2018 ANNUAL REVIEW

Mid-America Regional Council
A message from our chair

As chair of the Mid-America Regional Council’s Board of Directors, I’m honored to share with you highlights of the work that our organization, board and communities accomplished in 2018.

In Greater Kansas City, our local governments have a long history of regional cooperation. East and west of the state line and north and south of the Missouri River, we transcend our jurisdictional boundaries as we work together to create a better home for our residents and a welcoming destination for visitors.

In my first year as chair, I pledge to travel the region, meeting with each county to learn about challenges local leaders face and how we can leverage our collective experiences to surmount them. As I think about the value of regional collaboration, I’m reminded of an African proverb: If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

The programs and initiatives described in this report represent the dedication and collaboration of hundreds of people “going together.” They serve on dozens of committees that guide our work across a broad range of issues important to the region. It is through this important work that we as a region will “go far.”

Rob Roberts
Commissioner, Miami County, Kansas

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Regional Transportation Plan 2050

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) serves as a blueprint for managing the region’s transportation system over the next 20 to 30 years. As the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for Greater Kansas City, MARC is required to update this plan periodically. The three-year planning process for RTP 2050 began with Board adoption of an updated regional vision. Next, policy committees, community groups and residents were engaged to establish goals and identify regional transportation needs that shape the policy framework for the plan.

Using information gleaned from a series of scenario discussions about how the region and its transportation system could grow, as well as modeling and analysis, MARC is currently finalizing project criteria in advance of a call for projects to be included in the plan.

Federal funding

More than $85 million was allocated to transportation projects in 2018, including $20 million toward replacement of the Buck O’Neil Bridge, $52 million for complete streets and public transportation infrastructure, $11 million to improve regional air quality and $2.4 million to advance transportation services for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

The Planning Sustainable Places program allocates federal funds to projects that work to advance detailed planning and development activities that further the creation of sustainable places — those that offer a mix of options for housing, jobs, services and recreation with a variety of transportation options, and that support healthy living and a healthy natural environment. In 2018, the program awarded $883,375 to 12 local projects — one bistate project, four in Kansas and seven in Missouri.
Performance measures
The 2018 update provides current and historical data to help measure the regional transportation system’s progress toward long-range goals. This year, new performance targets were adopted for safety, transit asset management and travel time reliability.

Beyond the Loop
The Beyond the Loop study of the Buck O’Neil Memorial Bridge wrapped up in 2018. The study, which identified a range of feasible options for the bridge and north loop of I-70, received recognition from several professional organizations. The city of Kansas City, Missouri, and the Missouri Department of Transportation are currently working to fund construction of a new bridge.

Transportation innovation
MARC led a regional effort to examine issues related to autonomous and connected vehicles, and create a policy framework that will help the region position itself to maximize opportunities and minimize negative impacts of this new and potentially disruptive transportation technology. A series of facilitated meetings resulted in a strategic framework for unmanned aircraft systems, also known as drones, to address opportunities and challenges related to their adoption.

TIP updates
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was amended throughout the year to reflect budget and scope changes to projects slated to be funded in the next five years. The 2018-2022 TIP provides details for 525 projects totaling more than $3.4 billion.

Transit planning
In collaboration with KCATA, MARC continued work to implement the Smart Moves transit and mobility plan. MARC also completed an update to the Peer Cities Transit Report, which compares the region’s transit system to other metropolitan areas, assessing funding, ridership, service area and density.

Operation Green Light (OGL)
This cooperative effort to coordinate timing for hundreds of traffic signals across the region celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2018. OGL launched an interactive signal map that allows users to click on a traffic signal and find out which jurisdiction owns and operates it, along with contact information.

RideshareKC
Commuters connected with carpool buddies and learned about alternative commuting options at RideshareKC.org. During the 2018 Green Commute Challenge, more than 600 participants reduced driving by 500,000 miles.

Destination Safe
Using its Together Toward Zero Transportation Safety Blueprint as a guide, the coalition worked to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the region.

Multi-jurisdictional coordination
In May, MARC and the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City partnered with the Federal Highway Administration to host a megaregions workshop. Representatives from Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska explored ongoing transportation challenges and opportunities for cross-region collaboration on goods movement, technology and economic development.

Looking Ahead
HOW WE MOVE KC
In 2019, MARC will kick off How We Move KC, an extensive household travel survey to collect information about how people move through the region. Randomly selected addresses will receive a letter inviting household members to report where and how they travel on an assigned travel day. Survey data will be summarized to describe travel behaviors across the region, which will help inform future transportation decisions and set transportation priorities for the next 20 to 30 years.
KC Degrees
A skilled, educated workforce is a critical component of a competitive regional economy. Currently, almost 40 percent of jobs in the region require a postsecondary degree and that number is expected to grow.

