

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Sheboygan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) April 2021



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What is the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process?

Transportation planning in metropolitan planning areas is a collaborative process led by the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and other key stakeholders in the metropolitan transportation system. This process is designed to foster involvement by all interested parties (including the business community, community groups, environmental organizations and the general public) through a proactive public participation process conducted by the MPO in coordination with the state department of transportation and the transit operator.

The metropolitan transportation planning process is aimed at developing programs to meet a metropolitan planning area's transportation needs by analyzing the existing system and preparing plans and studies in a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing manner. This process is federally required as a condition for receipt of federal highway and transit funds.

These plans and programs are the basis for the development and operation of an integrated, intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient and economic movement of people and goods.

It is important to remember that the planning process does not extend to the funding and implementation of projects and programs; that responsibility rests with the legislative and executive branches of state and local governments.

What is the Sheboygan MPO?

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (Commission) was designated the MPO for the Sheboygan urbanized area in 1982. The Commission was designated the MPO after results of the 1980 U.S. Census determined that the population of the urbanized area (Cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls, Village of Kohler, and adjacent portions of surrounding towns) exceeded 50,000. Pursuant to the Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1973 (as amended in subsequent legislation over the years), all urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000 are required to have an MPO to carry out transportation planning functions.

All transportation planning activities conducted by the MPO are reviewed by technical and policy advisory committees (see pages 9 and 10):

- The MPO Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of transportation and planning staff at the municipal, county, state and federal levels of government; individuals representing airport, bicycle, pedestrian and rail modal interests; and individuals with air quality, water quality, highway safety and land use planning perspectives.
- The MPO Policy Advisory Committee is comprised of one elected executive (or their alternate) from each city, village and town in the metropolitan planning area, the Sheboygan County Board chairperson (or their alternate), as well as officials from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Northeast Region office and the Sheboygan Parking and Transit Utility Commission.

Once the MPO Technical and Policy Advisory Committees (which usually meet jointly) recommend approval of a planning document to the Commission, the Commission takes final action on the document as the MPO for the Sheboygan urbanized area. The Commission is an eight-county regional planning organization, with Sheboygan County being one of six member counties. Each member county (including Sheboygan County) has three voting representatives on the Commission, with non-member counties having one non-voting representative on the Commission.

Required MPO Activities and Planning Documents

As the federally mandated agency for ensuring a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive

planning process, the Commission plays a significant role in the coordination of transportation activities and in the programming of transportation-related funds in the Sheboygan metropolitan planning area. The Commission has four essential functions as the MPO for the Sheboygan metropolitan planning area:

- To establish a neutral setting for regional cooperation and decision making;
- To evaluate transportation alternatives (as outlined in the Transportation Planning Work Program) that are relevant to the area;
- To develop and update a long-range transportation plan with a minimum 20-year planning horizon; and
- To develop a short-range (minimum four year) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that conforms to the long-range transportation plan.

The Commission also has a fifth function that integrates public involvement into the decision-making processes of the four essential functions. The Commission has approved a separate document, the Public Participation Plan, which specifically addresses public participation activities. Other elements that have been added to the planning process in recent years have been performance target setting and the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects.

Long-Range Transportation Plan

The Update to the *Year 2045 Sheboygan Area Transportation Plan* is the official long-range transportation plan for the Sheboygan metropolitan planning area. Based upon projected transportation needs, the Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* identified short-range and long-range strategies and actions that should ultimately lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the safe, efficient and economic movement of people and goods.

The Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* was approved in April 2019 following nearly three years of planning effort and 18 meetings of the MPO advisory committees wholly or partially focused on plan development. The Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* was approved to conform to the most recent federal surface transportation legislation at that time (the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation” (FAST) Act, signed into law in December 2015).

The long-range transportation plan must be updated at least once every four years, and may be amended as necessary. An update to the long-range transportation plan is under development, and will be approved by April 2023.

