the reconstruction of the Marquette interchange by installing an electronic toll system, like a high-tech version of the toll roads in Illinois?

That is a proposal unveiled today by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Inc.

In a report titled "Rebuilding the Marquette Interchange Via A Public-Private Partnership," the WPRI claims that as much as \$1.5 billion could be made available to help pay for the impending rebuilding if such private funds are used.

But Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley, who has been on a panel of southeastern Wisconsin leaders considering a plan to rebuild the region's freeway system, was not an enthusiastic supporter after being briefed by WPRI on the plan.

"The funding proposal has to come from the state. We're not proposing how to fund it," said Finley, who is a member of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway Advisory Committee. That group has recommended a plan to rebuild the interchange and freeway developed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

"What I want for the region is to have funding equity," he said.

Finley said local toll charges would hit southeastern Wisconsin drivers harder than others.

"When we fund a freeway rebuild near Eau Claire, everybody in the state pays for it," he said. "This should be the same way."

Finley said the state government has assured area leaders that federal funds will be available for the project. Gov. Scott McCallum said the project will qualify for federal funds under the government's "major projects" program.

But Milwaukee leaders have challenged those claims, in light of a struggling national economy and possible costs of a war in Iraq. They claimed the state will need to raise the gasoline tax to pay for the project and they argue planners should acknowledge what tax hikes will be necessary.

### Finding the funding

WPRI President James Miller said, "The technology already exists to allow this to happen."

He added, "Such a plan would



Submitted photo

A nonprofit group has suggested charging a toll for using the Marquette interchange. At least one local official, however, disagrees with the concept.

mean up to 10 percent of the project would be funded by Illinois drivers."

Miller said Milwaukee area drivers would not be hit as hard by the tolls because they would know how to use side streets to avoid the interchange.

The report, prepared by Robert Poole Jr. and Kevin Soucie, states, "Wisconsinites are reported to contribute more than 40 percent of Illinois' out-of-state toll revenues. This proposal attempts to turn the tables by collecting \$17 (million) to \$21 million each year from out-of-state users of the Marquette."

The study claims that the state is unprepared to rebuild the interchange at a projected cost of \$1.5 billion while it also faces a multi-billion-dollar deficit and a lukewarm economy.

"There is very little prospect of obtaining significant 'extra' federal aid for this very large project," the report said. "And any significant reallocation of existing federal dollars from other Wisconsin projects toward the Marquette would meet certain opposition."

The study said such toll systems are in operation in California, Texas and Virginia.

"Large urban toll projects in excess of \$1 billion are in operation or under construction in Melbourne, Paris and Toronto," the study states. "These projects, in particular, make use of fully automated tolling systems to generate revenue to pay for the facilities. These automated tolling systems are designed from the outset without any toll booths. All tolls are collected electronically, at normal highway speeds, either via a dashboard-mounted transponder (for regular users) or via license-plate imaging (for occasional users)."

The study proposes "the entire reconstruction project could be funded via a toll revenue bond issue. A baseline toll revenue stream of \$165 million per year will support bonds in excess of the \$1.5 billion project cost. This revenue number is based on rush-hour bridge tolls of \$2 for cars and \$10 for trucks, comparable to tolls on major bridges nationwide."

The study assumes about 30 percent reduced rates during off-peak times on weekends and holidays. There is also a proposal to rebate fuel taxes for miles driven on the tolled Marquette to users of the interchange to avoid concerns about "double taxation."

The WPRI is a Milwaukee-based nonprofit institute established to study public policy issues. It is not an arm of any government.

### Plan set to start

The overall project cost is \$6.25 billion, of which about \$1.5 billion will be invested in rebuilding the Marquette interchange.

That interchange will be the first project done as it is the heart of the system, based on the recommendations by the state Department of Transportation and SEWRPC.

That interchange work is proceeding along the lines of starting the reconstruction in 2004 and is projected to take four years to complete. The work along the entire region will proceed outward in most directions once that central hub is finished.

Between 2001 and 2010, 113 miles of the freeway are to be reconstructed.

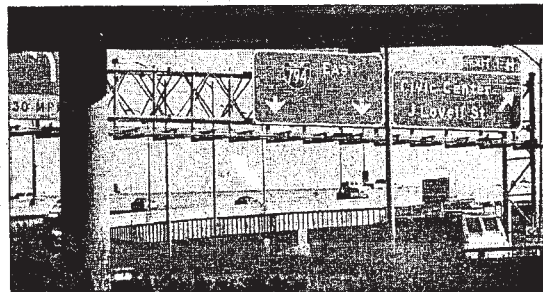
That is the phase most likely to include the controversial six-mile stretch between the zoo and Marquette interchanges.

Another 96 miles of work is coming between 2011 and 2020, with another 56 miles of reconstruction from 2021 to 2030.

Miller said even if there is resounding opposition to the toll concept, the plan will "at least focus the discussion on financing."

Soucie, who helped prepare the report, is a longtime friend of Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist. Norquist has opposed much of the freeway rebuilding plan, saying it contributes to white flight from the city and will take large tracts of land off of the Milwaukee tax rolls.

Six of the seven counties have had their county boards vote in favor of the plan. A vote by Milwaukee County has not yet been scheduled.



Brian Hanson/Freeman Staff

A plan unveiled today would make the Marquette interchange in downtown Milwaukee into a toll-based road.

# Doubling license plate fees rejected

DOT's plan to finance road work blasted

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

November 20, 2002

By **LARRY SANDLER**  
lsandler@journalsentinel.com

Wisconsin's incoming and outgoing governors have trashed a proposal to double license plate fees to help pay for rebuilding Milwaukee-area freeways, sending the state Department of Transportation back to draw up a budget without the increase.

Last week, the department proposed boosting annual vehicle registration fees from \$45 to \$90, effective Jan. 1, 2004, to raise \$428 million in the 2003-'05 budget.

But Governor-elect Jim Doyle says it's "not very likely" he would back that increase, Doyle spokesman Thad Nation said Tuesday.

And departing Gov. Scott McCallum announced he had rejected the department's budget request and ordered transportation officials to find a way around the fee increase.

Acting Transportation Secretary Tom Carlsen responded with a two-sentence written statement:

"Gov. McCallum has asked the department to rework its 2003-'05 biennial budget request. We will start that process immediately and give careful consideration to alternative ways to address the significant transportation needs that exist throughout the state."

Ruling out the fee increase closes off one option for the state to pay for reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange in downtown Milwaukee. Preliminary work is to start late next year on the four-year job.

But the state has set aside only \$340 million of the \$760 million to \$890 million it needs to rebuild the crossroads of I-94, I-43 and I-794. The budget request would have allowed the state to borrow the rest of the money it needs, using revenue from the fee increase to pay off both those bonds and future borrowing for other Milwaukee-area freeway work.

The interchange project would be the first step in rebuilding all of the area's aging freeways, a 20-year task that would cost \$6.25 billion, under a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee's preliminary recommendation to add new lanes. Current gas taxes and license fees wouldn't raise enough to cover that sum.

During the campaign, both Doyle, a Democrat, and McCallum, a Republican, opposed raising gas taxes and supported seeking more federal aid for the freeway work. Doyle also opposed raising license fees, while McCallum refused to take a stand.

Doyle has said he would cut other road projects if Congress didn't come through with more aid. Carlsen said last week he was trying to avoid that option, based on legislative opposition.

News of the fee increase's rejection cheered freeway critics. Mayor John O. Norquist revived his call to rebuild the interchange in its current form, for about \$450 million. And Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, a coalition of neighborhood groups, said the planning commission should start over on its freeway plans.

"This time, maybe they ought to look at what citizens want and what the state can afford, instead of creating a welfare program for the road-building lobby," said Robert Trimmier, co-chairman of the coalition.

But the Transportation Development Association, representing both road-builders and other transportation interests, said the registration fee would be \$129 — nearly triple its current level — if it had kept up with inflation.

Because the inflation-adjusted cost of driving has been falling while travel has been increasing,

authorities should boost revenue to maintain and improve roads and public transit, "so that Wisconsin can continue to foster economic growth and safe personal mobility," said Robert Cook, executive director of the association.

Agency chiefs appointed by McCallum are submitting budget requests because Doyle must present a 2003-'05 budget to the Legislature in February, after taking office in January. McCallum plans to reject any requests seeking fee increases, rather than leave them for Doyle, in light of the state's fiscal crisis, McCallum spokesman Tim Roby said.

Wisconsin is facing a budget deficit of \$2.8 billion for the two-year period that begins July 1, because projected spending outpaces current revenue. That figure does not include a request for an additional \$643 million from the Department of Health and Family Services to pay for medical assistance programs.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

## Group wants new SEWRPC plan

By **Jeremy Harrell**  
Daily Reporter Staff

**The Daily Reporter**  
November 20, 2002

Nov. 19, 2002

A citizens group on Monday asked the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to go back to square one with its plan to overhaul freeways in the Milwaukee area.

The request came on the heels of Gov. Scott McCallum's recent rejection of a proposal to increase vehicle registration fees. Last week, the state Department of Transportation submitted a budget request that would raise \$428 million over two years by increasing registration and other fees to start plugging a hole in a projected \$5 billion transportation budget deficit.

Heeding his campaign's pledge of no new taxes and fees, McCallum quickly dismissed the idea, and a group opposed to a \$6.2 billion reconstruction of freeways in southeast Wisconsin said the governor's move proves there's not going to be money to make the project work.

"It's the first time (WisDOT) proposed a funding mechanism, and it bombed," said Gretchen Schuldt, co-chairperson of the Milwaukee-based Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, referring to opposition from McCallum and state lawmakers in both parties. Though the new state budget must pass through Gov.-elect Jim Doyle, she said McCallum's rejection is "significant" because he's been an outspoken proponent of SEWRPC's freeway plan. With the funding proposal getting a cool reception at the state Capitol, Schuldt said SEWRPC should go back to the beginning of the planning process and look at more inexpensive options.

"We're saying start over," she said. "We realize that the useful life of the freeway is coming to an end. But there's got to be a more moderate plan."

Kenneth Yunker, SEWRPC's assistant director, said there's no need for the commission to start anew. SEWRPC has laid out three plans - ranging from a \$3.5 billion proposal to replace the freeway in its place to a \$6.2 billion proposal to make design modifications and widen 127 miles of freeway, primarily in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

"In terms of starting over, the alternatives are all there," Yunker said. "Elected officials can pick whatever they want."

### Money search

It's also not up to SEWRPC to figure out where the money needs to come from, said Bob Cook, executive director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin, which has a seat on SEWRPC's advisory board.

"If they went back to start over, their recommendations wouldn't change," he said. "It's not SEWRPC's obligation to find funding, it's the DOT's."

Schuldt said her organization supports a proposal that would fall somewhere between the \$3.5 billion plan and a \$5.5 billion plan that would make design upgrades. More left-hand exits and other safety measures are necessary, but there's still no evidence the state can pay for anything, she said.

"If there's no money, I don't know they can even do a replace-in-kind," Schuldt said.

But CASH and others opposed to SEWRPC's larger plans overlook a key element in the debate, Yunker said. Making design upgrades will cost roughly \$2 billion, \$600 million of which cover improvements on the Marquette Interchange reconstruction in Milwaukee, he said.

No one has expressed opposition to that project, and many of the same vehicles that pass through the Marquette Interchange also funnel through the Zoo and Mitchell interchanges in Milwaukee, Yunker said. It would be odd to make one set of upgrades to the Marquette and not make them on other key segments of the southeast freeway system, he said.

"There's nobody who's come out to say the Marquette Interchange is too much," Yunker said. "Those are the bulk of the design improvements. You have the same traffic going through the Zoo Interchange and the Mitchell Interchange."

### Setting priorities

Agreeing somewhat with Schuldt, he said the bigger picture for the freeways in southeast Wisconsin is WisDOT's budget deficit.

The difference between the \$5.5 billion and \$6.2 billion plans is "only incremental," he said, and either option will require money the state doesn't have right now, and that includes funding for the Marquette project.


"The funding is going to have to be found in the budget," Yunker said. "You've got to rebuild the Marquette. If you don't keep that on schedule, you're going to need to post weight limits or even close some segments. That's not going to change."

Jeff Stone, chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, said it's critical that government not lose sight of transportation funding as the governor and Legislature sort out the state's \$3.5 billion budget deficit. State government could raid the transportation fund to offset the imbalance, but, if anything, it should work the other way, he said.

In the meantime, fighting over one portion of the larger transportation debate clouds the larger discussion that needs to happen, Stone said. The state's mobility network needs to keep chugging ahead or the economy could drag to a halt, he said.

"I'm concerned that this attitude of 'let's just not do anything' could jeopardize the economy," Stone said. "We need to get a plan (statewide) that's generally accepted so we're not fighting over pieces of a pie. My way of thinking is that if we don't develop good transportation over the next 10 years, it will be the death knell for the Wisconsin economy."

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# Freeway funds must be found

The Waukesha Freeman  
November 19, 2002

The rejection of the proposed increase of license plate fees from \$45 to \$90 is seemingly enough to make a hero of Gov. Scott McCallum just as he is about to leave office.

But it also makes one wonder what road McCallum would have taken us down if he was serious about rebuilding the Marquette interchange and the interstate system in southeastern Wisconsin.

McCallum has been an outspoken proponent of the project. Several months ago he signed a bill that mandates that the state engineer rebuild of the east-west corridor of Interstate 94 from six to eight lanes, a project that is clearly needed.

The price tag will be \$6.2 billion for the project to rebuild 127 miles of freeway in the seven-county area covered by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Some groups opposed to the freeway project have taken the opportunity to try to detour the entire plan, which could lead to significant future problems as Waukesha County continues to grow.

One such group is composed of residents near the Story Hill neighborhood, where the freeway widening will lead to a slightly elevated road bed profile.

Calling themselves Citizens Allied for Sane Highways - CASH - the group said Milwaukee County and state leaders ought to vote against the SEWRPC plan because it will require some revenue.

The Sierra Club of Wisconsin

has also actively opposed the project, calling for an emphasis on commuter rail, which would also bring additional costs to taxpayers.

But those groups are not facing the realities of transportation in the region.

And as painful as it will be, the costs of the system expansion will have to be borne somehow, somewhere, at some time by somebody. As the system begins to crumble and show its weaknesses daily, reasonable leaders know there is no other option.

Needless to say the pressure should be on the state's congressional delegation to push for as much federal funding as possible.

We are certain this project is necessary, after seeing detailed

future traffic projections by SEWRPC and the state Department of Transportation. Anybody living in Waukesha County has more than enough anecdotal proof of that need as well.

So the challenge will be how to pay for it. If a hike in license plate fees is not the answer, maybe an addition to the gas tax is the way to go.

Another alternative that could avoid raising taxes would be to simply delay other projects throughout the state. Perhaps an honest evaluation of that option is also in order.

But build this system we must. And McCallum is hardly facing the reality of the situation by rejecting one funding source without suggesting an alternative to pave the way.

## Good freeway system vital to Wisconsin's development

State will lose jobs and businesses if transportation system fails to meet and sustain needs

*Last Updated: Nov. 3, 2002*

Wisconsin's business and labor markets took another blow last month when Rayovac Corp. announced it will cut 290 jobs when it closes its Madison packaging plant and Middleton distribution center.

Rayovac officials admitted that good access to transportation was a factor in its decision to move these operations to Illinois.

Rayovac is another disheartening example of why enhancing southeastern Wisconsin's freeway system is essential to Wisconsin business and industry. Economic stability and development in our state is largely dependent on reliable and safe transportation.

Without a transportation system that adequately sustains and meets our growing needs, Wisconsin stands to lose millions of dollars in existing and new business opportunities. Thousands of much-needed jobs will go to another state and our tax base will shrink if we don't step up and build a freeway system that addresses Wisconsin's transportation needs.

The good news is that Wisconsin doesn't have to continue to lose or miss out on business opportunities.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has developed a preliminary plan to rebuild the existing transportation system in southeastern Wisconsin to reduce traffic congestion and to make it more reliable and safe. The project is one major component to addressing Wisconsin's transportation concerns.

We cannot live by highways alone. This is why SEWRPC's analysis assumes we will significantly expand public transit and will have some form of rail system. The bottom line is, even with other transportation elements, we are still facing major increases in congestion on our roadways.