KC Degrees provides adults who have some college credits but no degree with personalized, consistent and reliable college success services. In its third year, KC Degrees has served almost 1,000 of these Reconnectors. More than 300 have enrolled in college, and 43 have earned college degrees. KC Degrees works with a network of 17 area higher-education institutions to provide wraparound services and track student success. In 2018, KC Degrees hired a Spanish-speaking college success navigator and launched an email newsletter to share program information and highlight student successes.

Talent-to-Industry Exchange
The Talent-to-Industry Exchange (TIE) concept was introduced in 2016 to improve the labor supply in key industry sectors and grow the human capital necessary to attract and retain companies in the Kansas City region. This strategy was put forward as a KC Rising pilot project to address the alignment of the region’s education pipeline with workforce needs in specific industries. The first TIE, published in 2017, focused on the life sciences industry.

In 2018, MARC completed the KC Global Design TIE, publishing both a detailed labor analysis and a workforce action plan for the engineering and architecture industry, and began work on a third TIE, which focuses on skilled trades.
339 adult learners returning to school through KC Degrees

44.2% of adults age 25 or over have at least an associate degree

235,839 jobs in the skilled trades — manufacturing, construction, and transportation and warehousing

1,108,300 current jobs in the Kansas City metro

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
In 2018, MARC updated the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan (CEDS) for the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Updated every five years, the CEDS plan helps the region maintain designation as an Economic Development District, which allows MARC and local agencies to apply for certain EDA grant funds.

Easy access census data
MARC launched an online tool in fall 2018 that allows users to easily explore U.S. Census data for area cities and counties. Users can select attributes such as age, gender, race, educational attainment and income for selected geographies and export the data in a variety of formats.

Regional Workforce Intelligence Network
This collaboration of economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, workforce investment boards and select educational institutions meets on a regular basis to share information on current workforce development activities. This year, the group provided guidance and oversight for the CEDS plan update and hosted the annual workforce summit.

Economic forecast
Twice each year, MARC’s Research Services Department develops a regional economic forecast on behalf of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. The 2018 mid-year forecast predicts 2.2 percent regional GDP growth in 2019, along with 19,000 new jobs — growth rates that mirror national averages but lag behind growth projected for many of the region’s peer metro areas.

Education Asset Inventory
In October, MARC released its fourth annual Educational Asset Inventory, which supports regional efforts to align education outputs with high-demand occupations and ensure adequate pathways for talent development. Completed with oversight from GradForce KC, the report identifies postsecondary degree programs available in five industry sectors that are important to the regional economy: advanced manufacturing, engineering and architecture, finance and insurance, information technology and life sciences.

Workforce Summit
The Regional Workforce Intelligence Network and GradForce KC hosted the eighth annual Greater Kansas City Workforce Summit, which took place in December. Representatives from colleges, universities and school districts, K-12 intermediaries, businesses, local governments, civic organizations and others interested in the connections between workforce, education and the regional economy discussed cross-sector collaboration and how best to solve problems at the scale at which they exist.

Looking Ahead
KC RISING
Through KC Rising, MARC works with the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City, the Kansas City Area Development Council, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and other community partners to strengthen the regional economy and foster inclusive prosperity. Since 2015, this effort has focused on three economic drivers — trade, people and ideas — with a goal of rising to the top 10 among 30 peer metros in key measures of economic prosperity.

In 2019, KC Rising will seek to strengthen systems-level change by emphasizing the enablers of economic prosperity: policy, place and inclusion.
Cybersecurity Strategic Framework

Local government leaders joined forces to advance key elements of the region’s Cybersecurity Strategic Framework in 2018. Work focused on establishing a baseline cybersecurity standard for the region, encouraging cities and counties to complete individual assessments of their cybersecurity preparedness, and developing communications strategies.

After extensive review and evaluation, the Cybersecurity Task Force selected the Center for Internet Security controls as model cybersecurity standards for the region and identified a self-assessment tool to help local governments evaluate their current capabilities and challenges, and set benchmarks to measure progress. Twenty member cities and counties completed the assessment. Training to address the gaps identified by the assessments will be scheduled in 2019.

Government Training Institute

MARC’s Government Training Institute (GTI) offers training for local governments in the region in the form of certificate programs, leadership training and custom training programs. Since 1996, more than 160,000 customers have participated in GTI special events, conferences, seminars and technical workshops.

In 2018, 4,532 people attended 272 GTI training classes and events. More than 60 people successfully completed program requirements for one of its four certificate programs focusing on supervision, customer service, administrative professionals and facilitation. GTI also provided 22 customized training programs to local governments, with 855 participants.
Cooperative purchasing
In 2018, the Kansas City Regional Purchasing Cooperative (KCRPC) helped local governments save more than $1.5 million on shared contracts for commonly used products and services, as well as higher-priced items, such as fire trucks, ambulances and public works equipment. Since its inception in 2003, KCRPC has helped local governments save $11.4 million.

