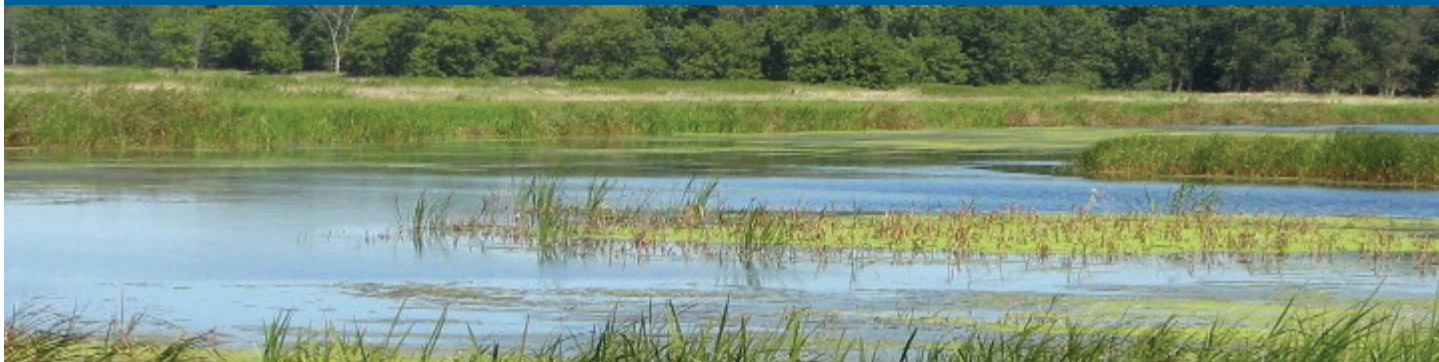


REGIONAL PLANNING NEWS



A publication of the **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

Volume 2, Issue 5, September 2015

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A Lake Protection and Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Rock Lake, Kenosha County, Wisconsin



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Root River Plan Meets USEPA Requirements

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has determined that the SEWRPC **Root River watershed restoration plan is consistent with the nine elements of a watershed-based plan** that USEPA considers critical for achieving improvements in water quality.

In order to be eligible for Federal funds provided under Section 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act, projects must be shown to directly implement a watershed-based plan that USEPA has determined to be consistent with the nine elements. Implementing a plan that is consistent with the nine elements is also a significant consideration in determining eligibility of projects for other Federal funding programs, such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

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Kenosha County Initiates Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

At the request of Kenosha County, the Commission has begun work on **an update to the 2011-2015 hazard mitigation plan for Kenosha County** in collaboration with the County Emergency Management Department and Planning and Development Department, along with a local task force of government and community representatives identified by the County.

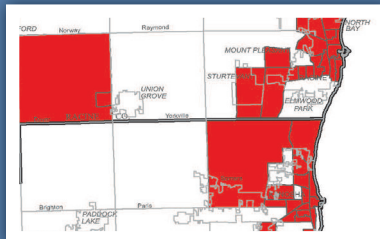
The current plan, Community Assistance Planning Report No. 278, *Kenosha County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update: 2011-2015, 2nd Edition*, June 2010, www.sewrpc.org/capr278, must be updated in order for the County to remain eligible for State and Federal funding related to hazard mitigation.

Hazard mitigation plans outline local strategies for mitigating hazards such as flooding, drought, lakeshore erosion, vehicle crashes, railway accidents, severe weather, hazardous material leaks and spills, and other hazards that primarily involve the

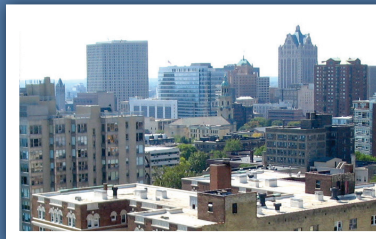
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Kenosha County initiates a plan update



2 **Economic Development**
Counties reviewing regional economic development strategy



3 **Housing Plan**
SEWRPC completes implementation report

Counties to Consider Adoption of Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Southeastern Wisconsin Region has been submitted to the County Boards and economic development organizations in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties, with a request that they consider its adoption. The CEDS will also be distributed to cities, villages, and towns with a request that they consider endorsing the regional economic development strategy.

