

The logo for SEMCOG, featuring the acronym in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced, with the 'S' and 'E' being particularly prominent.

SEMCOG

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

A horizontal banner with a dark blue background. It features a white diagonal line on the left side, creating a triangular shape. The text 'SMALL COMMUNITIES PEER GROUP' is written in a white, all-caps, sans-serif font, centered within the banner.

SMALL COMMUNITIES PEER GROUP

An aerial photograph of a small town nestled between a river and a dense forest. The town features a central street with various buildings, including a large white building on the left and a brick building in the center. A yellow truck is visible on the right side of the street. The river flows through the town, and the forest covers the surrounding hills.

Welcome!

Introductions

- **Name & Community**
- **One thing we should all know about your community:**
 - Unique fact, success, upcoming event, etc.



AGENDA

Welcome – *Joe LaRussa, Mayor, City of Farmington and SEMCOG Vice Chair*

Part I

- SEMCOG Overview
- Peer Group Goals
- Community Insights Survey Results
- SEMCOG Resources

Part II

- Open Dialogue, Feedback, and Direction from the Participants

Wrap Up and Next Steps

ABOUT SEMCOG

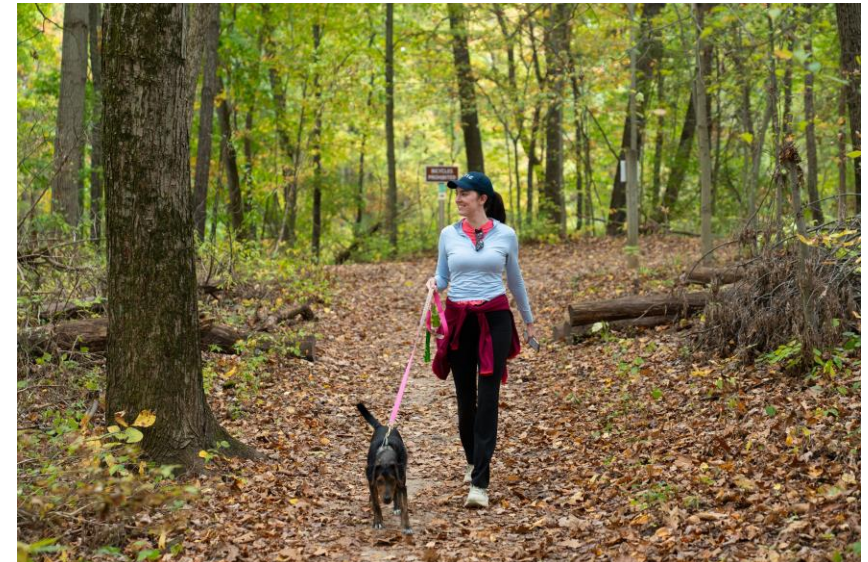
Regional Planning Agency

- Transportation (MPO)
- Infrastructure
- Environment
- Economic Development
- Education & Workforce
- Data Analysis

**Designated transportation, air, water,
economic development agency**

Membership Organization

- Counties
- Cities, villages and townships
- Community Colleges, ISDs



SEMCOG MEMBERS

★ 186 ★
TOTAL

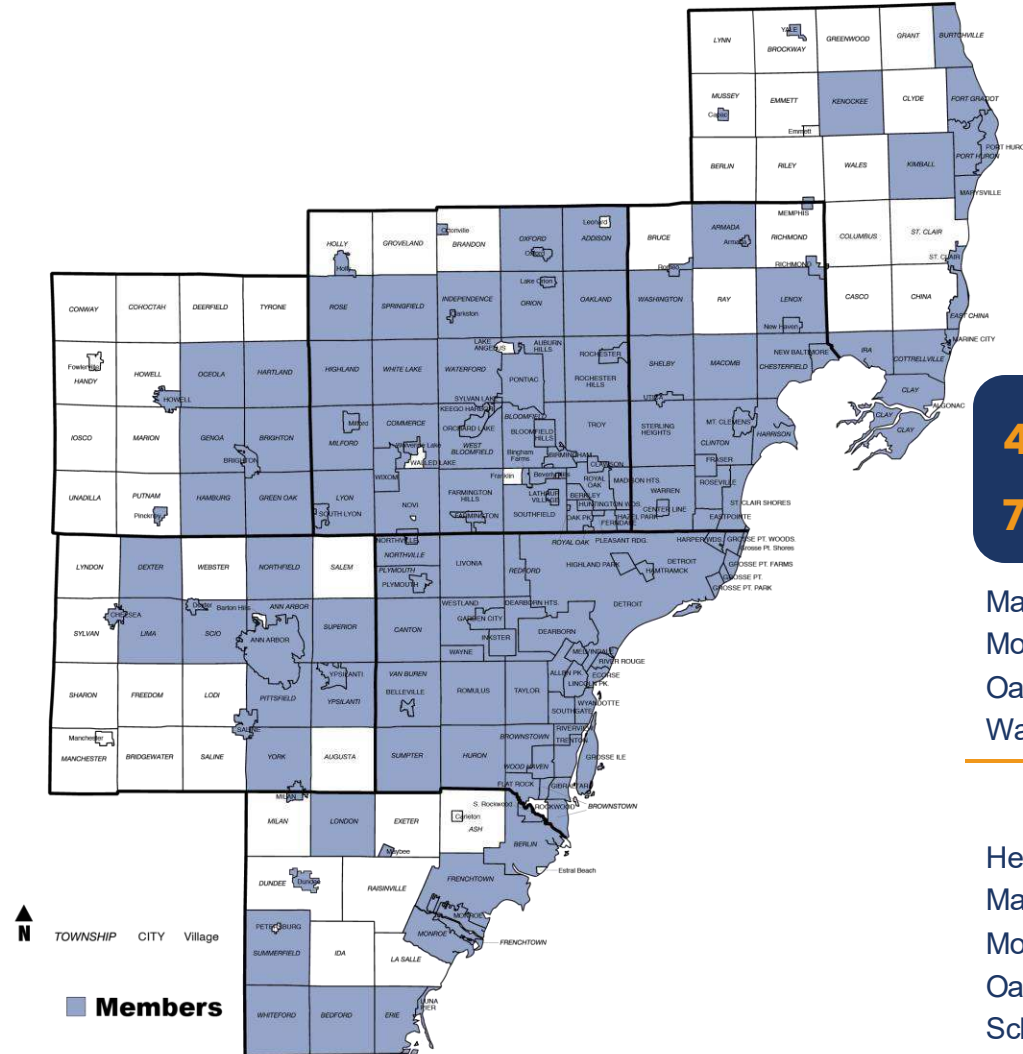
87 CITIES

16 VILLAGES

65 TOWNSHIPS

7 COUNTIES

Livingston, Macomb, Monroe,
Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw,
and Wayne



4 ISDs

7 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Macomb Intermediate School District
Monroe County Intermediate School District
Oakland Schools
Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency

Henry Ford College
Macomb Community College
Monroe Community College
Oakland Community College
Schoolcraft College
Washtenaw Community College
Wayne County Community College District

SEMCOG VISION

All people of Southeast Michigan benefit from a connected, thriving region of small towns, dynamic urban centers, active waterfronts, diverse neighborhoods, premiere educational institutions and abundant agricultural, recreational, and natural areas.



