

FALL 2016

Semscope

A quarterly publication of SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments



CREATING COMMUNITY

FALL BOUNTY AND MORE AT LOCAL FARMERS' MARKETS

SEMCOG

SEMCOG

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Cover photo:

The growing trend to buy local is just one reason behind the popularity of farmers' markets. We hope you will read our story beginning on page 3. Thanks to Tina Lloyd, Pittsfield Township's Market Manager, who talked to us about the growth and vibrancy of the market when we visited to take the cover photo on September 1, 2016.

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Please direct any questions about this publication to Sue Stetler, 313-324-3428 or stetler@semcog.org

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Kathleen Lomako
SEMCOG
Executive Director

The important role of elected officials at SEMCOG

Hundreds of local government and school district officials recently convened at SEMCOG's fall General Assembly. The event included a feature presentation by Lansing Correspondent Tim Skubick, who shared his insights on the 2016 election. His remarks were entertaining and a lighthearted start to our meeting which focused on regional vision, action, and progress. That said, at SEMCOG we do take elections – particularly local elections – seriously. And, I know those of you who run for local office do, too!

Elections and representative democracy are the foundation of SEMCOG. We are governed by individuals elected to local government positions who are selected by their local government or school district to represent them in regional decision making. This connection to local government ensures that SEMCOG decisions on regional plans and policies are responsive to the needs of local governments and the citizens they serve. This is important because plan implementation relies on the actions of local governments taken within the context of regional plans. As just one example, our *Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel Plan for Southeast Michigan* seeks a connected regional system of bike trails. In order for that to happen, it is important for local governments to work together and prioritize trail construction in places that fill in gaps in the regional system.

We also seek input from others as we carry out our planning responsibilities. This input is valuable to the elected official decision makers on SEMCOG's General Assembly and Executive Committee. Examples include:

- Issue-specific forums held throughout the region, the latest being a series on water issues that have been conducted this summer and fall. During these meetings, we learned about priorities in the counties we visited including the importance of drinking water infrastructure, stormwater management, and the increasing role of recreation and the blue economy.
- Through quarterly Pulse of the Region surveys on topics such as parks, water, economic development, and workforce development.
- Deliberations of committees and task forces whose membership includes a broad range of individuals from local, state, and federal government; business; nonprofits; and advocacy groups. Currently, the Water Resources Task Force and Transportation Coordinating Council are working on regional plans.
- Input received at General Assemblies. The meeting highlighted in this issue of *Semscope* included use of keypad voting to obtain input into our legislative priorities.

We value the input we receive from all these sources. Along with the knowledge of local elected officials, and the data and planning expertise of SEMCOG staff, the result is sound plans that can be implemented locally and that have a positive impact on Southeast Michigan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Lomako". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Creating community

Farmers' markets have evolved into robust business partners, valuable community resources

What began as a way to connect food with buyers close to home has become so much more.

Farmers' markets benefit farmers, communities that host them, and local residents. That "hat trick" of good is a big reason for the growth in farmers' markets over the last few years. Quick fact: Farmers' markets across the country have nearly tripled – from 2,700 in 1998 to 8,500 in 2015 – according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Market Directory.

Agriculture is the third largest contributor to Michigan's economy with an annual \$100 billion impact that is behind only manufacturing and tourism, according to state Agriculture Development Director, Peter Anastor. Michigan is second only to California in the diversity of its products, producing \$3 billion in exports every year.

There are 50,000 farms in Michigan, 90 percent of which are family owned. The industry has lots of job openings for high-tech workers, which Anastor hopes high schools will promote more. There are over 300 farmers' markets in the state.

Agriculture is also important in Southeast Michigan as more than 25 percent of land is used for agriculture. At least 50 communities have farmers' markets. In general, these are some of the reasons why:

- Farmers' markets support local farmers and connect them to local buyers. Food can be lower priced because the middleman is eliminated. The idea of buying food from the farmer is preferred by some; the notion of seeing and developing an ongoing relationship with that person is also appealing.
- Farmers' markets can help increase access to healthy food in areas that lack grocery stores and for residents who may not be able to travel greater distances to brick-and-mortar stores.
- Other events at farmers' markets help create community, promote healthy eating and living, and become a social destination for many residents.
- Market traffic generates visitors for nearby businesses, attention to the surrounding area and ongoing activi-

ties, and helps create a vibrant community and economy.