Current long-range transportation plan information can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/long-range-transportation-planning>

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a short-range (four year) program that allocates transportation funds among the priority projects in the metropolitan planning area. The TIP identifies and establishes the implementation priority for state and local transportation projects to be funded in part with federal highway and transit funds. In addition, “regionally significant” projects requiring an action by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must be included in the TIP even when federal highway or transit funds are not used. The project listing indicates projects that are fiscally constrained, which means that the projects can reasonably expect to be funded within the timeframe of the TIP. “Illustrative” projects can be included in the TIP, but are not officially part of the TIP, since these projects have yet to have their costs determined and/or have yet to obtain funding.

The 2021 – 2024 TIP was approved in October 2020. The 2021 – 2024 TIP has been amended

twice as of early April of 2021 to modify transit capital items, to program an elderly and disabled transportation capital project, to add Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP) projects, and to make cost and timing adjustments and add a project to the street and highway improvement project component of the TIP.

Staff will develop a 2022 – 2025 *TIP* in the coming months, with approval expected in October of 2021.

Although the *TIP* is a four-year program, it is normally updated every year, and is subsequently incorporated into the Wisconsin Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) developed by WisDOT. All projects proposed to be funded with FHWA or FTA funds must be included in the STIP for joint FHWA and FTA approval. In addition to Commission approval, the *TIP* is approved by the Governor or his/her designee (the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation). The *TIP* may be amended as necessary.

Current *TIP* information can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/transportation-improvement-program-tip>

Transportation Planning Work Program

The Transportation Planning Work Program lists MPO related transportation studies and activities to be conducted by the Commission staff and/or contracted agencies over a one-year period. The funding sources, the responsible entities for each study or activity, and the relative timeframe for each study or activity are identified and illustrated in a schedule of activities. The Transportation Planning Work Program is revisited and updated annually, and may be amended during the program year.

Current information on the Transportation Planning Work Program can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/about/sheboygan-mpo-work-program>

Public Participation Plan

The metropolitan transportation planning process must “include a proactive public participation process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and *TIPs*.” MPO staff worked with the MPO advisory committees in 2020 to develop an updated Public Participation Plan which reflects changes in federal legislation resulting from the FAST Act. The Public Participation Plan involved preliminary consultation and a 45-day public comment period, and was approved by the Commission at its September 2020 meeting.

Current information on the Public Participation Plan can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/about/sheboygan-mpo-public-participation-plan>

Performance Target Setting

Performance target setting has been a relatively recent required part of the metropolitan transportation planning process. The performance target setting process has better informed the MPO as the long-range transportation plan is developed and as projects are selected for inclusion in the *TIP*. Some of the performance targets that the Commission gets involved with include the following:

- Transit Asset Management (TAM, in cooperation with Shoreline Metro, approved annually);
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP, in cooperation with WisDOT, approved annually);
- Pavement Condition, Bridge Condition, and Emission Reductions Associated with the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program (in cooperation with WisDOT,

developed at a minimum every four years, with possible modifications every two years); and

- Public Transit Agency Safety Plan (PTASP, in cooperation with Shoreline Metro, approved annually).

In addition, the Commission produces an annual Transportation System Performance Indicators report that is presented to members of the MPO advisory committees every December.

Current information on performance target setting can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/short-range-transportation-planning/performance-targets-and-indicators>

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

Federal law requires MPOs to publish an annual listing of obligated projects from the previous calendar year. This information must be published on the MPO webpage by March 31. Information used to create this listing is typically supplied to Commission staff by FHWA Wisconsin Division staff and FTA Region 5 staff, with additional assistance provided by WisDOT and Shoreline Metro staff.

