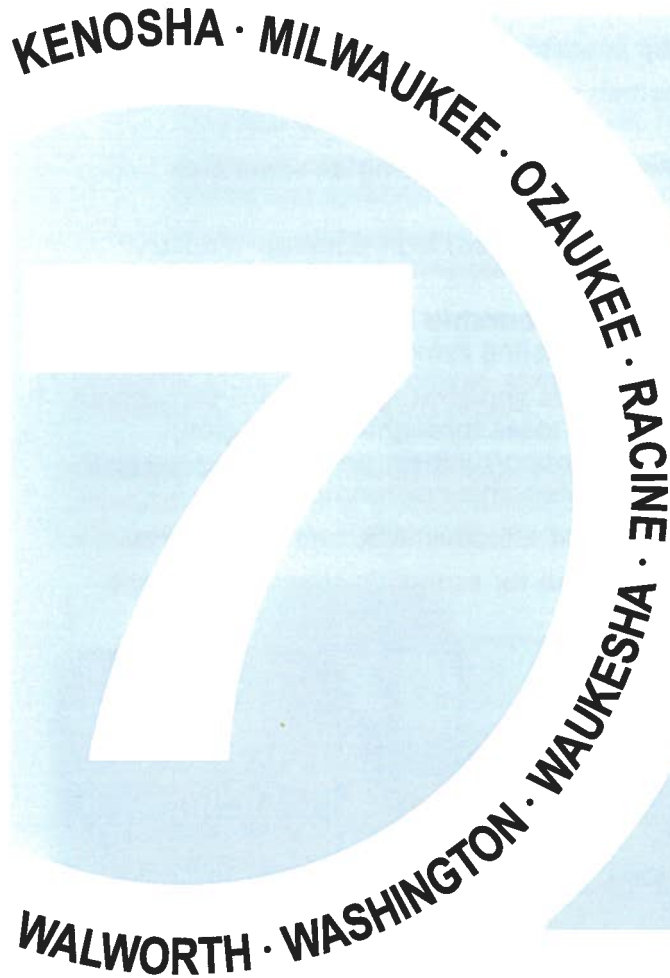


# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2015 - 2020



Seven counties united  
around a regional  
economic development  
strategy



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

August 2015

## STRATEGIES FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY

Nine strategies are proposed for moving the Southeastern Wisconsin Region forward on the path to economic growth. Each strategy is designed to increase the productivity of local firms by leveraging the Region's unique strengths, taking advantage of its emerging opportunities, and addressing its most critical challenges. These strategies provide a framework that aligns existing efforts, and offers guidance for identifying, developing, and prioritizing future economic growth initiatives.

- Become a leading innovator, producer, and exporter of products and services related to **energy, power, and controls**.
- Become a global hub for innovation and start-up activity in **water technology**.
- Leverage the Region's geographic, supply chain, and human capital advantages to grow the **food and beverage** cluster.
- Enhance the **export capacity and capability** of the Region's firms, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Align **workforce development** with growth opportunities in targeted, high-potential industry clusters.
- Foster a dynamic, richly networked **innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem** to boost rates of new firm creation and build the competitive advantage of existing firms.
- Catalyze "**economic place-making**" in the Region's core cities and strategic locations throughout the region to streamline the movement of goods, people, and ideas throughout the Region; reconnect its underutilized human capital assets to economic opportunities; and better leverage its strategically located land assets to foster growth in the new economic environment.
- Modernize **regional infrastructure** to enhance efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and connectivity.
- Enhance **inter-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration** for economic growth across the public, private, and civic sectors.



### WHAT IS A CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is intended to bring together the public and private sectors to develop a strategic plan to diversify and strengthen regional economies. A CEDS also identifies potential economic development projects. A CEDS for the Southeastern Wisconsin Region was prepared in 2014 and 2015 in order to:

- Provide a basis for a more widespread understanding of the ongoing economic development work program in the Region.
- Meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA) for economic strategic planning, thereby buttressing efforts to secure Federal funding for projects in the Region.
- Provide a basis whereby the EDA can consider creation of an Economic Development District in southeastern Wisconsin.



## KEY ECONOMIC CLUSTERS IN THE REGION

Six business clusters have been identified as having the best potential for economic growth, expansion, and attraction in Southeastern Wisconsin:

- **Energy, power, and controls**, focusing on products and services related to electrical power distribution and industrial and building automation and controls.
- **Water technologies**, involving water quality and quantity, wastewater treatment, environmental engineering, and the manufacturing and distribution of pumps, valves, and other water-related equipment.
- **Food and beverage production and manufacturing**, involving ingredients, processing, and food production.
- **Finance and insurance services**, focusing on insurance and money management.
- **Headquarters and business services**, particularly relating to information technology; data processing systems and services; distribution and supply chain systems; and medical information.
- **Medical technology, bioscience, and health services**, focusing on diagnostic equipment and botanical and pharmaceutical research, product development, and manufacturing.

