

Regional Planning News

Land Use

Transportation

Environment

Parks & Open Spaces

Housing



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Switch to Digital News
in the New Year!

An electronic version of this newsletter has been e-mailed to SEWRPC contacts for whom we have e-mail addresses. Please sign up for the e-mail newsletter at www.sewrpc.org and help save paper, printing, and mailing costs.

LOOK ONLINE

Find new and updated information at www.sewrpc.org & www.vision2050sewis.org.

[Reports and resources](#)

[Regional Transportation Improvement Program: 2015-2018](#)

[VISION 2050 electronic newsletter](#)

Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful Presents SEWRPC with Lifetime Achievement Award

On November 1, 2014, Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful (KGMB) presented the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) with a Lifetime Achievement Award at KGMB's 2014 IDEAL Awards Gala. The award was presented to SEWRPC in recognition of the Regional Planning Commission's "**outstanding contributions to environmental excellence.**"



"KGMB believes that SEWRPC's work in active environmental advocacy and commitment to the preservation and protection of our land, water, and air has made it the IDEAL candidate for the Lifetime Achievement Award," said KGMB Executive Director Joe Wilson.

IDEAL is an acronym for the award's criteria: innovation, diversity, education, accountability, and leadership. KGMB's mission is to promote a clean, healthy, safe, and beautiful community through environmental education and community involvement programs.

TRANSPORTATION

Regional Transportation Improvement Program Reviewed and Updated for the Years 2015-2018

SEWRPC has completed an update to the transportation improvement program (TIP) for Southeastern Wisconsin for the period 2015-2018. The TIP is a listing of arterial highway, public transit, and other transportation improvement projects proposed to be carried out by State and local governments over the next four years with Federal transportation funding. The **2015-2018 TIP contains 434 projects** representing a total potential investment in transportation improvements and services of \$2.64 billion in Federal, State, and local funds

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Village of Mount Pleasant Considers Park Plan

The Commission works with county and local governments at their request to prepare or update park and open space plans. An update of the Village of Mount Pleasant park and open space plan is nearing completion. The new plan is intended to help ensure a pleasant, healthy environment with diverse recreational opportunities for Village residents and visitors. Preparation of the plan was guided by the Village of Mount Pleasant Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The Village Board will consider adoption of the plan as a component of the Village’s comprehensive plan in early 2015.



Pike River corridor restoration in the Village of Mount Pleasant. Source: SEWRPC

Recent development of the Village park and open space system has focused on **improvements to the Pike River corridor**—a comprehensive project to reduce flooding, improve plant and wildlife habitat, and provide trails and other recreational facilities.

The Village has acquired about 340 acres and constructed about **five miles of trails for walking and biking** in the Pike River corridor, and plans additional land acquisition and trail construction. The Village has also developed **recreational facilities at Smolenski Park**, and **acquired land for the development of a centrally located Civic Campus Park** adjacent to the new Village Hall.

The outdoor recreation element of the plan update recommends the development of recreational facilities at 11 existing Village parks, the acquisition and development of 10 new parks, and the development of additional trails and on-street bikeways. The open space preservation element recommends the protection of identified areas with important natural resources, including, in some cases, Village acquisition of or conservancy zoning for environmental corridors, natural and geological areas, critical species habitat sites, wetlands, undeveloped floodplains, stream corridors, and woodlands. The plan incorporates pertinent recommendations from the Pike River and Root River Watershed Protection Plans prepared by the Root-Pike WIN and SEWRPC, respectively. More information is available at www.sewrpc.org/MtP-POSP.

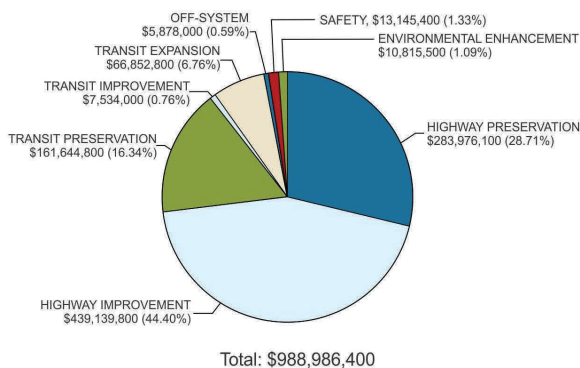
Regional Transportation Improvement Program Reviewed and Updated

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over the four-year timeframe. About 37.5 percent, or \$989 million, of the year 2015-2018 TIP proposed expenditures are programmed in 2015, the first year of the TIP. Highlights of the first year include:

- About **\$445.6 million, or 45.1 percent**, of the 2015 financial resources are devoted to the **preservation of existing transportation facilities and services**.
- The expenditures for **highway improvements**—widening existing arterials—are about **\$439 million, or about 44.4 percent** of total expenditures, with about 85.0 percent, or \$373 million, of these expenditures programmed for the reconstruction of the **Zoo Interchange** in Milwaukee County. (Note: The cost of additional traffic lanes typically represents 10 to 20 percent of the total costs of a highway improvement project.)