MEMBER EVENTS

- **General Assembly**
- **SEMCOG University**
- **Networking opportunities**
- **Grant training**
- **Member Meetups**
- **Committees/Task Forces**



SEMCOG PEER GROUPS INITIATIVE

- **Types of Peer Groups:**

- Urban Communities
- Suburban Communities
- Small Communities
- Rural Communities
- Education

- **Goals of Peer Group Committees:**

- Providing space for collaboration & knowledge sharing
- Connecting peers to information & resources
- Ensuring needs & challenges are heard & recognized in regional planning
- Working with federal & state partners to ensure priorities & resources reflect the unique needs of all communities

GOAL 1

- **Providing a space for collaboration & sharing of opportunities, best practices, challenges, and successes**



Crisis Management Workshop



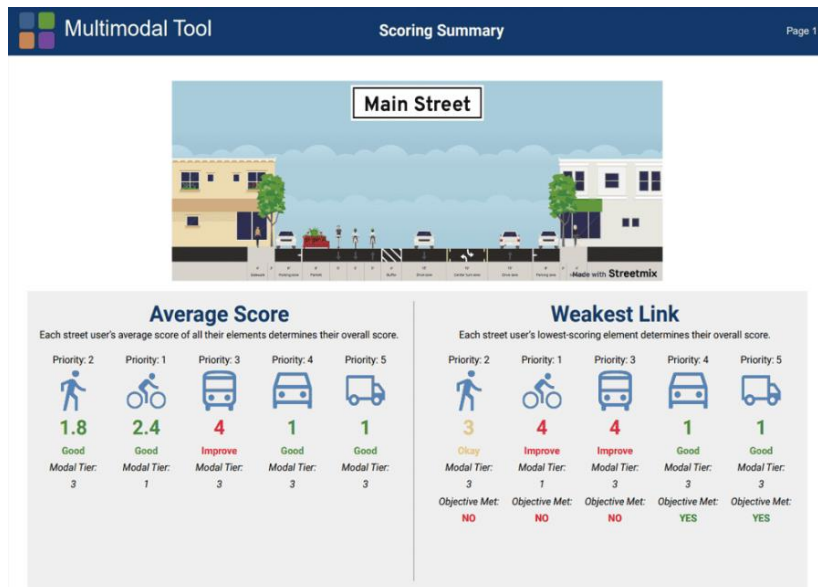
Member Meet-Up (Monroe – River
Raison National Battlefield Park)



Topic Specific Data and Tools –
General Assembly, June 2025

GOAL 2

- Connecting peers to information & resources specific to their needs & challenges



SEMCOG's Planning Assistance Program provides direct funding for local planning projects that move regional plans and priorities forward. Since its launch in 2019, this program has awarded over \$3.8 million through competitive grants to over 100 projects – ranging from planning projects on transportation safety, accessibility and corridor analysis, trails and greenways, sustainable infrastructure, and pedestrian placemaking.

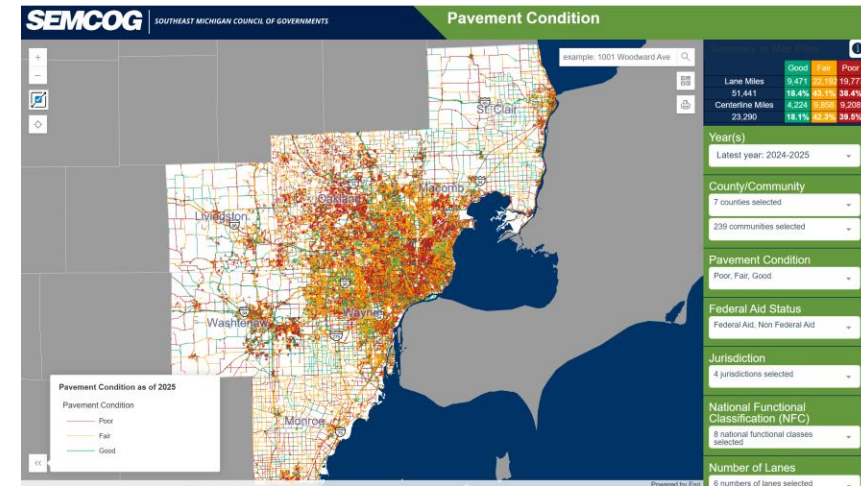
SEMCOG will be issuing an announcement for FY2027 funding availability in April, with applications due in June 2026. As with previous years, these will be one-year grants beginning on July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2027.



Funded by the Planning Assistance Program

In FY2026, SEMCOG awarded nearly \$500,000 to 13 projects across the region. Please visit the Planning Assistance Program's interactive map (QR code below) to learn more about all the successfully completed and recently awarded projects, including final products that may provide inspiration or guidance for your community.

Questions? Contact Katie Grantham at grantham@semcog.org



GOAL 3

- Ensuring needs & challenges of all member types are heard & recognized in regional planning & initiatives



STRATEGIES, GOALS, AND ACTIONS

STRATEGY 1: CULTIVATING A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Strengthen policies, infrastructure, and partnerships that position Southeast Michigan as a top destination for investment and innovation.

Actions:

- Build the capacity for emerging industry growth clusters to succeed in the region.
- Expand global trade and connect businesses with resources dedicated to expanding investment and opportunities.
- Support community and economic development incentives that attract a wide array of business investment, create quality places, and strengthen communities while including safeguards to ensure community benefits of development are realized.
- Work with research and development assets (e.g., universities) to help drive innovation that supports vital and emerging business clusters.
- Establish a clearinghouse of best practices for improving the economy and for local governments working with businesses.
- Leverage technology to strengthen economic opportunities from Industry 4.0.
- Identify the roles of federal, State, and local governments in planning, investing in, and promoting technology-based economic development.
- Support business growth by improving the ease and cost of conducting business in a manner that meets

community values and maintains vital public services and infrastructure.

- Engage in multi-community business site location efforts and develop collaborative relations among communities and stakeholders to attract large-scale business investment.
- Market and promote internationally the attractiveness of expanding or locating businesses to a region where there is a concentration of workers, supply-chain networks, research and development facilities, and educational institutions to support new businesses.
- Expand and support regional site readiness programs and strengthen collaboration to identify priority industrial sites, complete early assessments, and coordinate local resources.

STRATEGY 2: SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH

Goal: Expand access to capital, technical assistance, and networks that empower startups and small enterprises to thrive.

Actions:

- Engage government, private sector, education institutions, workforce development, nonprofit organizations, industry associations, and the financial community to strengthen the environment for startups and small businesses.
- Identify the roles of federal, State, and local governments in planning, investing in, and promoting technology-based economic development.
- Provide information on available resources and initiatives that are available to assist entrepreneurs and small business owners.