**Machinery manufacturing** has also been identified as a driver industry, which includes the manufacture of heavy industrial equipment and the production of sophisticated machinery that supports other key economic clusters in the power, energy efficiency, water treatment and distribution, medical and food products industries, among others.

**Printing** was identified as a legacy cluster, with a potential to capture an increasing share of the consolidating printing market based on the cluster's regional concentration and levels of local expertise, supportive industry institutions, and access to Wisconsin's paper industry.




The Southeastern Wisconsin Region includes the counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. Preparation of the CEDS was a joint effort by the following organizations:

- The Southeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (REP). The REP consists of the director of the economic development organization in each of the seven counties and representatives from the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, the Wisconsin Energy Corporation, M7, and SEWRPC.
- The Milwaukee 7 (M7). M7 is the economic development organization for the seven-county Region, and undertook an extensive strategic planning process during 2012 and 2013 that served as the basis for the CEDS.
- The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC). SEWRPC is the areawide planning agency for land use and infrastructure for Southeastern Wisconsin, and prepares advisory plans and recommendations for consideration by the seven counties and 148 cities, villages, and towns within the Region.

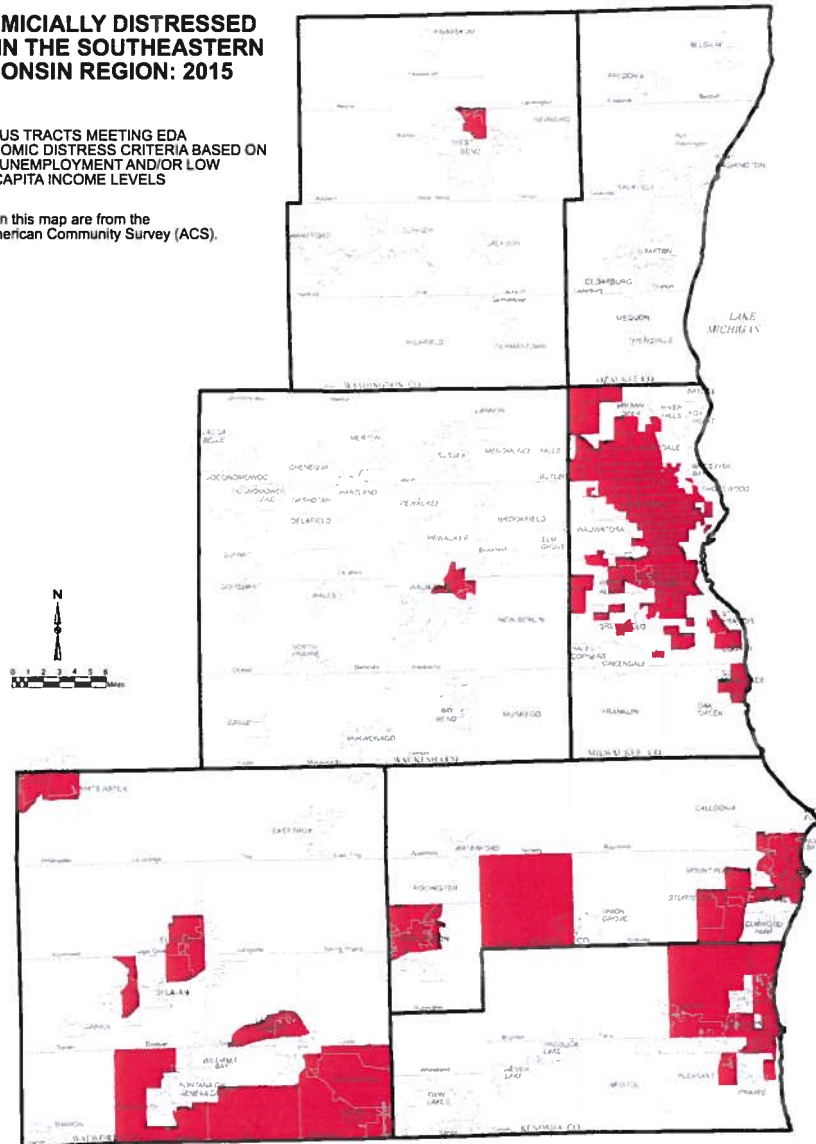
# EDA GRANTS

- Adoption of the CEDS by a County Board would make the county and local governments in the County eligible to apply for EDA grants. To be eligible for an EDA grant, a project must be located in and benefit an economically distressed area.
- If the Region is designated as an Economic Development District, all county and local governments would be eligible to apply for a grant, provided the grant would benefit a distressed area.

## ECONOMICALLY DISTRESSED AREAS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGION: 2015

 CENSUS TRACTS MEETING EDA ECONOMIC DISTRESS CRITERIA BASED ON HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND/OR LOW PER CAPITA INCOME LEVELS

NOTE: Data on this map are from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS).



Source: StatsAmerica and SEWRPC

### For more information:

The complete CEDS report can be viewed at:  
[www.sewrpc.org/CEDSreport](http://www.sewrpc.org/CEDSreport)

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