- Buying local is a concept that is also being embraced by traditional grocery stores in Michigan; many of them advertise the fact that they are local sourcing their food.

"Thanks for shopping local" is the guiding force behind the growth and expansion of farmers' markets throughout the region, state, and nation. Southeast Michigan's markets range from established and iconic with grand histories that attract residents from across the region, to smaller markets in local communities, and everything in between. Each is unique. In Southeast Michigan, elected officials see markets as successful community builders, as well as a regular gathering place for residents to buy local and interact with their neighbors. Here are some examples from SEMCOG members in Southeast Michigan.

Pittsfield Farmers' Market – Began in 2013; location is near the township hall which provides good parking and also overlooks Prairie Park which is a nice gathering place for picnics before and after market activities.

"The year-round Pittsfield Township Farmers' Market has helped transform the Administrative Campus into a hub that emits a vibrant sense of community as folks bike, walk, drive, or take the bus to buy local produce and a wide array of other products including meat, eggs, bread, honey," said Mandy Grewal, Pittsfield Township Supervisor. In addition to local, fresh, healthy food, the market helps build community with other activities such





Flowers in Eastern Market.

as a scavenger hunt at every market for neighborhood kids, sponsored by the parks and recreation department (find the frog hidden somewhere in the market); and live music. Other events have seen Ann Arbor's Leslie Science Center bring their hunters of the sky exhibit to the market for community interaction; twice a month Chef Kristi demonstrates simple, healthy recipes that can be made with the food purchased at the farmers' market; and once a month visitors can ask a master gardener lawn and garden questions and get tips for growing their own healthy food.

By the numbers

Farmers' markets that become community resources perform better than other markets

(Source: USDA survey of farmers' markets)

64% of markets hosting community events reported customer growth

The most popular community events at farmers' markets

79% – music

65% – youth activities

55% – cooking classes

48% – garden classes

Westland Farmers' Market – Begun in 2010, it is managed by the Westland Chamber of Commerce. Research on farmers' markets reveals that most often the community itself or the chamber has primary responsibility for the market. "Farmers' markets are popular now because more people are aware of what they are eating and shopping local. The community loves it," says Westland Mayor Bill Wild. "It is a gem in our city."

Farmers' markets have important economic impacts in the community. In Westland, government assistance programs such as EBT, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC, and Senior Fresh bring in shoppers from all over the local area. Some use the Nankin Transit system. Others shop at local stores and then stop by the farmers' market. The Westland Farmers' Market engages the community with "special events" including Pet Palooza, Kids' Day, and Seniors' Day. On Seniors' Day, special vendors of interest were added to the market. Veterans Health and Fitness ran an exercise workshop specially geared to older folks. Personalized Hearing Care and American House were also there. Westland's Senior Resource Center informed seniors about the products and services that the city and community has for them. Seniors from nearby communities – Canton Township and Wayne – as well as Westland attended this popular event.



Expansion of the Westland Farmers' Market is in the works. This is a drawing of the new pavilion.

Royal Oak Farmers' Market – One of the oldest markets in Southeast Michigan, now solely owned and operated by the City of Royal Oak, began operations in 1925 as a truck market. Two years later, the structure opened where the 25,000 square-foot market exists to this day. "The market has proved its worth over and over again by maintaining its market function and by providing a community events center," said Jim Ellison, Royal Oak Mayor. "At the market, you can get your shopping done on Saturday morning and come back for a good time on Saturday night."

Community Development

In addition to the year-round Saturday Farm Market, there's a Flea Market every Sunday with more than 100 vendors. A Friday Farm Market operates May-December. Special events include the Royal Oak Dreamfest prior to the Woodward Dream Cruise, with a 1950s-themed diner, a pig roast, and rib bash. Food truck rallies and tutorials on things such as making sauerkraut keep the market fresh and warm during the winter. In a city with a vibrant downtown and regionwide annual events such as the Dream Cruise and Arts, Beats, and Eats, the 80-year-old market remains among the most popular, with nearly 5,000 customers each weekend.

The building is also available to rent for weekend events, parties, and weddings and, with a capacity of 700, generates nearly half a million dollars, with a waiting list through 2017. With all of its popularity, the Royal Oak Farmers' Market remains committed to its original premise – locally grown food – and one of the best reasons for visiting: being able to ask the one who grew your purchase how it was grown and when it was picked.