GOAL 4

- **Working with federal & state partners to understand priorities & resources that align with & support needs of our diverse communities**



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS SURVEY: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **60% of communities** say they are **facing financial challenges**
 - Most frequently noted challenges: **Local government financing, economic development, road infrastructure, and water/sewer infrastructure**
 - **Structural revenue constraints** and/or **sharply limited staff**
 - Frequently cited strategies: **new efficiency measures/shared services, increased fees/taxes, and use of reserves.**
- Over **80% use traditional line-item budgeting**, but 45% have done some priority-based budgeting.
- Areas in greatest need of efficiency/quality improvements: **public works/infrastructure and community development.**
- 75% prefer **in-person workshops** (webinars also popular)
- **80% prefer to connect** with other leaders via **on-site visits** (remote/online meetings were second).

KEY TAKEAWAYS: SMALL COMMUNITIES

- **68% of “small” communities** say they are **facing financial challenges**
- **What is the most pressing financial challenge?**
 - 60% - Infrastructure maintenance and capital costs
 - 52% - Rising personnel costs (health benefits, pension, etc.)
- **Which areas offer unique challenge and opportunities?**
 - 53% - Road Infrastructure
 - 51% - Local government finance (budgeting, revenue sharing, purchasing, pension liabilities)
 - 50% - Water/sewer infrastructure



Data & Maps

Local Assistance &
Grants

Education &
Engagement

Policy & Advocacy

DATA, MAPPING, AND TOOLS

- *Resources for Community Planning*
- *Access to Core Services*
- *Main Street Handbook*



Resources for Community Planning

SEMCOG SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

SEMCOG DATA & TOOLS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY PLANS

SEMCOG has a number of tools, maps, dashboards, and datasets to support your community planning efforts.

The Big Three...Tools for All Community Plans

Community Profiles

Discover how people live, work, and travel in your community

- **Population data** – forecasted population, population change, older adults and school age population, educational attainment
- **Economic and employment data** – forecasted jobs, daytime population, median household income
- **Housing data** – households, median housing value
- **Transportation data** – pavement condition, bridge data, crash data
- **Land use** – land use data, land cover data, commute data, tree canopy data

Community Explorer

- Population density and additional population data details
- Total households, household size, housing units and housing unit details
- Households with broadband access
- Total jobs and job density, household income, housing value

Open Data Portal

Most of SEMCOG's tools provide users the ability to download the raw data directly from the tool. If not, the Open Data Portal contains many of the data sets which can be downloaded for further analysis.



Scan for all tools and resources listed on this sheet

Additional Tools & Resources

Land Use / Existing Conditions / Demographic Trends

- **Building Footprint Data** – includes commercial, institutional, retail, community centers, libraries, etc.
- **Land Use and Land Cover** – includes impervious land and tree canopy by community
- **Population and Households** – includes census data and latest American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for various indicators by community
- **Regional Forecast** – long-range & comprehensive view of future development & economic changes
- **Regional Development** – includes both nonresidential and residential development for the region
- **Regional Photography** – high-resolution imagery, elevation data, and historic imagery dating back to 1949
- **Aerial Photography** – high-resolution imagery, elevation data, and historic imagery dating back to 1949

Parks and Recreation / Sustainability / Resiliency

- **GREEN Dashboard** – community and regional data for tree canopy, wetlands, land conservation, recreational access, and green stormwater infrastructure
- **Access to Parks** – identify gaps in park accessibility for your community
- **ParkFinder** – information on 3,000 parks, and over 1,000 miles of trails, including amenities, and park type
- **Land Cover and Tree Canopy** – including impervious land and tree canopy by county and by sector
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory** – includes a summary of emissions by county and by sector
- **Flood Risk Tool** – displays flood risk for transportation assets including roads, bridges, culverts and pump stations
- **Regional Resiliency Framework** – describes initial planning level priorities at the local, regional and state levels to address flooding in the region

Housing/Neighborhoods

- **Housing Profiles** – includes building permits data, census data, and latest American Community Survey (ACS) estimates by community
- **Residential Construction StoryMap** – includes location and details about residential development for the region
- **Main Street Handbook** – designed to support local communities in revitalizing, enhancing, and/or establishing a main street district.

Economic Development/Employment

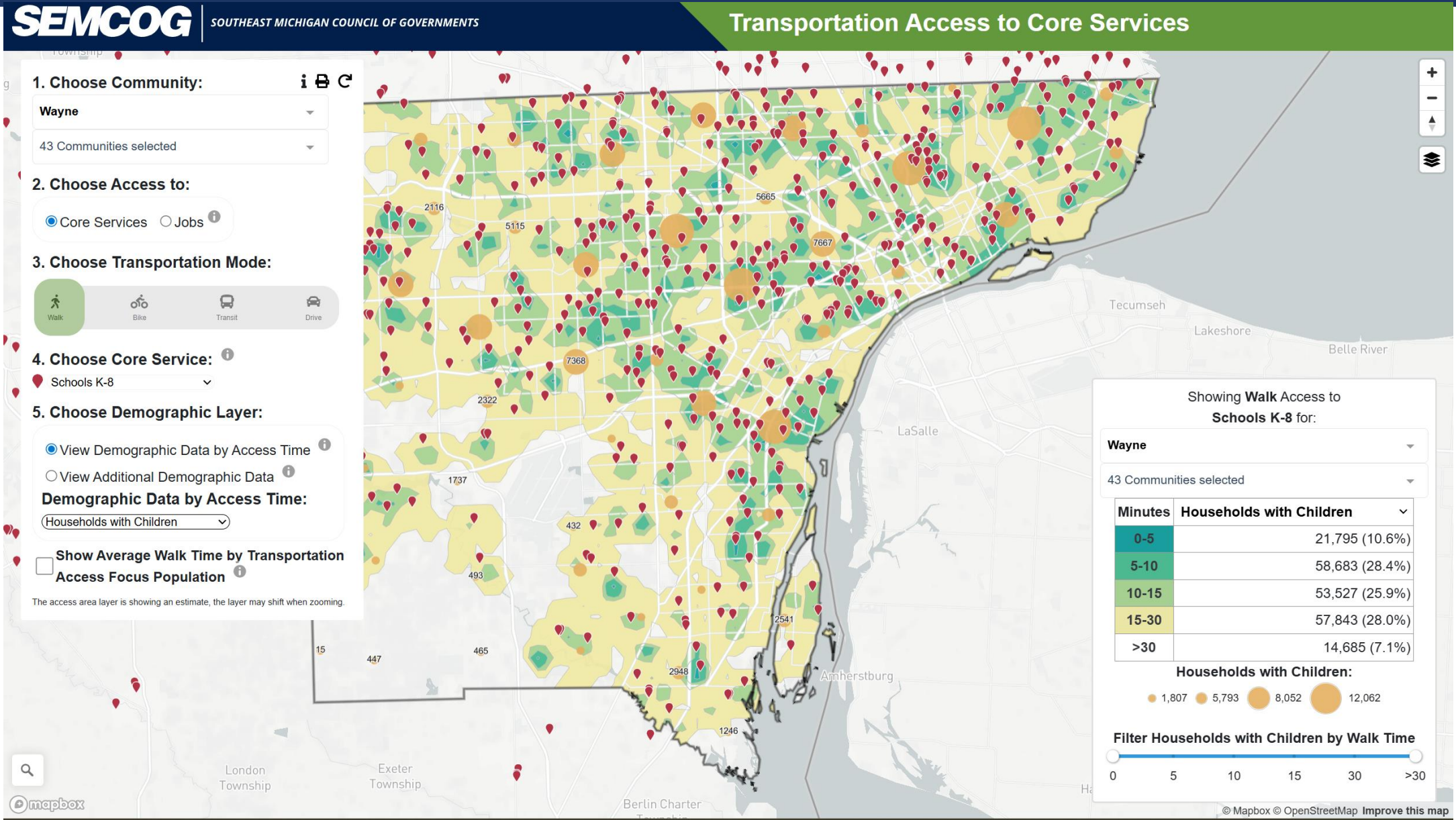
- **Socio-Economic Trends** – includes both Economic Indicators for employment, labor force, income, and housing units and High-Frequency Economic Dashboard for data updated quarterly, monthly, or weekly
- **Economy and Jobs** – includes forecast data by industry sector, daytime population, income, and poverty data by community
- **Employment Density** – shows employment concentrations by industry throughout the region and each community
- **Commuting Patterns** – displays inflow and outflow of residents and workers for each community
- **Broadband Navigator** – provides current information about the availability and importance of fast internet services, commonly known as broadband
- **Laborshed Information** – contains data for where workers live, work, and their commutes between

