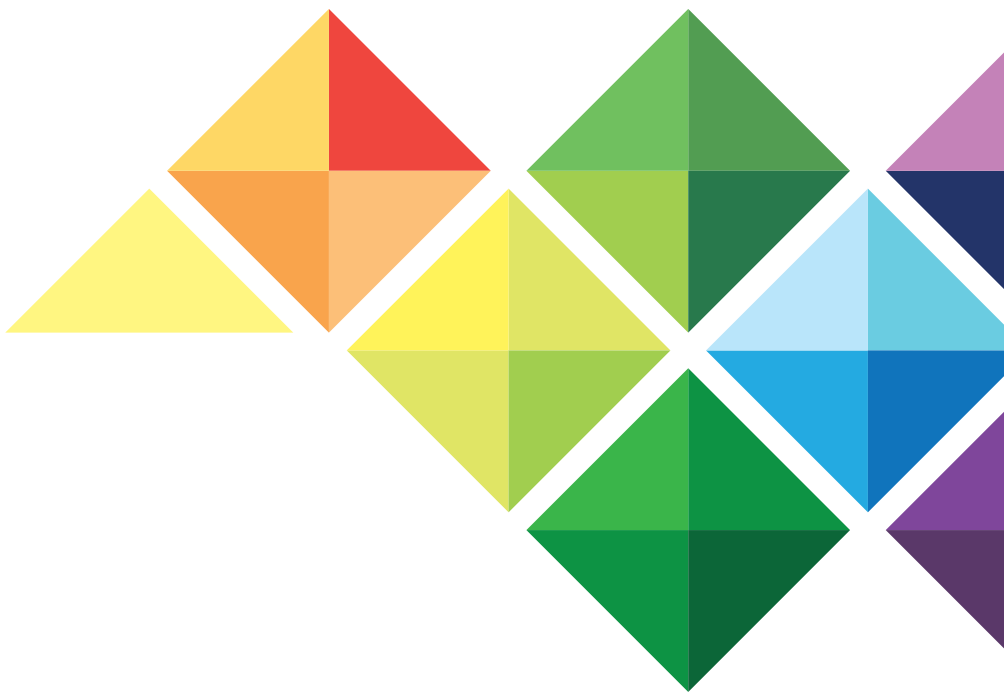




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23

Mid-America Regional Council  
**ANNUAL REVIEW**





Vendors display their products at the Mission Market in Mission, Kansas.

## A message from our chair



**Janeé Hanzlick**  
Commissioner  
Johnson County, Kansas

Along with the Board, executive director, staff and members of the Mid-America Regional Council, I am pleased to present the MARC 2023 Annual Review. The work highlighted in this report demonstrates the power of coming together through MARC to advance social, economic and environmental progress for all our residents.

The Annual Review showcases how our region is collaborating to address urgent issues through strengthening climate resilience, developing an equitable transportation system, enhancing public safety, supporting our most vulnerable residents and more. These are not easy issues, but we are working well together to meet these challenges.

On behalf of the elected leaders who shape the agenda at MARC, I want to express my gratitude and appreciation for your continued participation and support. I'm inspired by the dedication and passion of our members and partners. You are the driving force behind our vision of creating a stronger Kansas City region.

Thank you for making a difference in our communities.

# MARC Board of Directors

as of May 2024

## OFFICERS

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**Janeé Hanzlick**, Commissioner, Johnson County

### 1ST VICE CHAIR

**Beto Lopez**, Mayor Pro Tem, Lee's Summit

### 2ND VICE CHAIR

**Damien Boley**, Mayor, Smithville

### TREASURER

**Holly Grummert**, Council Member, Overland Park

### SECRETARY

**Dr. Bridget McCandless**, Council Member, Independence



Carson Ross, former mayor of Blue Springs, Missouri, accepts a gift for his service to the MARC Board from Janeé Hanzlick, commissioner, Johnson County, Kansas. Ross served as Board chair until April 2024, when he handed the gavel to Commissioner Hanzlick.

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**Kristofer Turnbow**, Mayor, Raymore

### CLAY COUNTY

**Jerry Nolte**, Presiding Commissioner

**Victor Hurlbert**, Auditor

**Damien Boley**, Mayor, Smithville

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**Mike McDonough**, Mayor, Raytown

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**Eric Mikkelson**, Mayor, Prairie Village

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**Dagmar Wood**, Commissioner

### RAY COUNTY

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**Dr. Evelyn Hill**, Commissioner

**Tom Burroughs**, Commissioner

**Tom Stephens**, Mayor, Bonner Springs

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**Scott Wagner**, Commissioner, Clay County

