

SEMCOG REGIONAL UPDATE

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

Vol. 13, No. 7

March 24, 2008

General Assembly meets on April 3 Panel will respond to 2035 Forecast

The General Assembly (GA) of SEMCOG will meet on Thursday, April 3, 2008, at the Rock Financial Showplace (46100 Grand River Ave., Novi 48374) beginning at 4:30 p.m. (registration begins at 4).

A panel of local leaders – **Robin Beltramini**, Troy Councilwoman; **Mary Blackmon**, Member of the Wayne County RESA Board of Education and First Vice Chair of SEMCOG; **Robert Guenzel**, Washtenaw County Administrator; **John Jones**, Ira Township Supervisor; and **Ken Podolski**, St. Clair Shores City Manager – will respond to the implications of SEMCOG's 2035 Forecast (of population, households, and jobs) and members will be asked to adopt this forecast. Also at the meeting, the GA will be requested to adopt:

- SEMCOG's FY 2008-2009 Annual Operating Budget and Work Program Summary for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2008, and
- an amendment to the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan.

As SEMCOG begins work on the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, one of the first steps is to hear, via a survey, what GA delegates and alternates think about the region's transportation system and the priorities for the future.

The Education Bloc Caucus will meet prior to the GA at 3:45 p.m., to elect their representatives to the Executive Committee, Regional Clearinghouse Review Committee, and Transportation Improvement Program Development Committee.

Register to attend the GA online at www.semco.org, using the Calendar accessible from the home page. *Contact: Kathleen Lomako, SEMCOG Deputy Director.*

Oakland and Monroe County Member Outreach meetings scheduled for April 8 and 10

SEMCOG's 2008 member outreach workshops will be held in each of our seven counties during the month of April. Agendas have been mailed to participants in the Oakland and Monroe County meetings, scheduled in early April; see details below. Complimentary lunch or dinner will be served. Elections to the Executive Committee will be conducted.

- Oakland County — Tuesday, April 8, 4:30 p.m.-6 p.m.; Embassy Suites Detroit-Southfield, Southfield;

- Monroe County — Thursday, April 10, 4:30-6:00 p.m.; Cabela's, Dundee;

You can register online now for these meetings. Look for the Calendar link on the top navigation bar of SEMCOG's home page at www.semco.org or the Member Outreach link under Meetings on the home page. *Contact: Amy Malmer, SEMCOG Membership Manager.*

SEMCOG University: Planning for Airports scheduled for April 22

SEMCOG University presents *Planning for Airports: An Integrated Approach* on Tuesday, April 22, 2008, from 9 a.m.-noon (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.) in SEMCOG's Buhl Building office in downtown Detroit.

The objective of this workshop is to understand how airport planning practices and policies are developed and implemented. In response to a changing economy, airports no longer only serve passenger and cargo transit. Increasingly, airports are expanding their non-aeronautical services to include hotels, shopping, and dining facilities accessible to both travelers and the general public. It is essential that airports plan for future growth by successfully integrating into the surrounding counties and communities. Elected officials and local planners play a vital role in the success of the region by participating in developing and redeveloping airports.

Scheduled speakers include **Robert Ficano**, Wayne County Executive; **Lester W. Robinson**, CEO, Wayne County Airport Authority; **Wayne G. Sieloff**, Director of Planning, Design, and Construction, Wayne County Airport Authority; **Rick Hammond**, Administrator, Airport Division, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT); and **Stu Lindsey**, Policy Specialist, Intermodal Policy Division, MDOT.

This SEMCOG University is free for SEMCOG members and partners. Seating is limited; please reserve yours by April 15. *Contact: Amanda Polanco, SEMCOG U Registrar.*

EPA lowers ozone standard; SEMCOG responds

On March 12, 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 opposes this change and issued the following response:

- Compliance with this new standard will be very difficult because most emission sources are already being controlled.
- There are a variety of challenges Southeast Michigan needs to confront related to air and water quality, most notably climate change. SEMCOG needs to apply the public's limited fiscal resources to the programs that will provide the greatest environmental benefits.
- This is an especially critical issue to this region, where we are 600 percent more dependent on the auto industry than the rest of the country for our economic vitality.
- This new standard will put many areas of the country out of compliance. As they are required to reduce their emissions to meet the standard, one way they may choose is to further limit auto emissions.
- The likelihood that there will be national legislation to require reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, at significant cost, is extremely high. Addressing climate change and ozone are being approached as separate policy decisions, despite the fact that our financial ability to implement one will affect the other.

SEMCOG will continue to track this issue and monitor air quality improvements to determine what actions will be needed to comply with this new standard. *Contact: Chuck Hersey, SEMCOG Manager of Environmental Programs.*

EPA accepting applications for technical assistance to local governments

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is now accepting applications for its highly coveted free technical assistance program. Every year, EPA selects a handful of communities to receive free, direct technical assistance for implementing different aspects of smart growth (including smart redevelopment). The wealth of experience and

knowledge within EPA's smart growth program (and outside experts) is mobilized to help communities, regions, or states that want assistance in making smarter growth a reality. The application deadline is May 8, 2009. Download the application at www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/2008_sgia_rfa.htm.

SEMNotes

Congratulations and best wishes to **Kay Beard**, Wayne County Commissioner, who recently retired after more than 30 years on the commission.

Congratulations and best wishes to **Brian Blaesing**, Road Commission for Oakland County, on his retirement at the end of the month after more than 30 years at RCOO.

Congratulations to the **Chelsea District Library**, honored in January as the Best Small Library in America by *Library Journal*. Now in its fourth year, this annual award, cosponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, encourages and showcases the exemplary work of public libraries serving populations under 25,000.

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

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Detroit, MI
Permit No. 3981

CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY CLERK
REC'D

2008 MAR 28 AM 11:00

Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk
3-700
City Of Ann Arbor
PO Box 8647
Ann Arbor MI 48107-8647



SEMCOG . . . Equipping local government leaders for the future
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
535 Griswold Street, Suite 300
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3602