### Express Yourself

Send your guest opinion to Business Editor, 333 W. State St., P.O. Box 371, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0371 or e-mail them. All submissions are subject to editing.

JS On Line Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
November 4, 2002

The SEWRPC plan would provide relief for the average Wisconsin worker who experienced a 10% increase in commute time from 1990 to 2000. Manageable commute times for the urban work force must be maintained. The freeway reconstruction and expansion is expected to relieve more than 50% of the expected freeway congestion, and 40% of expected severe congestion.

Southeastern Wisconsin's major metropolitan business sectors will enjoy increasing numbers of new skilled employees, clients and general productivity when highway commute times are addressed and remedied.

We also cannot overlook the economic impact of the transportation system on Wisconsin's thriving tourism industry by keeping freeways clear and safe, and providing ease of access to metropolitan and rural businesses.

An improved system will further strengthen our transportation industry by sustaining manageable costs and reliable roadways, and the construction will support thousands of skilled building and construction laborers. The business and employment opportunities abound with this project.

In these trying times for business and industry in Wisconsin, our leaders need to focus on investments that will benefit our economy. SEWRPC's plan to upgrade our transportation system is one of the primary catalysts for allowing that to happen.

The rebuilding of the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system will sustain our existing businesses and offer growth opportunities. An updated transportation system is necessary to remain productive and competitive in an evolving marketplace.

I encourage every Wisconsin business owner to support the SEWRPC plan to address our transportation system needs.

*Frank Becerra is owner of BITS and Associates LLC, an accounting, tax preparation and consulting business in Milwaukee.*



# Transportation Needs: Driving Wisconsin's Economy

Wisconsin faces a \$500 million annual deficit to fund growing needs in transportation across all modes. Over the next 20 years, the state will need to make major investments in the transportation system in order to sustain and grow economic activity as well as provide a safe and efficient system for its residents.

The biggest, and most immediate, challenge facing Wisconsin's transportation system is the rebuilding of the Southeast Wisconsin freeway system. Reconstruction of this gateway is essential for the economy of Southeast Wisconsin and the state. It will cost approximately \$6 billion dollars. The first phase, reconstructing the Marquette Interchange, will cost nearly \$1 billion alone. The interchange is literally crumbling. Wisconsin Department of Transportation has indicated that it will cost \$2 million to \$3 million per year to maintain the current structure. The 2001-2003 budget created a separate appropriation to fund the Marquette and subsequent Southeast freeway reconstruction. That appropriation has a base funding level of only \$46 million annually. This represents only 20 percent of the cost of the Marquette over the four year life of the project. Unless new funding is provided for the Marquette interchange, all other transportation programs are at risk.

The State Highway Rehabilitation Program is the primary program serving the state's communities. It is funded at \$605 million annually. This program replaces pavements and bridges, provides safety improvements, and upgrades obsolete roads to accommodate changes in an area's economy. Currently, about 30% of state highway pavements and 7% of bridges statewide need to be improved using rehabilitation funds. At the current funding level, approximately 8,500 miles of state highway deterioration will be neglected. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that 30% of accidents could be avoided through roadway improvements.

The State Major Highway Program is the primary program for reducing congestion. Approximately \$243 million is allocated for this program each year. WisDOT estimates that the program requires an additional \$50 million each year through 2010 to fund Major Highway projects already approved by the legislature. An additional \$42 million in projects have been excluded from the plan for lack of resources. Congestion is no longer just an inconvenience, it has significant environmental and economic implications as well. A recent study showed that congestion in the Milwaukee area wastes 34 million gallons of fuel and \$390 million dollars each year.

Any local official will tell you that the road infrastructure needs in his or her community far outpace the ability to fund them. Conservative estimates place those needs at \$75 million annually. The Local Road Improvement program currently provides \$42 million for

capital improvements with the costs shared between state and local governments. Without a dedicated funding source for local roads, there will continue to be additional pressure on property taxes.

It is not only our state highway and road system that need additional funding. Wisconsin is currently working with eight other Midwestern states to establish a high-speed rail network. High-speed rail in Wisconsin will cost approximately \$626 million. The federal government will likely fund 80%, leaving Wisconsin with a state share of \$125 million. The implementation of high-speed rail would allow for quick and hassle free connections both within the state and with other major Midwestern cities.

Commuter rail systems can provide congestion relief during peak travel periods as well as integrate feeder bus service to create regional transportation systems. There are two major systems currently being evaluated, Southeast Wisconsin and Dane County. Initial costs for commuter rail in Southeast Wisconsin are estimated to be between \$150 million and \$225 million. Dane County will cost approximately \$188 or \$240 million if you include costs associated with express bus and park-and-ride service. State and local government will be required to fund 50 percent of the costs of these systems. It is imperative that a funding policy be established to maximize federal funds, including a local government alternative to the property tax.

Existing transit services in Wisconsin must be maintained and improved. Buses in our cities, and increasingly shared-ride taxi systems in our smaller communities, are needed to continue to provide mobility. This is particularly important as our population ages. As urban areas expand, much of the new job growth is occurring in the outer ring, and communities are finding it difficult to expand transit service to those areas. Transit competes with many other services at the local level for property tax dollars. If we are going to provide viable transit options we must find a way to pay for those improvements.

Aviation and air services must also be enhanced. WisDOT estimates the state is approximately \$18 million short of funding required to meet annual airport needs. In Wisconsin, the aviation industry accounts for more than 41,000 jobs and more than \$2 billion in economic activity. For local communities, regularly scheduled service at a commercial or general aviation airport capable of handling corporate jets and cargo are critical. Between 1990 and 1996, 72% of the new or expanding manufacturing businesses located within ten miles of a public-use airport able to accommodate corporate jets.

There are significant current and emerging needs for Wisconsin's transportation system that must be addressed to grow our economy and maintain our quality of life. The cost of providing adequate transportation infrastructure for the new century will be great, but it is minimal compared to the cost of neglecting our system. §

**TDA trans Action**  
Fall 2002

# Freeways here need major renewal or future growth will be at risk

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
September 29, 2002

By DAVID F. SCHULZ

No infrastructure decision carries more import for the Milwaukee area's future than the debate over the proposed widening of freeways.

At issue: a study by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission requested by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation on how the 270-mile area freeway system should be rebuilt. The study, guided by a high-level committee of elected and appointed officials from the city and suburbs, determined most regional freeways needed complete reconstruction.

But there was another problem. Designed in the 1950's and 1960's, much of the system is obsolete and unsafe by modern standards. The problems? On- and off-ramps that are too short; lane drops at major interchanges; and, especially, the left-hand freeway-to-freeway ramps of the Marquette, Zoo, Mitchell, Stadium and Hale interchanges.

The study also found large and growing portions of the freeway system are congested. This was forecast to worsen in the future, even with aggressive "smart growth," transit improvement and systems management measures.

So the study recommended widening 127 miles of freeways, most of which are really not in dispute. Most

officials endorse widening 108 miles of the system, arguing only about widening the East-West Freeway (I-94) from the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange, and the North-South Freeway (I-43) from the Mitchell Interchange to Silver Spring Drive.

What are the arguments of the widening opponents?

■ **The freeways don't need to be widened.**

Well, actually, they do. Freeway congestion on the Milwaukee area system has increased to where almost a quarter of the system is congested, which would almost double by 2020 with no widenings.



What is so bad about congestion?

After all, it penalizes those who use cars when they have other choices and who live in low-density sprawl.

But it also hurts everyone else who drives, whether they have an alternative or not. It delays trucks and drives up the cost of doing business. Severe congestion produces unpredictable travel times, impacting just-in-time businesses, people going to work or meetings or home for supper, and soccer moms and office park dads trying to get their kids around.

In short, congestion harms the economy, costs money and impairs the quality of life in the area.

■ **Even if the freeways need to be widened, it will only increase flight from the city.**

Despite rhetoric to the contrary, growing congestion is probably causing additional sprawl rather than tarding it, according to an article transportation and smart growth: the Journal of Transportation Engineering.

Genevieve Giuliano, a professor of the School of Policy, Planning and Development at the University of Southern California, has studied the case of urban decentralization, both in America and elsewhere. She has concluded that causes of sprawl include rising affluence, societal changes, individual preferences for single-family homes, industrial restructuring, information technology and global competition. Not freeway congestion.

Opinion surveys show that people choose the suburbs over the city for a variety of reasons that have nothing to do with transportation: pace of life, crowding, crime and safety, racial tensions, job and career, cost of living, schools and environmental amenities.

With centrifugal forces large and growing, local efforts to contain sprawl by eliminating new highways appear to be a delicate balancing act. Too much additional highway capacity accompanied by a substantial dip in congestion might tempt businesses and residents to locate still further out on the periphery.

On the other hand, policies designed to induce more congestion (such as cutting all improvements) may well make life so uncomfortable that residents and businesses will accelerate their outward flight.

Since the Milwaukee-area freeway-widening plan would simply contain congestion at approximately current levels, rather than substantially reducing it, it appears to have found that balance and would not act as a sprawl accelerator.

■ **Even if the freeways need to be widened and even if widening wouldn't increase flight from the city, there are better, innovative alternatives available, notably rail transit.**

Take "yes" for an answer. SEWRPC's freeway study began with very ambitious bus transit and system management elements of the regional transportation plan and then added rail.

The network used in the evaluation of freeway capacity assumes 135 miles of commuter rail lines from downtown Milwaukee to Saukville, West Bend, Oconomowoc and Kenosha, with a connection there to the METRA line to Chicago. It also includes a 65-mile light rail system, and 40,000 more daily bus-miles of service, a 60% expansion over today's levels.

The study also accounted for the impact of significant system management improvements, including upgrading the freeway traffic management system; peak-hour arterial parking restrictions; traffic engineering enhancements; regional promotion of ride sharing; transit, bicycle and pedestrian movement; telecommuting and work-time rescheduling; development of neighborhood land use plans to facilitate transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel; and a variety of transit system management improvements including signal priority and pre-emption.

Is that innovative enough?

The point is both the transit improvements and the system management efforts were factored into travel demand models before any freeway capacity improvements were introduced. In other words, the forecasts of substantially increased freeway congestion have already accounted for the impact of very ambitious rail and other transit and system management improvements.

■ **Even if the freeways need to be widened, even if widening wouldn't increase flight from the city, and even if no better alternatives are available, there simply aren't the funds to do the work.**

Except for anti-car extremists, everyone understands the freeways need to be rebuilt. It would be more expensive to pay for ever-more-frequent maintenance, repair and resurfacing, to say nothing of the increasing necessity of emergency repairs. Factor in the costs to the public of disruption caused by partial or total closure of roads during construction, and there's really no argument over the first \$3.37 billion.

And there's not much argument on modernization. The outmoded designs, particularly the left-hand interchanges, cause severe traffic problems both upstream and downstream as vehicles, espe-



cially trucks, maneuver over to the left-hand lane, and then back to the right.

The problem is especially serious when people enter the freeway a short distance upstream and need to move left quickly or vice versa. Think about entering I-94 westbound at 84th St. (State Fair Park) and having to weave over to the left lane to go south on I-894, a movement so dangerous it is now prohibited in the peak hour. Such problems would be largely solved by modernization, at a cost of \$2.15 billion.

Widening the 108 miles not in serious dispute would cost \$470 million. The disputed 19 miles, mostly in Milwaukee, would add \$260 million, for a total widening cost of \$730 million, and program cost of \$6.25 billion.

Given construction staging, the cost would be spread out up to 30 years, about \$200 million per year, although there would be peaks and valleys in annual funding needs. Nearly a billion dollars is already committed to the Marquette Interchange reconstruction.

But the bottom line is, if the Milwaukee area wants to rebuild its freeways to modern standards, federal, state and local funds totaling \$5.52 billion simply must be found.

For \$730 million more, congested freeways can be widened, adding 20% more lane miles to the system and improving travel conditions substantially.

If the opportunity presented by the freeway reconstruction is not exploited, adding lanes in the future will be prohibitively expensive. In plain English, expensive as it is, the region simply can't afford not to rebuild and widen the freeways.

■ **Even if the freeways need to be widened, even if widening wouldn't increase flight from the city, even if no better alternatives are available, and even if the funds can be found, the negative community and environmental impacts of the proposed widenings are simply too great.**

Rebuilding and modernizing the freeway system would require acquisition of 577 acres and demolition of 166 residences, 23 commercial buildings and two institutional buildings. Under law, owners would receive fair market value for their properties and relocation assistance.

Widening 108 miles of freeway almost everyone agrees on would require an additional 35 acres and 14 residences. Widening the 19 miles in dispute would necessitate acquiring 46 acres, 36 homes, eight businesses and an institutional building.

Redesigned freeway reconstruction without the widenings would require about 38 acres of the approximately 273,000 acres of wetlands in the region, while the widenings would consume five more. Un-

der law, wetland-taking would be mitigated with at least a new acre and a half for each acre taken.

In effect, freeway widening would increase capacity to accommodate forecasted future growth, leaving freeway congestion at about current levels. Some argue this will actually induce additional traffic when compared to the more-congested do-nothing scenario.

But the concept of induced traffic is hotly debated.

A recent national study looked at various methods of estimating induced traffic and, using data from southeast Wisconsin in the 1970's and 1980's, concluded the effect was somewhere between 6% and 22%.

However, since Milwaukee area freeway congestion is largely a peak-hour phenomenon associated with work and school trips, with little opportunity for additional discretionary travel, we can work in the low end of that range.

Vehicle-derived air pollution is a complicated phenomenon. Emissions basically depend on the type and condition of the vehicle and how far and under what conditions it is driven. But additional emissions from whatever traffic is induced will be more than offset by emissions reductions due to lower congestion levels on the freeways than they would experience absent the widenings, plus traffic pulled back onto the freeways from the stop-and-go arterials by the lower congestion.

And, of course, the entire widening program will be subjected to detailed environmental impact assessment.

■ **Even if the freeways need to be widened, even if widening wouldn't increase flight from the city, even if no better alternatives are available, even if the funds can be found, and even if the negative community and environmental impacts of the proposed widenings are acceptable, the people who did the planning are incompetent . . . and think only about highways . . . and live in the 'burbs, etc.**

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission certainly doesn't need me to defend it or its staff. Over more than 40 years, it has earned a reputation as one of the finest regional planning agencies in the United States.

It is one of a handful of such agencies which really plan transportation on a regional basis, rather than simply accept and bundle together lists of road and transit projects from implementing agencies.

Far from being too highway-oriented, SEWRPC pioneered multimodal planning back in 1963, explicitly including transit in its initial planning when transit services in the region were still privately owned and operated. Over the last decade, its "highway-oriented" transportation plans have resulted in a 20% expansion in transit services in the region.

It has fashioned transit plans which supported development of publicly-owned transit systems in Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha and Waukesha, and is currently conducting a preliminary engineering and environmental assessment of the Milwaukee-Kenosha commuter rail line.

SEWRPC was also a pioneer in basing transportation planning on land use plans. Those plans have (1) been consistently aggressive in pointing the way to contain suburban sprawl; (2) actually worked to save the best remaining natural areas such as wetlands and woodlands from development; and (3) directed development in ways and areas where it can be economically accommodated with water and sewer service, as well as transportation.

The great irony in the current debate is a handful of self-appointed environmental ideologues in southeastern Wisconsin attack an agency which is widely recognized as having done as good a job as any in the country in incorporating environmental considerations into land use and transportation planning.

As far as freeway system renewal is concerned, southeastern Wisconsin has its future in its hands. It can ignore the deteriorating freeways and bridges until they crumble. It can piecemeal their replacement and condemn drivers to a future of dancing the "orange barrel polka" almost continuously. It can replace them "as is," with all the accidents, injuries, and other problems that would produce. It can rebuild them to modern design standards with no additional capacity and suffer as

freeway congestion doubles in the next twenty years.

Or it can do the smart thing and widen the most congested portions of the freeway system while rebuilding it.

Together with other needed transit and system management improvements, freeway widening would be a bold step toward a sound, vibrant transportation system to support economic growth and improvement in quality of life in the region for the first half of the new century.

Knowing my beloved hometown, the debate is likely to be loud and long. Hopefully, the eventual decision will be wise.