Transportation/Water Infrastructure

- **Transportation Data by Community** – a variety of transportation data for each community
- **Multimodal Tool** – planning tool for Complete Streets and corridor redevelopment
- **Traffic Volume** – Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) and Vehicle Miles Driven (VMT) data
- **Crash Locations** – current and historic traffic crashes throughout the region
- **Pavement Condition** – current and historic PASER road condition
- **Bridge Condition** – condition rating for over 3,000 bridges in the region
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Network** – data for sidewalks, trails, bikelanes in the region
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts** – includes detailed information on individual pedestrian and bicycle traffic count studies
- **Electric Vehicle Toolkit** – location of current EV infrastructure and analysis of gaps in the region
- **Water Infrastructure Planning Guide** – includes guidance, policies, and actions for local community planning
- **Transportation Access to Core Services** – Geographic data on access to services such as jobs, fixed-route transit, recreational spaces, grocery stores, childcare centers, and more.



Access to Core Services Tool



Access to Core Services Tool

SEMCOG

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Transportation Access to Core Services

1. Choose Community:

7 Counties selected

Howell

2. Choose Access to:

☒ Core Services ☐ Jobs

3. Choose Transportation Mode:

☒ Walk ☐ Bike ☐ Transit ☐ Drive

4. Choose Core Service:

☒ Parks (Local and School)

5. Choose Demographic Layer:

☒ View Demographic Data by Access Time

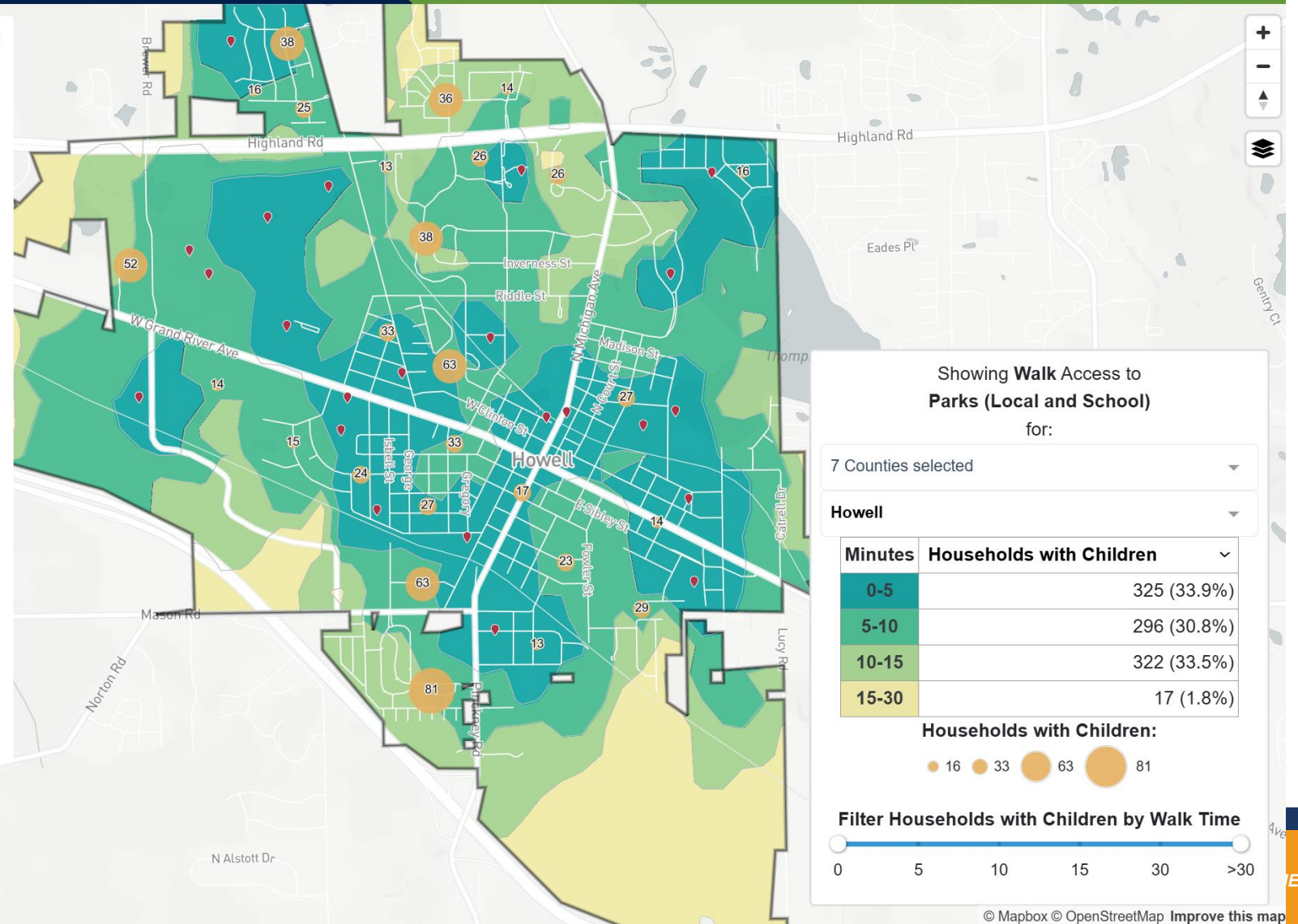
☐ View Additional Demographic Data

Demographic Data by Access Time:

Households with Children

☐ Show Average Walk Time by Transportation Access Focus Population

The access area layer is showing an estimate, the layer may shift when zooming.



NEW! Main Street Toolkit



View the full handbook

MAIN STREET CHECKLIST

This tool is designed to help evaluate the strengths and needs of a main street district. It can be applied to traditional main streets or used in planning efforts to create a main street environment. Use this checklist for a quick overview of main street characteristics and needs. For detailed guidance, resources, implementation ideas, visuals, and local examples, check out the Main Street Handbook.

PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE AND SAFETY

SPEED AND CROSSINGS

- ☐ Posted speed limits are between 25 and 30 MPH.
- ☐ Traffic calming measures have been implemented to keep prevailing speeds below 30 mph.
- ☐ Crosswalks are spaced at least every 400 feet – or more frequently if needed – to support safe and convenient walking between destinations.
- ☐ If needed, medians and pedestrian refuge islands are present to facilitate safe crossing.

SIDEWALKS AND BUFFERS

- ☐ There are wide sidewalks in the core area. In certain sections, they are at least 10–25 feet wide.
- ☐ There is a buffer such as a row of trees or parked cars, between pedestrians on the sidewalk and automotive traffic.

LAND USE AND ZONING

PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE

- ☐ There is at least one public space or plaza directly adjacent to the district and visible from the sidewalk. This space is highly visible to both pedestrians and motorists and centrally located.

SPACING AND MIX OF BUSINESSES

- ☐ A variety of businesses are located nearby, creating a vibrant mix of uses. Storefronts are frequent and closely spaced along the street.

HOUSING

- ☐ Housing is incorporated within the district and is located on the second floor and above, or on nearby supporting streets within walking distance of main street.

PARKING LOCATION

- ☐ Parking is available through on-street parking spaces or in lots located behind main street.

MAIN STREET HANDBOOK



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Land Use and Zoning	13
Mobility and Access	25
Green Space and Environment	33
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Business Support and Innovation	53



Pedestrian Experience and Safety

Pedestrian Experience and Safety



Photo Credit: Valley Transportation Authority



The planter/furniture zone provides spaces for utilities, such as light posts, sidewalk furniture, trees and green infrastructure, and other sidewalk amenities.

CHECKLIST
THERE IS A BUFFER BETWEEN PEDESTRIANS ON THE SIDEWALK AND AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC, SUCH AS A ROW OF TREES OR PARKED CARS.

Key to pedestrian experience along any roadway is the presence of an adequate buffer, which should separate pedestrians from traffic. Consider the experience of a parent walking with a child along a main street with minimal separation from high-speed traffic.

This type of environment is not conducive to walking. In general, pedestrians will only walk in this environment when it is absolutely necessary to get from one place to another, not when there is a choice. Because main street districts are designed to be cultural and economic hubs of the community, they must be attractive places to gather.



The parked cars act as a safety buffer for pedestrians.



The planter box is used to separate the automobile traffic from the main street pedestrian zone.

Speed Limits

- Posted Speed Limits
- Traffic Calming Measures
- Crosswalks
- Medians and Pedestrian Refuge Islands

Sidewalks and Buffers

- Wide Sidewalks
- Buffers between Pedestrians on sidewalks and Traffic

Implementation

- **Identify Road Ownership** – Use [SEMCOG's Road Jurisdiction Map](#) to determine if a road is owned by a local, county, or state agency. This will help identify necessary partners for approving changes to the right-of-way.
- **Engage Stakeholders** – Convene community members and relevant agencies to set priorities—such as improving pedestrian safety or calming traffic. For non-local roads, expect multiple planning iterations to balance goals with regional transportation standards. If needed, SEMCOG can assist with introductions to the appropriate authority.
- **Assess Safety and Traffic Speeds** – [Contact SEMCOG for assistance](#). Existing data on prevailing speeds may be available, or guidance can be provided for conducting speed studies.
- **Conduct a Walking Audit** – Evaluate the pedestrian experience firsthand by using a walking audit toolkit.
- **Update Planning Documents** – Incorporate desired changes into official plans such as the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Master Plan, or Downtown Plan.
- **Prepare for Grant Opportunities** – Develop a clear plan for road and streetscape improvements to strengthen future grant applications.
- **Plan for Reconstruction** – Anticipate road reconstruction projects and plan several years in advance to support coordinated infrastructure efforts and cost-effective implementation. Coordinate early with utilities and property owners.

Resources

- [SEMCOG's Multimodal Tool](#) – Test complete street designs in different land use contexts, including Main Street. Add/edit amenities such as sidewalks and planting strips.
- [Planning Assistance Program](#) – SEMCOG's grant for local projects advancing regional plans. Past awardees include downtown streetscape plans.
- [Transportation Alternatives Program](#) – Competitive SEMCOG grant funding bikeways, walkways, and stormwater projects.
- [Navigating Main Streets as Places](#) – Handbook by Main Street America and Project for Public Spaces on transportation and streetscape design in Main Street districts.
- [AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit](#) – Free resource to assess and report street, intersection, or neighborhood walkability and safety.
- [MDOT Road Diet Checklist](#) – Form for evaluating potential road diets of MDOT trunklines. Local roads can use the [FHWA Road Diet Informational Guide](#).
- [MDOT User Guide for Pedestrian Crossings](#) – This guide assists in determining the type of crossing needed in an area, based on characteristics.
- [USDOT Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations](#) – Publication addressing safety issues at uncontrolled crossings.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- *Planning Assistance Grants*
- *Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)*
- *Green Infrastructure Implementation*



Funding Resources: Planning Assistance Program

- Annual program (April call for projects)
- FY2026 program focus areas (example)
- Multi-community and regional impactful planning projects:
 - **Transportation Accessibility & Corridor Planning**
 - **Trails and Greenways**
 - **Transportation Safety**
 - **Stormwater Management**
 - **Streetscapes & Pedestrian Oriented Placemaking**
- Maximum grant – \$50,000 (18.15% match)



Filter by Categories
No category selected



Powered by Esri

- 11.5 Mile Relief Drain Retrofit and Access Study**
Macomb County, St. Clair Shores, Roseville
- 4 Corners Project 24 Mile at Van Dyke**
Shelby Twp.
- 9 Mile Road Corridor Improvement Plan**
Eastpointe
- Alley Pathway Project**
Hamtramck
- At-Grade Cross Blockage Resolution Strategy**
Romulus, Huron Twp.
- Auburn Avenue Traffic Study**
Pontiac
- Belleville Road Corridor Safety and Complete Streets Plan**
Van Buren Twp.
- Broughton Road Corridor Planning**
Macomb Twp.
- Citywide Nonmotorized Plan**
Northville
- City-wide Pathway Mobility Master Plan**
South Lyon
- Clinton River Spillway & Lower Clinton River Greenway Plan**
Macomb County
- Clinton Township DDA Streetscape and Placemaking Initiative**
Clinton Twp. DDA
- Community Plan - Shaping our Future**
Royal Oak Twp.
- Community Transportation Needs Assessment**
Livonia
- Corridor Improvement Study**
Oak Park, Huntington Woods, Berkley