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

#### (Non-voting advisory members)

**Frank White III**, President/CEO, KCATA

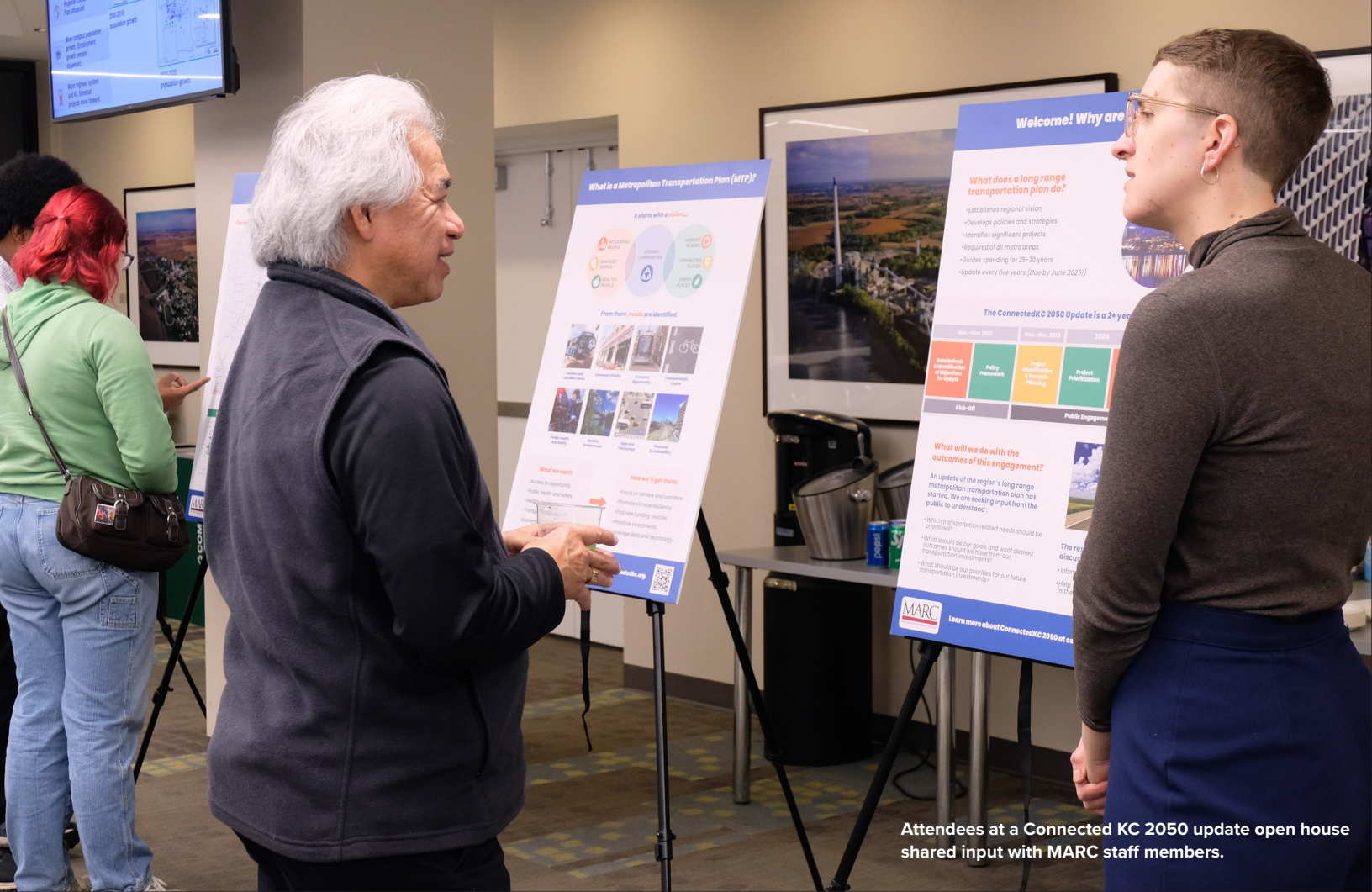
Alternate: Dick Jarrold, Vice President of Planning and Development, KCATA

**Michael Moriarty**, Chief of Transportation Planning, KDOT

Alternate: Leroy Koehn, District Engineer, KDOT

**Chris Redline**, District Engineer, Missouri Department of Transportation, MoDOT

Alternate: Jeff Hardy, Assistant District Engineer, MoDOT



Attendees at a Connected KC 2050 update open house shared input with MARC staff members.

# Efficient Transportation & Quality Places

MARC advances regional plans for a safe, balanced and equitable transportation system. We establish priorities, guide investments and support coordinated operations to help achieve a regional vision for our people, places and communities.

## Connected KC 2050

Residents and leaders in the Kansas City region are shaping the future of transportation by participating in the update to the Connected KC 2050 metropolitan transportation plan. As the metropolitan planning agency for the Kansas City region, MARC updates the region's transportation plan every five years. The plan serves as a blueprint for managing the transportation system to help achieve a vision of vibrant, connected and green places and successful, engaged and healthy people supported by strong communities. To involve communities, MARC worked with organizations and governments to hold outreach activities at public locations and cultural events in all nine MARC counties. The update is due by 2025.

## Transportation investments

By the end of 2024, MARC expects to have programmed about \$150 million in transportation investments across the region, including improved transit service, roadways and trails. Additionally, MARC is advancing the Bi-State Sustainable Reinvestment Corridor planning effort, supported by a \$6 million federal grant. The corridor will connect three downtowns and multiple destinations in the Kansas City region. Upcoming work includes updating transportation plans and completing advanced engineering design for one or more high-capacity transit routes, while also laying the groundwork for improved access to housing, health care, employment and education for residents in the area.

## Active transportation

MARC staff assessed how the Regional Bikeway Plan, adopted in 2015, has been implemented so far to better inform a future update. Staff also worked extensively with stakeholders to update MARC's Complete Streets Policy, which was adopted in February 2024. To encourage residents to use active transportation, MARC launched media campaigns to promote Bike Month in May and Walk To School Day in October.

## Operation Green Light

This cooperative effort to improve the operation of traffic signals on major routes throughout the Kansas City area celebrated 15 years in 2023. The program also secured a \$734,000 federal grant to develop arterial performance measures. Over the course of 2023, Operation Green Light completed 696 traffic signal investigations and retimed 77 signals.

## Planning area expansion

Ray County and its cities are now part of the Kansas City metropolitan planning area. Ray County is a founding member of MARC and participates in many other regional programs including aging services, emergency services and solid waste management. Ray County officials asked to join the planning area in May 2023 and the MARC Board of Directors approved the request in August. Missouri Gov. Mike Parson gave the final approval in October.

## Planning Sustainable Places

This program to develop vibrant, connected and green spaces in our region reached 10 years of service in 2023. Since its inception, Planning Sustainable Spaces has completed 101 planning studies and, with a total budget of \$10.8 million, netted over \$400 million in implementation funding. In 2023, MARC implemented 18 planning studies awarded in 2022, including consultant procurement, administrative support, knowledge sharing and public engagement activities across the metro.

## Regional commuting

In 2023, RideshareKC debuted a new name, WAY TO GO, and new strategic goals, including employer programming and services with mobility partners. MARC also promoted the use of the Guaranteed Ride Home program and ride-matching services for regional commuters.

## Airport transit strategy

A transit study recommends express bus services to meet the demands of employees and travelers at the new single terminal at the Kansas City International (KCI) Airport. The KCI Airport Public Transit Services Action Plan was conducted in collaboration with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority, MARC and other regional partners. According to the study, the routes should align with employee shifts and operate at a 30-minute frequency for 18 hours, seven days a week. Public engagement events in 2023 shaped the study's outcomes.