Oakland County Farmers' Market– Oakland County Parks and Recreation manages the Oakland County Farmers' Market, established in 1953, at a 14-acre facility in Waterford. Sue Wells, Manager of Oakland County Parks and Recreation operations, said of the market, "We've been able to capture visitors by offering different types of programs year round; it's become more of a destination." In addition to operating year round on Saturdays, the market is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays May-December.

Beyond providing grower-direct produce, flowers, baked goods, crafts, and more to Oakland County residents, the market is home to a wide variety of community, cultural, and educational programming. Highlights include a community garage sale, food truck rallies, a collectible car show, holiday-themed markets, various food preservation and preparation classes, a master gardener series with Michigan State University Extension, classes on conservation, as well as health and safety education. More than 300,000 residents and others visit the market annually.

Eastern Market: Past, present, and future



While farmers' markets old and new, large and small are bustling with activity all over Southeast Michigan, the region's largest and most historic is no exception. Detroit's Eastern Market has its origins in hay and wood sales. Originally located in Cadillac Square, the market moved to its current location in 1891. After World War II, the market took on its prevailing identity as a hub for wholesale food industry. While Eastern Market retains this purpose today, it has evolved into a center for community activity in addition to being the largest open air flower market in the country. In addition to the year-round public Saturday market, the Eastern Market Corporation has expanded operations to host the Sunday Street Market June-September, featuring "local artists, cooks, jewelers, musicians, and more." The smaller Tuesday Market, also June-September, features produce, meat, and bakery vendors as well as community programming. The Wholesale Market runs April-November on Monday-Friday to serve those looking to buy in bulk. To sustain and expand on its success, the corporation worked with merchants, customers, vendors, residents, government, and other stakeholders to create the Eastern Market 2025 Strategy, a document to guide economic development in the district.

New ballpark anchors development at regional crossroads

For 70 years, the corner of Auburn Road and Moscone Drive in Utica could never be confused with a place for recreation or entertainment. Once a landfill, the site sat unused for decades. After years of fruitless proposals and scuttled developments, Jimmy John's Field now sits proudly as the home of the independent United Shore Professional Baseball League and a cornerstone of Utica's downtown reinvention.

According to Andy Appleby, the chairman, CEO, and founder of the league, "We were able to take the town landfill and turn it into Disneyworld." The park is situated at the border of Macomb and Oakland Counties along M-59 between Van Dyke and Mound Roads. "For us, it's one of the best locations in the country," Appleby said.

While the ballpark strikes an impressive profile now, the City of Utica churned in frustration for years with the unrealized potential of a contaminated site. "About 10 years ago, a developer cleaned three or four acres but left the spoils from those parcels at the rear of the site," said Jacqueline K. Noonan, Mayor of Utica. "In 2008, a condominium development was started but abandoned because of the Great Recession," Noonan said.

Partnership leads to success

As the region began to emerge from the recession, speculators suggested different options for the site, including recreation, an online university, and retail. By 2011, baseball had emerged as the preferred option for development with multiple initiatives proposed. While the city wanted a ballpark, it would not be able to build it alone.

A public-private partnership was formed among three organizations: the City of Utica, the Utica Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Appleby's Rochester-based General Sports and Entertainment LLC (the parent company of the United Shore League). The DDA demolished the abandoned condo development. General Sports built the stadium. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and Macomb County assisted with environmental remediation on the site. The city leased land for the stadium and parking to General Sports at one dollar per year for up to 50 years.



"The economic impacts of this new development are far-reaching," said Noonan. She estimates up to 40 percent more business activity in Utica and ancillary benefits for neighboring communities. With the United Shore League's inaugural season in the books and its first championship claimed by the Utica Unicorns, expansion is on the horizon. The three-team league will add a fourth team in 2017. All games are currently played at Jimmy John's Field, but Appleby is confident that the success of the showcase park will lead to construction of more across the region along with further expansion of the league.



Major league experience at a minor league park

Appleby considers Jimmy John's Field a passion project many years in the making, as he drew from his sports management experience working with the NBA's Detroit Pistons, English Championship (soccer) League's Derby County, and the Single-A minor league baseball Fort

"The economic impacts of this new development are far-reaching."