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*David F. Schulz is executive director of the Infrastructure Technology Institute and adjunct professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Northwestern University. He was Milwaukee County executive from 1988-'92.*

**Milwaukee Journal Sentinel**  
September 29, 2002

## Be afraid, very afraid, of multi-county planning

### *Madison could wind up getting shafted like Milwaukee has*

Suppose you woke up, Madison and learned that renegade planners and highway-hungry engineers in the next county were recommending widening Regent Street, or Odana Road, or U.S. 51 from Sun Prairie to the Capitol Square, for the convenience of suburban commuters.

Imagine that they tried to mollify outraged homeowners in the corridors with the siren song of "regionalism" — and, as a fallback, ugly noise barriers.

Things like this could happen if Gov. Scott McCallum's imperious decision to replace the Dane County Regional Planning Commission with a six-county planning agency is allowed to stand. It's happening right now in Milwaukee, where the powerful seven-county regional planning body has preliminarily recommended paving 658 acres for 127 miles of new freeway lanes. The plan would level 31 businesses and 216 homes.

Milwaukee, Waukesha, Kenosha, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Ozaukee counties constitute the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC). There are 21 appointed commissioners — three from each county. That gives the smaller counties, like rural Ozaukee County and its 83,555 residents, the same influence at SEWRPC as Milwaukee County's 932,012 citizens.

The six-county commission envisioned by McCallum would repeat these imbalances: Dane County has 432,654 residents, while Columbia County has but 53,365 people. None of the other counties in the new region — Jefferson, Sauk, Rock or Dodge — have anywhere near Dane's population, let alone its tax base, racial diversity or urban character.

Exacerbating SEWRPC's governance imbalance is the fiscal imbalance. Though Milwaukee County is underrepresented on the commission, its taxpayers contributed 36% of the SEWRPC's budget line collected from counties in 2002. Ozaukee County's contribution? 6.5%.

And how many SEWRPC commissioners represent the city of Milwaukee, whose 596,974 residents outnumber the populations in each of the six non-Milwaukee counties? Zero, because commissioners represent counties, not cities. Sounds like taxation without representation to the city of Milwaukee, and it will sound the same to Madison, too.

SEWRPC's structure, and the agencies that may be coming your way, disenfranchises minorities, people with low incomes, apartment-dwellers and non-automobileowning citizens — the very people who are most in need of comprehensive planning.

Real regional planning needs to be more than a buzzword that conjures up images of efficiency — something that goes on routinely between Milwaukee and the suburbs when it comes to purchasing, water sales, emergency mutual aid pacts and other basic activities.

Genuine regional planning would foster a more open society. It would attack exclusionary zoning in the suburbs that forbids affordable housing by requiring large-lot, singlefamily housing — not a SEWRPC priority.

It would promote rail alternatives that would facilitate access to jobs and development at stations and along corridors. A belief in regional cooperation would have prevented Waukesha County Executive Dan Finley and state Rep. Scott Jensen from killing light rail for Milwaukee, as they did several years ago.

SEWRPC does not fight for light rail for Milwaukee. It likes highways. Its current \$6.25 billion transportation plan has no transit component. It does not address economic development, housing and other planning basics.

Big surprise: that's what you can get if the planning body is appointed, really reports to no one and puts the city out of sight, out of mind.

So don't be shocked if McCallum's new commission buffs its new rural image by fleeing downtown Madison for a far-off site. SEWRPC just completed a move from downtown Waukesha (it never would have been caught dead with a Milwaukee address) to suburban Pewaukee, in Waukesha County.

Don't expect the fight against sprawl to be led from a site where there isn't a pedestrian, bicyclist, bus stop, train platform, apartment complex or coffee shop in sight. And certainly don't expect an emphasis on comprehensive planning with diversity in mind if the new digs are in a nearly all-white enclave.

SEWRPC's entire 11 member senior staff is white, as are all 21 commissioners, records show. From their remote, antebellum outpost, they launched their plan to ram new freeway lanes through the city of Milwaukee and to steamroll its critics.

One particularly onerous expansion would require an elevated double-deck freeway bridge near Miller Park at Story Hill, a premier westside locale that looks and feels like Madison's Vilas or Monroe Street neighborhoods.

Never mind that testimony at SEWRPC's public hearings ran overwhelmingly against expansion. Or that the Milwaukee Common Council voted 16-1 against the bridge or any new lanes in Milwaukee County Or that Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist opposed all 127 miles of new lanes.

How is SEWRPC handling that pesky opposition from Story Hill? It's top planner says noise barriers will be considered, but the Berlin Wall solution is not appealing the heavily organized neighborhood. (See "Hood Happenings" on the area's very newsworthy website, [www.storyhill.net](http://www.storyhill.net))

Critics with impressive credentials don't fare much better. Walter Kulash, a nationally noted traffic engineer, came to Milwaukee this spring and said the SEWRPC vision was narrowminded and the plan antiquated.

In great detail, with a riveting PowerPoint presentation, he showed how the plan was a wasteful investment that would hurt the downtown, the city of Milwaukee and closer-in suburbs. He cited better planning in Toronto and Cincinnati.

SEWRPC responded simply that Kulash was "entertaining."

Then there is the June 5, 2002, technical critique sent to SEWRPC by University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee planning professor Edward Beimbom, who has worked for years with the agency.

Beimbom said SEWRPC's highwayonly approach "doesn't conform to your own regional plan." He said SEWRPC was using 1970's traffic forecasting methodology that "desperately needs" updating. While praising SEWRPC's track record, Beimbom urged SEWRPC to submit the plan to peer review.

Regardless of the feedback, it's widely believed that SEWRPC will adopt its committee recommendation and urge the full expansion to the state transportation department, which would have to seek a gas tax or income tax increase to pay for it.

The recommendation and the "public input process" will be spun by SEWRPC and the two consulting firms hyping the plan as regional planning at its finest. That's because SEWRPC is accountable to no one. It produces sprawl. It is not cooperating with city residents. It is not a planning model for Madison's future.

Isthmus  
September 13, 2002

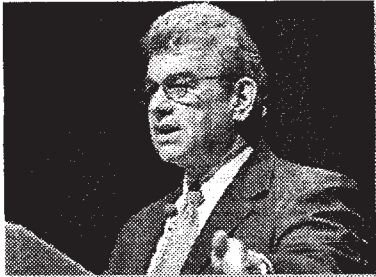
# Candidates express concerns about widening I-94

Four at forum oppose adding more lanes

**GMTODAY**  
September 5, 2002

By DENNIS A. SHOOK - GM Today Staff September 5, 2002

**BROOKFIELD** - Plans to widen the east-west corridor of Interstate 94 will be taking a severe U-turn if any of the three Democratic candidates for governor is elected in November.



**Ed Thompson**

And that also appears to be true if Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Ed Thompson is placed in the driver's seat for the state.

The freeway future was the first question answered by Democrat candidates Tom Barrett, Jim Doyle and Kathleen Falk, just one week before the Sept. 10 primary that will decide which of them will face Thompson and Gov. Scott McCallum in the Nov. 5 general election.

Thompson and the Democrats appeared at a candidate forum at the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts on Tuesday. The event was sponsored by the Brookfield Chamber of Commerce.

## I-94 debated

Last month McCallum signed into law an initiative by state Assembly Republicans on I-94 capacity expansion. It requires that when the I-94 corridor between Milwaukee and Waukesha counties is redesigned, it would accommodate the projected traffic in that corridor for the next 25 years.

"Rebuilding the interstate from Milwaukee to Waukesha is a moot point because there is no money for it," said Barrett, a Milwaukee congressman. "The state Legislature won't support it and I won't support it."

Barrett said rebuilding the Marquette Interchange would require all the transportation funds for the near future.

He added that other modes of transportation should be considered, while adding, "Light rail is not on board right now."

Doyle, the state attorney general, added of the legislative action, "This is not a good way to plan road building in Wisconsin."

He said any such work would require considerable planning by engineers rather than politicians if it ever is needed.

"And there is not very significant support for light rail as long as we have a \$1 billion deficit," Doyle said. "Let's be realistic."

Falk, the Dane County executive, said she favors looking at other modes of transportation.

"I support rebuilding the freeway" but not widening it from eight to 10 lanes in the area between the zoo and Marquette interchanges, she said.

"I disagree with what the state Legislature did in the midnight hour ... for one system only expansion," she said.

Thompson added, "If you can't afford it, don't do it. We have a \$2 billion deficit to talk about so a 10-lane freeway is irresponsible."



**James Doyle**

As for rail alternatives, the Libertarian mayor of Tomah also took after one of the favorite projects of his brother, former Gov. Tommy Thompson.

"Light rail? We're not ready for it," the candidate said. "It is like Amtrak, which is sucking more money out of us."

## Other topics hit

Thompson explained he had decided to join the debate in order to help his chances of receiving 6 percent of the total primary vote which would ensure that he receives public funds for his campaign.

"I would like to see a leveling of the playing field" with the funding he said. "I am the only candidate who has refused to take special interest money."

Falk touted her experience as the only "executive" of the group.



**Kathleen Falk**

"I am also offering a real set of solutions," Falk said. "Tom and Jim can spell out the problem. But I have offered eight reform packages for dealing with these problems."

Barrett said he was the only candidate "capable of changing the tone of the debate in Madison."

Comparing his days in the state Legislature, from 1984 to 1992, to current partisan bickering, Barrett said, "One needs to be able to work with both parties. This is not about politics but our families and our economy."

The event was attended by nearly 200 people and lasted about two hours.

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\* ELECTION \*

# 2002

## Doyle, McCallum see need for I-94 expansion

### Candidates differ on how to carry out improvements

*(Editor's Note: This is the third in a series of stories comparing the stands of the two leading candidates running for governor.)*

By **DENNIS A. SHOOK**  
Senior Staff Writer

**WAUKESHA** - The two leading candidates running for governor have slightly different levels of commitment to the proposal for widening Interstate 94.

And during recent interviews with the Freeman, they disagreed on the route being taken to move the plan along.

During the summer, Gov. Scott McCallum signed a provision in the budget repair bill that requires the freeway be rebuilt "to meet projected vehicular capacity needs for the next 25 years," particularly in the east-west corridor between Waukesha County and downtown Milwaukee.

Democrat gubernatorial nominee Jim Doyle said the signing detoured a process that serves the state well.

"I want the decisions on the additional lanes and how we do it to be made as part of the overall transportation picture," Doyle said. "We may well need those

lanes. I don't disagree with that. But I think this idea of sticking individual highway projects into the state budget is just going to be a mess in future years.

"I think we have had a pretty good system in this state for the (state Department of Transportation) to set priorities instead of having one group of powerful legislators" push through the project, Doyle said.

The governor said the easing of traffic congestion will help provide "more jobs and higher paying jobs. For the sake of commerce and economic development, the freeway must have the capacity for growth."

The Waukesha Freeman  
October 28, 2002

"This is needed to build Wisconsin and to build Milwaukee," the governor said.

Doyle said the decisions still need to be made by professional planners rather than politicians.

"I have no real argument with the expansion proposal but I

would leave it for the experts to say that the amount of congestion warrants it and whether the route can handle additional lanes," Doyle said. "Those are the kinds of things that I don't think governors and legislators make very good decisions on. The people who really understand traffic and roads do."

Neither man was able to identify how the improvements would be paid for. Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist said he believes McCallum plans to raise the gas tax or related fees to raise the needed funds.

The overall project cost is projected at \$6.25 billion, of which about \$1.5 billion will be invested in rebuilding the Marquette interchange.

That interchange will be the first project done as it is the heart of the system, based on the recommendations of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and the state Department of Transportation.

Reconstruction of the interchange is expected to begin in 2003 and is projected to take four years to complete.

The work along the entire region will proceed outward in most directions once that central hub is finished.

Between 2003 and 2010, 113 miles of the freeway is to be reconstructed.

That is the phase most likely to include the controversial six-mile stretch between the zoo and Marquette interchanges.

Another 96 miles of work is coming between 2011 and 2020, with another 56 miles of reconstruction from 2021 to 2030.

*(Dennis A. Shook can be reached at [dshook@conley.net](mailto:dshook@conley.net).)*

# Survey shows strong support for freeway expansion plans

**S**outheastern Wisconsin residents who responded to a survey on the area freeway system overwhelmingly expressed support for modernization and expansion of the system.

The freeway design modifications and expansions of key corridors were supported as part of a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the region's interstate highways.

Results of the survey were recently released by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The study related to 270 miles of freeways serving southeastern Wisconsin. Responses to the survey came from more than 15,000 households in seven counties. The 15,000 responses represented a return rate of more than 27% of the surveys sent out.

Overall, 87% responded in favor of rebuilding the freeway system to meet modern design standards.

Close to 75% of respondents called for additional lanes on the freeway system to address traffic congestion.

More than 76% supported expansions to provide eight freeway lanes on I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County; 74% of Milwaukee County residents supported such expansions.

Just over 72% called the 20-year traffic congestion growth to be unacceptable — congestion that would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit expansion, controlled development and surface street improvements.

## Executives support plan

"It's encouraging to see that residents of southeastern Wisconsin recognize the need for modernization and expansion of our freeway system," said Gov. Scott McCallum. "This project is essential in making our state a better place to live, work and visit, into the future."

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker also expressed support for the actions. "Milwaukee County is the source of job opportunities for residents in Wisconsin. Addressing transportation issues is absolutely critical if Milwaukee plans to continue to attract and retain new industry, and be a leader in hosting cultural and civic events."

SEWRPC conducted the random survey to gauge local residents' reactions to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system during the next 20 years. The

- Estimated residences and businesses to be acquired under the plan are not disproportionately located in areas with above county or regional averages of minority or low-income populations;

- Freeways system reconstruction will reduce peak-hour travel times, increasing the number of jobs accessible

study, commissioned by the state, examined the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns relating to the 270-mile freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

## Two options

Among SEWRPC's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option that would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but would not add highway capacity. A \$6.25 billion option that adds capacity to 120 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns, especially to address traffic congestion projected on the system during the next 20 years.

Six of the seven southeast Wisconsin county boards already have indicated their support for SEWRPC's recommendations. Action by the Milwaukee County Board is expected by the end of this year.

SEWRPC also conducted a public hearing process on the plans during May and June, with 310 persons providing comments on the preliminary freeway plan. Of those comments, 46 persons expressed support for the plan, 23 expressed support for a plan alternative, 19 offered comments but did not express support or opposition to the plan, and 222 specifically opposed the plan. In addition, SEWRPC received nearly 1,500 pre-printed Sierra Club cards stating general opposition to the work.

SEWRPC analyzed estimated impacts of the preliminary freeway plan on minority and low-income populations in the area and came up with the following:

- Minority and low-income populations are not disproportionately represented in areas close to proposed widened freeways;

- The majority of freeway system segments proposed to be widened are not adjacent to minority populations;

- The majority of census blocks with above-average concentration of minority populations are not located adjacent to or in proximity to the freeway system;

within 10, 20 and 30 minutes of peak travel time, affecting equally minority and non-minority populations;

- Improved and expanded transit service called for in the regional plan would be particularly focused on areas with above-regional-average concentrations of minority and low-income populations.

Editorials

# Wider highway means stronger economy here

## Regional planners envision eight lanes on I-94

Kenosha News  
October 23, 2002

It's an environmentalist's nightmare: The six lanes of I-94 in Kenosha County expanded to eight, all of them just as full of exhaust-spewing trucks and cars as they are today.

That's not really an unlikely vision. The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has a plan to widen 127 miles of freeway, including the 12 miles through Kenosha County. If the road is built to handle more traffic, the traffic is going to come, and more air pollution is going to come with it. That's not a good development for an area that already has a pollution problem.

But the air pollution effect is only one of many factors that go into decisions about highways, and for many highway

### ACCESS

*to transportation,  
especially the Inter-  
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setbacks.*

planners it appears to be just an afterthought. In this case, an argument might be made that the traffic is going to come no matter what, and the question is whether the highway will be able to move it efficiently or not. Slow-moving traffic with frequent backups would cause even more air pollution.