Families in Kansas City, Missouri, hit the trails and sidewalks as part of Walk To School Day on Oct. 12.





Hartzell Gray opens the 2023 Climate Action Summit at Rockhurst University.

# Healthy Environment

MARC develops and implements initiatives that help keep the region's air and water clean, reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, protects and conserves green infrastructure, advances energy efficiency and renewable energy, and catalyzes climate resilience.

## Climate resilience

The region continued to prioritize climate action by implementing the Kansas City Regional Climate Action Plan, which offers a roadmap for fostering more resilient and healthy communities, while positioning the metro for large federal investments in 2024. In 2023, MARC secured a \$1 million federal grant to develop a prioritized climate action plan, a required step to access possible large implementation grants, in partnership with local governments, community organizations and residents. More than 250 people contributed to the development of the priority plan. MARC also supported Climate Action KC's annual Climate Action Summit, which attracted hundreds of attendees and featured speakers, local artists and an expo. The Climate and Environment Council continued leading climate plan implementation efforts, including the development of a regional climate

communications plan with support from local partners and featuring visuals created by Kansas City Art Institute students. As part of Climate Action KC's Building Energy Exchange of KC (BE-Ex KC), 11 construction firm leaders graduated from the Rising Trades Contractor Accelerator Program, which focuses on growing diverse businesses in the high-performance building industry. BE-Ex KC also helped secure \$6.2 million to support local nonprofits with energy efficiency upgrades for their facilities, saving critical operational dollars. As part of a statewide collaborative of workforce agencies across Missouri, BE-Ex KC was awarded federal funding to educate local architects and engineers in implementing a high-performance energy code recently adopted in Kansas City, Missouri.

## Air quality

The region experienced an active ozone season in 2023. From March to October each year, MARC issues a daily SkyCast forecast to alert residents in the region of potentially high levels of ozone pollution. The 2023 ozone season was the most active since 2012 with 14 alerts. MARC also issued one particulate matter alert due to wildfire smoke.

## Water quality, stormwater and watersheds

MARC works with partners to keep our watersheds clean and improve water quality. In 2023, MARC coordinated with local and national partners to begin updating the regional stormwater engineering standards, last revised in 2003. MARC worked with seven communities and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue the

development of a Little Blue River Watershed Feasibility Study to reduce flood risks and restore ecosystems. Also in 2023, more than 300 attendees participated in the KC Urban Stormwater Conference, hosted by MARC and the Water Environment Federation, to gain professional development and education opportunities. MARC supported the Kansas City, Missouri, Parks and Recreation Department in securing \$4.6 million for Blue River Watershed restoration work, benefiting up to 270 riparian areas. Additionally, the MARC Water Quality Education Committee awarded \$20,680 in grants to six nonprofits to help reduce stormwater runoff and improve the quality of local waterways. Work also began on a regional green stormwater infrastructure training program for landscape maintenance professionals.

## Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure incorporates natural elements — such as trees and rain gardens — into the built environment to protect water quality and enhance climate resilience. In 2023, MARC supported the green infrastructure-focused site plan for the Wendell Phillips Accelerator, a community resource center for early learning, dance, food, film, food service and STEAM-based programs. Work also began on National Green Infrastructure Certification Program training and identifying innovative conservation funding techniques to advance large-scale green infrastructure projects within the metro along the Blue River.

## Brownfields

MARC completed site assessments for a local community garden and co-op in Kansas City, Kansas, while continuing work to assess four contaminated commercial and industrial sites in the metro. Six additional projects were identified during a call for projects in 2023.

## Solid waste management

The MARC Solid Waste Management District works with partners and governments to divert waste from area landfills. In 2023, efforts included the upgrade and launch of RecycleSpot.org to help residents easily locate recycling options; the development and launch of Kansas City Food Wise, a regional effort to reduce food waste; and initiatives to reduce illegal dumping. The district awarded 14 grants totaling \$698,855 and included the expansion of food waste composting, glass recycling and a reuse program to support local teachers. The district also facilitated a landfill capacity study and worked to bring to Missouri a state-wide paint recycling program.



The annual Plogtober event, supported by the MARC Water Quality Committee, is an all-ages effort to pick up litter near the region's waterways. Kids and pups are always welcome to join the fun.





The 2023 Greater Kansas City Workforce and Education Summit focused on attracting and retaining talent in the public sector.

# Competitive Economy

MARC works with regional partnerships to enhance the performance of the metropolitan economy and expand inclusive economic opportunity, focusing on supporting regional workforce development systems and producing data and analysis for economic prosperity efforts.

## Workforce development

In response to feedback from local jurisdictions, MARC launched a focused effort to strengthen the public sector workforce development pipeline. The annual Greater Kansas City Workforce and Education Summit focused on attracting and retaining talent in public sector organizations. MARC also offered career development resources to Head Start families in the metro.

Community and partner organizations are working together through MARC to strengthen the region's economy and workforce development system. In 2023, MARC completed work on a pandemic recovery grant, assisting disadvantaged job seekers in Wyandotte County with Workforce Partnership resources and supporting three organizations in providing training and

technical assistance to small businesses in Wyandotte County. The programs served over 1,500 adults with career coaching and employment search, and technical training for 200 job seekers. Over 500 businesses and entrepreneurs received training and technical support from the Toolbox, Entrepreneurial Business Basics and Wyandotte Economic Development Council.

Work also began on a Talent-to-Industry Exchange report about the transportation sector. This report will provide a detailed economic and labor analysis of the transportation sector in the Kansas City region



## Technology and innovation hub

MARC supported BioNexus KC in helping the metro achieve federal designation as a regional technology and innovation hub focused on vaccine development, biologics and biomanufacturing. The designation clears the way for the region to apply for up to \$75 million in federal investments to support growth in the sector.

## Broadband and digital equity

In partnership with KC Rising and the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, MARC developed a Kansas City Regional Digital Equity Action Plan. MARC shared the report with community members and assisted state agencies by hosting meetings to collect input on broadband and digital equity plans.

## Economic Equity Values Atlas

MARC updated the Economic Equity Values Atlas (EEVA), a tool designed to help decision-makers apply an equity lens when evaluating place-based investments and policies. EEVA is a web-based application. By overlaying recent major investments or growth patterns, users can identify strategies to support an economy that grows for everyone. In 2023, MARC revised EEVA using the latest data and census boundaries while also automating much of the update process.

