

# SEMCOG REGIONAL UPDATE

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

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## SEMCOG's elected leaders choose investment direction for next transportation plan

As a part of developing **Direction2035** — the region's next long-range transportation plan, local elected leaders of SEMCOG member communities adopted a guide for spending transportation funds at the September 26 Executive Committee:

- Transit capital — 5.6 percent;
- Transit operations — 17.9 percent;
- Pavement — 23.8 percent;
- Bridges — 4.0 percent;
- Congestion relief — 7.6 percent;
- Safety — 0.6 percent;
- Nonmotorized transportation — 0.8 percent; and
- Road operations — 39.7 percent.

Combined with an analysis of transportation needs and priorities, this guide will be used by SEMCOG and state and local road and transit agencies as projects are proposed for inclusion in **Direction2035**.

Investing in this manner is expected to have an overall positive impact on the transportation system. It will result in the continued operation of the existing transit system plus construction and operation of three rapid transit lines; 69 percent of pavement in good or fair condition; 91 percent of bridges in good or fair condition; 2.8 hours of travel delay per 1,000 vehicle miles traveled; 0.74 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled; 58 percent of people and jobs within one-half mile of a nonmotorized facility; and continued operation of the existing road system.

The Executive Committee further adopted a statement indicating that current funding levels for both highway and transit systems are inadequate to support needed improvements. The resolution supports efforts to raise additional revenues at both the state and federal levels to address needed transportation improvements in Southeast Michigan. Find more information at [www.semco.org/Long-RangeTransportationPlan.aspx](http://www.semco.org/Long-RangeTransportationPlan.aspx). *Contact: Jennifer Evans, SEMCOG Transportation Coordinator.*

## SEMCOG and Lt. Gov. Cherry to host meeting seeking input on The Great Lakes Framework

SEMCOG has announced details for an October 20, 2008 meeting it will host to consider Michigan's plan for protecting

and restoring the Great Lakes. At the meeting, Lt. Governor John Cherry and staffs from the Office of the Great Lakes and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs will seek input for the strategic plan for the Great Lakes from individuals and organizations who are actively engaged in Great Lakes restoration, remediation or protection. SEMCOG and its members are recognized as key stakeholders whose experiences and expertise are critical to the success of the initiative. The meeting will take place from 7-9 p.m. in SEMCOG's Ambassador Room. *Contact: Chuck Hersey, SEMCOG Environment Manager.*

## Great Lakes water compact becomes law

Culminating several years of work in Michigan and other Great Lakes states, President George W. Bush has signed a compact designed to prevent Great Lakes water from being diverted to other areas of the country or world. It also requires the region's eight states to regulate their own use. This is the final step in a process going back nearly a decade, when the region's governors began discussing how to prevent other regions from tapping into the lakes. The language was negotiated by the governors and ratified by the legislatures of all eight states, with Congress recently giving its approval. The compact bans diversions of water with limited exceptions for communities near the basin boundary and sets a standard for Great Lakes states to use in regulating water use. SEMCOG advocated for passage of the compact by participating in several groups that helped craft and pass Michigan's legislation as well as securing support in Congress. *Contact: Chuck Hersey, Manager, SEMCOG Environmental Programs.*

## Quick Facts: Community Fiscal Capacities

A new installment of SEMCOG's Quick Facts, *Community Fiscal Capacities: Initial Findings*, discusses changes in taxable value data between 2006 and 2008. Quick Facts highlights demographic and economic trends in the Southeast Michigan region, and can be viewed at [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org) (click on Programs and Projects on the left sidebar, then Regional Growth). Watch future issues of *Regional Update* for new Quick Facts pages. *Contact: Xuan Liu, SEMCOG Data Center Manager.*

## Ozone action season ends

Ozone Action season ended on September 30. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the voluntary program that helps keep Southeast

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Michigan's air clean. Southeast Michigan had five Ozone Action days this summer, called on July 11, 17, and 18; August 21; and September 2. Thanks in part to citizen support and action, Southeast Michigan is now attaining the ozone standard. SEMCOG and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality are requesting that EPA re-designate the region as an ozone attainment area. *Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.*

### Two important SEMCOG Universities scheduled for October

Two SEMCOG University workshops are scheduled for October in SEMCOG's downtown Detroit offices or via Webinar.

**Winter Road Maintenance: Policy, Practice, and Technology** - Thursday, October 23, 2008, 9 a.m.-noon (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.). Managing a winter maintenance program today is an increasingly complex endeavor with tight budgets and high public expectations. This workshop will provide planners, engineers, policy makers, maintenance, and public works personnel with a forum for discussing winter road maintenance practices, sharing information and experiences, and advancing cost-effective and environmentally friendly methods for snow and ice removal.

**Economic and Workforce Development Solutions for Local Government** - Wednesday, October 29, 2008 from 9 a.m.-noon (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.). During these economic times, local government and education are responding to the changing workforce environment by introducing solutions designed to meet the needs of both businesses and the workforce. At this workshop, local elected leaders, education administrators, city managers, planning managers, economic development practitioners, and policy makers, will learn about actions that can be taken, the importance of creating an adequate and relevant workforce, resources that are available to local governments, and successful case studies from Southeast Michigan.

SEMCOG University workshops are for members and partners. There is no charge to attend, but seating is limited. Please respond as soon as possible. Register online via the Calendar at [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org). *Contact: Amanda Polanco, SEMCOG U Registrar.*

### SEMCOG report: Slight growth in population and households in Southeast Michigan

Southeast Michigan's population and households grew slightly from the 2000 Census through July 1, 2008, according to *Population and Households in Southeast Michigan, 2000-2008*, a new report released by SEMCOG. The slight growth in Southeast Michigan's population since the turn of the century is quite different from the trend observed between 1990 and 2000. Copies of the report are available in PDF format at SEMCOG's Web site — [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org). SEMCOG also updates population and household data monthly on its Web site. Link to Data and Maps, then By Community. *Contact: Xuan Liu, SEMCOG Data Center 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.

**Mary Blackmon**, Chairperson  
Treasurer,

Wayne County Regional Education Service Agency  
**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@semco.org](mailto:lastname@semco.org)  
[www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)



Ann Arbor MI 48107-8647

PO Box 8647

City Of Ann Arbor

Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk 3-731



Detroit, Michigan 48226-3602

535 Griswold Street, Suite 300

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