



SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF SEWRPC'S REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is the advisory regional planning agency for SE WI and is charged with *“the function and duty of making and adopting a master plan for the physical development of the Region.”* For the 2035 regional housing plan, the following housing challenges within the Region were identified:

1. A job/housing imbalance in the Region, particularly the supply of “workforce” housing near employment centers;
2. Challenges faced in sustaining the present supply of subsidized housing stock in the Region;
3. A need for accessible housing stock to accommodate persons with disabilities;
4. Housing discrimination;
5. Concentration of low-income and minority populations in the Region’s central cities;
6. The need to encourage sustainable, or environmentally responsible, residential development practices;
7. The national economic recession and related housing crisis.

The socio-economic impact (SEI) analysis is intended to identify, measure, and analyze the potential impacts (positive or negative) of the preliminary housing plan recommendations on environmental justice communities in the Region. Environmental justice communities include low-income and minority populations and persons with disabilities. Specifically, the following five questions were used to evaluate the preliminary plan recommendations:

An Evaluation of the Regional Housing Plan Recommendations:

- What positive social and economic impacts to environmental justice populations, if any, would be expected from implementation of the plan recommendations?
- If positive social and economic impacts would be expected, would environmental justice populations receive a proportionate share of benefits, compared to the regional population as a whole?
- What adverse social and economic impacts to environmental justice populations, if any, would be expected from implementation of the plan recommendations?
- If adverse social and economic impacts would be expected, would impacts on environmental justice populations be disproportionately high, compared to the regional population as a whole?
- If adverse impacts would be expected, what steps could be taken to mitigate disproportionately high social and economic effects on environmental justice populations?



Public Meetings

The public is invited and encouraged to attend a series of meetings where the preliminary recommendations from the regional housing plan and draft findings of the socio-economic impact analysis will be presented. Summary materials will be provided and all meetings will be held from **4:00pm—6:00pm** in an **“open house”** format. An opportunity to provide comments in a **“public hearing”** format will also be available at the meeting on December 6th.

November

Tuesday 11/13

Racine Gateway Technical College, Michigan Room (Room #113)
 1001 S. Main Street, Racine

Wednesday 11/14

Kenosha County Job Center, Commons Area
 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha

Monday 11/19

Matheson Memorial Library/Community Center, Community Room
 101 N. Wisconsin Street, Elkhorn

Tuesday 11/27

Rotary Building, Frame Park
 1150 Baxter Street, Waukesha

Wednesday 11/28

Washington County Public Agency Center, Rooms 1113 A-B
 333 E. Washington Street, West Bend

Thursday 11/29

Ozaukee County Administrative Center, Auditorium
 121 W. Main Street, Port Washington

December

Monday 12/3

HeartLove Place, Bethel Empowerment Room
 3229 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Milwaukee

Wednesday 12/5

IndependenceFirst
 540 S. 1st Street, Milwaukee

Thursday 12/6

Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, Wisconsin State Fair Park, Banquet Rooms 1 & 2
 640 S. 84th Street, Milwaukee

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The central tenet of the Regional Housing Plan is providing affordable housing throughout the Region. The preliminary housing plan recommendations fall into six categories.

1. Affordable Housing
2. Fair Housing/ Opportunity
3. Job/ Housing Balance
4. Accessible Housing
5. Subsidized/ Tax Credit Housing
6. Housing Development Practices

Each recommendation was analyzed in light of its impact on environmental justice communities, to determine if it had

a positive or negative impact, or no impact at all.

Based on the analysis portion of the SEI, most recommendations had either a positive or a significantly positive impact on environmental justice populations. If the recommendation was found to have a positive impact, then it would benefit most people in the Region. If the impact was found to be significantly positive, then it would have a greater and more positive impact on environmental justice populations then the population as a whole. Table 1 summarizes the key

findings.

The CED socio-economic impact analysis identified key recommendations that would have the most significantly positive impacts on environmental justice communities. None of the preliminary recommendations offered by SEWRPC, if implemented, would have a negative impact on environmental justice populations.

The entire draft SEI along with links to the Regional Housing Plan and its preliminary recommendations are available online at www4.uwm.edu/ced.