Staff worked with local governments, economic development organizations, foundations and other groups to demonstrate how EEVA can be of value. MARC started development of a business plan to provide long-term capacity to maintain and improve the tool. EEVA technology was also integrated into the regional transportation planning process.

## KC Rising

KC Rising brings together civic and business partners to strengthen the regional economy and foster inclusive prosperity. In 2023, MARC supported development of a data dashboard for KC Rising's Pillars of Progress and explored how KC Rising can use EEVA to better understand inclusive prosperity challenges. MARC also supported KC Rising's transition to action teams, and participated on the housing, workforce, industry and federal grant action teams.

## Economic and demographic forecasting

As part of the update to the region's long-range transportation plan, MARC forecasted how the metro will grow and develop by 2050. The draft forecasts predict the region's population and employment growth rate will be healthy, but is projected to slow over the next 25 years, compared to previous projections. This forecast will impact expected economic growth as the population grows older and more people age out of the workforce.



Panelists share their insights at the 2023 Greater Kansas City Workforce and Education Summit. From left: Teri Casey, director of human resources with the City of Kansas City, Missouri; Andrew Weisberg, director of talent for the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce; Joni Porter, career and life design coordinator with the University of Central Missouri.





More than 3,000 students from across the region explored public sector careers at the 2023 Public Service Career Expo.

# Effective Local Government

MARC provides high-quality training and technical assistance services to local governments and develops collaborative efforts and shared services to help cities and counties work more efficiently and effectively.

## Local government partnerships

Through MARC, local governments collaborate in a number of programs and systems that help them deliver public services and perform administrative functions more efficiently and effectively.

As part of regional efforts to strengthen the public sector workforce pipeline, MARC worked with local governments to hold the region's fifth Public Service Career Expo. This free, in-person event allowed middle and high school students to explore high-demand and rewarding career opportunities in local government. Numerous cities and counties across the bi-state region co-sponsored the expo, featuring hands-on, interactive sessions about public sector jobs and information on internships, job shadowing and volunteer opportunities.

MARC also supports the First Suburbs Coalition, which brings together elected officials, local government staff and private sector partners to address issues facing first suburb communities, enhance the unique qualities these communities offer, and maintain a high quality of life for current and future generations.

MARC provides local governments with various services, such as cost-effective training and cooperative purchasing. MARC also offers data and mapping services, and supports initiatives like the Metropolitan Culture District — known as the Bi-State Commission — and the Core Communities Initiative, which gathers leaders from the largest jurisdictions to discuss shared concerns.

## Regional Housing Partnership

Safe, quality and affordable housing is critical to the Kansas City region because it impacts access to jobs and education, economic development, and our quality of life. In partnership with LISC Greater Kansas City, MARC convenes and coordinates the Regional Housing Partnership to build an effective housing system that expands and sustains access to affordable housing and promotes regional prosperity to result in better economic and health outcomes. In 2023, the partnership mobilized individuals and organizations to enact systems-level change around the goal of creating and preserving more homes of greater variety and at different price points across the region. The regional Housing Data Hub underpins all the work undertaken by the Regional Housing Partnership, which elevates data to spur discussion and action.



More than 40 MARC staff members achieved an ambitious goal for #CityHallSelfie Day in 2023. They visited the nine counties and 119 cities in the MARC region as part of the national celebration showcasing pride in local government institutions.

## Government Training Institute

MARC's Government Training Institute (GTI) provides quality professional development at an affordable cost to local governments. In 2023, GTI offered specialized trainings for planning commissioners and elected officials. MARC also increased its catalog of on-demand professional development trainings available online, such as active shooter response. GTI offered administrative and logistics support to special events in the region, including the Kansas City Urban Stormwater Conference and the Heartland Conference on Health Equity, as well as specialized and custom training options.

## Government-to-University initiative

The Government-to-University (G2U) program supports the need for talented public servants by building sustainable connections between government and universities. In 2023, G2U launched a Talent Connections toolkit, with support from the Volcker Alliance, to enhance partnerships between government employers and college career service officers. MARC launched MetroKCGovJobs.org, a jobs board, to help job seekers find public sector opportunities in the Kansas City region. G2U also held a regional coalition summit and offered curricula, including online courses for the Regional Data Academy, to help public sector employees expand their data skills.

## Shared services

The Eastern Jackson County Shared Services Initiative continued to collaborate on projects of mutual interest. MARC secured funding to continue a cross-jurisdictional mental health co-responder program, which pairs co-responders with law enforcement on mental health calls in five cities. Through this program, in 2023, co-responders supported law enforcement on 624 calls for service, approximately 30% of all mental health related calls for services received by the departments.





Using artwork such as this, MARC promoted 988 to metro residents in 2023. MARC also helped coordinate an equitable crisis response among providers.

# Safe & Secure Communities

MARC manages ongoing operation, maintenance and state-of-the-art enhancement of the regional 911 system and coordinates the region’s interoperable communications system. MARC also helps strengthen the region’s emergency services and homeland security capabilities to prevent, protect, prepare, respond and recover with coordinated plans and high-quality training, exercises, technology and specialized equipment.

### 988 mobile crisis response

In 2023, MARC continued to support and promote 988, the national suicide and crisis lifeline. MARC administered a \$3 million federal grant to advance equitable mobile crisis response for 988 calls in partnership with five Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in Missouri serving Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties and in coordination with providers in Kansas. MARC also began efforts to develop an education campaign to direct residents to 988.

### Emergency preparedness

Through the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee (RHSCC), the region supported nearly 100 local exercises and trainings to help agencies prepare for all threats. The committee also concluded a multi-year planning process to focus on enhancing a culture of preparedness in the metro. Other committee efforts in 2023 included piloting a “planning special events” workshop for jurisdictions, and supporting event organizers and volunteers in the region. The RHSCC also supported police, fire and EMS services at the NFL Draft and Chiefs Super Bowl parade.