Current information regarding the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects can be found at: https://baylakerpc.org/application/files/1016/1228/2244/PDF_Copy_of_2020_Annual_Obligated_Projects.pdf

Other MPO Activities

Other MPO activities that are not mandated, but are frequently a part of the work program, include the following:

- Review and comment on state transportation plans (overall and modal plans) and programs;
- Planning assistance to local units of government or to WisDOT (if requested);
- Completion of transit development programs (TDPs) for Shoreline Metro (current information on the latest TDP can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/sheboygan-mpo/shoreline-metro-transit-development-program-tdp>);
- Completion of special studies for Shoreline Metro (as requested by the Director of the Sheboygan Parking and Transit Utility); and
- Development of Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Coordination Plans for Sheboygan County (current information on the latest plan can be found at: <https://baylakerpc.org/services/transportation/regional-transportation/coordinated-public-transit-human-services-transportation-plans>).

Items that Must be Considered in All Planning Activities

Air Quality Conformity

The Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 have impacted transportation planning in the Sheboygan metropolitan planning area. For Sheboygan County, the CAAA regulations continue to require reductions in emissions of ozone precursors such as volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. The CAAA regulations require that long-range transportation plans and TIPs be consistent with the motor vehicle emissions budgets established in the State Implementation Plan for air quality in Sheboygan County developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin SIP does not currently commit either air quality conformity analysis area in Sheboygan County to any transportation control measures.

The “shoreline” portion of Sheboygan County (mostly east of Interstate Highway 43) is in nonattainment of the 2015 standard for ground-level ozone. The remainder of Sheboygan County

is in attainment of the 2015 standard for ground-level ozone, but is a maintenance area for the 2008 standard for ground-level ozone. Both areas have separate sets of motor vehicle emissions budgets, as well as different years for those budgets. The current long-range transportation plan and TIP were found to conform to the emissions budgets for all of Sheboygan County that were established in a previous version of the Wisconsin SIP. The Commission intends to demonstrate conformity against the new emissions budgets for both parts of Sheboygan County as the next TIP is developed later in 2021.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 – Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations was issued in 1994. This Executive Order was issued in response to public concerns that certain populations were bearing a large part of the adverse impacts associated with government actions; among cases cited were some associated with transportation, such as freeway building. Each federal agency, including the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), was directed to make environmental justice a part of its mission. In an effort to implement Executive Order 12898, the USDOT issued DOT Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations in 1997.

According to the USDOT, there are three fundamental principles at the core of environmental justice:

1. To avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and on low-income populations;
2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process; and
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

All long-range transportation plans and TIPs are analyzed for compliance with this directive, and the MPO Public Participation Plan was revised to better comply with this directive. The Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* has a fairly detailed environmental justice impact analysis, while the *2021 – 2024 TIP* has a simpler analysis that relies on the more detailed analysis in the Update to the *Year 2045 SATP*.

Fiscal Constraint

Both the long-range transportation plan and the TIP must be fiscally constrained documents. This means that the plan and TIP must indicate that funding from public and private sources can be reasonably expected to be available to carry out the planned projects along with the operations and maintenance of the existing system.

Fiscal constraint is addressed in the “Financial Plan” chapter of the Update to the *Year 2045 SATP*, and is also addressed in a section of the main body of the TIP.

The long-range transportation plan and the TIP may contain “illustrative” or “visionary” projects that illustrate the long-term goals and objectives of the metropolitan planning area whose costs and funding sources have yet to be determined.

Current Work Program Activities (2021)

- Preparation of the 2022 MPO Work Program.
- Coordination of approximately seven joint meetings of the Sheboygan MPO Technical and Policy Advisory Committees in 2021.
- Continued preparation of the next long-range transportation plan due in April 2023.

Sheboygan MPO

- Discussion and coordination of MAP-21/FAST Act performance measurements and establishment of state and MPO performance targets, including working to align the Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* with USDOT performance management rules.
- Continue to work with WisDOT on the development of statewide transportation plans, including *Connect 2050*, *Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050*, and potential planning efforts such as Transportation Demand Management.
- Various public involvement, environmental justice and Title VI activities.
- Planning assistance to local units of government and to WisDOT (if requested).
- Continue to collect data for those performance indicators that can be tracked annually, and share such data with members of the MPO advisory committees.
- Completion of special studies for Shoreline Metro (as requested by the Director of the Sheboygan Parking and Transit Utility).
- Continue to provide technical assistance to Shoreline Metro and to the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) on employment transportation issues in the Sheboygan metropolitan planning area.
- Assistance in preparing possible amendments to the *2020 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan for Sheboygan County*.
- Processing of amendments to the *2021 – 2024 TIP*.
- Preparation and approval of the *2022 – 2025 TIP*, including an air quality conformity analysis on both the Update to the *Year 2045 SATP* and the *2022 – 2025 TIP*.
- Preparation of a mid-year report on the progress of projects in the TIP for members of the MPO advisory committees.