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES IN 2015 OF THE 2015 THROUGH 2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BY PROJECT CATEGORY



Source: SEWRPC

- A significant portion of total financial resources is devoted to **public transit projects, which account for about \$236 million, or 23.9 percent**, of programmed funding. Public transit ridership represents about 2 percent of all person trips made on an average weekday in Southeastern Wisconsin.

More information is available at www.sewrpc.org/tip.

ENVIRONMENT

Conducting Environmental Assessments

SEWRPC staff biologists conduct over 100 environmental assessment requests each year to **evaluate the environmental significance and quality of lands** and help **facilitate permitting and decision making** for public and private development projects.

The assessments include the **identification and staking of wetland and/or primary environmental corridor boundaries** on individual parcels. Once these boundaries are delineated, this information—along with the vegetative species and other plant community data—is digitally preserved by the Commission. This process is ongoing, as boundaries are revised and even new sites are identified.

Did you know?

Wetlands and environmental corridors store floodwaters, filter pollutants and reduce erosion, improve water quality, protect pollinator insects for crops, protect groundwater recharge and aquifers, and provide recreation for water- and land-based activities.



*SEWRPC staff stake an environmental corridor.
Source: SEWRPC*

The assessments are most effective when conducted prior to commitments to detailed site planning, as they provide the precise location and extent of environmentally sensitive areas at the parcel level. This information helps the municipal planner and engineer to properly carry out local planning and land use control responsibilities as well as development plans.

Requests to the Commission for wetland or environmental corridor/isolated natural resource area delineations must be made by a local unit of government on behalf of the private property owner. More information is available at www.sewrpc.org/natrescfieldwork.

Aerial Photography Set to Begin Across Region in Spring

Aerial photography is set to begin again this spring as part of a joint effort to obtain new orthophotography for the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin Region at five-year intervals. SEWRPC sponsors this program, which receives funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the seven counties of the Region: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha.

The Commission maintains an **inventory of black-and-white aerial photographs** of the Southeastern Wisconsin Region first obtained in 1963 and collected at five-year intervals since 1970. All aerial photography has been obtained as color imagery since 2005; the most recent complete aerial photo inventory was acquired in spring 2010. Beginning in 1995, all inventories have been collected as orthophotography, which is aerial photography that is enhanced by the removal of horizontal displacement caused by ground relief. **Orthophotos are image products that can be used as true maps.**



The Racine harbor as seen from an airplane. Source: SEWRPC

The orthophoto files are reviewed by SEWRPC for positional accuracy by comparison of the imagery to ground survey control features (section and quarter-section corners of the U.S. Public Land Survey System) and to large-scale topographic mapping.

Aerial photographic prints, photographic enlargements, and contact negatives are available for purchase. More information is available at www.sewrpc.org/aerialphotos.

Ask About Environmental Corridor Delineation Training

SEWRPC is planning an Environmental Corridor Delineation Training program for late April or early May. This workshop will cover the **history of environmental corridors, criteria and mapping elements, and the delineation process**, and will include three hours of presentations followed by an optional onsite field delineation activity. For information, contact **Jennifer Dietl** at (262) 953-4291 or jdietl@sewrpc.org.

ABOUT US

The **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission** is the official advisory areawide planning agency for land use and infrastructure for Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties. More information can be found at www.sewrpc.org. Please contact us at sewrpcnews@sewrpc.org.



VISION 2050: Watch for Alternative Plans and a NEW Series of Visioning Workshops

With the third round of VISION 2050 workshops completed last fall, the Commission staff is working on the **development of alternative plans** for the fourth round of workshops to be held this spring.



One Region, Focusing on Our Future
VISION 2050 is the land use and transportation planning effort for Southeastern Wisconsin for the year 2050.

The results of the third round of workshops, which focused on exploring a series of conceptual, sketch-level land use and transportation scenarios, are available at www.vision2050sewis.org/Vision2050/TheResults.

Residents also explored the scenarios online using an interactive web-based tool. All feedback on the scenarios is being considered as the detailed alternative plans are developed and evaluated.

The next round of workshops and workshop activities will be announced in the next few months. To learn about the workshops and other opportunities to get involved, please visit the VISION 2050 website, sign up for the e-newsletter, and follow us on Twitter [@VISION2050SEWis](https://twitter.com/VISION2050SEWis).