The Kenosha County Board has solidly backed the recommendation of the regional planners. What else could they do? Access to transportation, especially the Interstate highway, has been one of the primary reasons for the economic

resilience of the Kenosha area despite some serious setbacks. If the Interstate highway doesn't expand enough to move cars efficiently, Kenosha loses one of its main advantages as a commercial or industrial location. A company that moves here now can move its trucks on and off the highway quickly, and it can draw from a large labor pool because of reasonable commuting times. If the Interstate highway doesn't accommodate future growth, the growth isn't likely to occur.

Commuter trains are part of the transportation picture, too. So are bike trails and sidewalks, but, when looking at importance to Kenosha's economy, every transportation alternative pales in comparison to the Interstate highway. Kenosha's great economic advantage is a location between two big cities, Chicago and Milwaukee. However, one train line only connects Kenosha to Chicago. Another connects Chicago to Milwaukee, but it doesn't stop here. The Interstate highway is what links Kenosha to both big markets.

Making I-94 wider through Kenosha County will help Kenosha's economy grow.

The concern about air pollution isn't insignificant, but it's unlikely to be solved by failure to build adequate roads.



# Panel's plan may put wheels in motion for adding lanes to I-94

**KENOSHA NEWS STAFF**

Eight lanes and no more frontage road interchanges.

Welcome to the future of Interstate 94 through Kenosha and Racine counties as recommended by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

SEWRPC is recommending a \$6.25 billion project that calls for widening 127 miles of freeways in its seven-county planning area and upgrading access to and from the aging system.

That means eight lanes, not six, for the 12 miles of interstate that run through Kenosha County. It also means new interchanges for five of the county's six existing exits, and for a sixth that straddles Racine County at Highway KR.

Two years of interchange work beginning in 2005 is already planned for busting Highway 50.

"What is there was basically laid out and built in the 1950s, and it served the motoring public for about 50 years," said Fred Patrie, the county's public works director. "We're talking about what will be here 50 years from today."

SEWRPC made its preliminary recommendation earlier this month, and it was approved unanimously by the Kenosha County Board, one of six counties to agree to the proposal. The lone hold-out is Milwaukee.

The planning commission's final proposal and recommendation to the state's Department of Transportation will emerge in coming months, as the future of the interstate in southeastern Wisconsin approaches a crossroads.

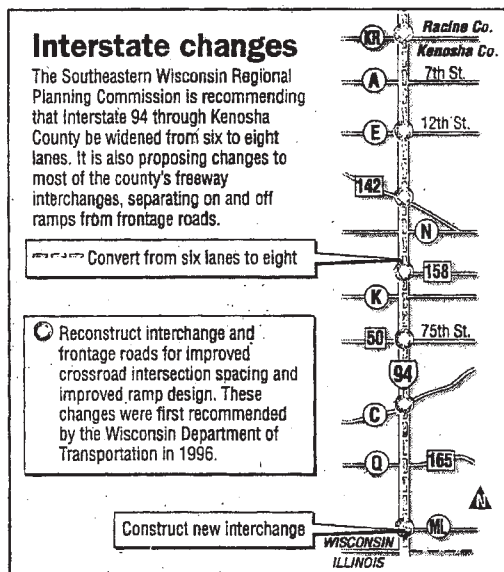
## Public support

Just how much work does the system need?

Supporters of the project say a lot, as they seek to reduce congestion and travel times and increase safety.

Opponents are more cautious. They argue that an expanded freeway will simply lead to more driving, thus increasing pollution, congestion and decentralization—a continued movement away from cities like Milwaukee.

Kenosha County government leaders are squarely behind the project. So are most county residents, according to a recent SEWRPC survey that showed that more than 73 percent either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" to reconstructing



KENOSHA NEWS

the freeway in Kenosha County with additional lanes.

In all, more than 75 percent of respondents across the seven counties — Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, Walworth and Washington — agreed with expansion and rebuilding.

"They feel that it's necessary. I feel that it's necessary," said Thomas Gorklinski, a SEWRPC commissioner and county supervisor. "It just has to be done."

The SEWRPC recommendation calls for the complete reconstruction and improvement of the 270-mile regional freeway system, including 127 miles of lane expansion. Some parts would go from four to six lanes and others from six to eight. The latter includes I-94 as it snakes through Waukesha and Milwaukee counties south to the Illinois state line. The proposal also includes plans for interchange improvements, including separating nine interchanges from frontage roads in Racine and Kenosha counties.

## Work may not be soon

A timeline is harder to come by, although there will be priorities.

Improving the Marquette Interchange, a controversial plan that is still under discussion, is expected to begin next fall and be completed by 2007. Work on the more than 40-year-old stretch of freeway in Kenosha County — one of the oldest stretches of interstate in

the region — may follow soon after, said Phil Evenson, executive director of SEWRPC. That may not come until after 2008.

"That may be one of the higher priorities," Evenson said. "Surely it will be in that early group."

Kenosha County's section of I-94 was last resurfaced in 1998. Resurfacing typically lasts 10 to 12 years, and, said Evenson, "We've likely resurfaced for the last time."

"We wouldn't be talking about adding capacity if we could get by with another resurfacing or two," he said. "You can only resurface a highway so many times. We are going to be faced with a total rebuild, from the ground up."

SEWRPC considered two other alternatives — replacing the freeway system "in-kind" or with design improvements, but without expansion — before deciding on the widening recommendation.

Both options are ill-advised, Gorklinski said.

"It's a consideration, but if that were done, in 15, 20 years we'll probably have different people in political office say, 'What the hell did these people do to us?'" he said. "It will have to be overcome whichever way you go. If you just want to do a

Band-Aid, it's still going to cost you money."

## County backs project

Dennis Elverman, chairman of the County Board's Highway and Parks Committee, called the freeway expansion and

**'WE WOULDN'T be talking about adding capacity if we could get by with another resurfacing or two. You can only resurface a highway so many times.'**

**Phil Evenson**

SEWRPC executive director

improvements "positive all the way" despite minimal congestion traffic concerns in Kenosha County.

"They have become more congested here, but we are not in the extreme range at all. Not yet," he said.

"We need to get traffic off these county roads," said Elverman, who lives in Twin Lakes. "The expansion is going to help that. If you go on Highway C in the morning in the dark, it's just a constant trail of taillights. The first thing they would more than likely work on would be the interchanges. That would help."

## Properties affected

Improving the interchanges in Kenosha County is not without its costs.

The plan calls for the acquisition of 658 acres of right-of-way, including 216 residences, 31 commercial buildings, and three government properties. In Kenosha County, 19 properties are threatened — 14 residences and five commercial buildings. Evenson said that figure was based on a 1996 Wisconsin Department of Transportation study into the effects of separating the freeway interchanges from frontage roads, a concern for five of Kenosha County's six I-94 intersections.

Mars' Cheese Castle, a High-

way 142 landmark for 52 years, is one of the affected businesses. Manager Mario Ventura Jr. disagrees with the changes, including the 127 miles of suggested lane widening.

"I wish they would leave us alone ... for 10 years," Ventura said. "Economically I don't think it warrants it. I don't think commerce is at the state that we need to do this right now. My response is to take the frugal step: Wait and see."

The interchange improvements will likely be done ahead of the widening, as needed. After Highway 50 comes the Highway 158 and Highway 142 exits north of there, said Gary Sipsma, director of the county's division of highways.

Merging concerns and lines of sight are among the biggest problems with frontage road on- and off-ramps, problems that early freeway planners may not have foreseen.

Said Gorklinski, president of Therm-Cast Corp. in Bristol: "When Dwight D. Eisenhower came back from Europe and said what we need is an interstate system, everybody jumped on the bandwagon. Certainly some of the projections of what it was going to look like in 50 years were a little bit shy."

**Kenosha News**  
October 22, 2002

# Where is transportation in political debate?

**Y**ou might think the gubernatorial campaign would shed some light on our transportation future. You would be wrong.

For all of its impact on land use, neighborhoods, air and water pollution, lifestyles and pocket-books, transportation is scarcely on the radar screen in this election. The only time the candidates seem to get excited about the issue is when they're accusing each other of using state planes for campaigning. The rest of their rhetoric on this front is mostly a mix of evasions and wishful thinking.

For example, with only \$340 million in state and federal money set aside for rebuilding — and expanding, with 11 miles of new lanes — the decrepit Marquette Interchange, where would the next governor find the additional

## SPACES



WHITNEY GOULD

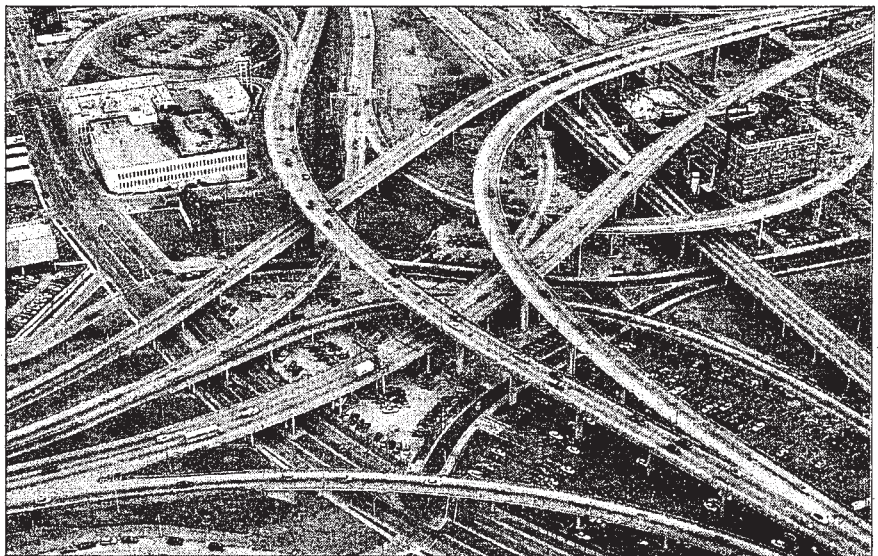
\$420 million to \$550 million to pay for it? Ditto for the estimated \$6.25 billion it would cost to rebuild and expand metro area freeways over the next few decades. According to a recent story by the Journal Sentinel's transportation reporter, Larry Sandler, the three leading candidates — Republican Scott McCallum, Democrat Jim Doyle and Libertarian Ed Thompson — oppose raising the state gas tax. Doyle and Thompson also oppose boosting license fees; McCallum, formerly cool to that option, now refuses to take a stand, though he says he'd consider shifting sales taxes on auto-related purchases into the transportation fund.

But that would take dollars away from other programs. And relying on the feds to bail us out seems pure fantasy. Why are Wisconsin's highway needs more urgent than any other state's?

Which brings us back to this: Where is the money coming from? Absent new sources of revenue for transportation, what programs would the candidates cut? What about less costly alternatives to the pave-everything approach? Don't voters deserve to know where the contenders stand on the trade-offs?

As one of those voters, I'd like to ask the gubernatorial hopefuls some other questions:

Why is the state even talking about freeway expansion when there is no convincing evidence that it provides real relief from congestion? In fact, if you look at the record from L.A. to Long Island, ever-wider roads fill up almost as fast as they're built, inducing more congestion and more sprawl.



JEFFREY PHELPS / JPHELPS@JOURNALSENTINEL.COM

**The Marquette Interchange** needs repair, but the candidates for governor aren't mentioning sources of funding

Studies from the University of California at Berkeley show that a 10% increase in road capacity, measured by lane miles, translates to a 9% increase in vehicle miles traveled. Moreover, Mike Maierle, the city of Milwaukee's long-range planning manager, noted recently that adding a lane of freeway would serve about 2,300 vehicles per rush hour — only 2.5% of the number of people working along I-94 in the metro area. And never mind the impact on surrounding neighborhoods, including noise pollution, the loss of 216 homes and 31 businesses and the disruption of graves in adjacent cemeteries.

So where's the sense in pouring so much money into something with so much pain and so little gain? Wouldn't it be more productive to explore alternatives that could, over the long haul, reduce demand for short-range freeway driving and concentrate scarce dollars on maintaining the roads we already have?

For starters, the state could toughen its fledgling Smart Growth law and withhold aid for roads and sewers to communities that fail to promote compact development, where people can live closer to jobs and services and not have to drive everywhere. The state could also get serious about commuter rail. And the metro region could revive the idea of a regional transportation authority to help spread the costs of such a system fairly.

As another alternative to dumping local traffic onto freeways that were designed for long-distance travel, communities could improve local arterials and traffic management schemes.

It would take real vision to promote such an integrated approach to transportation planning. And vision seems to be in short supply at both the South-eastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, which has recommended the ruinous \$6.25 billion freeway-expansion scheme, and the DOT, which appears bent on a full-employment plan for road builders at the expense of our sense of place and quality of life. What, if anything, would the candidates do to reform DOT?

While you await an answer to that one, if you want to get involved in a growing movement to fight freeway widening in Milwaukee, there's a new coalition of neighborhood groups called Citizens Allied for Sane Highways (CASH, as in: Show me the money). The sparkplug behind it is Gretchen Schuidt, a former colleague of mine at the Journal Sentinel who's a stalwart in one of the affected neighborhoods, Story Hill. You can reach Gretchen at (414) 526-0049; e-mail to [noexpansion@yahoo.com](mailto:noexpansion@yahoo.com).

**Rescue mission** Last week I reported on an apparent stalemate over a promising effort to save and re-use the abandoned Coast Guard station on the lakefront. But even as I was writing, it turns out, the impasse was beginning to break.

HONOR, an American Indian group, has agreed to build its education and cultural center within the current footprint of the 1915<sup>th</sup> station and its boathouse addition, rather than expand onto nearby parkland, according to spokesman Jim DeNomie. The expansion plans had run into opposition from open-space advocates and Supervisor Sheila Aldrich, head of the county parks committee.

Aldrich says even the scaled-back plan could be a tough sell, and parking concerns need to be addressed. But she sounds moderately optimistic that something can be worked out. I hope so. This may be the last chance to rescue a battered but still charming Prairie-style icon — a link to our maritime past that deserves a second life.

Call Whitney Gould at (414) 224-2358, write her at The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, P.O. Box 371, Milwaukee, WI 53201, or e-mail her at [wgould@journal sentinel.com](mailto:wgould@journal sentinel.com)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
October 22, 2002

# SEWRPC survey gets high marks

By Chris Mier  
News Graphic Staff

**Ozaukee County** — Based on a seven-county survey on the region's freeway system, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) determined that there is strong public support of its \$6.25 billion freeway expansion proposal.

Editorial/AS

The Ozaukee County segment of the proposal includes widening I-43 to six lanes from the Ozaukee/Milwaukee county border north to where I-43 breaks off from Highway 57 north of Saukville.

According to the survey results, 69 percent of Ozaukee County residents are in favor of creating additional freeway lanes in the county.

In all, the plan calls for additional lanes to be added to 127 of the roughly 270 miles of freeway throughout the seven county region.

Ken Yunker, the SEWRPC assistant director, said the entire freeway expansion plan would take place over the next 30 years.

The survey asked respondents nine questions about their opinions on current and projected future freeway congestion and whether they would be in favor of expanding the current freeway system, including adding more lanes and upgrading the freeway to modern design standards.

Neither the survey nor the cover letter mention the cost of SEWRPC's proposal.

In Ozaukee County, 84.3 percent responded that traffic congestion in southeastern Wisconsin is a severe and growing problem during peak traffic periods. Thirty-eight percent said traffic is severe during peak periods and at other times as well.

The survey also found that 43 percent of Ozaukee County residents feel that a doubling of traffic on the current freeway system is highly unacceptable.

SEWRPC's study into freeway congestion determined that even with regional land use and transportation plans designed to reduce freeway use, the congestion would more than double on the current freeway system over the next 20 years.

Over 90 percent of Ozaukee County residents agreed that a modern and efficient freeway system is important to the economic future of the region and that the freeway should be rebuilt to modern design standards, including eliminating left hand on- and off-ramps, lane drops at major interchanges and providing full inside and outside shoulders.

Of the respondents, 51 percent from Ozaukee County said they use the freeway system almost every day. Twenty percent said they use the system three to five times a week.

Yunker said the survey results vindicate SEWRPC's freeway proposal.

"We've heard from some people throughout the study who've said

'you guys at SEWRPC are all wet, freeway traffic congestion is not a problem. It's a problem only for a couple minutes and people don't perceive it as a problem,'" he said. "Well I think the response to that question shows that the vast majority of people perceive current levels of freeway traffic congestion as a severe and growing problem.