Key Meetings in 2021

Joint meetings of the Sheboygan MPO Technical and Policy Advisory Committees are tentatively scheduled for the following dates for the remainder of 2021 (all meetings are to start at 1:00 p.m., and all meetings will either be held in the Sheboygan area or held virtually; even if meetings are held in the Sheboygan area, a virtual option will always be available):

- May 27, 2021;
- September 2, 2021;
- October 28, 2021; and
- December 9, 2021.

MPO staff reserves the right to call special meetings of the Sheboygan MPO Technical and Policy Advisory Committees in order to complete tasks in a timely manner.

Membership of the Sheboygan Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee

The following pages contain the members of the MPO's Technical and Policy Advisory Committees. Membership is subject to change.

Sheboygan Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee

Evan Gross (for Kelley Brookins) (Ex-Officio Member)
FTA Region 5
Chicago

Kevin Struck
Growth Management Educator
Sheboygan County UW Extension
Sheboygan

Steve Sokolowski
City of Sheboygan Dept. of Planning and Development
Sheboygan

Aaron Brault
Sheboygan County Planning and Conservation Department
Sheboygan

Brad Sippel, Urban Planning Section
WisDOT Bureau of Planning & Economic Development
Madison

Greg Schnell, Director*
Sheboygan County Transportation Dept.
Sheboygan

Mitch Batuzich (Ex-Officio Member)
Federal Highway Administration, Wisconsin Division
Madison

Ryan Sazama
City of Sheboygan DPW Engineering Division
Sheboygan

Jerry Benzschawel, Director
City of Sheboygan Falls Public Works Department
Sheboygan Falls

Derek Muench, Director**
Shoreline Metro
Sheboygan

Steve Hirshfeld
WisDOT Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors
Madison

Sandra Carpenter
WisDOT Northeast Region
Green Bay

Ryan Welsing
Village of Howards Grove
Howards Grove

Matthew Grenoble
Sheboygan Co. Memorial Airport
Sheboygan Falls

David Bizot
Bureau of Air Management
Wisconsin DNR
Madison

Al Bosman
Eastern WI Counties Railroad Consortium
Sheboygan

David Smith
Bicycling Advocate
Sheboygan

David Biebel, Director
Department of Public Works
City of Sheboygan

Christopher Bovee
Bureau of Air Management
Wisconsin DNR
Madison

Jeremiah Schiefelbein
Wisconsin DNR Northeast Region
Green Bay

Cory Roeseler
Sheboygan Co. Traffic Safety Commission
Sheboygan

Brett Edgerle
Village of Kohler

*Indicates Committee Chair

**Indicates Committee Vice-Chair

Sheboygan Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Advisory Committee

Vernon Koch, Chairperson*
Sheboygan County Board

Lyman Theobald, Chairperson
Town of Sheboygan Falls

John Ehmann, Chairperson
Town of Wilson

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Ryan Sorenson, Mayor
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Aaron Anger, Chairperson
Town of Mosel

Charles Born, Chairperson**
Town of Lima

Jeff Plass, President
Village of Howards Grove

Heather Cleveland, Chairperson
Sheboygan Transit Commission
Sheboygan

George Marthenze, Chairperson
Town of Herman

Sandra Carpenter (for Colleen Harris, Director)
WisDOT Northeast Region
Green Bay

*Indicates Committee Chair

**Indicates Committee Vice-Chair

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