## Public health

The region's public health departments work together through the Metropolitan Official Health Agencies of the Kansas City Area committee, also known as MOHAKCA, to promote public health at the regional level and increase the effectiveness of public health agencies. In 2023, MARC supported MOHAKCA in developing and rolling out a public education campaign about the dangers of opioids. Using local voices and images, the campaign has been featured around the region on billboards and transit ads, as well as in the media and through social media.

## Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity incidents are a reality that today's organizations must address. MARC supports the region through pre-planning and relationship-building to strengthen the capacity of local governments to address cybersecurity threats. As part of this work, in 2023, MARC launched the development of a Cybersecurity Toolkit for Local Governments. The toolkit, expected in 2024, will provide an overview of how to handle cybersecurity risks, from initial mitigation to response and recovery following a breach.

## 911 training

MARC's Peer Support Program received a national award of service excellence from the 911 Training Institute for helping 911 and other emergency response professionals cope with personal and job-related stress. Trained volunteers provide this service 24/7. Other supports included mental health resilience training and weekly training tips. MARC also conducted online and in-person trainings to ensure state-level minimum guidelines were met. Nearly 640 dispatchers participated in MARC 911 trainings in 2023.

## 911 system updates

Work continued in 2023 to strengthen and expand the regional 911 system. MARC completed the upgrade of a router to facilitate the region's transition to Next Generation 911, a new technology that will allow the public to share videos, images and texts with emergency call centers. Across the region, MARC replaced 60 workstations for 911 dispatchers and completed the implementation of GeoComm maps to increase location accuracy for dispatchers. MARC responded to requests from the Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department to provide the agency with automatic abandoned callback and auto-attendant features. MARC also led a study in partnership with agencies in Jackson County, Missouri, to evaluate the possibility of a regional approach to dispatch services or other solutions to workforce needs.



Each April, MARC hosts the Telecommunicators Appreciation Celebration and Outstanding Performance Awards to honor the important role telecommunicators and 911 calltakers play in keeping our communities safe. Above, Master Deputy Tamara Gasper-Adell, with the Johnson County, Kansas, Sheriff's Office, receives a 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award.





Participants in Give 5, a volunteer-matching program, listen to a presentation by After the Harvest staff as part of their training.

# Thriving Older Adults & Communities

MARC empowers our region's vulnerable residents, including older adults and underserved communities, by ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources that support independence, healthy living and active lifestyles for all residents.

## Education and engagement

As part of MARC's efforts to create communities where all residents can thrive, the Age Positive Conference brought together more than 150 attendees to enhance older adult programming and supports. The annual event was held in collaboration with partner agencies and celebrated the 50th anniversary of MARC's role as the local Area Agency on Aging. Also in 2023, MARC launched the volunteer-matching Give 5 program with 24 participants. The initiative was met with enthusiasm by participants and involved nonprofits. The program plans to expand in 2024. MARC also led efforts to encourage vulnerable residents to receive flu and COVID-19 vaccines by hosting 25 vaccination events around the region.

## Nutrition

Double Up Food Bucks helps families afford fresh produce at grocery stores and farmers markets in Kansas and Missouri. Launched in 2015, the program provides a dollar-for-dollar match for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, up to \$25 a day, for fresh produce purchases at participating grocery stores, farmers markets and farmstands. In 2023, 168 locations across the two states participated in the program, reaching nearly 73,500 households and an estimated 150,000 individuals. MARC also continued to ensure older adults and people with disabilities had access to healthy food through the home-delivered meal program, providing more than 12,000 meals weekly in 2023. Efforts also began in 2023 to purchase a meal repackaging facility.

## Community health workers

Since 2015, MARC has supported the KC Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative, which encourages the use of community health workers (CHWs) to meet patient needs. CHWs are trusted members of the community who serve as a link between patients and health organizations. In 2023, MARC provided professional development trainings to CHWs across Kansas and Missouri in core competencies, supervisory skills, continuing education and career pathways. MARC supported training and technical assistance on reimbursement strategies for employers through Medicare and Medicaid for CHWs as part of a health care team.



## Communities for All Ages

The Communities for All Ages program recognized four cities in 2023 for their efforts to make communities more welcoming for all age groups. Twenty-three jurisdictions have earned honors to date, with 13 reaching the Gold Level.

## Caregiver support

In recognition of the critical role that family caregivers play, MARC provided programming and support to local organizations and individuals. The *GrandPass* program, launched in 2023, gives older caregivers a break by providing a free week of summer camp to the children they care for. The program will expand in 2024 to provide respite opportunities for more older caregivers.

## Veteran-directed care

Working with the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, MARC managed referrals, provided assessments, helped with care plans and managed care relationships between veterans and care providers. These services are offered to veterans who wish to choose their own care worker to maintain their independence at home. In 2023, MARC connected 152 veterans to services from the VA Medical Center and also held webinars for hospitals with ALS programs to educate staff about the benefits of the program.

## Integrated care

MARC and regional stakeholders formed the Mid-America Community Support Network (CSN) to integrate social care services into regional health care systems in response to national health directives for providers to increase focus on health-related social needs. The CSN brings together diverse regional partners to alleviate the resulting strained capacities and address health-related social needs of community members through targeted home and community-based services and interventions. Among these partners are community-based organizations, health systems, health plans, educational institutions and other payers and stakeholders. The CSN utilizes a hub model that provides coordinated back-office administrative functions, centralized intake and referral, and quality oversight to reduce barriers to access and improve health outcomes and health equity. Integrated care services provided in 2023 included community care management, whole-person interventions, consumer-directed care, nutrition support, chronic disease self-management education and community health worker support.

As part of MARC's nutrition work, staff partnered with three local health clinics to launch a produce prescription program in the Kansas City area called KC Fresh Rx. The first cohort of 23 patients received nutrition education and financial incentives to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Above, a chef demonstrates how to make simple, healthy meals for a video shared with program participants.



Capt. Tala Hooban, deputy director of the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, celebrated Head Start Awareness Month in October with a visit to two MARC Head Start locations in the Kansas City region.

# Quality Early Learning

MARC provides leadership and coordination to build a robust early learning system with strong families, skilled teachers, quality programs, supportive communities, sustained and sufficient funding, and multi-sector collaboration.