"We've also had people tell us throughout the study 'even if congestion is a problem, you guys are nuts for talking about additional lanes. That's the wrong solution,' and again the results of the survey show that the vast majority of people believe that indeed, you ought be considering adding lanes to the freeway as the freeway system is rebuilt," Yunker added.

Yunker's defense of the proposal was made in response to some who've criticized some of its recommendations.

Milwaukee's Commissioner of Public Works, Mariano Schifalacqua, issued a letter to SEWRPC, alleging that its plan doesn't adequately address alternative means of transportation and would contribute to sprawl.

Schifalacqua also wrote that the plan is "largely inconsistent with accepted regional planning principles," noting that its proposals would only marginally improve traffic congestion.

The Milwaukee City Council has also stood out in opposition to the plan, favoring a scaled back \$5.5 billion dollar version with fewer miles of additional lanes.

Ozaukee County Board Chairman Gus Wirth, who's also a SEWRPC Commissioner, sounded off in support of the proposal.

"The hearings that I went to in Ozaukee County were overwhelmingly supportive of the plan," Wirth said.

"I think that this plan puts us where we are now (as far as traffic congestion goes) 20 years from now," Wirth said.

Ozaukee News Graphic  
October 17, 2002

## *SEWRPC plan not in public's best interest*

**I**t isn't what you'd call delicious irony, but two unrelated traffic events last week have more in common than you'd think.

On Monday, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission released results of a public survey that suggest overwhelming support for reconstructive surgery on the interstate system, including the addition of lanes on parts of I-43 and I-94.

On Friday, 10 lives were lost and 45 cars mangled in a horrible accident on a fog-shrouded stretch of I-43 near the Ozaukee/Sheboygan county border.

Discarding for a moment the fact that SEWRPC's survey did not ask respondents whether they favor spending \$6.25 billion — money this debt-ridden state does not have — on such a project, we still are troubled by this survey.

It gives those who favor this project — notably, governor-du-jour Scott McCallum — the opportunity to crow that this project must go forward because it's what the public wants, and of course, they are all about serving the public.

But the public doesn't know what's good for it, and we saw that in Friday's crash. Law enforcement officials say it was primarily the result of people driving far too recklessly for the conditions. Even after the accident, there were reports of drivers whizzing by the debris-ridden site at more than 70 mph.

The public does not need more driving opportunities. It does not need more lanes of interstate for deer to bound across, for fog to envelop, for them to drive their 2008 Ford Continent to and from work, with 10 seats empty in the back, belching emissions and going 75 mph all the way.

Certainly, the freeway system needs updating. Though our traffic "congestion" would be a joke in many other cities, real trouble is on the horizon and it's important to plan ahead.

But just slapping down a few more lanes, taking away some of the dangerous left-lane exits and adding full shoulders not only won't be the best use of money we don't have, it won't aid safety all that much. (How many of us have seen impatient drivers whizzing down a shoulder on the way to work?)

If SEWRPC is going to make the freeway system better, it must give the public not what it wants, but what it needs:

- A significantly expanded mass transportation system, extending well into the suburbs. If you add freeway lanes, make at least one in each direction dedicated to buses through the morning and evening rush hours, and for major events such as Summerfest and State Fair. Then run more buses. Add a dedicated carpool lane as well, and launch a statewide advertising campaign to promote the practice.

- More employment opportunities for suburban residents in their individual communities. Downtown Milwaukee always will be the hub of white-collar employment, but Ozaukee County especially could benefit immensely by trying to bring some of those jobs here.

- Increase the use of signs such as the one above I-43 that gives the travel time to Good Hope Road and downtown. Use them to remind drivers when conditions are dangerous, and encourage them to slow down.

Before someone gets hurt.

Ozaukee News Graphic  
October 17, 2002

Politicians debate merit of freeway expansion  
10/14/2002  
Jason Ivanitz  
Special to the Tribune

Wisconsin's freeways, built mostly in the 1950s and 1960s, are starting to wear away, and how to repair them is sparking a huge political debate.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission conducted a survey to determine whether or not the citizens of Wisconsin would support fixing the freeways and expanding lanes. Out of the 55,000 surveys sent out, 15,000 were returned. The overall results showed that 75 percent of the people supported the freeway idea.

Wisconsin Republican Gov. Scott McCallum was impressed with the results and is proposing a \$6.25 billion plan to fix the freeways and expand some portions of the freeway from six lanes to eight. Tim Roby, McCallum's press secretary, says this is something the city of Milwaukee desperately needs.

"The 270 miles of freeway are the backbone of our economy," Roby said. "The governor just put down \$160 million for the Marquette Interchange to be fixed. We will use both state and possibly federal funds to complete these tasks."

Wisconsin's Department of Transportation supports the plan and believes it is a necessity in the state of Wisconsin.

"We are expecting to have a 40 percent traffic increase in the next few years," said Linda Thelke, head of public relations at the Department of Transportation. "This is an investment that will pay dividends in the future."

State Rep. Jeff Stone (R-Greenfield) is willing to work with anyone to improve the transportation of Wisconsin.

"The vast amounts of people in the state are for this movement - just look at the surveys," Stone said. "We have to develop some new strategies to help our traffic situation."

Ken Yunker, regional planner for the freeway project, said the freeway problem is a severe one.

"Most of the roads, especially around the Milwaukee area, have been resurfaced two or more times already," Yunker said. "We need to rebuild these roads to modern day standards. Simply redoing them will do no good because the traffic flow is steadily increasing and there will be back-ups. No one says we need to have the money by tomorrow. This is a 20-year plan."

The Marquette Interchange is one of the first priorities, and if the plan gets passed, construction would begin in 2004 and go on through 2007. The plan would move all the left ramps to the right, reducing traffic and possibly widening the lanes.

However, many politicians, including Democratic Mayor John O. Norquist, do not view the state's plans to be productive or even possible.

Steve Jacquart, Norquist's chief of staff, feels that the program is unrealistic and cannot possibly happen financially.

"The survey didn't say a thing about how much money it will cost to do all the work," Jacquart said. "Sure it might create jobs, but the state is already in deficit. Sooner or later McCallum will have to give the plan up because it is unrealistic. (McCallum is) living in a fantasy land."

With the gubernatorial election approaching, Jacquart believes this is a ploy to lure voters into reelecting McCallum for office. At the hearings held throughout the state, 80 percent of the people who attended disagreed with the expansion, according to a press release from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Freeway expansion may result in the reduction of personal property, and Robert Trimmer, co-chairman of Citizens Allied for Safe Highways, fears this will have a negative effect on many lower class neighborhoods.

Trimmer said no one really knows the truth about this plan, and the Republicans do not have the people in mind when they make these decisions.

"The city is planning on building a double-decker road right by a cemetery which would cut through veteran's gravesites," Trimmer said. "The state doesn't have a single penny to fund this project. I don't know how it will get done."

# Freeway decision entering fast lane

There are many uncertainties heading into the last couple of months of consideration for a plan to rebuild and expand the regional freeway system.

Things will come to a head when the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transportation Advisory Committee strives to recommend a plan to the state Department of Transportation. Gov. Scott McCallum has supported the \$6.2 billion project. In fact, he signed legislation supporting the addition of two more lanes to Interstate 94, from the zoo interchange east to the Marquette interchange.

Even Democratic gubernatorial candidate Jim Doyle has expressed support for some kind of expansion, as long as it is carefully constructed and clearly shown to be necessary.

But opposition continues from east of 124th Street, as exhibited by Mayor John Norquist at a forum Thursday at Turner Hall. The mayor is not so interested in opening the lanes to people because it appears he fears they will use them to flee the city. But that perspective fails to recognize that some people also use the freeway to work and recreate in Milwaukee ... and they may think less of doing that if

the interstate becomes a giant parking lot.

Norquist did bring out an important point during his anti-freeway comments, however. That is, who will be paying the bill for the project?

Freeway opponents claim the plan is to add 20 cents per gallon onto the gasoline tax and that would be in place for at least the next decade.

That may or may not be the case. But an intelligent discussion of the expected range of the costs and their impacts is only fair, as people consider the plan.

Support could easily rise or fall, based on the bottom line cost and who is paying for it. And the manner in which the project impacts areas like the Story Hill neighborhood in Milwaukee or deals with interchanges in Waukesha County will likely play a role.

This newspaper supports building the additional lanes. The lack of ridership during the rail demonstration project while the freeway was being repaved clearly shows the lack of support for diverting freeway lane funds to a commuter rail system that residents clearly will not ride.

The Marquette Tribune  
October 14, 2002

The Waukesha Freeman  
October 14, 2002

# Mark Belling was wrong

By Jason Blazina

The following column will attempt to meld my recent move to the Marquette University area; a press conference concerning highway reconstruction in southeastern Wisconsin; and last week's Mark Belling column which appeared in this very newspaper (I think it'll work but bear with me).

First, the move: One of Hometown Publications' former sportswriters - a Marquette alum - approached me early in his tenure here and asked me where I lived.

"Whitefish Bay," came the reply, "and where do you live?"

"21st and Wisconsin, he said.

"Where?" I asked, taken aback while wondering how meagerly he was actually being paid.

(I mean, the Marquette area - the GHETTO....you know, COPS Filmed On Location. Sure, I knew ALL about it - from newspaper and TV, that is.)

"It's convenient," he said, rattling off the reasons which included a cheap cab ride to anywhere downtown. "You'd pay just as much to park, and I'm coming in on the freeway when everyone else is leaving and vice versa."

Now, a born-and-bred North Shore suburban white boy (that would be me) was certainly skeptical upon visiting him and his wife those first few times. But, you know, he had a point - to eat, they simply had to walk a block to a Thai joint; across the street to a bona fide 'greasy spoon,' Taco Bell (I admit, I'm a fan), or Blimpies - not to mention a Greek place and a bar or two.

Cool, I thought, but would I want to live there? Well, I had my chance to find out this past summer when his friend - who also resided in the area - needed someone to assume his lease. Okay, I thought, I'll take the plunge.

My first day moving in certainly didn't ease any doubts as a black guy approached me for money. (You seldom want a conversation to begin. Now I'm not armed, complete with a view of the speaker's waistband just for proof.) However, such an instance fails to discourage me since I've been approached before in the suburbs - usually by someone wearing an outfit worth at least \$200 more than what I have on, of course. Anything can happen anywhere, I tell myself, and I've truly enjoyed my new, 'convenient' lifestyle thus far.

Which brings me to the Oct. 7 press conference conducted by Governor Scott McCallum, who crowed about a recent SEWRPC (Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission) survey revealing support for a freeway overhaul. No less than 55,000 households were chosen from among seven counties to receive the "confidential," 11-question form.

"These survey results clearly indicate there's strong support here in southeast Wisconsin for a quality freeway system that will support economic development and enhance public safety," said McCallum. "We all know this freeway system is rapidly aging and needs to be rebuilt soon. What people are saying is that we should plan for the future and do the job right the first time."

And all that deduced from a grand total of 15,241 respondent households, but I'm not criticizing McCallum - I hope he wins in November, and maybe there really is significant support for his proposal. However, that multi-billion-dollar construction won't affect me that much because I absolutely avoid the freeway like the plague (has to do with the myth that it's somehow faster while all you do is sit in traffic), and maybe liberals have a point on this less-driving thing. It's certainly made my life more enjoyable.

I'll offer up Wauwatosa as an example. I've covered that city for approximately three years as a reporter, and everyone's been most accommodating and kind - OUTSIDE of their respective vehicles, that is. Once behind the wheel, I don't know if Tosans are overcome by demonic possession

or what, but I just don't comprehend the transformation. I mean, it's evidently sport here to drive the wrong way up and down the City Hall parking lot lanes.

So that's basically the deal I've made: Trading in a sprawling, antiseptic environment in which a car is an absolute everyday necessity for the convenience of urban living....but on to Belling's column appearing in the Oct. 7 edition of the *Express News*, and I quote:

"Could last weekend's savage beating of a man by a mob of teenage thugs have happened in Brookfield? How about Menomonee Falls? St. Francis? Tosa? Slinger? I guess we know the answer. Milwaukee's inner city is the only conceivable place in the region that such a savage incident could have occurred....The plain fact is that much of Milwaukee's black community has become societally dysfunctional."

And this is now the piece BEGINS. First of all, what exactly is inferred by the *region*? Milwaukee? Wisconsin? The continental U.S.? If so, any detractor could simply say, 'Oh really, now,' and evoke a little incident some years back by the name of COLUMBINE which strictly involved white high schoolers.

Oh, strictly Milwaukee, you say? Well, what about the young Hispanic male who was viciously gunned down in cold blood on the steps of a near south side church a couple years back?

Now, I get the whole Limbaugh-O'Reilly blowhard shtick of having the guts to say what conservatives really think, right? Well, that's fine and dandy when it's a defensible, intelligent, THOUGHTFUL view. I usually agree with Belling, but he crossed the line with his Oct. 7 column. "Behavior needs condemned, not defended!"

It seems that our star has commuted: no less than a pair of cardinal sins of column writing: 1) He wrote from the heart and not the head; 2) He wrote in generalities.

I dare say that Belling forgot that this isn't his radio show, in which a spur-of-the-moment crack goes "Poof" and it's forgotten as soon as the next commercial break. This is print - the most powerful of all media because it's the enduring medium; better yet, it's the *thinking man's medium* and you'd better get it right the first time. There's no creative license, if you will.

Maybe my judgment has been tempered by living in the city for awhile, though; maybe I would've had a different take just a few months ago.

Case in point: Last week I visited my aforementioned friend just west of my new neighborhood, whereupon a few black guys across the street began yelling in my direction as I exited my car. Oh great, they're giving me a hard time, I thought, as I proceeded to ignore them.

"Hey man, Hey man," they yelled as I continued to walk towards my friend's house.

"HeymanHeymanHeyman!!  
(Don't look back and keep walking)

"Hey man, Hey man."

(No response)

"Hey man - you're gonna get a tick...."

Me: "What?!!!"

"That's a bus stop--you can't park there-- see the sign?"

(Me, sheepishly) "Oh, thanks a lot," fumbling for my keys.

"We're just trying to help you - we're nice around here."

(Me, wanting to crawl into a hole)

Jason Blazina is a staff writer for Hometown Publications.

Mukwonago Express News  
October 14, 2002

# Strong support for freeway plan

By Jason Blazina  
Staff Writer

Governor Scott McCallum announced the results of a survey concerning the reconstruction of southeastern Wisconsin freeways last week, citing "strong support" for the multi-billion-dollar plan.

The proposal entails both design modifications and expansion of key corridors within the 270-mile system – including eight freeway lanes along segments of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County – at a price range of \$5.5-6.25 billion.

"The freeway system serves as the backbone and lifeline of Wisconsin's economy and after 40 years, we know they must be rebuilt," said McCallum at the Midwest Express Center Oct. 7. "This project means more high-paying jobs – we can't afford to not get this done."

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) conducted the random survey to assess local residents' reaction to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system over the next 30 years.

The study – commissioned by the state of Wisconsin – examines the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic-flow concerns relating to the freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

Among SEWRPC's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option which would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but does not add highway capacity. A \$6.25 billion option which adds capacity to 127 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic-flow concerns – especially to address traffic congestion projected on the system over the next 20 years.

The preliminary plan recommends adding lanes to the segments of I-94 between the Milwaukee County Zoo and Marquette interchanges and I-43 between the W. Brown Deer Road and Mitchell interchanges.

The survey was performed in July and August by randomly selecting a total of 55,000 households among the seven counties to receive the confidential, 11-question form. A total of 15,241 households responded, yielding a response rate of nearly 28 percent. The survey findings include:

- Nearly 88 percent are in favor of rebuilding the freeway system to meet modern design standards.

- Approximately 75 percent support additional lanes on the freeway system in their own county to address traffic congestion problems.
- Nearly 74 percent support additional lanes in six southeast counties other than their county of residence.
- More than 76 percent favor an expansion plan providing eight freeway lanes on sections of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County.
- A total of 73 percent consider the projected growth in traffic congestion over the next 20 years to be "unacceptable."

According to literature distributed by McCallum: "This congestion would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit expansion, land-use changes and surface-street improvements."