Shared services
MARC continued to explore opportunities for shared services that can reduce costs and increase efficiency for local governments. For example, an ongoing partnership with the Institute for Building Technology and Safety (IBTS) helped 25 cities and counties access low-cost, efficient building department services in 2018.

Sub-regional partnerships
MARC continued support of self-organized local government partnerships in their work to develop collaborative strategies.

This included ongoing support for the CORE 4 governments of Jackson, Johnson and Wyandotte Counties and Kansas City, Missouri, quarterly meetings of the First Suburbs Coalition, and a new partnership among the eastern Jackson County cities of Independence, Blue Springs and Lee's Summit.

Salary survey
More than 60 local governments and organizations participated in MARC’s annual salary survey in 2018. The survey provides participants with easy online access, searchable by job type, to compare salary and benefit packages with peer cities and counties.

Managers Roundtable
At bimonthly meetings of the Managers Roundtable, city and county administrators heard presentations on legislative agendas for Kansas and Missouri, the Unified Government’s innovative work to improve residents’ quality of life, the value of immigration, and new technologies for urban mobility. MARC’s monthly Management Matters newsletter highlighted regional news, grant opportunities and upcoming events of interest to city and county managers.

G2U Roundtable
In November, MARC partnered with the Volcker Alliance and the University of Kansas to host a Government-to-University (G2U) Roundtable that focused on recruitment of top talent into government careers, aligning degree programs with public sector employer needs and research to support effective government.

Small Cities Program
MARC’s Small Cities program provides grant writing, grant management and technical assistance to small cities in the region. In 2018, the program helped nine cities with a range of projects that included water and sewer system improvements, food pantry expansion, flood buyouts, economic site certification, and community facility improvements.

Looking Ahead
2020 CENSUS
Local governments, community leaders and volunteers across the Kansas City metro are working together to ensure a complete and accurate count during the upcoming 2020 census.

For the first time, the U.S. Census Bureau will encourage people to complete the census form online in 2020, which may pose greater challenges for hard-to-count populations. Under-counting by even 1 percent could cost the region as much as $48 million per year in federal funds.

MARC will convene a regional Complete Count Committee (CCC) to develop and implement a public information campaign, identify strategies to increase internet access and encourage public participation.

MORE 2018 ACTIVITIES

- 24,846 government employees in the Kansas City region
- 4,532 attendees at 272 GTI training classes and events
- 132 federal programs use census data to allocate funds
- $1.5 million saved through regional cooperative purchasing
Planning for complex, coordinated terrorist attacks

In 2017, MARC was awarded a competitive grant to help the region prepare for complex, coordinated terrorist attacks (CCTAs), that occur at multiple locations in quick succession. Over the past year, the CCTA Task Force, led by the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee in collaboration with local governments and community partners, coordinated 13 in-depth assessments of capabilities and gaps in cities and counties across the region for this type of incident. Project partners hosted a FEMA-sponsored workshop in July and a tabletop exercise for public information officers in October. MARC coordinated several training opportunities for command staff and responders, and began work on a customized training curriculum to help address gaps identified in local assessments. An outreach workgroup began work on a public information campaign and outreach to venues and venue operators to assess risks and provide training resources.

Legislation to add wireless devices to 911 funding

After years of effort to stabilize 911 funding for local governments, the Missouri General Assembly passed legislation in 2018 that will allow counties, with voter approval, to impose fees on wireless phones and other devices to support 911 services. Missouri had long been the only state in the nation that did not have a mechanism for wireless callers to help pay for 911, even though most 911 calls come from wireless devices.

The new legislation also included a small surcharge on pre-paid wireless phone services — a portion of which will be returned to the county of origin, with the remainder going to a statewide pool to fund 911 equipment upgrades — and established a statewide 911 board. Additional legislation is now before the General Assembly to clarify some provisions and ensure effective implementation of the new law.

MARC coordinates ongoing enhancement and operation of the regional 911 and interoperable communications systems. MARC’s emergency services program helps strengthen the region’s emergency services and homeland security capabilities to protect, prepare, respond and recover with coordinated plans and high-quality training, exercises, technology and equipment.

Safe & Secure Communities
MARRS
The Metropolitan Area Regional Radio System (MARRS) allows 30,000 public safety users to seamlessly connect within and across agencies. In 2018, the MARRS Management Council approved adding the cities of Lee’s Summit and Excelsior Springs to the system.