The CEDS was developed by the Regional Planning Commission and Milwaukee 7 (M7) in collaboration with the Regional Economic Partnership (REP). The REP includes representatives from the county economic development organizations or staffs, City of Milwaukee, M7, We Energies, and SEWRPC. CEDS recommendations are based on the "Framework for Economic Growth" plan prepared by the M7 in 2012-2013. The draft CEDS was available for public review and comment in spring 2015.

The CEDS identifies key cluster industries believed to have the best potential for economic growth, expansion, and attraction in Southeastern Wisconsin; nine strategies that provide guidance for identifying, developing, and prioritizing future economic growth initiatives; an action plan; and proposed economic development projects in the Region.

In addition to setting forth a strategy for economic growth in the Region, the CEDS is intended to meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA) for such work, thereby buttressing efforts to secure Federal funding for projects in the seven-county Region that have a particular focus and impact on economic development, particularly projects that will benefit economically distressed areas.

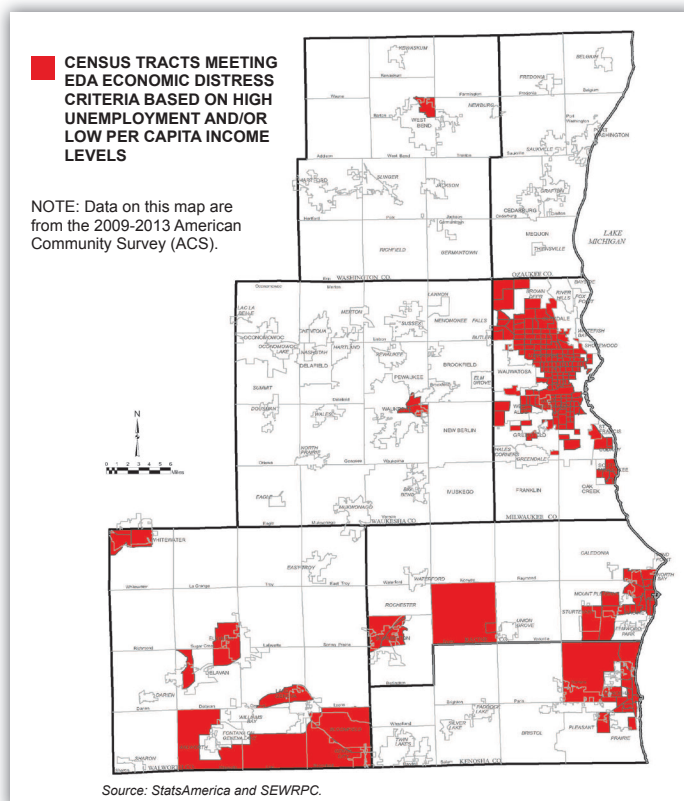
The EDA identifies economically distressed areas as census tracts experiencing an average 24-month unemployment rate of 1 percent or more above the national average, and/or an average annual per capita income of 80 percent or less than the national average. Forty-two percent of the census tracts in Southeastern Wisconsin meet one or both of the criteria (see right).

Adoption of the CEDS by all seven counties could potentially lead to Federal Economic Development District status for the Region. Designation of the Region as a District would make county and local governments eligible to apply for

EDA grants that would benefit economically distressed areas. The EDA grants are designed to support infrastructure projects, revolving loan funds, and other business assistance programs that increase job opportunities and incomes in economically distressed census tracts.

Information about economic development in Southeastern Wisconsin and the CEDS — including an executive summary and the full report — is available at www.sewrpc.org/CEDSreport or by contacting SEWRPC Chief Community Assistance Planner **Nancy Anderson** at nanderson@sewrpc.org.