## Pediatric health care

MARC continued to support KidsCARE, a collaboration to remove barriers to high-quality medical and dental care for children, through a partnership with Swope Health Services. In 2023, a new KidsCARE clinic opened at the Excelsior Springs Head Start site. The project was supported by \$300,000 in federal, private and corporate funds. The new Swope Health KidsCARE clinic features three exam rooms, providing preventive, early intervention and treatment services covering medical, dental, behavioral health care and optometry services. MARC also supported the creation and implementation of the Come on Now app, which notifies families of upcoming well-child dates and assists in scheduling and keeping appointments.

## Early care and education workforce

Although the region's early care and education programs continued to recover from impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic workforce shortages persist. In 2023, staff refined and replicated MARC Head Start's workforce skill-up program for parents and caregivers with young children. Also in 2023, in partnership with the University of Central Missouri, MARC implemented a four-credential stackable program to advance nine local classroom teachers toward their bachelor's degrees. Additionally, MARC provided retention pay to Early Start and Head Start staff at direct-service providers in an effort to retain child care professionals.



## Training and assistance

In 2023, the Educare program transformed into the Child Care Collaborative Network and expanded its footprint to 15 counties in Missouri. The program offers resources, training and technical assistance to improve the quality of care and education provided within family child care and center-based early learning programs. MARC partnered with The Family Conservancy, the Local Investment Commission, Youth Alliance of St. Joseph and the University of Missouri to administer the program. MARC also prepared to develop and distribute reports on a variety of metrics related to the network, including on-site consultation visits.



Dental services are available at the new Swope Health KidsCARE clinic housed at the MARC Excelsior Springs Head Start site.

## Strategic action planning

In partnership with the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Kids Win Missouri, Kansas Action for Children and others, MARC began collaborating with community leaders throughout the Kansas City region to build an actionable road map toward a sustainable and high-quality early learning system. In 2023, MARC secured funding for the project, conducted research on early childhood systems-building frameworks and led recruitment for a steering committee. The planning effort will be led by the steering committee, consisting of families and professionals from early care and education, including members from Partners in Quality, public schools, higher education, area nonprofits, and business and civic leaders. The plan will include specific goals and metrics for measuring progress.

## Quality environments

To ensure the healthy growth and development of children receiving care in MARC-supported child care centers and home programs, staff coordinated and completed over 279 Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) assessments to inform coaching and quality improvements for participating classrooms. MARC also completed Early Learning Program Profile (ELPP) quality assessments on 29 participating early learning programs using CLASS assessments and a self report form assessing structural quality. In 2023, MARC provided \$13,000 in quality improvement to child care programs participating in the ELPP.

Facility improvements also enhanced education at MARC Head Start sites in 2023. MARC supported the creation of outdoor classrooms at locations in Kansas City, Missouri; the Center School District; and Raytown, Missouri. MARC also funded new playground equipment for several Head Start sites.





MARC staff posed next to a Parade of Hearts sculpture at the 2023 Regional Assembly and Leadership Awards.

# Exemplary Core Capacities

MARC provides exemplary core functions necessary to ensure effective operation of all programs, including financial management, human resources, information technology, data management and communications.

## Respect for all

Understanding, respecting, valuing and accepting differences is a core MARC value. In 2023, staff participated in advanced training and education opportunities focused on inclusion. Using a learning management system, MARC staff completed virtual trainings while efforts began to hold a first-ever, in-person allyship training. To help strengthen onboarding, recruitment and retention efforts, MARC implemented a “buddy” program to pair recent hires with current employees. Staff also learned about our diverse metro through presentations, planned discussions and activities. Looking into 2024, conversations will continue around equitable representation on MARC committees and inclusive engagement practices.

## Digital communications

MARC increasingly relies on digital communications to connect with audiences across the region. In 2023, the new MARC.org welcomed nearly 172,000 visitors and celebrated its first birthday. Recent updates to the website include improved user experiences and new data and map displays. Several new or redesigned websites launched in 2023, including RecycleSpot.org, KCFoodWise.org and WayToGoKC.org. To strengthen internal communications, MARC prepared for a new intranet site, called Compass, to enhance internal information sharing, learning and culture. Work also continued to refine MARC’s new contact and event system to enhance quality of data by building and offering trainings for staff and developing policies.

## Human resources

In 2023, MARC completed a job description and compensation plan update, resulting in current and standardized job descriptions for all agency staff, along with new data on market values. Staff also implemented a comprehensive onboarding program to ensure new hires have a successful transition to the MARC team. MARC also updated its leave programs to provide competitive, flexible leave use and paid parental leave for the first time.

## Financial excellence

MARC's record of financial excellence continued in 2023 with the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate for Distinguished Budget Presentation for the 2023 Budget and Work Plan. MARC's 2022 audit also received a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, an honor MARC has achieved for more than 30 years.

## Technical capacity

Supporting regional efforts requires the use of innovative tools and technology. In 2023, MARC explored a comprehensive document management platform for the organization to help staff manage and access program records. The new MARC Data Style Visualization Guide, which demonstrates best practices for displaying data, received local and national accolades. The guide is available to MARC partners in the region. To help plan for future needs, MARC selected a technology consultant to assess organizational administrative platforms and develop a plan for what tools, programs and resources are needed for the agency to support the region in the coming years.