Peer support training
Promoting mental well-being through confidential support and stress-reduction training, MARC’s Peer Support Program is helping first responders in the metro better cope with personal and job-related stress. In 2018, the 911 dispatcher and command-level teams responded to 23 critical incident stress debriefings.

Interoperability
In 2018, the Regional Interoperability Committee hosted its first regional communications exercise, which offered participants an opportunity to demonstrate required skills for certification. Communications coordinators assisted with interoperable communications for approximately 80 regional incidents or events in 2018.

Regional coordination
The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee (RHSCC) continued to oversee coordination of planning, training and exercises, and sharing of information and resources, with a focus on emerging threats, lessons learned and effective use of resources and assets. The RHSCC administered federal and state grants totaling more than $2.3 million in 2018.

Health Care Coalition
The MARC Health Care Coalition convened leaders from hospitals, emergency medical services, public health agencies, emergency management offices and health care providers to develop a preparedness plan, test surge capacity, host a long-term care workshop and conduct exercises in 2018.

Pre-hospital care
MARCER, the Mid-America Regional Council Emergency Rescue committee, strengthened its cooperative purchasing program, reinvigorated its paramedic recruitment program, and worked on revisions to modernize the regional Mass Casualty plan in 2018.

Chemical safety
In August, the Mid-America Local Emergency Planning Committee hosted the region’s first Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards workshop to engage businesses and industries that store and use chemicals in discussions about safety, security and regulatory standards.

Community resilience
In 2018, MARC, the Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee and other partners worked to strengthen community preparedness and disaster recovery capabilities for vulnerable populations.

The Community Disaster Resiliency Network (CDRN) hosted an emergency preparedness training that focused on the needs of children and older people during disasters.

MORE 2018 ACTIVITIES

1,548,534 emergency 911 calls answered, with 79.9% coming from wireless devices
2,725 emergency services personnel participated in 50 training courses and 16 exercises
10 regional plans updated and maintained
685 dispatchers and call takers attended 83 public safety communications trainings

Looking Ahead

NEXT GENERATION 911
The regional 911 system is working to make the vision of Next Generation 911 (NG911) a reality. In 2019, MARC will complete a system-wide hardware and software upgrade in all public safety answering points that will position them to receive photos, videos and data from callers and devices.

HEALTH CARE RESPONSE
Over the next year, Health Care Coalition members will work to develop a Health Care Response Plan to ensure continuity of health care delivery during large-scale disasters. One aspect of the planning work will be to assess the region’s current health care supply chain and identify gaps.
Homeless Management Information System

In 2018, MARC continued to make improvements to the KC Metro Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS), a secure online database that helps agencies coordinate and track the programs and services they provide to individuals and families in need.

MARC serves as the lead agency for the HMIS, working on behalf of the region’s two Continuum of Care organizations — the Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness, serving Wyandotte and Jackson counties, and United Community Services of Johnson County, serving Johnson County, Kansas. The system currently serves 33 agencies with almost 500 users. MARC staff provides training and technical assistance to new users, and an HMIS User Committee meets regularly to provide feedback to improve services.

New service models to aid older adults

MARC’s Aging and Adult Services department is refreshing its service models to more effectively connect older people with community services that support independent living, health and well-being. A new integrated care service line was established, including hiring seven individuals to conduct professional, in-home assessments. Some services and collaborative initiatives now apply to the entire bistate region, while the department continues its core work as the Area Agency on Aging for Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties.

MARC is also taking a lead role with the Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4) to administer a three-year Administration for Community Living grant to build a sustainable system to provide evidence-based chronic disease self-management courses to older people and those with disabilities.

Thriving Older Adults & Communities

MARC programs help strengthen support systems for the region’s most vulnerable residents, including older adults and disadvantaged populations, and also promote public health through healthy, active lifestyles and nutrition for area residents.
Looking Ahead

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is becoming a concern among communities of all sizes and types in the Kansas City region and across the nation.

In 2019, the First Suburbs Coalition will lead regional efforts to explore affordable housing issues through a series of workshops designed to help local officials face these challenges.

Workshops will provide participants with a better understanding of the definition of affordable housing, and offer strategies that communities could use to help homeowners and renters access more housing choices near employment centers, along key transportation corridors and around activity centers.

CoverKC
The CoverKC coalition continued outreach efforts in 2018 to help uninsured consumers sign up for health coverage through the Marketplace. For the sixth year, the coalition joined forces to run television, radio, print and digital ads promoting enrollment through HealthCare.gov and the availability of free, local help through area safety net clinics, hospitals and social service organizations.

Community Health Workers
The KC Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative continued its work to integrate Community Health Workers (CHWs) into the region’s health and human services systems. During 2018, the collaborative worked with the state of Missouri to review and revise existing CHW training curriculum to align with core competencies, and to establish a state CHW credentialing system.