– Jacqueline K. Noonan, Mayor of Utica

Wayne TinCaps. "What we've created here is very much of a premium experience for everyone," Appleby said. Park and league features include:

- A maximum spectator capacity of 4,500 (average attendance is 3,200) and more than 400 workers at each game.
- Premium suites 30 feet from where the catcher receives the pitch, a distance Appleby calls the closest in professional baseball history.
- Free haircuts on Wednesdays.
- A new "finishing school" for players; early returns include five players "graduating" to contracts with Major League Baseball organizations.
- A playground and wiffle ball field that allow kids at the park to play ball in addition to watching it.

Bus tour launches from ballpark



SEMCOG members received a behind-the-scenes tour of Jimmy John's Field at the start of a recent bus tour of regional bicycle and pedestrian improvements. It was a short walk westward from the ballpark to the Hike and Bike Trail along the Clinton River. This trail is a key segment of both the statewide (2,000+ mile) Iron Belle Trail and Macomb County's 70-mile loop trail. The group then traveled to Downtown Clawson to walk through three pedestrian and bicycle mid-block crossing islands, which complement the downtown's streetscape enhancements, providing safe

crossing options and enhancing access for a growing shopping district. Lastly, the tour visited Ferndale to experience streetscape enhancements along 9 Mile Road and Livernois. These projects include reduced automobile traffic lanes to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, midblock crossings, buffered bike lanes, porous paving on-street parking, and bicycle-storage facilities. Ferndale is also part of a 17-mile bicycle network connecting its neighboring communities of Royal Oak, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Oak Park, and Pleasant Ridge through a series of signage, pavement markings, and pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements.



TIP investment makes regional, local impact

Southeast Michigan's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a four-year schedule of projects that implements the region's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Each year, SEMCOG conducts a survey of communities and agencies to chronicle the projects that have been implemented, benchmark the types of transportation investment being made, and evaluate how effectively RTP projects have been executed.

The 2015 survey shows that TIP projects implement high-priority RTP policies focused on reliable, quality infrastructure. As illustrated in the chart on the right, maintaining highway infrastructure through preservation projects — including 776 lane-miles of preservation over the past year — accounted for more than half of the total investment.

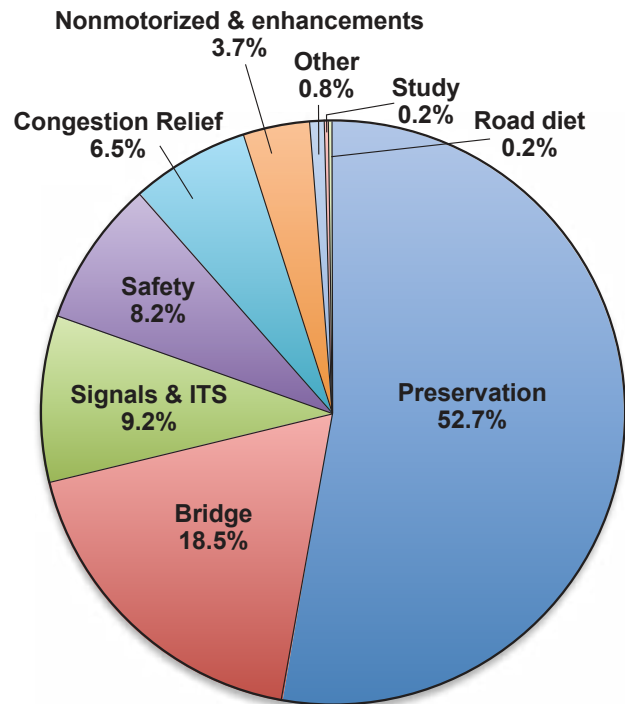
The 2015 investment totaled just under \$1 billion, which is consistent with transportation investment in recent years. This included \$684 million to fund 256 highway projects and \$349 million for transit with the majority of transit investment going to operations. Funding supports hundreds of projects in the region. It is important to summarize the projects and see how they match up with regional goals. It is also important to look at the benefits of specific projects.

Project yields significant results in safety, congestion relief, and walking & biking improvements

Let's consider one example: the US-23 and Geddes Road interchange in Washtenaw County. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) worked in partnership with the City of Ann Arbor and the Washtenaw County Road Commission to address several issues at this location:

- Significant delays as stoplight signals struggled to meet needs of randomly arriving traffic exiting M-23,
- Safety concerns,
- Ease of pedestrian and bicycle travel through the area.