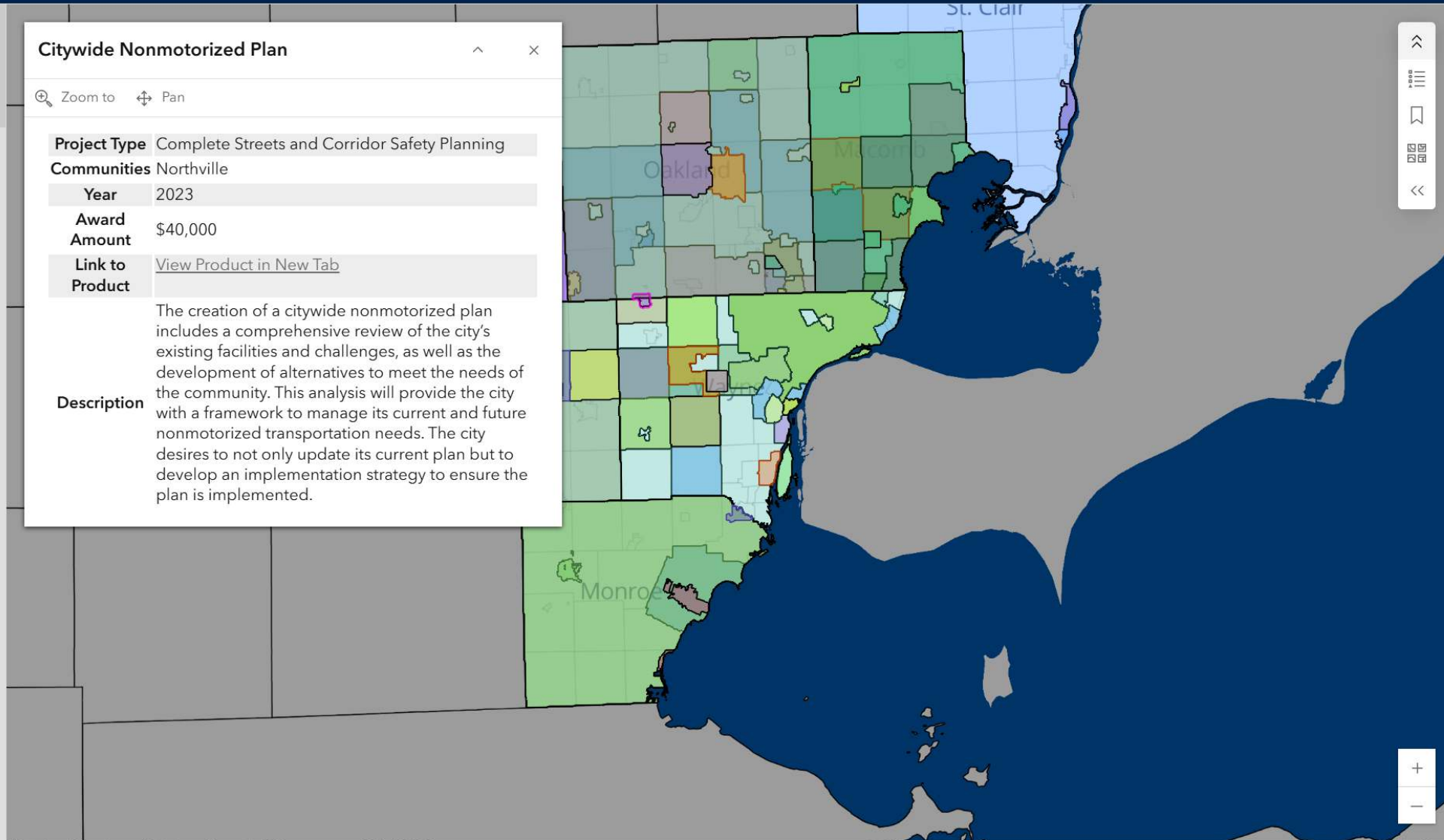
Citywide Nonmotorized Plan

Zoom to
Pan

Project Type	Complete Streets and Corridor Safety Planning
Communities	Northville
Year	2023
Award Amount	\$40,000
Link to Product	View Product in New Tab

Description

The creation of a citywide nonmotorized plan includes a comprehensive review of the city's existing facilities and challenges, as well as the development of alternatives to meet the needs of the community. This analysis will provide the city with a framework to manage its current and future nonmotorized transportation needs. The city desires to not only update its current plan but to develop an implementation strategy to ensure the plan is implemented.