"What people are saying is that we should plan for the future and do the job right the first time," he said. "The public knows that freeways are essential."

During last week's press conference, McCallum was flanked by Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, Waukesha County Executive Dan Finley and Racine County Executive Jean Jacobson. According to Walker, transportation issues are vital to future economic growth in Wisconsin.

"Milwaukee County is the source of job opportunities for residents in Wisconsin," he said. "Addressing transportation issues is absolutely critical if Milwaukee plans to continue to attract and retain new industry and be a leader in hosting cultural and civic events."

Finley concurred in stating, "Many business leaders in downtown Milwaukee call Waukesha County home. Addressing transportation issues is absolutely critical to managing commute times and keeping southeastern Wisconsin an attractive and efficient place to do business."

However, Mayor John Norquist sharply criticized the plan and vehemently questioned the validity of the survey results. According to literature distributed by Norquist:

"Nearly 80 percent of citizens registering opinions in 11 hearings held around the southeastern Wisconsin area earlier this year opposed widening the freeway system, according to results released by SEWRPC

today (Oct. 7). At the hearings, 222 of 310 people submitting comments said they opposed the entire freeway plan, while 23 people said they opposed widening freeways but supported safety enhancements. Only 46 people said they supported the full \$6.25 billion plan with freeway widening."

Norquist asserted that McCallum failed to mention the hearing results last week "even though they had been released on SEWRPC's Web site ([www.sewrpc.org/freewaystudy](http://www.sewrpc.org/freewaystudy))."

"Instead, he released the results of a survey that was hastily commissioned: this summer," said Norquist.

According to him, the survey was sent to recipients with a letter signed by officials such as Walker and "designed to lead public opinion, with phrases such as 'freeways badly in need of repair or replacement....' and 'frequent congestion and delays....'"

"The governor and SEWRPC didn't like the results of the public hearings, so they commissioned a 'phony' survey with loaded questions," said Norquist. "The biggest flaw of the survey was that it made no mention at all of the cost of the proposed freeway widenings and it makes no mention of the taxes that would have to be raised to pay for it."

Norquist – in characterizing the ploy as "McCallum Accounting" – added that "if they'd asked people, 'Do you want your taxes raised to pay for freeway expansion?' they would have gotten the same answer as at the public hearings – no."

"It's irresponsible for the governor to promise people something without working out a way to pay for it," said Norquist.

Last week, McCallum stated that "gas taxes won't necessarily increase" with implementation of the project.

"Right now, we have a lower price tag for the Marquette Interchange than what we had last year," he said, "and we'll be very aggressive in soliciting federal funding."

According to McCallum, a half-dozen of the seven southeast Wisconsin county boards have "already indicated" their support for SEWRPC's recommendations. The Milwaukee County Board is expected to vote on the matter by the end of this year.

"The county executives throughout the region are very committed to economic growth and investment in all transportation modes – roads, rail, etc.," said McCallum. "Engineers tell me that they're putting patches upon patches in repairing the freeways, and the roads must be replaced. I call on the region to acknowledge this overwhelming support to the survey."

# Area needs alternatives to freeway expansion

By MICHAEL J. MAIERLE

David Schulz's article in the Sept. 29 Crossroads section about the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's \$6.2 billion freeway expansion plan was just another salvo in the old argument that if we only built a bigger freeway system, our transportation problems would be solved ("Freeways here need major renewal or future growth will be at risk").

He also calls anyone who favors a more balanced approach "an anti-car extremist" and a "self-appointed environmental ideologue." This is just too simplistic an approach for what should be a high-level public policy dialogue.

If we're going to address transportation issues, we're going to need good information about reasonable alternatives that serve the needs of all the communities that comprise the Milwaukee area — not just the same old freeway pros and cons that have stalemated the Milwaukee area since the freeway system building era ended around 1970.

To start down the path of a more comprehensive, workable approach, consider the following:

■ Major transportation improvements will require regional cooperation. Consider a package of improvements that will help older communities as well as newer ones, communities that are more and less reliant on automobiles, and the development needs of those communities. The current freeway expansion plan seeks to help some communities at the expense of others. It's tailor-made for a big fight instead of a consensus. It's hard on older urban and suburban communities, many of which are delightful places to live and do business and currently experiencing a resurgence.

■ There is an imbalance in regional planning that favors highways. While SEWRPC has provided many studies for the region over the years, the highway recommendations in SEWRPC plans usually get implemented by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Maybe half the land use recommendations are followed, and little in the way of public transit gets accomplished. SEWRPC's current \$6.25 billion freeway expansion plan will only serve to usher in a new era of freeway building and attendant urban sprawl just at a time when people are rediscovering the value of living in places that feel like neighborhoods and towns.

■ Freeway planning needs to get a grip on economics. Freeways are already the highest cost component of the transportation system and there is no end in sight. Simply replacing the freeway system alone will cost \$3.4 billion. Design improvements add another \$2.1 billion, or 62%. I haven't seen the justification for this additional expenditure. It would be good to know exactly what benefit the area is going to get from that sum. And when more lanes are added, the final cost is almost double the cost of the existing freeway, which isn't exactly cheap to start with.

Look at how this type of thinking affected the replacement of the Marquette Interchange. We're told there will be no expansion, the work will be done in the same footprint. The fact is that this new interchange adds 1.1 miles of new lanes, an increase of 56% compared to the existing interchange. The cost of the interchange has doubled in cost from roughly \$500 million to \$1,000 million. I'd like to analyze the benefits of this increase in cost, but I can't because the earlier recommendation was dropped from consideration before the evaluation could be made. Our public policy decisions need to be better informed than that.

■ Freeway expansion doesn't solve congestion. Everywhere in the country, urban freeways are congested during rush hour. First, we don't charge any more to use them even though they cost much more to build, so, of course, people crowd onto them. Second, you can never serve all the trips that could possibly be made on the freeway. Study these few numbers: Adding a lane of freeway serves 2,300 vehicles per rush hour. This is only about 2.5% of the number of people who work along I-94 in eastern Waukesha County or downtown Milwaukee. While freeways are useful for making long trips, we've learned that you just can't build enough freeway lanes for every new Wal-Mart and office park on the edge of urbanized areas. They quickly swamp the capacity of the new roadway.

■ If you want to improve transportation in the Milwaukee area, provide alternatives to driving on the freeway. Plan communities that create less demand on the freeway system. Link them by rail and bus lines. Recognize the economic opportunities offered by development along those lines. Don't move your office to an office park adjacent to a freeway interchange in Pewaukee, as SEWRPC recently did. Keep your home and business in town, where people use less expensive arterial streets and surface highways, transit, bike trails or sidewalks. The vast majority of trips within an urbanized area can be made without getting on a freeway.

The bottom line is that freeway plans in the Milwaukee area should not just be technical decisions made by transportation engineers and road-builders — and then paid for by you and me. These are choices that affect our wallets, our communities and our freedom to travel by a variety of means.

Many of the alternative approaches that I've mentioned are already in SEWRPC's plans. What we need to do is raise their priority and put together a package that serves everyone's needs — and then make them happen. Until that happens, Schulz doesn't need to lecture me from Illinois about the need to spend more Wisconsin tax money on a freeway-only approach.

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*Michael J. Maierte has spent 20 years working in urban and transportation planning at the local, regional and state levels. He is currently the City of Milwaukee's long range planning manager.*

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

October 13, 2002





Kevin Harnack/Freeman Staff

In front of a packed house, acting secretary of the state Department of Transportation Thomas Carlsen, left, Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley, center, and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist talk about the future of the regional transportation system during a forum Thursday. The forum was held in downtown Milwaukee.

## Freeway forum fails to merge communities

### Norquist, Finley disagree on need for added lanes

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

MILWAUKEE - Many at the packed luncheon Thursday at Turner Restaurant downtown did not share the freeway vision offered by state and Waukesha County leaders.

That much was clear during a forum on "The Future of Transportation in Southeastern Wisconsin - Who Decides?" The so-called "Fourth Street Forum" was sponsored by area businesses and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley and Thomas Carlsen, acting secretary of the state Department of Transportation, extolled the virtues of expanding and repairing the regional interstate system. But it was clear that Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist had the majority of support in the crowd, largely made up of environmental groups and city

politicians.

Finley and Carlsen explained their support for the \$6.2 billion plan proposed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. It includes a major renovation of the Marquette Interchange and widening the east-west corridor of Interstate 94 from six to eight lanes between the zoo and Marquette interchanges.

"What we need to do is come up with some common vision," Finley told the crowd of more than 200. "We all know that I-94 is the transportation backbone of our system. We need to promote transit but realize that the freeway is the most important part of the system."

Carlsen pointed out that a blueprint unveiled for developing Milwaukee by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Area Chambers of Commerce supported the freeway expansion.

"Most of the county boards in the area have voted for the plan already and the DOT will take that recommendation to go forward," Carlsen said.

Norquist said a major problem is the price tag for the system.

"Those who admire this mode

of transportation have a fundamental responsibility to level with the taxpayers on where the funding is coming from," the mayor said.

"This plan will actually create more traffic congestion than it will solve," Norquist said.

The mayor also mentioned that some in Waukesha County favor looking at alternatives, like a rail system inside Milwaukee County. Norquist pointed out that a Waukesha County Board resolution supporting that approach was vetoed by Finley.

Finley said while he disagreed with Norquist on the need for the freeway and mass transportation, the two agreed in their opposition to the state Legislature passing and Gov. Scott McCallum signing legislation mandating the construction of two additional lanes in the east-west corridor. He said it would have been better to allow the area counties, deliberating the plan to reach a compromise.

Those counties are to vote on the expansion plan by the end of the year, Finley said.

(Dennis A. Shook can be reached at [dshook@conley.net](mailto:dshook@conley.net).)

The Waukesha Freeman  
October 10, 2002

## Transportation forum yields few answers

By Sean Ryan  
Daily Reporter Staff

Oct. 10, 2002

A Milwaukee forum on southeast Wisconsin's freeway overhaul yielded few agreements and scores of disputes between the city's mayor, the state transportation department secretary and the Waukesha county executive.

A reoccurring point in the discussion, sponsored by the Milwaukee Turners Board Thursday afternoon, was what the ultimate goal should be for the impact of the reconstruction on the area.

Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist said the freeway plan should focus on the value it will hold for individual communities. He said the state Department of Transportation should pay more attention to the impact an expansion of Interstate 94 would have on local communities rather than on broader improvements it would make to traffic patterns.

"The big freeway cuts through Milwaukee may have had benefits to through traffic, but they tended not to have any economic value to the city itself," Norquist said. "The focus has been on through traffic and traffic modeling and black boxes. We need to look at the blocks, the streets, the neighborhood. What adds value to the immediate area where the street is built?"

Acting WisDOT Secretary Thomas Carlsen said the priority should be maximizing traffic flow and preventing congestion using both public transportation and freeway improvements. These considerations don't automatically mean that local communities would be hurt, he said, especially since the public was invited to make comments on the plans while the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission was developing them.

"The mayor realizes that we do reach out to neighborhoods, especially in the design aspect of the project," Carlsen said. "But what we need to focus on is our outcomes. If we want to lower our standards as far as congestion is concerned, we can do that."

### Two choices

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley took a different approach, summing the decision into a choice between two options.

"Are our roads now to be an economic catalyst for us or are they meant to get people to and from work?" he asked. "Should it be to move people into the system, or should it be to move people around the system?"

Finley suggested widening portions of I-894 and U.S. Highway 45, which are on the outskirts of Milwaukee, rather than I-94, which runs through the middle of downtown. He said that it would unfortunately need to be one or the other since WisDOT has predicted it will have a \$5 billion budget deficit by 2020.

The entire debate involving SEWRPC's foremost plan, which would cost \$6.2 billion over 20 years, and any visions behind it would be pointless until WisDOT comes up with a way to pay for it, Norquist said.

"If a simple vision creates money, then that would be an interesting way to run government programs," he said. "There's no funding for Marquette Interchange, let alone all the other things that have to be done. They don't want to put a funding plan behind it because they don't want to explain to the people of Milwaukee how they're going to fund it."

Carlsen said WisDOT hasn't devised a funding proposal because it hasn't settled on a final plan for the overhaul.

"You have to see what you need and then you need to figure out how to fund it," he said.

### Funding issues premature

Raising questions about funding the SEWRPC proposal is premature because you can't request funding for a project until you know what it will be, said Tom Walker, executive director of the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association.

"You don't ask people, 'Could you pay some more?'" he said. "Because people will ask, 'For what?' You have to put the horse before the cart."

Carlsen said WisDOT was considering its funding options, however, and hadn't ruled out increasing gas taxes or turning to the federal government for more money. He said that it had ruled out the idea of issuing bonds for the project, however.

"Wisconsin is going to be against that," Carlsen said. "We think transportation should be pay as you go. We will fund it. Don't worry about it."

SEWRPC will not decide whether to go with its \$6.2 billion plan, or one of its two less expensive options, until after the Nov. 5 elections, Carlsen said. But it would rule before the end of the year.

Until that decision is made, the current debate will help the final plan result in a middle ground that balances all of the parties' demands, Walker said. The plan that will best serve southeast Wisconsin will combine highway expansion with public transportation improvements and balance the needs of local communities with the necessity to improve traffic flow.

"This is a balance," Walker said. "It's critical that the city of Milwaukee and other parts of the region come away with a solution that benefits everybody. This should not be an either-or debate. It should be a debate about how to find the resources to do both."



Chris Ahmuty (left), Milwaukee Turners Board member and executive director of the state American Civil Liberties Union, moderates the discussion between WisDOT Acting Secretary Thomas Carlsen, Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist. Early in a debate between Carlsen and Norquist, Finley joked, "I'm not sure if I've been strategically placed between these two."

Photo by Sean Ryan

The Daily Reporter  
October 10, 2002

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## EDITORIALS

# No freeway free lunches

Do folks in southeastern Wisconsin support the expansion of the regional freeway system? No. And yes. Real answer: It depends on what questions you ask and how you ask them, and therein lies the reason why debate over this controversial idea needs some extra innings.

On Monday, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission released documents related to its proposal for a \$6.25 billion expansion of the area's freeways — one that would expand certain segments of I-94 and I-43 from six to eight lanes. SEWRPC concedes that “an intensive public hearing process” in May and June yielded strong opposition to its plan. More than two-thirds of the 310 people who offered public comments opposed the plan while only 46 people supported it.

But SEWRPC also unveiled the results of a public-opinion survey that, it says, reveals overwhelming support for its proposal. Gov. Scott McCallum trumpeted those results at a press conference, with four prominent county officials from the region in tow. But then, Mayor John Norquist promptly savaged SEWRPC's survey, arguing that it amounts to a stacked deck — and that in any event, the state doesn't have the money to pay for the expansion and doesn't even have a financing plan.

Norquist, in our view, is on solid ground here. First, the survey's cover letter is highly prejudicial, in effect conditioning the respondent to the questions that follow. The survey itself, the result of 15,000 responses to a mailing of 55,000, asked a half-dozen questions about the freeways. Some of them were worded to produce the obvious. Question 3, for example, cites studies indicating

a doubling of traffic congestion in southeastern Wisconsin over the next 20 years if additional freeway lanes aren't built, even with better land-use strategies, public-transit expansion and improved surface streets. Is it any surprise that nearly 73% of respondents would find this scenario unacceptable?

The outcome might well have been different if the survey suggested other studies with less apocalyptic scenarios. Furthermore, the mayor is right when he says that the absence of cost in the survey grossly undermines its validity. Right now, the state has yet to explain how it and the federal government would pay for this venture. According to the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, the state's long-term plan for highways indicates a \$5 billion shortfall between projected cost and projected state and federal revenues.

Given the state's fiscal problems, which show no signs of abating for years, the only way to square this circle may be a tax increase — either on gasoline or something else. Question: Do you think the survey response might have been different if the possibility of a tax increase was included?

An alternative plan for southeastern Wisconsin that would cost \$5.5 billion makes more sense. It would rebuild the existing freeways and make important design changes to improve safety. But even this proposal, rejected for now by SEWRPC, is problematical if the state cannot find a way to pay for it.

Sometimes, Milwaukeeans can talk an issue to death. But this one deserves much more discussion — and full disclosure.