KC Communities for All Ages
In 2018, four cities — Independence, Lee’s Summit, North Kansas City and Peculiar, Missouri — were recognized by KC Communities for All Ages for their age-friendly initiatives, bringing the total number of local jurisdictions involved in the recognition program to 14. Six communities have now attained gold status, the highest level.

Aging Mastery Program
In 2018, MARC facilitated 20 Aging Mastery Program® classes, using a curriculum developed by the National Council on Aging. The classes were offered by 11 partner agencies in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Johnson, Leavenworth and Ray counties, with 226 participants completing the course. During the 10-week core curriculum, participants learned how to make changes in their health behaviors, finances and social connections to enrich their later years.

Double Up Food Bucks
The Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) program continued into its third year, offering a dollar-for-dollar match to SNAP shoppers buying fresh vegetables and fruits at participating farmers markets and grocery stores in Kansas and Missouri. In 2018, the DUFB incentive was offered at 14 Ball’s Price Chopper stores, 72 Missouri Schnucks stores, 10 independent grocery stores and at 63 farmers markets in Missouri and Kansas.

Managed Services Network
MARC is coordinating efforts to build a managed services network, a community asset that will improve health outcomes and reduce health care costs. The network is designed to provide in-home specialist support for high-risk clients, coordinated back office functions, and centralized intake and referral services. In 2018, project partners completed a three-year business plan to guide implementation activities that will begin in 2019.

More 2018 Activities

-$828,766 of Double Up Food Bucks redeemed by SNAP users for fruits and veggies

541,537 meals delivered to older people at home

134,366 congregate meals served to older people

3,994 hours of community care management
2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Quality Early Learning

MARC’s early learning and Head Start programs help lead the implementation of a comprehensive, high-quality early learning system that prepares children for success in school, and supports efforts to improve program quality and develop innovative models for fiscal sustainability.

Improving service delivery

After two years of strategic planning with Head Start providers, families and stakeholders, the Head Start Policy Council and the MARC Board of Directors approved a new delivery structure for MARC’s Head Start program in early 2018. The new service delivery model, implemented last fall after MARC was awarded a five-year Head Start grant renewal, is built on three pillars — the grantee, partners and support agencies — working together to efficiently provide services to families.

As the Head Start grantee, MARC serves as the administrative and policy arm of this structure. The partners, including school district and community early learning centers, provide comprehensive early childhood services for children and families. The third pillar comprises community support agencies that provide technical assistance and program support services. In 2018, 2,876 families received support through Head Start services.

Early Learning Program Profile

MARC’s Metropolitan Council on Early Learning (MCEL) conducted a pilot project in 2018 to test a new Early Learning Program Profile (ELPP) in 30 programs serving more than 2,700 children under age 5.

The ELPP provides a consistent way to measure quality improvement in early childhood programs. Partners in Quality, a community collaborative for early learning convened through MARC, formed a workgroup to guide development of the profile. The ELPP collects data on a range of process and structural quality measures, including classroom organization, curriculum, teacher qualifications, financial management and more. The ELPP can be used to track both teacher/child interactions and organizational quality measures with the goal of leading to better outcomes for young children.
Workforce development
MARC’s Metropolitan Council on Early Learning and Partners in Quality are partnering with the University of Central Missouri on a stackable credential program for early learning teachers. In the pilot program, a cohort of 10 teachers who hold associate degrees will have the opportunity to complete a series of onsite certificate modules to earn credit toward a bachelor’s degree.

School readiness
MCEL introduced the Kindergarten Observation Form in 44 kindergarten classrooms across three school districts last year. This tool measures kindergarten readiness based on four levels of proficiency — self-care and motor skills, self-regulation, social expression and kindergarten academics. More than 800 kindergarten children were screened in 2018.

Trauma Smart program
MARC’s Head Start program works with experts at Crittenton Children’s Center to train parents and teachers on Trauma Smart, a program designed to help implement effective strategies at home and in school that build resilience and social and emotional well-being for children. During the 2017–2018 program year, the number of children referred for formal mental health assessments or treatment was less than in previous years, demonstrating the benefits of Trauma Smart.

Data analysis
In 2018, MARC published “The Status of Children and Families,” a comprehensive analysis that provides context for understanding the availability and quality of early learning services, as well as equity and access issues that affect children and families in the nine-county Kansas City metropolitan area.

Assessing children’s development
Educators at MARC Head Start centers use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) early childhood assessment system to track and support children’s progress toward goals for their learning and development. Three times each year, educators review each child’s developmental progress along the DRDP continuum. The majority of Head Start and Early Head Start children demonstrated progress in all levels across the DRDP continuum during the program year.