Mapbox | Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

Completed Projects

City of
Northville
Michigan

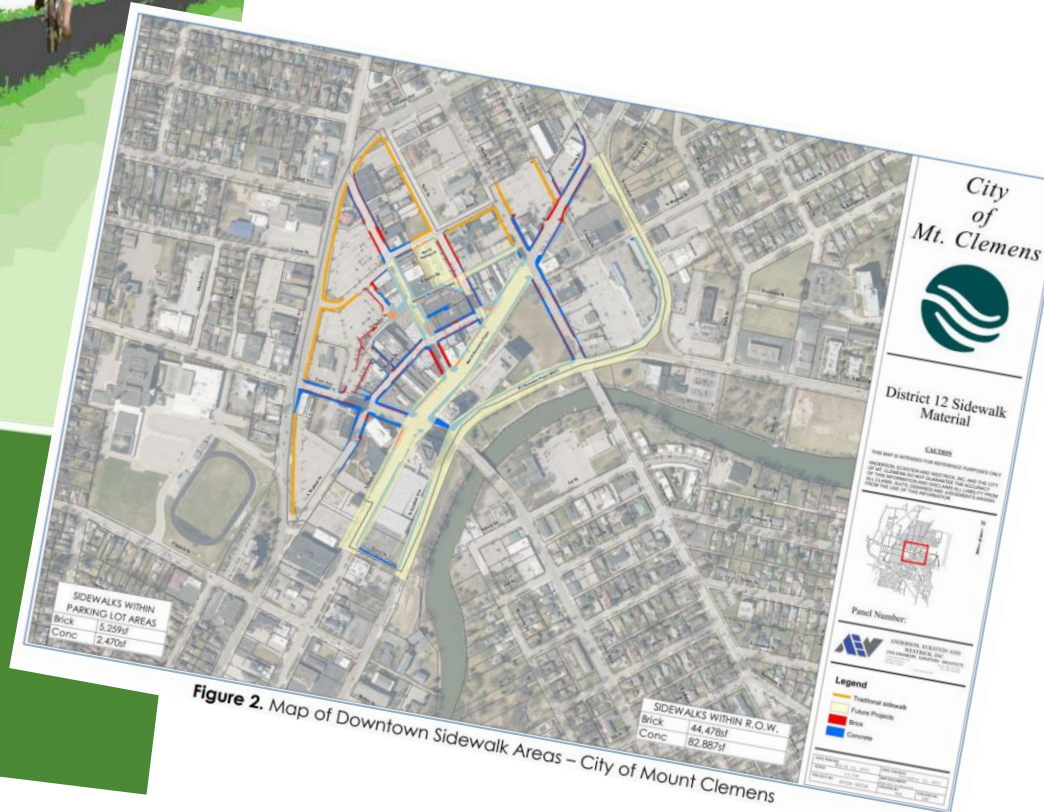
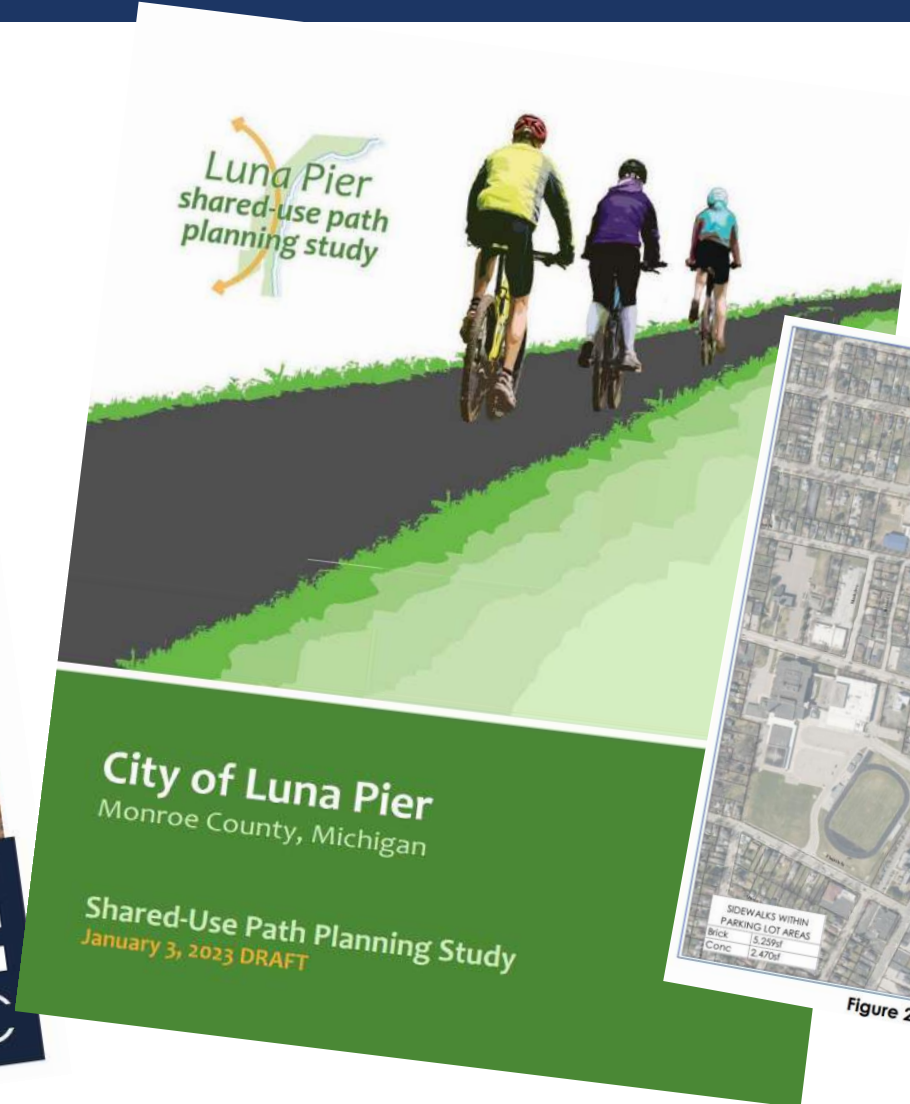
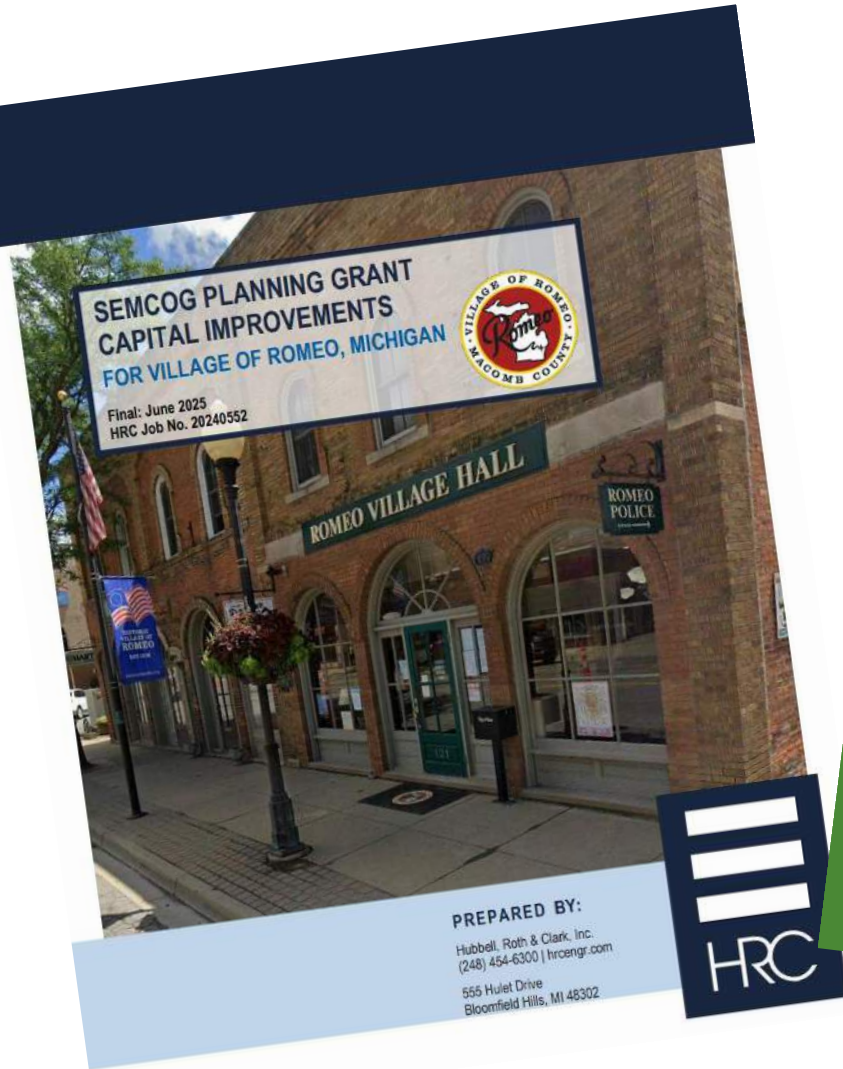