# Freeway survey result makes sense

Despite the accusations of bad polling coming from conservationists, it is easy to believe a poll taken recently that shows vast support throughout southeastern Wisconsin for rebuilding and expanding the region's interstate system.

The failure by people to consistently use commuter rail, as evidenced during the repaving of Interstate 94 in the late 1990s, should have made that perspective abundantly clear.

The poll, conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, contacted 15,000 households in the seven-county area, including Waukesha and Milwaukee.

The survey shows that more than 87 percent of those respondents favor rebuilding the interstate system to meet modern design standards. Among those standards is adding two lanes to the six-lane east-west corridor connecting Waukesha County to downtown Milwaukee, which has proven to be the most controversial aspect of the plan.

For leisurely trips on vacation or trips from Madison to Chica-

go, some commuter rail service seems to make sense. A direct route between Chicago and Milwaukee would also be more heavily used.

But commuters between Milwaukee County and Waukesha County clearly are still more interested in taking their individual vehicles than jumping on any mass transit system, whether it be train or even bus.

Anybody who commutes regularly understands the problems:

- Mass transit routes are generally not extensive and flexible enough to accommodate people whose hours are not the same every day.

- Even with parking and expense and the cost of gas, the cost savings by riding mass transit may not be significant.

- Perhaps most importantly, if your destination is not near the central transit station, it may be difficult, more expensive and more time consuming to take another mode of transportation from that central transit headquarters.

Trying to limit the size of the freeway in the hope that people will voluntarily use mass transit

– or be forced into it – is like buying a pair of pants that won't fit in the hope that your diet will eventually work. In this case, the people using the system don't believe they have a problem, despite all the complaints by environmental groups about emissions, over consumption of fuels and urban relocations of homes and businesses.

Expanding the freeway is a natural result of expanding suburbs just like loosening a belt a notch.

It is also the proper way to handle the challenge that mass transit apparently is not equipped to meet.

But opponents like Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist have a good point when they say the citizens deserve to know how the \$6.25 billion freeway project will be funded. If it is to come from a 20 cents-per-gallon gasoline tax increase for the next decade, taxpayers should be told that so they determine if they are still on board the bandwagon.

The Waukesha Freeman  
October 9, 2002

# Poll surveys level of support for rebuilding freeway

## SEWRPC claims huge support for new lanes

By DENNIS A. SHOOK  
Senior Staff Writer

WAUKESHA - Southeastern Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly support rebuilding and expanding the regional interstate system, based on a recently completed survey.

But a group opposed to the freeway work called the effort "biased."

More than 15,000 households from seven counties responded to a survey conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in July and August. In a release Monday, Gov. Scott McCallum said the results indicate broad support for a \$6.25 billion plan to improve and expand the freeway system.

The governor recently signed a bill that requires the freeway to be rebuilt to that standard, adding lanes in several sections.

The survey shows that more than 87 percent of respondents favor rebuilding the interstate system to meet modern design standards. Among those standards is adding two lanes to the six-lane east-west corridor connecting Waukesha County to downtown Milwaukee, which has proven to be the most controversial aspect of the plan.

### Plan has critics

One section of the freeway near Mitchell Boulevard, abutting the Story Hill neighborhood just north of Miller Park, might require elevating - or decking - part of the freeway to accommodate

the expansion.

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley favors the plan while Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist opposes it. The two leaders are slated to discuss regional transportation issues at a free public forum at noon Thursday at Turner Hall, 1034 N. Fourth St., Milwaukee. The forum is sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"These survey results clearly indicate strong support in southeast Wisconsin for a quality freeway system that will promote economic development and enhance public safety," McCallum said. "We all know this freeway system is rapidly aging and needs to be rebuilt soon. What people are saying is that we should plan for the future and do the job right the first time."

But Norquist has criticized the plan because it fails to consider other modes of transportation to move people, such as a rail system. He also has said there is no money available for it right now and it would mean a tax hike to provide needed money.

Brett Hulsey, senior Midwest representative for the Sierra Club, a conservation group, also criticized the plan and the survey.

"This plan cost the state \$40,000 in taxpayer funds to produce," Hulsey said. "It asks questions like, 'Are you in favor of less traffic in Wisconsin?' But it doesn't ask people what they would think if the state were going to add 20 cents a gallon to the gas tax to pay for this and not even look at alternatives like rail."

Hulsey called it "a desperate action by desperate road builders. It's a totally bogus and biased survey."

### Other survey details

Other survey results show:

- About 75 percent support more lanes on the freeway system in their own county to address traffic congestion problems.

- Nearly 74 percent support more lanes in six southeast counties other than their county of residence.

- More than 76 percent favor an expansion plan providing eight freeway lanes on sections of Interstate 43 and Interstate 94 in Milwaukee County.

- About 72 percent consider the projected growth in traffic congestion during the next 20 years to be unacceptable. This congestion would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit expansion, land use changes and surface street improvements.

SEWRPC conducted the random survey to gauge local residents' reactions to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system during the next 20 years.

The study, commissioned by the state of Wisconsin, examines the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns relating to the 270-mile freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

Among SEWRPC's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option that would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but would not add highway capacity. A \$6.25 billion option that adds capacity to 120 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns, especially to address traffic congestion projected on the system during the next 20 years.

A total of 55,000 households in the seven counties were selected randomly to receive the confidential, 11-question form. Some 15,241 households responded, yielding a response rate of nearly 28 percent. The survey has an overall error margin of plus or minus 1 percent,

with an error margin of 1.5 percent for Milwaukee County and 2 percent for the city of Milwaukee.

Six of the seven southeast Wisconsin county boards already have indicated their support for SEWRPC's recommendations. Action by the Milwaukee County Board is expected by the end of this year.

Waukesha Freeman  
October 8, 2002

# State survey backs freeway expansion

*Milwaukee mayor, others criticize findings*

By **DAVE RANK**  
Daily News Staff

Nearly 90 percent of Washington County residents responding to a survey said they favor rebuilding the freeway system in Southeastern Wisconsin to meet modern design standards, more than two percentage points higher than the public's 87 percent response as a whole in the region.

Nearly three-quarters of the people in Southeast Wisconsin who responded to the survey support modernization and expansion of the southeast freeway system to avoid traffic congestion and to elevate aging roadways to modern safety and traffic demand standards.

More than 15,000 households from seven counties filled out and returned the survey conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC).

Survey results were released by the state at a news conference Monday.

Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, backers of public transit and environmentalists blasted the survey results, saying the questions were biased toward expansion while failing to mention cost or funding mechanisms.

The freeway modifications and expansions, including those in Washington County, proposed by the state's Department of Transportation are included in a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the region's interstate highways over the next 20 years.

In Washington County, it is proposed to extend the six lanes on Highway 41-45 from Milwaukee County north to the highways 41 and 45 exchange in the town of Richfield.

That program began with the refurbishing of the Marquette Interchange in Milwaukee County this year.

"Improvements to the freeway system in Southeastern Wisconsin will benefit all of the residents of this region," said Kenneth Miller, Washington County County Board chairman.

Increasing east of travel means more expanded work and recreation options for residents of this county and easier access to Washington County for travelers and

tourists," he said in a written statement on the survey results issued from his office.

Other survey results for Washington County residents:

■ 64 percent agreed additional lanes on the freeway system were needed to address traffic congestion. Overall, 75 percent of respondents agreed.

■ 77 percent supported expansions to provide eight freeway lanes on I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County. Regionally, more than 76 percent agreed.

■ Just under 70 percent consider the projected 20 years of traffic congestion growth rate to be unacceptable, compared to 72 percent regionally.

SEWRPC conducted the random survey to evaluate local residents' responses to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system over the next two decades.

Commissioned by the state, the study examines the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns relating to the 270-mile freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

SEWRPC's preliminary results present a \$5.5 billion option to reconstruct the system to modern design infrastructure and safety standards, but not for additional capacity.

The \$6.25 billion option would add capacity to 120 miles of freeway while also correcting infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow problems.

The more expensive option would also halt the growth of traffic congestion on the freeway system over the next 20 years, SEWRPC claims.

The survey was conducted this past summer through a random selection of 500,000 households in the seven counties that received the nine-question form.

Better than 27 percent (over 15,000) responded, nearly double the typical response rate for a survey of this type, SEWRPC stated.

The freeway survey has an overall error margin of plus or minus 1 percent.

The error margin for Washington County's respondents alone was estimated at 4.1 percent.

**West Bend Daily News**  
October 8, 2002

# Survey finds support for rebuilding freeway system

BY DAVID STEINKRAUS  
*Journal Times*

MILWAUKEE — A survey of southeastern Wisconsin residents found fairly uniform and strong support for rebuilding and expanding the area's freeway system, officials said Monday. That was followed by some sparring over the leadership shown by Gov. Scott McCallum.

Results of the survey were released during a press conference at the Midwest Express Center. The survey is part of the development of a highway system reconstruction plan, and specifically was the result of questions raised during public informational meetings, said Ken Yunker, deputy director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. SEWRPC is leading the plan's development.

At the press conference, McCallum said the survey shows people of the region know that a good highway system is necessary for the economic strength of the state.

Among the survey's findings:

■ In the region, 82.4 percent of survey respondents (81.8 percent of those in Racine County) said traffic congestion is a severe and growing problem at peak travel times or other times.

■ Rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes in their counties of residence was supported or strongly supported by 75.3 percent of survey respondents (72.7 percent in Racine County).

■ Rebuilding the freeway system with additional lanes in some other county in the region was favored or strongly favored by 73.5 percent of survey respon-

denfs in the region (77.9 percent in Racine County).

"I am committed to making investments in all modes — transit, rail, airports, and highways — to keep our citizens safe and to support economic growth in Wisconsin," McCallum said.

"The 270 miles of freeway in southeastern Wisconsin are the backbone of the transportation network and the lifelines of our economy. Quite simply, this freeway system means jobs for the people of this region and for all of Wisconsin."

Already the estimate for rebuilding the Marquette interchange in Milwaukee has decreased from \$1.9 billion to between \$750,000 and \$860,000, McCallum said.

The financing for the plan, and the survey itself, were blasted afterwards by Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist. "The survey was loaded," he said.

It wasn't, said Yunker. It was designed not to lead people to a conclusion, and it was done with the help of a company experienced in surveys, he said.

Norquist also knocked the lack of firm funding for the road work. There's no money in place for the Marquette interchange work, he said. "And then to go on from there and promise six and a half to seven and a half billion dollars of new spending for expanded highways in southeastern Wisconsin without any source of financing whatsoever is completely irresponsible. And it shows you why the McCallum administration has gotten the state in a deep deficit, not only in transportation, but, as we all know, bankrupted the state in terms of general purpose revenue."

There will be a funding plan in place, said Thomas Carlsen, act-

ing secretary of the Transportation Department. Government doesn't put all funding in place ahead of time for projects planned out 20 years, he said.

The preliminary highway reconstruction plan calls for adding lanes on about 47 percent of the regional freeway system in addition to rebuilding the roads, which are reaching the ends of their lives. The cost is estimated at about \$6.25 billion over 30 years.

Specifically for Racine County, the plan calls for widening Interstate 94 from six to eight lanes and separating exit ramps from frontage roads beside the highway.

But the issue is broader, said Racine County Executive Jean Jacobson, who served on the advisory committee for the freeway study. Two-thirds of all the state's commerce passes through the Marquette interchange in Milwaukee, and a large fraction of Racine County residents use these roads regularly, she said. "It's not just the fact that this I-94 runs through our county. It is a major artery to our everyday events."

The survey says that 45.8 percent of Racine County respondents, in households where there is one full-time worker, drive on the region's freeway system almost every day.

Surveys were mailed to more than 15,000 homes throughout the seven-county region that comprises southeastern Wisconsin. More than 27 percent of the surveys were returned, according to the study summary. Forms were mailed out in July under the signatures of the executives or board chairmen for each county. That local tie was probably the reason for the good rate of return, Jacobson said.

## MAKING IT RIGHT

If you see an error in a story or a photograph in *The Journal Times*, please call City Editor Sherri Jackson at (262) 631-1720 after 10 a.m. weekdays or News Editor Tom Farley at (262) 631-1723 after 5 p.m. weekdays or weekends. Corrections will be carried on this page.

■ An item in Tuesday's *Journal Times* said that a survey about reconstruction of the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system was the result of questions raised at public informational meetings. Ken Yunker, of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, said the survey had been long planned and was not developed to contradict or distort the opinions collected at the meetings.

*The Journal Times*  
October 8, 2002

# McCallum favors freeway system upgrade

## KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

MILWAUKEE — Major renovation and expansion of the freeway system in southeastern Wisconsin over the next 20 years is being planned by the state.

The announcement Monday by Gov. Scott McCallum comes on the heels of an extensive survey by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission that showed overwhelming support for updating the system and improving safety measures.

The state has not yet determined how it will pay for the \$6.25 billion project on a 270-mile stretch of highway in seven counties, nor has it developed any specific construction plans.

"Kenosha County is the gateway to Wisconsin from the south," said County Executive Allan Kehl, who endorsed the plan. "Addressing traffic congestion issues is important to our economy because it will ensure that residences and businesses in Kenosha County continue to grow and remain an attractive place to live and work for our neighboring communities."

More than 15,000 households in southeastern Wisconsin responded to the survey. Eighty-seven percent said they are in favor of renovations.

Seventy-five percent said they support renovations in their own counties, and 74 percent said they would like to see additional northbound and southbound lanes, especially

four lanes in each direction on I-94 in Milwaukee County. Seventy-two percent said they consider more growth in traffic congestion unacceptable.

The Kenosha County results mirror the regional tally. Eighty-seven percent said they favor reconstruction. Seventy-five percent said they want work done in Kenosha County, and an equal number said they want freeways expanded in Milwaukee County.

McCallum said inefficiencies cost the state jobs, and he considers the project an economic development boost as well as an aid to a good transportation system.

"We will try to avoid inconveniences and relocations," McCallum said. "There are no immediate assurances of federal funding, but some will eventually come our way."

First on the priority list is the \$860 million rebuilding of the Marquette Interchange in downtown Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist criticized the plan because it does not identify financing sources and does not outline what the cost will be to local governments.

"The state has gotten into deep deficits because of this kind of planning," Norquist said.

Kenosha News  
October 8, 2002



# Mayor slams freeway survey at conference

## Planning commission finds support for added lanes; McCallum praises results

By LARRY SANDLER  
lsandler@journalsentinel.com

A gubernatorial news conference turned into an impromptu debate over freeway expansion Monday, as Mayor John O. Norquist slugged it out with Gov. Scott McCallum's administration at the Midwest Express Center.

McCallum had called the news conference to announce the results of a survey that, he said, shows overwhelming support for a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the area's freeways with 127 miles of new lanes. He was joined by Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, Waukesha County Executive Dan Finley, Racine County Executive Jean Jacobson and Ozaukee County Board Chairman Gus Wirth.

"Southeastern Wisconsin supports a modern and essential freeway system. Now it's time to get it done," McCallum said.

But after the governor left the room, Norquist took the microphone and blasted the mail survey as "biased" and "loaded" because the questions focused on relieving traffic congestion and safety hazards but never mentioned the price tag.

He said the survey was conducted to cover up the results of public hearings in which most speakers opposed freeway expansion.

### WHAT THEY SAID

Gov. **Scott McCallum**, supporting a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the area's freeways with 127 miles of new lanes:

"Southeastern Wisconsin supports a modern and essential freeway system. Now it's time to get it done."

Mayor **John O. Norquist**, calling the plan irresponsible in light of the general-fund deficit projected at \$2.8 billion for the next biennium:

"It shows why the McCallum administration . . . has bankrupted the state."

In addition, Norquist said, proposing such a freeway plan without the money to pay for it was "completely irresponsible. It shows why the McCallum administration . . . has bankrupted the state," a reference to

the general-fund deficit projected at \$2.8 billion for the next biennium.

Tom Carlsen, McCallum's acting transportation secretary, then rose to defend the administration, but Norquist remained at the podium to debate him.

The transportation chief said state officials would have a financing plan in place before the freeways were rebuilt.

Norquist, a Democrat, asked if the Republican governor would announce that financing plan before the Nov. 5 election.