Health and nutritional needs
The REACH Healthcare Foundation awarded a grant to MARC’s Head Start program to support three community health workers (CHWs) who serve as personal guides to families, empowering them to fully understand their health care options and overcome barriers to access. Last year, CHWs worked with families in the Center, Grandview, Lee’s Summit and Raytown school districts, and helped them complete health and nutritional assessments.

Looking Ahead
EDUCARE
In partnership with the Local Investment Commission (LINC), MARC’s Early Learning Department will take on administration of the Educare initiative in 2019. Educare offers resources, training opportunities and technical assistance to family and license-exempt child care providers.

Through Educare, participating providers can attend workshops in child development, cognition, motor skills, behavior problems, child abuse and neglect.

The Missouri Department of Social Services provides funding for Educare and the majority of funding goes to direct service providers.

MORE 2018 ACTIVITIES

137,865 children are under age 5, or 6.6% of the region’s population
37% of children under age 5 are non-white, compared to 27% of the total population
17.2% of children under age 5 in Greater Kansas City live in poverty
$20,400 average annual wage for child care workers, compared to $40,700 for all metro area jobs
Healthy Environment

MARC develops policies, processes and projects that help keep the region’s air and water clean, reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, protects and conserves green infrastructure, and promotes climate resilience.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Clean Air Action Plan update

In 2018, with the support of community partners, MARC updated the Clean Air Action Plan, which offers community-based, voluntary actions for businesses and individuals to reduce emissions and help keep the air clean. The Air Quality Forum and MARC Board of Directors adopted the updated plan in May.

The update includes three new action areas focusing on transportation connectivity, transportation technology and public engagement, along with new strategies for two existing action areas focused on sustainable landscaping and green buildings. The plan also notes progress action areas included in the original 2005 plan and 2011 update, including reduced diesel and power plant emissions, public education, alternative transportation and energy-efficiency incentives.

Green Infrastructure Framework

Green infrastructure promotes the use of native vegetation, soil restoration, and other ecologically-sensitive planning and design practices to restore the natural processes required to manage stormwater and create healthier environments. MARC’s framework offers a planning and design approach to infrastructure and land development that simultaneously benefits public health, social equity and environmental quality. In 2018, the Green Infrastructure Advisory Committee held two stakeholder workshops to establish policy opportunities and priorities to promote green infrastructure. Workshop recommendations are being incorporated into “Green Infrastructure Policy, Planning & Action” — the third installment of the region’s Green Infrastructure Framework — which will be released in spring 2019. The committee also adopted a new brand, “Here We Grow,” and educational messages related to green infrastructure.
AIR QUALITY

Ozone monitoring
During the 2018 ozone season (March through October), the region’s air quality monitors recorded higher ozone levels than in recent years, exceeding the federal health-based standard on 12 days.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency uses a rolling three-year average to determine whether a region is in compliance with the ozone standard. Despite lower ozone levels in 2016 and 2017, the 2018 exceedances have put the region on the brink of violating the ozone standard.

Public outreach
To alert area residents of potentially high levels of pollution, MARC issues a daily SkyCast ozone forecast from March 1–Oct. 31 and provides residents with tips on simple actions they can take to protect their health and help reduce pollution. In addition, 12 emissions clinics offered residents simple tests to determine whether their vehicles needed simple maintenance to help reduce emissions.

Workplace partnerships
MARC also collaborates with local governments and businesses across the region to promote emissions reduction. More than 180 area organizations participated in the Workplace Partnership in 2018, receiving monthly newsletters, Ozone Alert notifications and access to free workshops and consultations.

WATER QUALITY

Public education
The MARC Water Quality Public Education Committee (WQEC), a consortium of 20 local governments, focused on grassroots outreach activities targeting neighborhoods and homeowners in 2018. Presentations, workshops and community events educated residents on ways stormwater runoff contributes to the pollution of waterways, along with specific steps they can take to reduce non-point source pollution in their communities.

Water quality videos
Building on a series of four animated videos developed in 2017, the WQEC created a new animation in 2018, illustrating the impact of litter on water quality with a vintage video game theme.

The 2017 series of videos was recognized with a silver Philly Award from Nonprofit Connect. These annual awards recognize outstanding achievement in nonprofit communications.

Water quality grants
Each year, the WQEC offers funding opportunities to local nonprofit and educational organizations for education and outreach events that help reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality in area waterways.

In 2018, the committee awarded six grants totaling $25,000. Over the past decade, the committee has awarded a total of $262,811 to more than 30 organizations that have implemented a variety of projects, ranging from stream cleanups and rain garden installations to watershed festivals, puppet shows and educational float trips.

Community planning survey
In 2018, the WQEC conducted its seventh biennial survey of residents in the region. The survey helps measure the impact that water quality education efforts have on public awareness of water quality issues and related behavior changes.