FY 2015 highway detail by project type (millions of dollars)



Project Type	Cost (millions)	Percent of total highway
Preservation	\$334.2	52.7%
Bridge	\$117.3	18.5%
Signals & ITS	\$58.3	9.2%
Safety	\$52.1	8.2%
Congestion Relief	\$41.4	6.5%
Nonmotorized & enhancements	\$23.2	3.7%
Other	\$5.2	0.8%
Study	\$1.5	0.2%
Road diet	\$1.2	0.2%
Total	\$634.5	100.0%

US-23 and Geddes Road interchange in Washtenaw County

Before



After



After years of study, analysis of options, and public input, a project design was completed to make several enhancements to the interchange corridor, including:

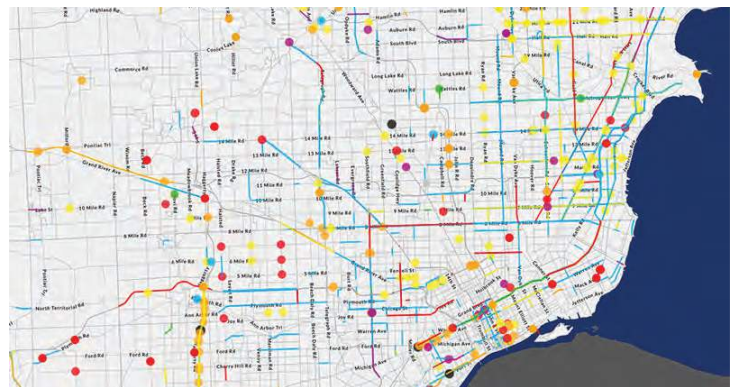
- Converting three signalized intersections to roundabouts, including two at the US-23 ramps and one at the intersection of Geddes and Earhart Road (location of Concordia University);
- Modifying expressway ramps;
- Creating a new asphalt bicycle and pedestrian path and bridge;
- Adding new sidewalks and lighting;
- Landscaping and drainage improvements; and
- Utility replacements.

The total project cost was \$6.9 million, with positive results. There is better traffic flow coming off US-23 and improved connectivity for walking and biking between the City of Ann Arbor and Ann Arbor Township in this corridor. Safety has also improved.

Whether looking at the numbers on a regional level to see how transportation investment supports the quality of our infrastructure or focusing on a local project to see how it can make daily life easier and safer, the impact of TIP investment is real and significant. In the next issue of Semscope, we will look at how the FY2017-2020 TIP lays out further improvements to Southeast Michigan's infrastructure.

Total crashes at the US-23 and Geddes Road intersections have decreased by approximately 27 percent since converting to roundabouts, including a 57 percent reduction in crashes with fatalities and injuries. Washtenaw County Road Commission is engaged in ongoing education initiatives on how to safely use roundabouts. These include media coverage, workshops, partnerships with other agencies, videos, community conversations, and presentations. The road commission has also gathered input from road users to guide these efforts.

Implemented Transportation Construction Projects, 2010 - 2015



This map, available on SEMCOG's Website, includes projects implemented under Southeast Michigan's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

SEMCOG's Fall General Assembly

October 13, 2016 • MSU Management Education Center • Troy



SEMCOG Chair, Rod Green, Superior Township Trustee, welcomed attendees. "I hope you find this event beneficial," he said. "We all know that SEMCOG is an excellent source of information and data about our region, and today's event will put you closely in touch with those resources."

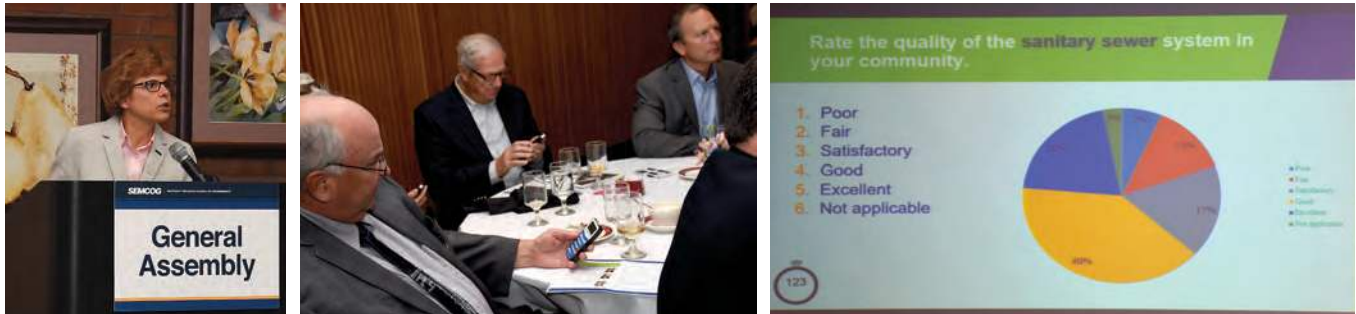


The Fall General Assembly followed a new format this year beginning with a lunchtime session followed by an afternoon of issue-specific workshops.



