

Minutes of the Thirty Sixth Meeting of the  
**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE**

DATE: March 22, 2016  
TIME: 4:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Global Water Center  
Paul and Pat Jones Board Room  
247 W. Freshwater Way  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Members Present

Adelene Greene..... Director of Workforce Development, Kenosha County  
Chair  
Yolanda Adams..... President and CEO, Urban League of Racine and Kenosha  
Huda Alkaff ..... Founder and Director, Wisconsin Green Muslims  
Ella Dunbar ..... Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee  
N. Lynnette McNeely..... Legal Redress Chair, Waukesha County NAACP  
Jackie Schellinger ..... Indian Community Representative, Retired Judge  
Theresa Schuerman..... Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach  
May yer Thao..... Director, Hmong Chamber of Commerce  
Willie Wade ..... Vice President, Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board

Guests and Staff Present

Stephen P. Adams ..... Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC  
Donna Brown-Martin..... Director, Bureau of Planning and Economic Development,  
Division of Transportation Investment, Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
Preston D. Cole ..... Director of Operations, City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works  
Dennis Grzezinski ..... Law Office of Dennis Grzezinski  
Michael G. Hahn..... Deputy Director, SEWRPC  
Eric D. Lynde..... Principal Transportation Planner/Engineer, SEWRPC  
Benjamin R. McKay ..... Principal Planner, SEWRPC  
Kevin J. Muhs ..... Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC  
Karyn Rotker..... Senior Staff Attorney, ACLU of Wisconsin  
Kenneth R. Yunker ..... Executive Director, SEWRPC

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Greene called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force to order at 4:35 p.m., welcoming those in attendance. Ms. Greene introduced two new Task Force Members, Huda Alkaff, Founder and Director, Wisconsin Green Muslims and May yer Thao, Director, Hmong Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Greene thanked the new members for joining the Task Force and asked the others in attendance to briefly introduce themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2015**

Ms. Greene noted that not enough Task Force members were present at this time to constitute a quorum; however, additional members are expected to attend. She suggested moving the agenda item to later in the meeting when a quorum of members may be present.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Greene asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDED LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR VISION 2050**

Mr. Yunker stated that drafts of the VISION 2050 Preliminary Recommended Plan (“Draft Plan”) and its evaluation have recently been completed, which are documented in Volume II, Chapter IV and Appendix H of the VISION 2050 report (copies of the draft chapter and appendix were distributed at the meeting and are available [here](#)). Mr. Yunker noted that the Financial Analysis of Expected Transportation Plan Costs section of the draft chapter and Appendix I, “Evaluation of the Preliminary Recommended Plan without the Widening of IH 43 between Howard Avenue and Silver Spring Drive,” are still under preparation. He stated that the financial analysis and Appendix I will be presented at the upcoming joint meeting of the Commission’s Advisory Committees on Regional Transportation System Planning and Regional Land Use Planning on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Yunker added that an agenda with links to meeting materials would be emailed to Task Force members prior to the Joint Advisory Committee meeting.

Mr. Yunker then asked Mr. Muhs and Mr. Lynde of the Commission staff to provide an overview of the Preliminary Plan and its evaluation using a summary PowerPoint handout that was emailed to Task Force members prior to the meeting (available [here](#)). The overview included discussions of feedback on the evaluation of the VISION 2050 Alternative Plans, Draft VISION 2050 Land Use Component, Draft VISION 2050 Transportation Component (including the Public Transit, Bicycle and Pedestrian, Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand Management, Arterial Street and Highway, and Freight Transportation Elements), financial analysis of the Transportation Component (including expected costs, reasonably expected revenues, and potential funding gaps), and evaluation of the Draft Plan. The following comments and discussion points were made during the overview:

1. Mr. Wade referred to the summary of feedback on the alternatives and asked who participated in answering the feedback questions. Mr. Muhs responded that the questions were answered through iClicker voting at the last series of VISION 2050 workshops and through the VISION 2050 alternatives website.
2. Ms. Schellinger referred to question No. 4 under the summary of feedback on the alternatives and asked how “bicycle facilities” are defined. Mr. Muhs responded that bicycle facilities could be on-street facilities such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, and widened outside travel lanes, or off-street paths. Mr. Muhs added that the Alternatives I and II also include enhanced bicycle facilities in key regional corridors, such as protected, buffered, and raised bicycle lanes. Mr. Muhs noted that staff explained the different type of bicycle facilities when asking this question. Ms. Schellinger commented that the term “facilities” should be explained in the text of the report.