The 2018 survey quantified increases of 10 percent or more in support for ordinances that promote environment health, funding for restoration of urban waterways, conservation of natural areas and incentive programs for native plantings and water harvesting. However, over half of those surveyed did not know where stormwater goes after entering the storm drain, indicating a continuing need for education.

Sustainable Success Stories
The 2018 Sustainable Success Stories program recognized 10 projects from eight organizations for exemplary efforts in sustainability.

Honorees included Bridging The Gap; Blue Valley North and Turner High schools in Kansas; the cities of Gladstone, Kansas City, Lee’s Summit and Raymore in Missouri; and Ripple Glass.

The annual Sustainable Success Stories event is part of an ongoing community dialogue focused on building a better understanding of sustainable practices that have the potential to transform our community. By sharing local successes and challenges, community partners can learn how to replicate high-impact practices that can improve the quality of life for citizens in the MARC region.
MORE 2018 ACTIVITIES

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
Recycling better
The MARC Solid Waste Management District (SWMD) continued its outreach to educate residents about what items can and cannot be recycled in curbside bins. Contamination of recyclables increases sorting costs and limits the value of materials, making it more difficult for local governments to sustain recycling operations.

Community outreach
SWMD staff made 25 presentations to community organizations, engaged six area employers with the Recycle More at Work program and answered more than 600 phone calls on the district’s recycling information line. RecycleSpot.org, the district’s recycling education website, served more than 67,000 users in 2018.

District grants
Each year, the SWMD receives funding from landfill and transfer station fees collected by the state, and half of that amount is used for a grant program to promote local waste reduction, reuse and recycling projects. In 2018, the district awarded $609,135 to 12 local organizations, funding a wide range of projects from mattress recycling to composting to educational programs.

Household hazardous waste collection
Since 1997, the SWMD has coordinated household hazardous waste collection events around the region to help residents safely dispose of toxic household products. In 2018, 35 cities and counties participated in the program, collecting 168 tons of waste at 12 local events.

TRAILS AND GREENWAYS
Historic Trails Retracement
The National Park Service’s National Trails Intermountain Region worked with MARC, local governments and local trails organizations last year to develop a strategy for retracing three National Historic Trails — the Santa Fe, Oregon and California — through the Kansas City region.

The resulting Concept Strategy Plan offers a system alignment that, once implemented at the local level, will help residents and tourists explore these historic routes and connect with historic and community assets. The completed plan was accepted by the MARC Board of Directors in early 2019, and MARC is working with local governments on ways to incorporate plan recommendations into local plans and policy documents.

Looking Ahead
TRANSFORMING VACANT LOTS
In mid-2018, with support from the Health Forward Foundation, MARC and a group of regional partners launched an initiative to demonstrate how green infrastructure — natural areas, rain gardens and parks that improve ecosystem health — can deliver multiple benefits for human health and community revitalization.

In Missouri, the project will work with the Urban Neighborhood Initiative’s Vacant to Vibrant program to prioritize areas for green infrastructure installations. Work in Kansas will focus on Clifton Park and the surrounding neighborhood. Resident input will drive the final project and location selections.

The initiative is expected to lead to a better understanding of the link between green spaces, public health and policy recommendations to promote green infrastructure.

10 Orange Ozone Alerts in 2018, up from four in 2017
168 tons of household hazardous waste collected at 12 community events
$609,135 awarded to 12 solid waste management projects
91% of residents surveyed are concerned about water pollution
Exemplary Core Capacities

In addition to its programmatic work, MARC’s core back-office functions ensure effective operations that include financial management, human resources, information technology, data management and communications. MARC also uses these core capacities to support external partners through shared services, effective use of technology and innovative approaches to regional problem solving.

Data management and analysis — MARC collects and analyzes data to inform policy making and planning using a variety of advanced tools, including GIS, statistical modeling and data visualization. Examples include providing the metrics for KC Rising and evaluating the region’s quality of life based on a survey of 1000 residents in partnership with the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Innovation — With the addition of a chief innovation officer and expansion of its shared services work in 2018, MARC is placing a new emphasis on ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public service delivery.

Grant management — MARC’s finance team administered more than 100 unique funding streams in 2018, documenting expenses and reporting to funding agencies as required.

Facility and event management — The MARC conference center provides a venue to convene local, state and federal officials to advance regional efforts, provide training and conduct committee work and public meetings.

Publications and online communications — MARC’s public affairs team uses a variety of printed and electronic communications to provide information, engage stakeholders, share best practices and celebrate progress and promote positive change.

