

SEMCOG REGIONAL UPDATE

A BIWEEKLY PUBLICATION OF SEMCOG, THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Vol. 14, No. 11

May 19, 2008

SEMCOG celebrates 40 years at June 26 General Assembly

The General Assembly (GA) of SEMCOG will meet on Thursday, June 26, 2008, at the Village Pavilion, Greenfield Village (Dearborn, MI) beginning at 4 p.m. (please note the earlier start time).

Please join us for a celebration of SEMCOG's 40th anniversary! Registration begins at 3 p.m. and will feature an ice cream and lemonade social.

Bloc caucuses will meet prior to the GA, beginning at 3:15 p.m. to elect the important positions of Bloc Chairs and Vice Chairs, as well as members of the Regional Clearinghouse Review Committee and the Transportation Improvement Program Development Committee.

The Business meeting convenes at 4 p.m. The agenda includes Regional Ambassador Awards, election of 2008-2009 officers, and adoption of amendments to the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan.

The 40th anniversary celebration begins at 5 p.m. and will include remarks from the outgoing chairperson and the incoming chairperson, as well as some remarks from historical personalities at Greenfield Village. The celebration concludes with a reception and horse-drawn tours of Greenfield Village. Attire should be business casual and comfortable for an outdoor summer celebration. Please RSVP online (www.semco.org) using the Calendar (accessible from the upper navigation bar on the home page). Watch the mail for an invitation coming soon. *Contact: Kathleen Lomako, SEMCOG Deputy Director.*

Ozone Action season underway; more OA days possible as EPA lowers standard

The 15th year of Southeast Michigan's voluntary program that helps keep the air clean began on May 1. The good news is that the air in Southeast Michigan is cleaner, but the standard has been lowered, so the possibility is great that there will be more Ozone Action days called this summer. In 2007, there were three Ozone Action days; in 2006, there were two.

On March 12, 2008, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a lowering of the ozone standard, from 80 parts per billion (ppb) to 75 ppb. As Southeast Michigan's lead planning agency for air quality, SEMCOG has long been a champion of continuing to improve air quality in the region. Regardless of any change in the

standard, however, emissions will continue to decline significantly for several years as newly enacted control programs are phased in. Therefore, SEMCOG opposed this change, but realizes that lowering the standard could result in more Ozone Action days this summer.

Actions taken by Southeast Michigan residents on Ozone Action days do make a difference and we must continue to be diligent. SEMCOG encourages good habits every day, but especially on Ozone Action days, Southeast Michigan residents can help keep the air cleaner by doing the following:

- Try not to refuel on Ozone Action days. If you need to refuel on an Ozone Action day, fill up in the evening when the weather is cooler and don't "top off" the tank.
- Reduce automobile use on Ozone Action days. Plan to carpool, use public transit, walk, or work at home.
- Relax on Ozone Action days. Choose the lawn chair over the lawn mover.

SEMCOG reminds everyone that hot, sunny days combine with existing pollution to produce elevated ground-level ozone, which is a health hazard.

Ozone Action days are announced in area media and other outlets, such as freeway message signs. Additional information is also available at www.semco.org; look for Ozone Action on the home page under Hot Topics. SEMCOG members are encouraged to link to the Ozone Action pages on their Web sites. SEMCOG has Ozone Action displays and tip cards for placement in your public areas. Residents wishing to be added to SEMCOG's Ozone Action e-mail notification list should send an e-mail to ozoneaction@semco.org; put notification in the subject line. *Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.*

View highlights of Executive Committee on Web

Highlights of SEMCOG's May 8 Executive Committee can now be viewed on www.semco.org. From the home page, link to Podcasts in the upper right bar, then look for the Executive Committee link in the center of the page. Highlights include the description of the new Foreclosures section of SEMCOG's Web site and the discussion of the transportation-related action items. *Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.*

SEMCOG releases three new annual reports

Southeast Michigan Traffic Crash Facts, 2007 — In 2007, there were a total of 140,115 crashes (resulting in 38,833

injuries and 382 fatalities) in Southeast Michigan, up from 138,165 crashes in 2006 and down from 157,284 crashes in 2005. Fatal crashes were down slightly. This report provides useful data to aid local communities in their efforts to improve traffic safety.

Nonresidential Development Activity in Southeast Michigan, 2007 — Nonresidential floorspace either under construction or completed in Southeast Michigan in 2007 totaled nearly 42 million square feet. The largest development project in the region in 2007 was the new C.S. Mott Children's and Women's Hospital at the University of Michigan Health System (1.1 million square feet).

Residential Construction in Southeast Michigan, 2007 — As the region's economy struggles, so does residential construction. Southeast Michigan permitted just 5,241 new residential units in 2007, a 48 percent drop from 2006 and an almost 80 percent drop from 2004's high of over 25,000 new units. New housing starts have not been this low since 1982. For the third straight year, Detroit led the region with 653 new residential units.

The complete reports can be downloaded in PDF from SEMCOG's Web site under Reports on the home page. Paper copies are available from the SEMCOG Information Center. *Contact: SEMCOG Information Center.*

SEMCOG to host grant writing workshop

SEMCOG and Grant Writing USA will present a two-day grant writing workshop on July 17-18, 2008, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. in SEMCOG's Buhl Building office in downtown Detroit. Beginning and experienced grant writers from city, township, county, and other governmental agencies as well as nonprofits, K-12, colleges, and universities are encouraged to attend. Tuition is \$425 and includes all materials – workbook and accompanying resource CD that's packed full of tools and more than 200 sample grant proposals. For more information visit www.grantwritingusa.com. *Contact: Cathy Rittenhouse, (800) 814-8191 or cathy@grantwritingusa.com.*

New on SEMCOG's Web site: Messages from mayors of Southfield and Rochester Hills

Many of SEMCOG's local government members have begun placing increased emphasis on becoming better stewards of our natural resources. Video messages from Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence and Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett describe how their cities are providing leadership by establishing a range of environmentally friendly practices. These videos can be viewed on SEMCOG's Web site; click on the Members section (upper or left navigation bars) of SEMCOG's Web site, then scroll down to the "Members Speak" link. *Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.*

Correction

In announcing results of elections for SEMCOG's Executive Committee, the Livingston County Township Alternate is Kathie Horning, Hartland Township Treasurer. *Contact: Amy Malmer, SEMCOG Membership Manager.*

SEMCOG is a regional planning partnership of governmental units serving 4.9 million people in the seven-county region of Southeast Michigan striving to enhance the region's quality of life. *Regional Update* is a publication of SEMCOG, financed through funds from state and federal grants and dues from member communities.

William T. Roberts, Chairperson
Mayor, Walled Lake
Paul E. Tait, Executive Director
Susan L. Stetler, Editor

SEMCOG Contact Information:
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
535 Griswold Street, Suite 300, Detroit, MI 48226
313-961-4266 • Fax: 313-961-4869
Staff e-mail: lastname@semcog.org
www.semco.org

Jaqueline Beaudry, City Clerk 3-713
City Of Ann Arbor
PO Box 8647
Ann Arbor MI 48107-8647



Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
535 Griswold Street, Suite 300
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3602

SEMCOG . . . Equipping local government leaders for the future

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Detroit, MI
Permit No. 3981
2008 MAY 27 PM 3:56
CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY CLERK
REC'D