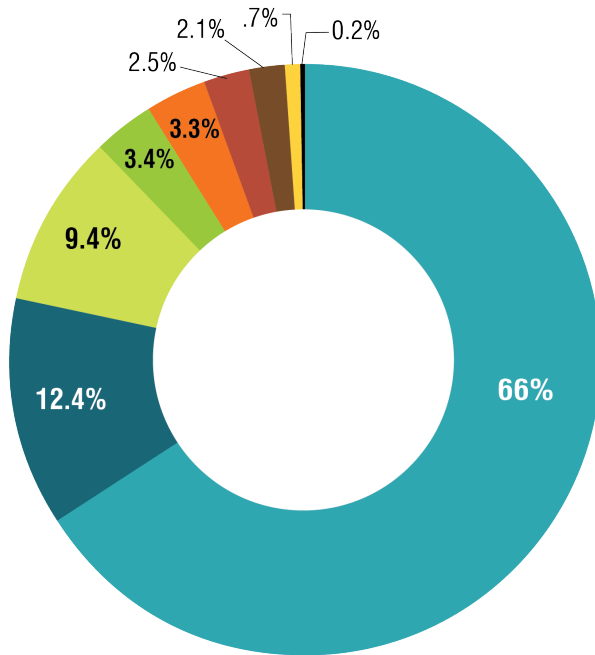
## Internal climate action

MARC staff are taking action to reduce waste and lower greenhouse gas emissions. In 2023, MARC expanded facility composting and recycling options for employees and guests, including installing new landfill, recycling and compost containers and signage in meeting rooms and break rooms. MARC also initiated a program for employees to compost refuse from home. With the MARC conference center back to full capacity, a green meeting initiative was launched to reduce waste at internal and off-site meetings. Internal communication about green tips continued through staff emails, lunch 'n learns and trainings. MARC also held two staff-led litter cleanups at the Rosedale Memorial Arch in Kansas City, Kansas, resulting in dozens of bags of trash (and a few tires) being removed from the iconic park.



MARC staff members pick up litter from the Rosedale Memorial Arch in Kansas City, Kansas. MARC is the "Adopt-A-Spot" program partner for the park.

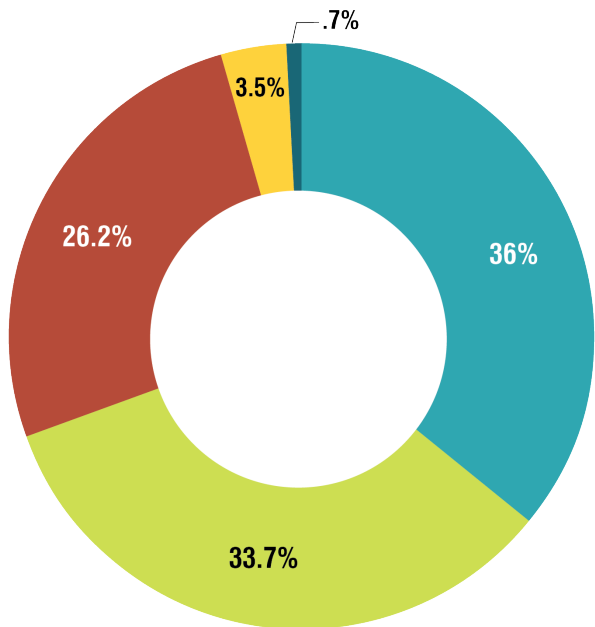
# 2023 Budget



## 2023 REVENUES

- Federal and State Funds — \$73,145,168
- Other Local Funds — \$13,790,026
- Indirect Allocation to Clearing Fund — \$10,384,199
- Contributed Services — \$3,803,012
- Private Funds — \$3,690,334
- Local Dues and Fees — \$2,726,215
- Fees for Services — \$2,297,032
- Transfers from Other Funds — \$800,681
- Investment Income and Other Financing Sources — \$210,744

**TOTAL — \$110,847,411**



## 2023 EXPENDITURES

- Contractual Services — \$39,389,639
- Direct Program Expenses — \$36,855,368
- Personnel\* — \$28,671,534
- Contributed Services — \$3,803,012
- Transfer to Other Funds — \$800,681

**TOTAL — \$109,520,234**

*Note: Approximately 74% of cash revenue was passed through to local governments and service providers in 2023.*

*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.*

# 2023 Funders

## FEDERAL

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Department of Transportation / Federal Transit Administration
- U.S. Department of Treasury
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Volcker Alliance

## STATE\*

- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Kansas Division of Emergency Management
- Kansas Highway Patrol
- Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Missouri Association of Councils of Government
- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Missouri Department of Economic Development
- Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
- Missouri Department of Homeland Security
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Public Safety
- Missouri Department of Transportation

## 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

- Anthem Foundation
- ARTSKC – Regional ARTS Council aka Parade of Hearts
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas
- BlueKC
- Civic Council of Greater Kansas City
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- Francis Family Foundation
- Hall Family Foundation
- Health Forward Foundation
- Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
- Kansas Health Foundation
- KC Healthy Kids
- KUMC Research Institute
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- MAGIC (Mid America GIS Consortium)
- Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation
- Opportunity Trust
- REACH Healthcare Foundation
- Roger A. and Corinne R. Durkee Fund
- Rose Brooks Center
- School Smart KC
- Sosland Foundation
- St. Louis University
- Stanley H. Durwood Foundation
- The Family Conservancy
- University of Central Missouri
- University of Missouri
- University of Missouri Kansas City
- University of Missouri Kansas City Institute for Human Development
- William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank, Trustee
- WJ Brace Charitable Trust, Bank of America, Trustee

*\*Includes pass-through federal funds*

## MARC Management Team

- **David A. Warm**, Executive Director
- **Ron Achelpohl**, Director of Transportation and Environment
- **Carol Gonzales**, Director of Finance and Administration
- **Kristi Bohling-DaMetz**, Director of Aging and Adult Services
  - James Stowe, through January 2023
- **Toni Sturdivant**, Director of Early Learning and Head Start
  - Jovanna Rohs, through May 2023
- **Frank Lenk**, Director of Research Services
- **Marlene Nagel**, Director of Community Development
- **Lauren Palmer**, Director of Local Government Services

# MARC Committees

## EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION AND QUALITY PLACES

- Total Transportation Policy Committee and related subcommittees:
  - 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
- Operation Green Light Steering Committee
- Sustainable Places Policy Committee
- Planners Roundtable
- Technical Forecast Committee

## HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

- Air Quality Forum and related subcommittees:
  - Air Quality Public Education Committee
  - Conformity Consulting Agencies
- Climate and Environment Council
- Regional Water Quality Public Education Committee
- Solid Waste Management District and related committees:
  - Management Council
  - Grant Review Committee
  - Household Hazardous Waste Task Force

## COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

- Regional Workforce Intelligence Network (RWIN)
- KC Rising Metrics Task Force

## SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES

- MARC Health Care Coalition (includes committees with \*)
- Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee and subcommittees:
  - Law Enforcement
  - KC Regional Fusion Center
  - Policy
  - Public Health\*
  - Training and Exercise
  - CCTA Task Force
  - Functional and Access Needs
  - E-RAPIO
  - Cybersecurity
- Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee (MEMC)\*
  - Plans
  - WebEOC
  - Citizen Readiness
  - Badging and Accountability
  - Hazard Mitigation
  - Medical Reserve Corps
- Metropolitan Official Health Agencies of the Kansas City Area (MOHAKCA)
- Mid-America Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
  - Training
  - Plans
  - Industry

## SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES CONT'D

- Mid-America Regional Council Emergency Rescue (MARCER)\*
- Hospitals Committee\*
  - Northern and Southern Health Care Coalitions
- Community Disaster Resiliency Network
- Public Safety Communications Board and related committees:
  - Public Safety Communications Users
  - Regional Interoperability
  - 911 Peer Support Advisory Committee
- Metropolitan Area Regional Radio System Management Council

## THRIVING OLDER ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

- Commission on Aging and related committees:
  - Community Center Administrators
  - Silver-Haired Legislature Delegation
- Community Support Network Steering Committee
- KC Communities for All Ages Advisory Board
- Leaders in Aging Network
- Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative

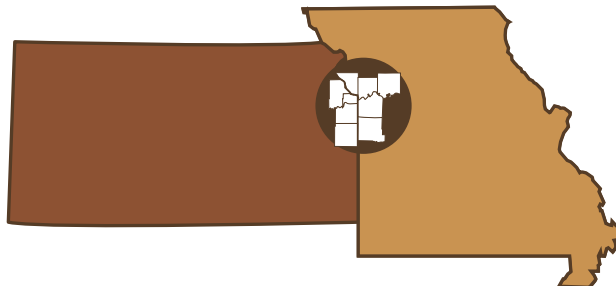
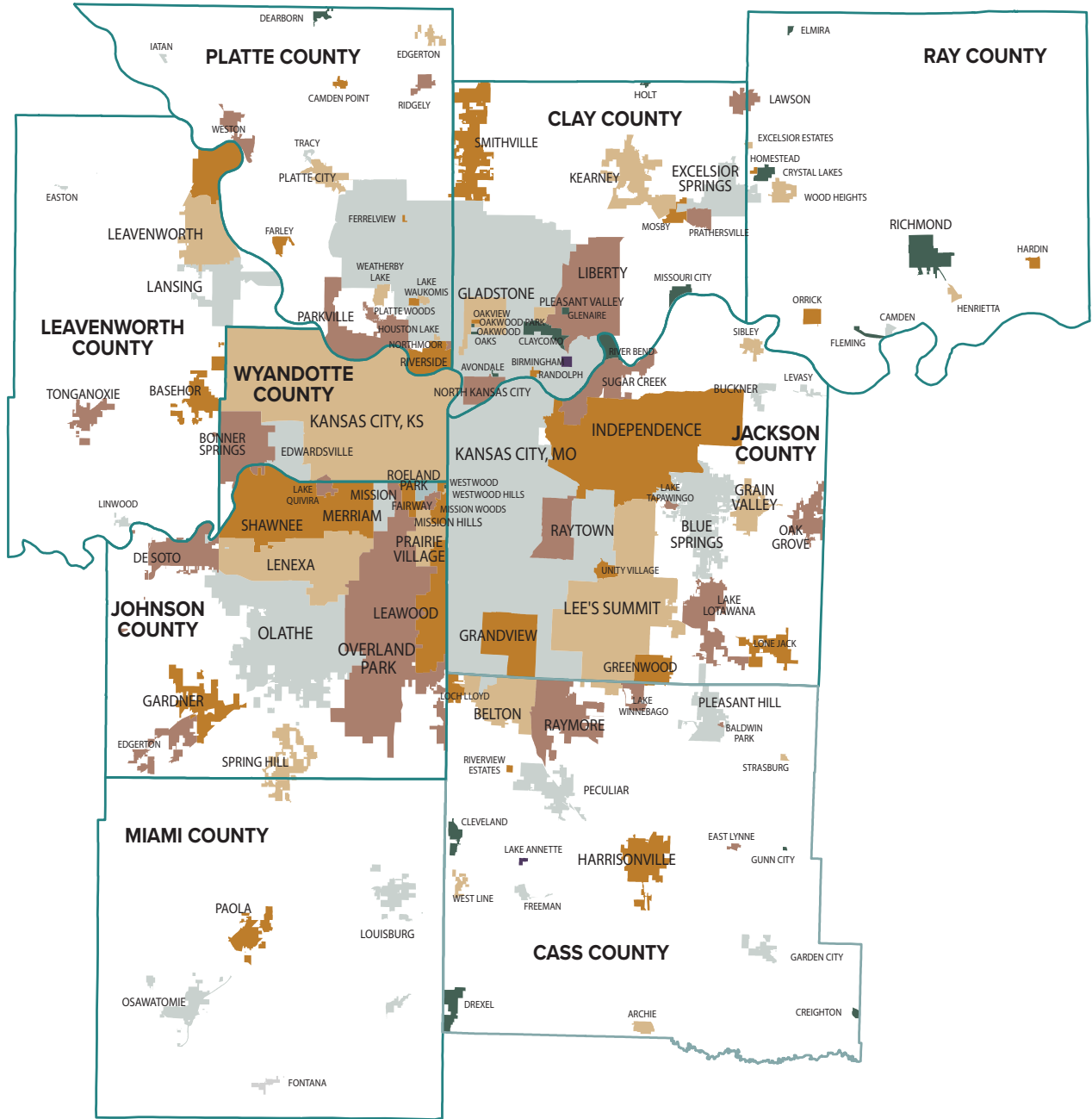
## EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- First Suburbs Coalition
- Government-2-University (G2U) Steering Committee
- Greater Kansas City Regional Housing Partnership Strategy Committee
- KC Metro GIS
- Managers Roundtable
- Kansas City Regional Purchasing Cooperative

## QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

- Partners in Quality
- Head Start Policy Council
- Head Start Advisory Committee
- Head Start Health Advisory Committee

# The MARC Region



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

# MARC

MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL

600 Broadway, Suite 200  
Kansas City, MO, 64105-1659

**[www.marc.org](http://www.marc.org)**