(Left) Keynote speaker Tim Skubick, veteran Lansing Capital Correspondent, provided a lighthearted look at the 2016 elections. His final remarks to the elected officials in the room were serious. "Thank you for serving. It is a tremendous personal sacrifice to serve. We don't thank politicians enough."

(Upper right) Tim Skubick interacts with Tom Borton from Lima Township and (lower right) Bryan Barnett, Mayor of Rochester Hills.



SEMCOG Executive Director Kathleen Lomako led attendees in an interactive exercise to gauge input on a variety of topics useful to SEMCOG as policies are shaped to move Southeast Michigan forward. Through keypad voting, attendees weighed in on several water-related questions – quality of the drinking water system, quality of sanitary sewer infrastructure, and quality of the storm drainage system. Answers to these questions will provide input to SEMCOG’s Water Resources Task Force as they work to update Southeast Michigan’s water resources plan.



Michael Bosanac, Monroe County Administrator, was one of several SEMCOG members interviewed for a series of promotional videos SEMCOG is creating. Additional filming occurred at the General Assembly and continues throughout the region. Watch *Regional Update* for information on these videos.



Two sets of afternoon breakout sessions followed. The sessions gave attendees an opportunity to learn about SEMCOG’s planning initiatives and how they are being successfully implemented in the region as described by local elected officials and others working in the implementing communities. The sessions covered a variety of topics including community marketing, green infrastructure, economic development, education partnerships, bike and pedestrian travel, and SEMCOG’s data resources.

SEMCOG works on 2045 forecast; your help needed

Every five years, SEMCOG produces a long-range, socio-economic, and demographic forecast. It provides a detailed outlook on the region's employment by industry; population by age and race; households by lifecycle; as well as land-use changes and transportation needs. These long-range forecast numbers are used for regional and local planning for transportation and other infrastructure.

Since the 2040 forecast, completed in 2012, new emerging trends and data are available. SEMCOG's 2045 forecast begins with analyzing big trends that may profoundly affect our region's future, and helps us develop visions and policies to achieve a desirable future.

Some big trends we'll be considering

Future mobility/service economy: Connected vehicles, autonomous driving, and shared rides may provide an opportunity for Southeast Michigan to leverage its economic strength in the automotive industry to expand, diversify, and modernize the region's economy in related industries, such as information, communication, and automation. Some of the car companies are positioning themselves as mobility service companies in addition to vehicle manufacturers. It may add new jobs, helping the region's overall economic growth. However, such technology, coupled with changing consumer taste and preferences, like car sharing, may also mean fewer cars and trucks sold in the future.

Question: If we continue to see our economy shifting from making goods to providing services, how will that affect the way we prepare our workforce and educate future generations?

Changing demographics: Our population is aging, and we're going to see the pace accelerate, as more and more baby boomers enter their senior years. Labor shortage will be a problem for our economy. This trend may impact future services.

Question: With birth rates declining and death rates going up, what kind of immigration policy should we pursue to grow population?

These trends will impact Southeast Michigan communities and affect our planning work. They provide both opportunities and challenges and additional questions to consider:

What are the new requirements for infrastructure that smart cars, buses, and trucks will rely on? How will we pay for it?

What type of housing do we need for the future? What are our parks and recreation needs?

How many high-skilled jobs can be created? And what are the effects on income distribution?

No single forecast can deal with all future uncertainties. SEMCOG is analyzing some of these big trends and developing alternative forecast scenarios, to understand the effects of big trends on our region's future.