Non-motorized Plan 2023

10/02/2023



Completed Projects



Funding Resources: TAP

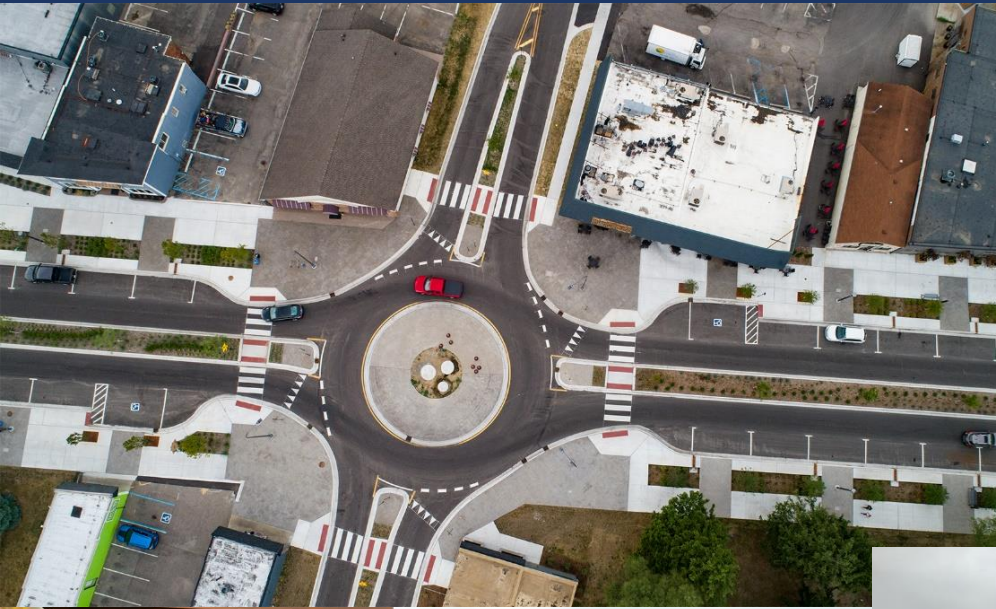
Safe Streets Now

- \$7 million- FY28-29

Regular TAP Call for FY30



SEMCOG Awarded Projects (TAP)



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM



- \$4.2 Million from USEPA for Green Infrastructure Implementation
- Pass-Through Funding for Subawards:
 - 12-15 Projects
 - \$50,000-300,000
- Call for Projects May 2026 – August 2026
- Implementation from **Spring 2027 – June 2030**
- Demonstrate annual stormwater runoff reduction

EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- *SEMCOG Universities*
- *Experience Southeast Michigan*
- *Safe Streets/One Water Campaigns*



SEMCOG Universities



Experience Southeast Michigan



Experience Downriver



Charming Shops



Parks



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Experience Southeast Michigan



Public Education Campaigns: Safe Streets and One Water

Place orders today!



Campaign begins in May



Campaign begins in June

SEMCOG LEGISLATIVE POLICY PLATFORM



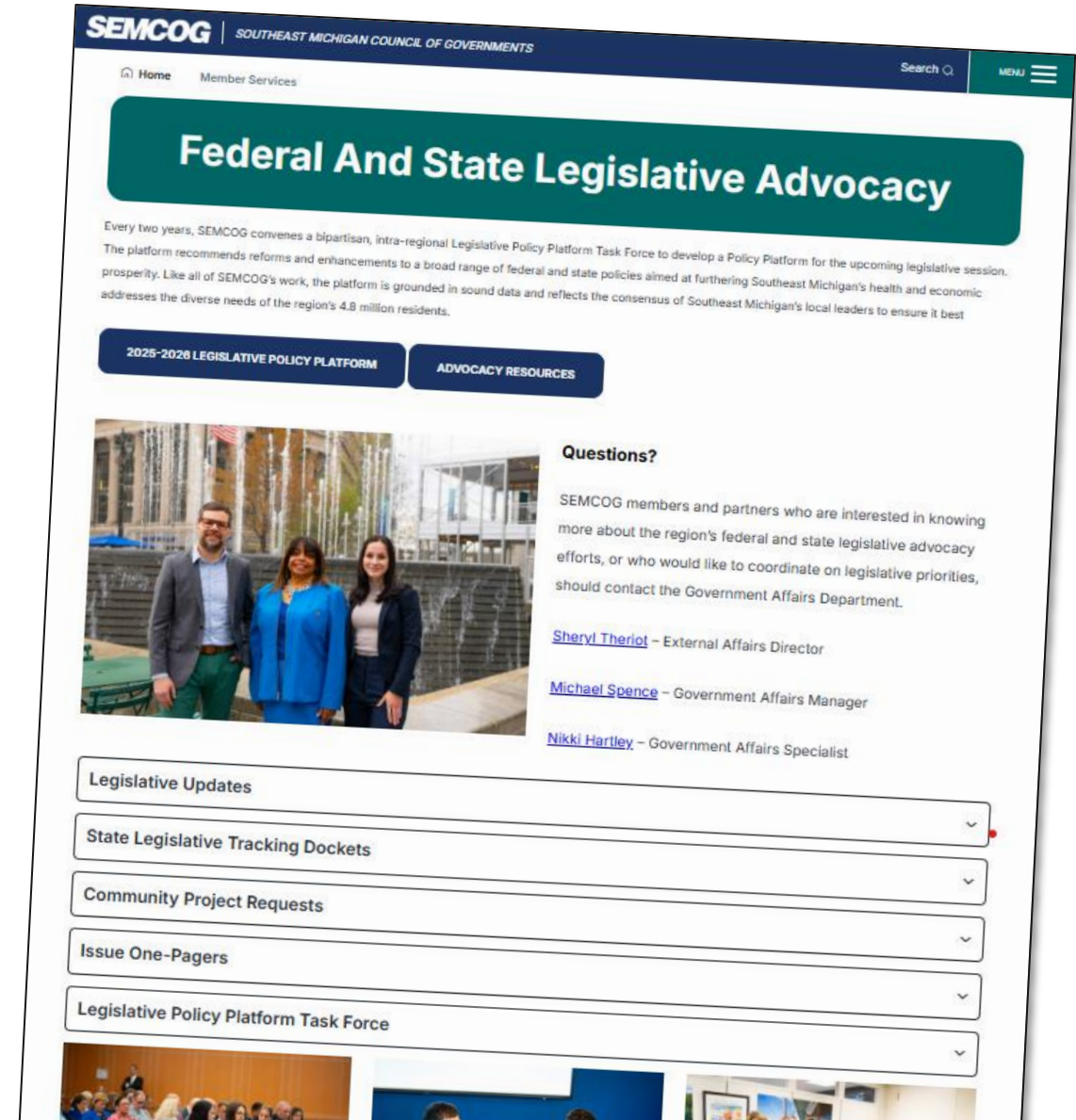
Prior to each new session of Congress and Michigan's Legislature, SEMCOG forms a Legislative Policy Platform Task Force to guide development of a new policy platform.

SEMCOG's 2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- **Advance sustainable stormwater infrastructure funding**, including the implementation of stormwater utilities to ensure long-term, locally driven solutions
- **Protect and preserve local government and education funding**, with a focus on safeguarding property tax revenue as a cornerstone of community services
- **Secure a surface transportation reauthorization** that protects and strengthens SEMCOG's most impactful programs
- **Defend local control** by opposing state or federal preemption that undermines the authority of local governments to address community-specific needs

CHECK OUT SEMCOG'S ADVOCACY WEBPAGE!

- Federal and State Legislative Reports from SEMCOG lobbyists
- Legislative Update and Action Alert e-newsletters
- Community Project Funding info and support
- State Legislative Tracking dockets
- Issue Area One-Pagers
- Advocacy Resources
 - SEMCOG data/reports supporting policy positions
 - Legislative district maps
 - Michigan legislator contact info



Guiding our Direction and Focus

- What keeps you up at night in regard to your community?
- What training, assistance and resources do you need from SEMCOG?
- What's going well in your community?



SMALL COMMUNITIES NEXT STEPS

- What do you want to get out of this peer group
- Summary of the main discussion
- Future Meetings
 - Frequency
 - Location
 - Date