Economically Distressed Areas in the Southeastern Wisconsin Region: 2015



Property damage from one of two tornadoes that hit Kenosha County on January 7, 2008, injuring 15 people and causing \$23.7 million in property damages. The more severe tornado on that day was rated as an EF-3 tornado on the Enhanced Fujita scale of zero to 5.

Source: Dan Treloar, Kenosha County

Kenosha County Initiates Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

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physical environment. They are not the same as government emergency preparedness and response plans, which focus on public health and safety and include planning for hazardous events by preparing for local needs such as evacuation and shelter. Instead, **hazard mitigation plans provide preventative recommendations such as infrastructure improvements** to reduce damages from flooding and manage stormwater flows.

Hazard mitigation plans are required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for local governments to receive Federal funding for mitigation projects. The planning process begins with a comprehensive analysis of existing reports of incidents such as severe weather events and motor vehicle

SEWRPC Completes 2014 Housing Plan Report

The Commission annually monitors the regional housing plan for Southeastern Wisconsin and reports on implementation of the plan recommendations. **The Commission recently completed its 2014 Regional Housing Plan Implementation Report, www.sewrpc.org/housing2014**, which provides information about plan implementation with regard to affordable housing, fair housing, job/housing balance, accessible housing, subsidized and tax credit housing, housing development, and other aspects of the plan.

Following adoption of the regional housing plan in March 2013, SEWRPC Planning Report No. 54, *A Regional Housing Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2035*, www.sewrpc.org/pr54, was distributed to all county and local governments in the Region with a request that they consider endorsing the plan as a guide to housing and community development within their community or county. By the end of 2013, four of the seven counties and 10 of the 147 cities, towns, and villages in the Region had formally endorsed the plan through adoption of a resolution. Three additional units of government acted on the plan in 2014.

Implementation of the plan in two communities in 2014 included affordable-housing updates to local zoning ordinances to allow single-family homes of 1,200 square feet or less, higher density development in multifamily zoning districts, and mixed-use commercial and residential zoning districts.

Fair Housing and Opportunity

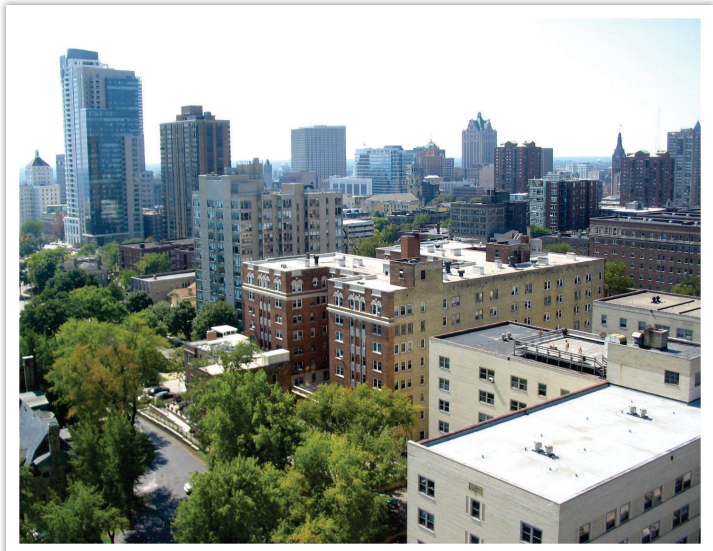
With regard to fair housing and opportunity, Milwaukee County has determined that communities that receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) program grant funds from the County should agree to implement activities intended to affirmatively further fair housing, including an option to work with the Commission to review and revise zoning ordinances to better accommodate affordable housing. The County receives the funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Job Balance

With regard to job/housing balance, the regional housing plan recommends that each community with sanitary sewer service

and railway-related accidents, as well as an inventory of County characteristics that include population and land use data. Among the many steps and components involved in the process are the identification of hazard conditions and previous hazards, mitigation activities, and the vulnerability of the area to certain hazards such as flooding and high winds; the consideration of local government issues and needs, and alternatives to address those identified needs; and the development of plan recommendations and strategies to mitigate hazards.