Carlsen said the election wasn't a factor in highway planning. Norquist said McCallum just didn't want to talk about raising gas taxes before the election.

The \$6.25 billion plan is the preliminary recommendation of a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission advisory committee studying how to rebuild the area's aging freeways as they wear out over the next 20 to 30 years. That plan would expand the area's biggest freeways from six lanes to eight.

Current gas taxes and license fees would not cover the cost of the plan.

McCallum said he hopes to win more federal aid to help cover the costs.

During a series of public hearings last spring, the commission received comments from 310 people, of whom 222 opposed freeway widening and 46 supported it, with the rest either supporting other options or expressing no opinion.

Almost 1,500 others sent postcards preprinted by the Sierra Club, urging officials to expand public transit instead of freeways, planners said.

Planners then mailed the survey to 55,000 randomly selected households in seven counties this summer, receiving more than 15,000 responses.

That survey found support for adding lanes at 75% both area-wide and in the city, with support between 70% and 80% in six of the counties. In Walworth County, which has little freeway congestion, only 50% backed expansion.

Citizens Allied for Sane Highways, a newly formed coalition of six west-side and south-side neighborhood associations, joined Norquist in assailing the survey.

In a news release, coalition co-chair Bob Trimmer said the survey was "designed to get the answers SEWRPC wanted."

But William R. Drew, chairman of the study committee, adamantly dismissed the claim that the survey was designed to counteract opposition from the spring hearings. He said the poll was planned in advance.

Asked why the survey didn't mention the cost of freeway expansion, Drew replied, "I don't think that the cost is relevant to the planning process."

McCallum and Walker also said they believe the survey is a fair expression of public opinion.

Opposition to freeway expansion has been hottest on Milwaukee's west side, where planners have talked about double-decking I-94 west of the Story Hill neighborhood to avoid moving graves.

The anti-freeway coalition said the planning commission has not done a good job of explaining how its plan would harm neighborhoods and raze homes.

But McCallum and Walker said freeway expansion offers economic benefits.

The governor called the freeway system the economic backbone of the area, helping people reach jobs. Walker said businesses want to ease congestion so trucks can deliver products.

After the news conference, state Rep. Jeff Stone (R-Greenfield), chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, said improving area transportation would depend on building a consensus for a package that includes not only expanding freeways, but also improving public transit and extending Chicago's Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee.

The planning commission is studying the commuter rail concept, which could cost \$152 million to build.

Stone said he agrees with rail advocates who have called for setting up a smaller version of the rail line to give commuters an option during reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, set to start late next year, and future freeway work.

"We've got to get beyond looking at this stuff piecemeal," Stone said. "People are going to have to get a bigger mind-set."

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
October 8, 2002

# Poll surveys level of support for rebuilding freeway

SEWRPC claims huge support for new lanes

By DENNIS A. SHOOK - GM Today Staff

October 8, 2002

WAUKESHA - Southeastern Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly support rebuilding and expanding the regional interstate system, based on a recently completed survey.

But a group opposed to the freeway work called the effort "biased."

More than 15,000 households from seven counties responded to a survey conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in July and August. In a release Monday, Gov. Scott McCallum said the results indicate broad support for a \$6.25 billion plan to improve and expand the freeway system.

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The survey shows that more than 87 percent of respondents favor rebuilding the interstate system to meet modern design standards. Among those standards is adding two lanes to the six-lane east-west corridor connecting Waukesha County to downtown Milwaukee, which has proven to be the most controversial aspect of the plan.

## Plan has critics

One section of the freeway near Mitchell Boulevard, abutting the Story Hill neighborhood just north of Miller Park, might require elevating - or decking - part of the freeway to accommodate the expansion.

Waukesha County Executive Daniel Finley favors the plan while Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist opposes it. The two leaders are slated to discuss regional transportation issues at a free public forum at noon Thursday at Turner Hall, 1034 N. Fourth St., Milwaukee. The forum is sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"These survey results clearly indicate strong support in southeast Wisconsin for a quality freeway system that will promote economic development and enhance public safety," McCallum said. "We all know this freeway system is rapidly aging and needs to be rebuilt soon. What people are saying is that we should plan for the future and do the job right the first time."

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Brett Hulse, senior Midwest representative for the Sierra Club, a conservation group, also criticized the plan and the survey.

"This plan cost the state \$40,000 in taxpayer funds to produce," Hulse said. "It asks questions like, 'Are you in favor of less traffic in Wisconsin?' But it doesn't ask people what they would think if the state were going to add 20 cents a gallon to the gas tax to pay for this and not even look at alternatives like rail."

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## Other survey details

Other survey results show:

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- Nearly 74 percent support more lanes in six southeast counties other than their county of residence.
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- About 72 percent consider the projected growth in traffic congestion during the next 20 years to be unacceptable. This congestion would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit expansion, land use changes and surface street improvements.

SEWRPC conducted the random survey to gauge local residents' reactions to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system during the next 20 years.

The study, commissioned by the state of Wisconsin, examines the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns relating to the 270-mile freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

Among SEWRPC's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option that would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but would not add highway capacity. A \$6.25 billion option that adds capacity to 120 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns, especially to address traffic congestion projected on the system during the next 20 years.

A total of 55,000 households in the seven counties were selected randomly to receive the confidential, 11-question form. Some 15,241 households responded, yielding a response rate of nearly 28 percent. The survey has an overall error margin of plus or minus 1 percent, with an error margin of 1.5 percent for Milwaukee County and 2 percent for the city of Milwaukee.

Six of the seven southeast Wisconsin county boards already have indicated their support for SEWRPC's recommendations. Action by the Milwaukee County Board is expected by the end of this year.

# Milwaukee mayor blasts freeway survey; Governor praises results

October 8, 2002

MILWAUKEE - Gov. Scott McCallum praised survey results he says show overwhelming support for a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the area's freeways, but the city's mayor called the survey's questions biased.

"Southeastern Wisconsin supports a modern and essential freeway system. Now it's time to get it done," the Republican governor said Monday at a news conference announcing the survey's results.

After he left the room, Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist took the microphone and called the survey's questions loaded because they focused on relieving traffic congestion and safety hazards but never mentioned the plan's cost. The project would add 127 miles of new freeway lanes.

Norquist, a Democrat, claimed the survey was designed to cover up the results of public hearings in which most speakers opposed freeway expansion. He said proposing the plan without money to fund it was irresponsible.

"It shows why the McCallum administration ... has bankrupted the state," Norquist said, referring to a state budget deficit projected to reach \$2.8 billion in the next biennium.

McCallum's acting transportation secretary, Tom Carlsen, defended the administration by saying state officials would put in place a financing plan before rebuilding the freeways.

McCallum said he hopes more federal aid will help cover the costs.

A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission advisory committee issued the \$6.25 billion plan as a preliminary recommendation to rebuild the area's aging freeways over the next 20 to 30 years.

Committee chairman William R. Drew said planners designed the survey before the spring public hearings. He said the survey did not mention the plan's cost because it wasn't relevant to the planning process.

Planners received 15,000 responses to surveys mailed to 55,000 randomly selected households in seven counties this summer. The survey found 75 percent of respondents supported adding freeway lanes.

GMTODAY  
October 8, 2002

## SEWRPC plan backed

By Candace Doyle  
Editor

Oct. 7, 2002

A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission survey of 15,000 households from seven counties revealed widespread support of a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the region's interstate highways, Gov. Scott McCallum said at a press conference Monday afternoon.

"It's encouraging to see that residents of southeastern Wisconsin recognize the need for modernization and expansion of our freeway system and are supportive of the plan," McCallum said. "This project is essential in making our state a better place to live, work and visit in the future."

The survey, conducted in July and August by randomly selecting 55,000 households in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties, found that 87 percent of respondents favored rebuilding the freeway system to meet modern design standards. In Milwaukee County, the plan received stronger support, with 88 percent favoring rebuilding the system.

"Milwaukee County is the source of job opportunities for residents in Wisconsin," said Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker. "Addressing transportation issues is absolutely critical if Milwaukee plans to continue to attract and retain new industry and be a leader in hosting cultural and civic events."

The survey also uncovered that:

- Almost 75 percent of the survey sample, including 78 percent of Milwaukee County respondents, called for additional lanes on the freeway system to address traffic congestion.
- More than 76 percent supported expansions to provide eight freeway lanes on Interstate 43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County, with 74 percent of Milwaukee County respondents and 72 percent of city of Milwaukee respondents supporting the additions.
- Just more than 72 percent of the respondents considered the 20-year traffic-congestion growth to be unacceptable, including 73 percent of Milwaukee County respondents. This congestion would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit growth and street and other improvements, according to SEWRPC.

### Getting results

The survey, commissioned by the state, was conducted to gauge residents' support of SEWRPC's recommended \$6.25 billion plan for the seven-county, 270-mile freeway system in southeastern Wisconsin. The plan, one of three originally considered by SEWRPC, is the costliest and has come under fire by Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist as well as the American Civil Liberties Union.

The ACLU criticized the plan because it believes it would unfairly harm low-income and minority populations in the project's urban areas. Milwaukee's mayor opposed it because he claims freeways push development away from central cities and because of its high cost.

After the press conference Monday, Norquist reiterated his concerns about the project and said the survey was biased because it did not include the project's cost estimates. The survey questions also failed to spell out how the project would be financed, he said.

"I think the survey was created as a way to try to cover up for the overwhelming opposition they heard during the public hearing process," Norquist said.

SEWRPC held 11 public hearings on the recommended plan, which is costlier than its alternatives because, the agency said, it confronts future traffic needs. The least expensive plan, at \$3.4 billion, would rebuild the freeway system along its existing footprint, which the agency said would merely add to congestion.

The second, \$5.5 billion plan would have added shoulders, eliminated the left-hand exits and improved sight lines for motorists but not sufficiently reduce traffic congestion, SEWRPC said.

The final and recommended alternative incorporates design upgrades and adds lanes to 127 miles of freeway, primarily in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. This \$6.25 billion plan, SEWRPC officials said, would result in a 50 percent reduction in the number of miles affected by heavy traffic loads and ease the burden on local roads and surface streets.

The three plans were developed because the aging infrastructure, built in the 1950s and 1970s, will be outdated in the next decade, and SEWRPC maps outlining traffic patterns show moderate and extreme congestion on many stretches of interstates 94, 43 and 894.

Supervisors in six of the seven counties have approved the plan; the Milwaukee County Board is expected to vote on the project by the end of the year.



Gov. Scott McCallum says he's not surprised that residents in southeast Wisconsin overwhelmingly support a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild and expand the freeway system.

Photo by Candace Doyle



Milwaukee Mayor Norquist maintains that the SEWRPC survey that shows support for the freeway system plan is flawed because its questions did not include the cost of the project.

Photo by Candace Doyle

The Daily Reporter  
October 7, 2002

## Survey: Residents approve \$6.25B freeway rebuild

About three out of every four residents of southeast Wisconsin approve of a \$6.25 billion plan to rebuild the region's freeway system, including plans to widen a section of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County to eight lanes, according to results of a survey released Monday.

The goal of the modernization and expansion plan is to reduce traffic congestion and to upgrade the freeway system to greater safety and traffic demand standards.

The Business Journal  
October 7, 2002

More than 15,000 households from seven counties responded to a survey conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in July and August.

Key survey findings indicate:

- More than 87 percent of respondents — including more than 88 percent in Milwaukee County — are in favor of rebuilding the freeway system to meet modern design standards.
- About 75 percent support additional lanes on the freeway system in their own county to address traffic congestion problems. Seventy-eight percent of Milwaukee County respondents support adding lanes in the county.
- More than 76 percent favor an expansion plan providing eight freeway lanes on sections of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County.
- Seventy-two percent consider the projected growth in traffic congestion during the next 20 years to be unacceptable. This congestion would occur without freeway expansion and despite public transit expansion, land use changes and surface street improvements, the commission said.

Nearly three-fourths of respondents voted in favor of plans to rebuild the southeast freeway system with both design modifications and expansions of key corridors, including eight freeway lanes along segments of I-43 and I-94 in Milwaukee County.

The results indicate broad support for a \$6.25 billion plan to improve and expand the freeway system.

"These survey results clearly indicate strong support in southeast Wisconsin for a quality freeway system that will promote economic development and enhance public safety," Gov. Scott McCallum said of the survey. "We all know this freeway system is rapidly aging and needs to be rebuilt soon. What people are saying is that we should plan for the future and do the job right the first time."

Among the planning commission's preliminary alternatives is a \$5.5 billion option that would reconstruct the system to meet modern design standards and address infrastructure and many safety concerns, but would not add highway capacity.

A \$6.25 billion option that adds capacity to 120 miles of freeway corridor would address infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns, particularly to address traffic congestion projected on the system during the next 20 years.

The commission conducted the random survey to gauge local residents' reactions to an ongoing study of how to reconstruct the southeast freeway system during the next 20 years. The study, commissioned by the state of Wisconsin, examines the economic development, infrastructure, design, safety and traffic flow concerns relating to the 270-mile freeway system in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties.

A total of 55,000 households in the seven counties were selected randomly to receive the confidential, 11-question form. About 15,241 households responded, yielding a response rate of nearly 28 percent. The survey has an overall error margin of plus or minus 1 percent, with an error margin of 1.5 percent for Milwaukee County and 2 percent for the city of Milwaukee.

Six of the seven southeast Wisconsin county boards already have indicated their support for commission's recommendations. Action by the Milwaukee County Board is expected by the end of this year.

**Appendix D**

**ADDITIONAL BRIEFINGS TO INTERESTED GROUPS AND MUNICIPALITIES  
REGARDING THE REGIONAL FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION STUDY  
AND THE PRELIMINARY FREEWAY SYSTEM RECONSTRUCTION PLAN**

### **Study Briefings to Interested Groups and Municipalities**

In addition to the efforts to solicit input regarding the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study and the preliminary plan for freeway system reconstruction previously noted, Commission staff provided briefings regarding the study and preliminary plan to numerous groups and municipalities. Commission staff provided briefings to the following groups and municipalities between September 1, 2002 and March 12, 2003:

- Milwaukee Near North Side Business and Community Leaders – Comments received at this October 10, 2002 meeting expressed the need for minority-owned businesses to participate significantly in freeway reconstruction, as well as for minorities to be a significant part of the reconstruction labor force.
- Racine/Kenosha Economic Inclusion Coalition – Comments received at this November 14, 2002 meeting expressed the need for minority-owned businesses within Kenosha and Racine Counties to participate significantly in freeway reconstruction, as well as for minorities in Kenosha and Racine Counties to be a significant part of the reconstruction labor force.
- The Business Council, Inc. – Comments received at this December 3, 2002 meeting expressed the need for minority-owned businesses to participate significantly in freeway reconstruction, as well as for minorities to be a significant part of the reconstruction labor force.
- Milwaukee Near South Side Neighborhood – Comments received at this January 16, 2003 meeting expressed concerns regarding the right-of-way requirements of reconstructing to meet modern design standards and provide additional lanes and concerns regarding increases in freeway traffic noise levels. There was additional concern about false information this neighborhood had received, which indicated that freeway reconstruction would require substantial property acquisition, beyond any residential takings, including the Esperanza Unida building, the United Community Center, and area churches.
- City of Wauwatosa – Commission staff provided a briefing on the regional freeway system reconstruction study and preliminary freeway system reconstruction plan to the City of Wauwatosa Common Council on January 21, 2002.
- City of West Allis – Comments received at this January 29, 2003 meeting expressed concerns regarding the right-of-way requirements of reconstructing to meet modern design standards and provide additional lanes, concerns regarding increases in freeway traffic noise levels, and concerns over mitigation strategies dealing with potential negative impacts of freeway system reconstruction.
- Milwaukee Near South Side – Comments received at this February 8, 2003 forum expressed concern over the cost of preliminary recommended freeway reconstruction plan, increases in freeway traffic noise levels, and actual and perceived negative impacts on the Hispanic community due to freeway system reconstruction.
- Village of Whitefish Bay – Comments received at this February 12, 2003 meeting expressed concern regarding increases in freeway traffic noise levels, the current noise mitigation practices employed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, opposition to the widening of IH 43 to eight lanes in northern Milwaukee County, and support for improved public transit.