Table 1

Category	Key Objective	Key Finding
Affordable Housing	<i>Increase the distribution of smaller homes and higher-density housing options in sewer areas throughout the Region</i>	<i>Recommendation 1 provides the basis for affordable housing throughout the Region by stating that communities with sewer service throughout the Region should provide areas for modest single-family and multi-family housing. Such areas should be identified in community comprehensive plans and allowed for by community zoning ordinances. This would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice populations.</i>
Fair Housing/ Opportunity	<i>Increase housing options for low-income and minority residents throughout the Region</i>	<i>Recommendation 1 states that communities with sewer service throughout the Region should provide areas for modest single-family and multi-family housing. This would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice populations.</i>
		<i>Recommendation 3 recommends that subgrantees of Community Planning Grants (including Community Development Block Grants and HOME funds) to certify that they will further fair housing as a condition of receiving funding or grants. Such grants and funds are important economic development tools for communities, therefore incentivizing such tools would likely have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice communities.</i>
Job/ Housing Balance	<i>Increase affordable housing options in municipalities in proportion to the number of moderate and low wage jobs in a given municipality and increase job opportunities near concentrations of existing affordable housing</i>	<i>Recommendation 1 recommends that communities with job/housing imbalances act to reduce the imbalances. If implemented in a widespread manner throughout the Region, this recommendation would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice communities.</i>
		<i>Recommendation 4 calls for amending State law to tie the creation of tax incremental financing (TIF) districts to the provision of affordable housing based upon ameliorating job/housing imbalances. TIF is possibly the most powerful economic development incentive that municipalities have in their toolbox. Therefore, Recommendation 4 should have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice communities.</i>
		<i>Recommendation 5, similar to recommendation 4, would incentivize other economic development programs to promote fair housing and affordable housing development, and would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice communities.</i>
Accessible Housing	<i>Increase housing options for all persons with disabilities throughout the Region</i>	<i>Recommendation 1 is parallel to Recommendation 1 under Affordable Housing and provides the basis for affordable housing by stating that communities with sewer service throughout the Region should identify areas for multi-family housing. This would have a significantly positive impact on persons with disabilities as Federal and State laws require most new multi-family units to have minimum accessibility features.</i>
Subsidized and Tax Credit Housing	<i>Increase distribution of subsidized housing units throughout the Region</i>	<i>Recommendation 4 states that communities in economic need priority sub-areas and subsidized workforce housing need priority sub-areas should work with HUD or their entitlement jurisdiction to secure HUD Housing and Community Development Program and other funds to provide housing in the community that is affordable to extremely and very low-income households. It also states that local PHAs should encourage mixed-income housing development. Expanding housing choices for extremely and very low-income households, particularly in communities where there is a workforce housing need would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice communities.</i>

Table 1, continued

Category	Key Objective	Key Finding
Subsidized and Tax Credit Housing	Increase distribution of subsidized housing units throughout the Region	Recommendation 6 states that administrators should work together to develop a regional Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. Removing the financial disincentives for administering vouchers on a regional basis through cooperation between the local PHAs would likely streamline the voucher process and cut down considerably on administrative costs, which would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice populations.
		Recommendation 10 calls for the establishment of a Regional Housing Trust Fund for Southeastern Wisconsin that can streamline the process for development of multi-family housing, remove the administrative burdens for funding applicants, spread the funding burden across multiple jurisdictions, and raise the profile of potential affordable housing projects in order to attract more private investment. This would have a significant positive impact on the Region's environmental justice communities.
Housing Development Practices	Incorporating housing best management practices into planning and design, to lower the long-term cost of housing and provide safe and healthy neighborhoods throughout the Region	Recommendation 3 calls for the redevelopment and infill of vacant and underutilized sites. Given that the majority of brownfield, vacant, and underutilized sites are located in the Region's urban core areas along with the Region's highest concentrations of environmental justice communities, remediation and redevelopment would have a significantly positive impact on environmental justice populations.

ACTION ITEMS

CED identified several recommendations within the preliminary RHP that can be improved upon in order to have a more positive impact on environmental justice populations. These CED suggestions call for some revision of selected RHP recommendations as well as highlighting areas where additional research is underway by CED.