3. Mr. Wade referred to the summary of the Public Transit Element and the rapid transit corridor between downtown Milwaukee and downtown Waukesha. He suggested that the line run along Bluemound Road rather than Wisconsin Avenue because Bluemound Road has more commercial development and opportunities for redevelopment. Mr. Yunker noted that Commission staff is assisting Milwaukee County with exploring the development of bus rapid transit (BRT) between downtown Milwaukee and the Regional Medical Center in Wauwatosa along this corridor. He noted that the only dedicated transit lanes in the Region are on Bluemound Road west of the Regional Medical Center in eastern Waukesha County.
4. Ms. McNeely referred to the discussion of parking management and guidance systems in major activity centers under the summary of transportation system management (TSM) and suggested adding a similar recommendation for transit. Mr. Muhs responded that Recommendation 2.10 of the Public Transit Element proposes providing real-time and trip planning transit information at transit centers, at transit stops, on websites, and on mobile devices for all transit operators in the Region. Ms. McNeely noted that the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) implemented technology that allows riders to track bus locations and arrival times on its website. She commented that this has been very helpful to riders, but could be enhanced. Ms. Dunbar noted that MCTS will no longer use paper transfers. Mr. Muhs noted that Recommendation 2.11 of the Public Transit Element proposes a universal fare system and free transfers across all transit operators in the Region.
5. Mr. Yunker referred to the summary of the financial analysis of the Draft Plan's transportation system and noted that a regional transit authority (RTA) with a half percent sales tax was proposed in the 2009-2011 State budget, but the State Legislature rejected this proposal and it was not included in the adopted budget. Another attempt was made to pass RTA legislation in 2010 that came very close to passing, but was not adopted into State law. Mr. Yunker stated that similar legislation could occur in the future, but there is not a current proposal to provide dedicated funding for transit. Mr. Yunker added that the proposed Public Transit Element is important because it would help Southeastern Wisconsin compete with other regions to immigrate the population needed to grow jobs. He stated that public transit in Southeastern Wisconsin is funded in a unique way, heavily dependent on Federal and State funding. The local share of funding for public transit in the Region is provided through county or municipal budgets, largely provided by property taxes. He indicated that the proposed Public Transit Element could not be implemented under the current public transit funding structure and expenditures. He added that as pointed out under the Trend Alternative, without any funding changes, transit service may not be expected to increase, but will likely decline. He noted that the conclusion with respect to arterial streets and highways would be different, specifically, that continuing current levels of expenditure would be expected to implement that element of the Draft Plan.
6. Mr. Wade asked about sources of transportation funding in the Region. Mr. Yunker responded that much of this information is available in a State budget report, which will be included in the minutes. Mr. Wade asked if there are restrictions on the use of Federal transportation funds. Mr. Yunker responded that there are limitations on Federal highway and transit funds. For example, Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds can only be used on capital costs for certain types of roadways and for transit capital projects, and cannot be used for operating costs.

[Secretary's Note: The Wisconsin Department of Transportation provides information about how transportation is funded in the State, including a report on

transportation budget trends, on this website:  
[http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/about-wisdot/performance/budget/budget.aspx.](http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/about-wisdot/performance/budget/budget.aspx)]

7. Ms. Adams asked if any businesses sponsor off-street bicycle paths in the Region. She noted that Wal Mart sponsors a path in St. George, Utah. Mr. Yunker responded that he is not aware of any corporate sponsored bike paths in the Region. Ms. McNeely commented that corporate sponsorship could be a way to provide facilities in economically depressed areas.
8. Ms. Schellinger noted that using public transit instead of driving is a major factor in estimating the out-of pocket transportation costs under the Draft Plan. She asked if additional trips that may occur for family households with children were accounted for in the estimate. Ms. Schillinger noted that a family may need to purchase multiple bus passes if it relies on public transit, while a vehicle can carry multiple occupants. Mr. Yunker responded that the potential for multiple occupants in a vehicle is incorporated into the estimate.
9. Ms. Schellinger referred to driver's license recovery programs and asked if automobile insurance assistance would be part of the program. She noted that automobile insurance is required in Wisconsin and could be a large expense for low-income households. Mr. Yunker responded that staff would determine if insurance coverage is typically addressed under driver license recovery programs.

[Secretary's Note: The driver's license recovery program serving the Region, the Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability (CDLRE), provides participants with counseling regarding automobile insurance and referrals to independent agents. An independent agent may be able to get participants the lowest cost coverage available; however, mandatory automobile insurance may create a barrier for low-income residents to obtain a valid driver's license.]

10. Ms. Adams asked if residents of Racine and Kenosha Counties are still eligible to participate in the Ways to Work Program. Mr. Yunker responded that staff will determine which County's residents are eligible to participate in the program.

[Secretary's Note: Residents of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties are eligible to participate in the Ways to Work Program.]

11. Ms. Schellinger referred to the second bullet on page IV-15 of the Draft Plan chapter and noted that most new homes include a two-car garage. Mr. Muhs clarified that the text refers to dense urban areas with fast, frequent public transit service.
12. Ms. Schellinger referred to Recommendation 1.6 on page IV-7 of the Draft Plan chapter and questioned whether industrial land would be compatible near residential land. Mr. Yunker suggested changing "industrial land" to "business parks."