The Kenosha County hazard mitigation plan update will take about two years to complete. Local public meetings will be scheduled to review plan information and materials will be provided in print and online. For information, contact SEWRPC Senior Planner **Joseph Boxhorn** at jboxhorn@sewrpc.org and visit www.sewrpc.org/Hazard-Mitigation.



Housing options on the east side of Milwaukee near downtown.

Source: Gregory Patin

that is projected to have a job/housing imbalance (based on a general analysis of their comprehensive plans conducted as part of the housing plan) complete its own detailed job/housing analysis for its community when its comprehensive plan is updated. The intent of the recommendation is to remind local communities of specific housing plan findings as they propose expansion of their sewer service areas and to encourage them to consider job/housing balance as part of the next major update of their comprehensive plans. During 2014, the Commission adopted amendments to sanitary sewer service area plans that modified the planned sewer service areas for six local governments. In accordance with a housing plan recommendation, information on the housing plan job/housing balance analysis was provided as part of the review process for the amendments.

Multifamily and Affordable Housing

With regard to multifamily housing, there was a slight increase, 2.3 percent, in total multifamily housing units in the Region between 2010 and 2014. An increase helps expand the supply of accessible housing units because many newly constructed multifamily units must be accessible to persons with mobility disabilities under Fair Housing Act requirements.

Housing developed under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program has been a major source of new affordable housing in the Region, and six additional projects were awarded tax credits in 2014. Also related to subsidized and tax credit housing, there was a modest 6 percent increase in the number of vouchers allotted to public housing agencies in the Region between 2011 and 2014.

About 57 percent of public-agency housing units are designated for families and 43 percent are designated for seniors or persons with disabilities. Eighty-eight percent of the public-agency housing units in the Region are located in the City of Milwaukee and managed by the City's Housing Authority.

SEWRPC staff continue to make presentations about the regional housing plan at conferences and meetings requested by civic, business, public policy, educational, and other groups and organizations. For more information, contact SEWRPC Chief Community Assistance Planner **Nancy Anderson** at nanderson@sewrpc.org.

Watch for Updates



One Region, Focusing on Our Future

VISION 2050 is SEWRPC's land use and transportation planning effort for Southeastern Wisconsin.

Learn about VISION 2050 at www.vision2050sewis.org.

Follow us on Twitter at [@vision2050sewis](https://twitter.com/vision2050sewis).

The **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission** is the official advisory areawide planning agency for land use and infrastructure for the seven counties in the Region.

More information can be found at www.sewrpc.org.

Please contact us at sewrpcnews@sewrpc.org.

Root River Plan Meets USEPA Requirements

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Community Assistance Planning Report No. 316, *A Restoration Plan for the Root River Watershed*, www.sewrpc.org/rwr, was completed by the Commission in July 2014 in partnership with the Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust and the Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network (Root-Pike WIN). Memorandum Report No. 220: *Supplemental Information Developed for the Root River Watershed Restoration Plan*, April 2015, www.sewrpc.org/mr220, presents background information about the USEPA finding, and also information about USEPA-requested clarifications regarding streambank stabilization projects, grassed waterway projects, and management measures related to animal agriculture recommended under the plan.

Information about the USEPA's nine elements can be found in *A Quick Guide to Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters* on the USEPA website at http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/upload/watershed_mgmnt_quick_guide.pdf.

For more information, contact SEWRPC Deputy Director **Mike Hahn** at mhahn@sewrpc.org.



The Root River watershed restoration plan seeks to preserve, restore, and enrich the natural environment by focusing on water quality, recreational use and access, habitat conditions, and flooding. Source: SEWRPC

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