

SEMCOG REGIONAL UPDATE

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Executive Committee meets December 12

SEMCOG's Executive Committee will meet at 1 p.m. on Friday, December 12, 2008, in SEMCOG's downtown Detroit office. Action items to be considered by the committee are as follows:

- Endorsing the federal and state legislative policy platform for 2009-2010. These issues will guide discussions with Southeast Michigan's congressional delegation and with our state senators and representatives;
- Approving an amendment to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program to add 98 projects and delete nine projects. The net funding change for this amendment is \$259.9 million, representing an increase of \$195.3 million in federal, \$57.2 million in state, and \$7.4 million in local funding; and
- Approving a 2008-2009 SEMCOG Work Program budget amendment that adds \$33,000 for a new Local Roads Asset Management project.

Contact: Kathleen Lomako, SEMCOG Deputy Director.

Results of SEMCOG member survey indicate strong satisfaction

According to SEMCOG's recently completed member satisfaction survey, members are very satisfied with the services they receive from SEMCOG. According to the 2008 Cobalt Citizen Satisfaction Index for Michigan, local governments deliver an average satisfaction level of 52 on the 1-100 scale. SEMCOG delivers an 80, with a stronger rating by local government staff, who tend to be the heaviest users. While satisfaction is strong, these are the areas in which SEMCOG will focus improvement:

- Access and location of training,
- Web site ease of use,
- Closer tailoring of programs and services to audience segment, and
- Enhance member services.

Members also indicated a significant need for case studies, benchmarking/best practices (including outside of Southeast Michigan), regional trends, and information to help stretch budgets.

The 2008 SEMCOG Member Satisfaction Survey was conducted by Cobalt Community Research (Lansing, MI). It was mailed to SEMCOG members in September and October 2008. Approximately 1,531 surveys were distributed.

Recipients could respond either by mail or online. SEMCOG thanks everyone for their participation. Contact: Amy Malmer, SEMCOG Membership Manager.

SEMCOG University on January 27 and 29 to focus on local government restructuring

The first SEMCOG University Workshop of 2009 — **Restructuring Local Government Due to Dropping Revenues** — is planned for two dates and locations: Tuesday January 27, 2009 (from 9 a.m.-noon at the SEMCOG offices and via online webinar), and Thursday, January 29, 2009 (9 a.m.-noon at Sterling Heights City Hall). The workshop will provide tools to more accurately forecast future property tax revenues, offer case studies of successful restructuring and downsizing efforts by local governments, and assist participants in dealing with their specific local fiscal issues. Watch for more details in early 2009, or register online now for either date (via SEMCOG's online Calendar). Contact: Amanda Polanco, SEMCOG U Registrar.

Legislative Action Alert: Transportation funding legislation introduced

Key legislation was recently introduced in the Michigan House of Representatives to increase funding for transportation needs. The legislation is described on the Legislative Issues page of SEMCOG's Web site (www.semco.org/LegislativeIssues.aspx). The legislation has a broad range of supporters and is poised to move in the lame duck session, but will not pass unless legislators hear from local officials. SEMCOG strongly urges you to contact your legislators and the governor, and ask them to support the transportation package and the local options proposal. Please copy SEMCOG (wieber@semco.org) on your e-mail or letter, so we can remind legislators of your position when we speak to them in person. Contact: Karen Wieber, SEMCOG Planning Analyst.

SEMCOG urges safe and sober holiday driving

With more people expected to travel on America's highways during the holiday season, SEMCOG urges everyone to enjoy the holidays, but know the facts — alcohol is a significant factor in holiday deaths.

In Southeast Michigan, alcohol was involved in 31 percent of all fatal crashes in 2007. Alcohol was a factor in 122 deaths and over 2,600 injuries in 2007. Search SEMCOG's traffic crash

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database for community-specific data — www.semco.org (Data & Maps, By subject, Traffic crashes). Contact: Tom Bruff, SEMCOG Transportation Coordinator.

SEMCOG transit video sent to members

“Get on Board with SEMCOG,” the transit video that debuted at SEMCOG’s General Assembly last month, is now available for viewing and downloading from www.semco.org/GetOnBoard.aspx. Those attending the GA received a USB drive containing the video. This USB drive was also recently mailed to the CEO of all SEMCOG members. The accompanying letter outlined some ways in which to share this video with residents. If you want to run this video on your cable channel, please request an autoplay DVD. Contact: SEMCOG Information Center.

MDOT seeks public comment on draft 2009-2013 transportation program

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is seeking public comment on its draft 2009-2013 Five Year Transportation Program. The MDOT program — a continuous, interactive dialogue with the department’s customers and stakeholders, has become the anchor of MDOT’s project development and delivery systems. Each year, a new fifth year is added and program/project adjustments are made to the previous four years. The draft of the 2009-2013 Five Year Transportation Program is available on the MDOT Web site at www.michigan.gov/mdot5yearplan.

SEMPeople

Congratulations to Auburn Hills, who recently celebrated its 25th anniversary as a city. The Oakland County community and SEMCOG member has a current population of over 20,500 (SEMCOG estimate, November 2008).

The National Recreation and Park Association awarded Canton Township Leisure Services a National Gold

Medal for having the best managed parks and recreation department for communities with a population between 50,000 and 100,000.

The University of Michigan-Dearborn, in its second Entrepreneurial Cities Index Report, *eCities 2008*, has named Auburn Hills, Plymouth Township, and Southfield as the top communities for attracting and retaining entrepreneurial companies in Southeast Michigan.

Our sincere sympathy on the death of Harold Thomas, husband of SEMCOG Past Chair Marjorie Thomas, and longtime friend of SEMCOG.

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*Best wishes from SEMCOG for a safe
and happy holiday season.*

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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.

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