Management Team

- David A. Warm, Executive Director
- Ron Achelpohl, Director of Transportation and Environment
- Carol Gonzales, Director of Financial and Administration
- Frank Lenk, Director of Research Services
- Marlene Nagel, Director of Community Development
- Jovanna Rohs, Director of Early Learning and Head Start
- James Stowe, Director of Aging and Adult Services
2018 Budget

REVENUES

- Federal, state & private grants $54,646,220
- Contributed services (non-cash) $10,255,646
- Program & other income $1,955,006
- Local government dues $959,752

$67.8 million

EXPENSES

- Pass-through funds $42,993,687
- MARC’s coordination services $14,976,255
- Contributed services (non-cash) $10,255,646

$68.2 million

Note: 74.2 percent of cash revenue was passed through to local governments and service providers in 2018.

Because MARC’s budget typically includes more than 100 active grants that operate on different schedules, it is not unusual for expenses to exceed revenues, or vice versa, in a given calendar year.

2018 Funders

FEDERAL
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. National Park Service

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS*
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
STATE*
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Kansas Division of Emergency Management
- Missouri Alliance of Area Agencies on Aging
- Missouri Association of Councils of Government
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Public Safety
- Missouri Department of Social Services
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
- Missouri Housing Development Commission

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES*
- Nine counties and 119 cities in the MARC region
- Kansas City Area Transportation Authority
- Regional hospitals and emergency services agencies

FOUNDATIONS AND NONPROFITS
- DeBruce Foundation
- Durkee Fund
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- Family Conservancy
- Francis Family Foundation
- George Baum Family Foundation
- H&R Block Foundation
- Hall Family Foundation
- Health Forward Foundation
- Heartland Conservation Alliance
- KC Scholars
- KC Healthy Kids
- Margaret A. Cargill Foundation
- Menorah Heritage Foundation
- Missouri Foundation for Health
- National League of Cities
- Nettleton Foundation
- New American Economy Research Fund
- REACH Healthcare Foundation
- reStart, Inc.
- Truman Heartland Community Foundation
- United Way of Greater Kansas City
- WJ Brace Charitable Trust, Bank of America, Trustee

*Includes pass-through federal funds
MARC Committees

AGING SERVICES
• Commission on Aging and subcommittees:
  - Community Center Administrators
  - Silver-Haired Legislature Delegation
  - Managed Services Network Steering Committee

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
• First Suburbs Coalition
• KC Communities for All Ages Advisory Board
• Homelessness Management Information System Oversight Committee and Users Committee
• Sustainable Places Policy Committee
• GradForce KC Steering Committee
• Regional Workforce Intelligence Network
• Regional Community Health Workers Collaborative
• Cybersecurity Task Force
• Solid Waste Management District Management Council
• Household Hazardous Waste Task Force
• Solid Waste Management District Grant Review Committee

EARLY LEARNING
• Partners in Quality
• Head Start Policy Council
• Head Start Advisory Committee
• Head Start Health Advisory Committee

EMERGENCY SERVICES
• Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee and subcommittees:
  - Law Enforcement
  - KC Regional Fusion Center
  - Public Health
  - Policy
  - Training and Exercise
  - Functional and Access Needs
  - E-RAPIO
  - CCTA Task Force
• MARC Health Care Coalition
• Hospitals Committee
• Area Maritime Port Security Committee
• Community Disaster Resiliency Network
• Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee
• Mid-America Local Emergency Planning Committee
• Mid-America Regional Council Emergency Rescue

PUBLIC SAFETY
• Public Safety Communications Board and subcommittees:
  - Public Safety Communications Users
  - Regional Interoperability Committee
  - Metropolitan Area-Wide Regional Radio System (MARRS) Board

RESEARCH SERVICES
• Community-Wide Information Network
• KC Metro GIS
• Technical Forecast Committee

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT
• Air Quality Forum and subcommittees:
  - Air Quality Public Education Committee
  - Conformity Consulting Agencies
  - Operation Green Light Steering Committee
  - Sustainable Places Policy Committee
• Total Transportation Policy Committee and subcommittees:
  - RTP 2050 Steering Committee
  - Aviation Committee
  - Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee
  - Destination Safe Coalition
• Goods Movement Committee
• Highway Committee
• Regional Transit Coordinating Council
• Active Transportation Programming Committee
• Kansas and Missouri Surface Transportation Program Committees
• Mobility Advisory Committee
• Regional Water Quality Public Education Committee

PROFESSIONAL ROUNDTABLES
• Managers Roundtable
• Planners Roundtable
• Kansas City Regional Purchasing Cooperative
• Metropolitan Official Health Agencies of the Kansas City Area
• Regional Association of Public Information Officers
• Regional Information Technology Managers Association
The MARC Region

- 2 states
- 9 counties
- 119 cities
- 4,423 square miles
- 2 million people