[Secretary's Note: Recommendation 1.6 has been revised as follows:

**“Recommendation 1.6: Provide a mix of housing types near employment supporting land uses**

Commercial land and business parks should be developed in mixed-use settings where compatible, or near a mix of housing types to avoid job-worker mismatches. Local government land use policies should allow a mix of housing types and land uses as proposed under Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 to promote accessibility between housing and jobs.”]

13. Ms. Schellinger asked if neighborhood organizations in Milwaukee have been provided with notices about opportunities to participate in the VISION 2050 planning process. Mr. Yunker responded that the Commission’s Public Involvement and Outreach staff has been regularly contacting about 100 organizations that represent minority and low-income populations in the Region, including neighborhood organizations. Ms. Schellinger stated that it is important that the Commission remain engaged with neighborhood organizations so residents understand plan proposals and feel engaged in the process, which will foster support. Ms. Schellinger then noted that Commission staff has been very responsive to suggestions from the Task Force.
14. Mr. Yunker referred to the next steps in the planning process on page 24 of the summary PowerPoint. He noted that the fifth and final round of VISION 2050 workshops will be held in late April and early May. The fifth round of workshops will include one workshop in each county and eight workshops hosted by the VISION 2050 partner community organizations. Commission staff will also hold a workshop with any interested party by request. Mr. Yunker then stated that staff will prepare a Draft Plan summary booklet, similar to the booklet prepared for the VISION 2050 alternatives. The summary booklet will include an introduction that explains the need to update the regional plan. The booklet will summarize the Draft Plan recommendations and describe the benefits of implementing the Draft Plan. He added that estimated costs of the plan will be compared to current and likely expected future transportation revenues, including consideration of any existing limitations on the use of these revenues. Funding gaps will be identified, and the elements of the plan which cannot be reasonably expected to be funded with existing and likely future revenues will be identified. He noted that this will likely include transit improvement and expansion.
15. Mr. Yunker noted that Milwaukee County is in the process of studying bus rapid transit (BRT) in the heavily traveled corridor between downtown Milwaukee and the Regional Medical Center in Wauwatosa, which was recommended in the year 2035 regional transportation plan. He explained that BRT operates in a dedicated lane and has limited stops and signal priority at intersections, which increase speed. He noted the example of the Health Line BRT in Cleveland, which has increased speed along the route up to 30 percent. He noted that ridership along the route has increased by 60 percent.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2015**

Ms. Greene noted that a quorum of Task Force members was now present and asked if there were any questions or comments on the December 8, 2015, meeting minutes. There were none. Ms. Greene then asked for a motion to approve the December 8, 2015, meeting minutes. Ms. Schellinger moved and Ms. Adams seconded the approval of the December 8, 2015, meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Ms. Greene noted that the next meeting would be in June if the Task Force would like to stay on a quarterly schedule. She requested that Commission staff email Task Force members with prospective dates and schedule a meeting in June based on the availability of members.

## **FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Greene asked if there were any public comments. The following public comments were made:

1. Ms. Rotker stated that it will be important for Task Force members and others who are interested in public transit improvement to contact local elected officials in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa to express their support of BRT between downtown Milwaukee and the Regional Medical Center. Mr. Yunker noted that public transit improvement and expansion has not been implemented within the Region, by and large as a result of the lack of funding. He added that funding will likely not be the obstacle to the implementation of this BRT proposal. Rather, BRT may not be implemented if there is opposition to dedicating a parking or traffic lane for the exclusive use of transit along the route.
2. Ms. Rotker complimented the VISION 2050 planning process and made the following comments:
  - Ms. Rotker referred to Appendix H and suggested including a dot map showing the locations of concentrations of minority and non-minority populations in the Region under each Equitable Access criterion.
  - Ms. Rotker suggested disaggregating minority populations for core issues presented under the Equitable Access criteria.
  - Ms. Rotker commented that the Households with Affordable Housing + Transportation Costs criterion uses the area median household income as the basis for measuring affordability and does not consider low-income and minority households.
  - Ms. Rotker referred to the text on page H-34 and commented that the text states that most minorities use the automobile for their travel to and from work, but it does not discuss the higher unemployment rate among the minority population compared to the non-minority population.
  - Ms. Rotker commented that a lack of affordable housing in some areas of the Region limits access to jobs, and freeway widenings in outlying portions of the Region may exacerbate the problem and have a disproportionately negative impact on the Region's minority population. She requested an equity analysis of the potential impacts of the land use component on minority and low-income populations.
3. Mr. Grzezinski commented that he is pleased with the direction of VISION 2050. He stated that the savings in extending infrastructure and services to new residential development, out-of-pocket transportation savings, and public health benefits under the Draft Plan should be highlighted for the public. He then stated that the increased public investment in transit is a small price to pay for addressing the isolation of minority residents in the Region.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Greene thanked those in attendance and attending by phone. She then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. McNeely moved and Ms. Dunbar seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay  
Recording Secretary

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KRY/EDL/KJM/BRM  
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