Affordable Housing	Recommendation 2 is still under consideration by CED. Our concern is whether or not greater reliance on sales and income taxes as alternative revenue streams could be regressive and have a disproportionately negative impact on environmental justice households.	More information on Recommendation 10 is forthcoming. CED will determine whether any communities have taken advantage of the existing program that extends the life of a Tax Increment Financing District by 1 year in order to help pay for affordable housing.
Fair Housing/ Opportunity	No further actions warranted.	
Job/ Housing Balance	CED advises clarifying Recommendation 5 to include which programs/agencies would be targeted. This should apply to existing and future economic development programs, given the changing nature of the Federal and State programs.	
Accessible Housing	Currently, accessibility features and modifications are not documented in property assessments. CED recommends developing a recommendation that would add documenting accessibility features and/or modifications to the residential property assessment. Alternatively, Recommendation 3 could be modified to incorporate this.	CED will provide additional clarification on Recommendations 3 and 4. CED agrees that there will be an increased need for funding or proportional funding over the course of the planning period, but needs to do some work on this to see how the specific budgets have been impacted over the past 4 years.
	CED encourages the rewriting of Recommendation 2 to include examples of how communities could "support the efforts" of developers, for instance, by providing density bonuses.	Recommendation 7 calls for the modification of government programs to fund accessibility modifications for renters. CED recommends that this also be extended to allow for landlord eligibility.
Subsidized and Tax Credit Housing	CED recommends that SEWRPC develop at least one recommendation regarding homelessness and emergency shelter housing.	CED suggests a recommendation that focuses on the preservation of existing subsidized housing, and/or modifying Recommendation 4 to include funding for the rehabilitation and preservation of existing housing units in priority areas through the Choice Neighborhood Program.
Housing Development Practice	CED is currently examining the possibility of expanding Recommendation 5 to include local programs such as the Targeted Investment Neighborhoods and their potential impact on environmental justice populations.	CED will provide more information on the impact of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design program.



Center for Economic Development



Center for Economic Development
University of Wisconsin
P.O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201
www4.uwm.edu/CED

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH

We will be engaging participants to gain feedback during a series of public meetings throughout the southeastern Wisconsin Region (see page 1 for schedule and meeting locations).

This second major component of the socio-economic impact analysis is meant to address concerns that may not have been expressed during the planning process. We hope to hear from ethnic/minority and low-income populations and persons with disabilities in the Region and those who advocate on their behalf.

Assessing community perceptions about regional development is most difficult when portions of that community may not be engaged in the participatory process.

SEWRPC has done considerable public outreach regarding the RHP through the use of public meetings, the internet, and other forms of communication feedback.

For more information on the public meetings please contact **CED** at (414) 229-6155 [www4.uwm.edu/ced] or **SEWRPC** at (262) 547-6721 [www.sewrpc.org].



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice seeks to rectify any past or present harm or injustices related to environmental issues, and attempts to ensure that the environment and human health are fairly protected for all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income.

The concept of Environmental Justice is not new; it has its roots in the laws and regulations developed by agencies including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other Federal, state, and local agencies throughout the 20th Century. These laws and regulations were developed to ensure safe,

responsible use of resources and to safeguard the population from the hazards of industry and harmful environmental conditions. Planning as a field, particularly land use planning and zoning, had developed from the need to improve and safeguard the health, welfare, and safety of communities. In 1994, EJ was formalized by requiring most Federal agencies, including HUD, to consider how Federally-assisted projects may have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.

Since then, Environmental Justice has become integrated into HUD's mission, which includes working with states, tribes,

local communities, other grantees, and staff at other Federal agencies to incorporate EJ awareness and planning considerations into program activities.

In 2007, SEWRPC created the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) to oversee issues pertaining to Environmental Justice in the Region.

The primary role of the EJTF is "to enhance the consideration and integration of environmental justice throughout the regional planning process." The EJTF was instrumental in advocating and executing the development of a socio-economic impact analysis for the regional housing plan.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

More information on the Regional Housing Plan can be found on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission website at: <http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/Housing.htm>