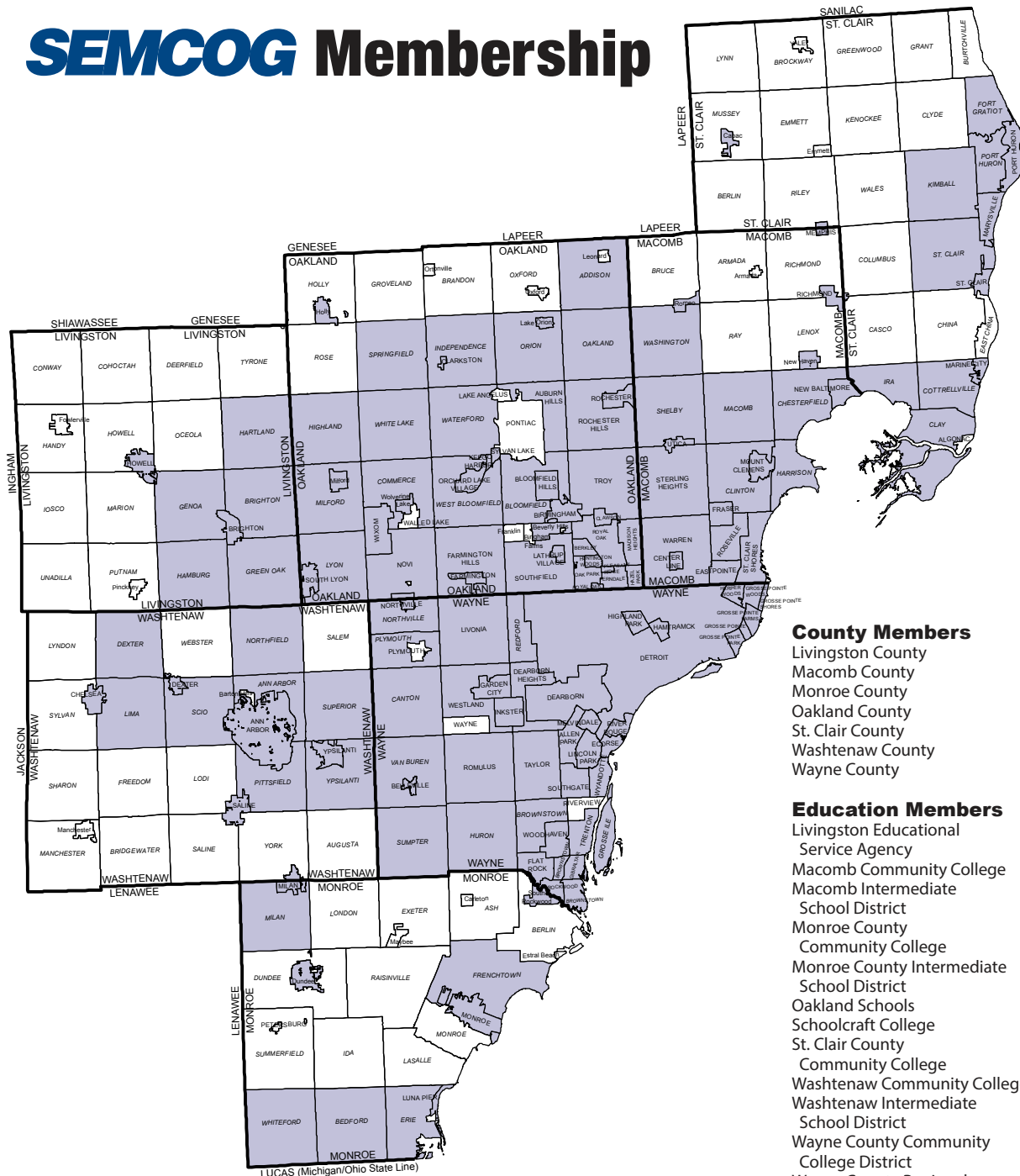
Your feedback

The forecast is not only a product of computer models and analysis by staff and consultants, but also a process of intensive review by community leaders, planners, and other data users in the region.

You can help develop the 2045 forecast. Provide your thoughts on other big trends that may affect the region, and how communities prepare for them. They may become critical input into SEMCOG forecast scenarios.

Send your thoughts and information to Xuan Liu, liu@semcog.org, or 313-324-3441.

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SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, is the only organization in Southeast Michigan that brings together all governments to develop regional solutions for both now and in the future. SEMCOG:

- Promotes informed decision making to improve Southeast Michigan and its local governments by providing insightful data analysis and direct assistance to member governments;
- Promotes the efficient use of tax dollars for infrastructure investment and governmental effectiveness;
- Develops regional solutions that go beyond the boundaries of individual local governments; and
- Advocates on behalf of Southeast Michigan in Lansing and Washington