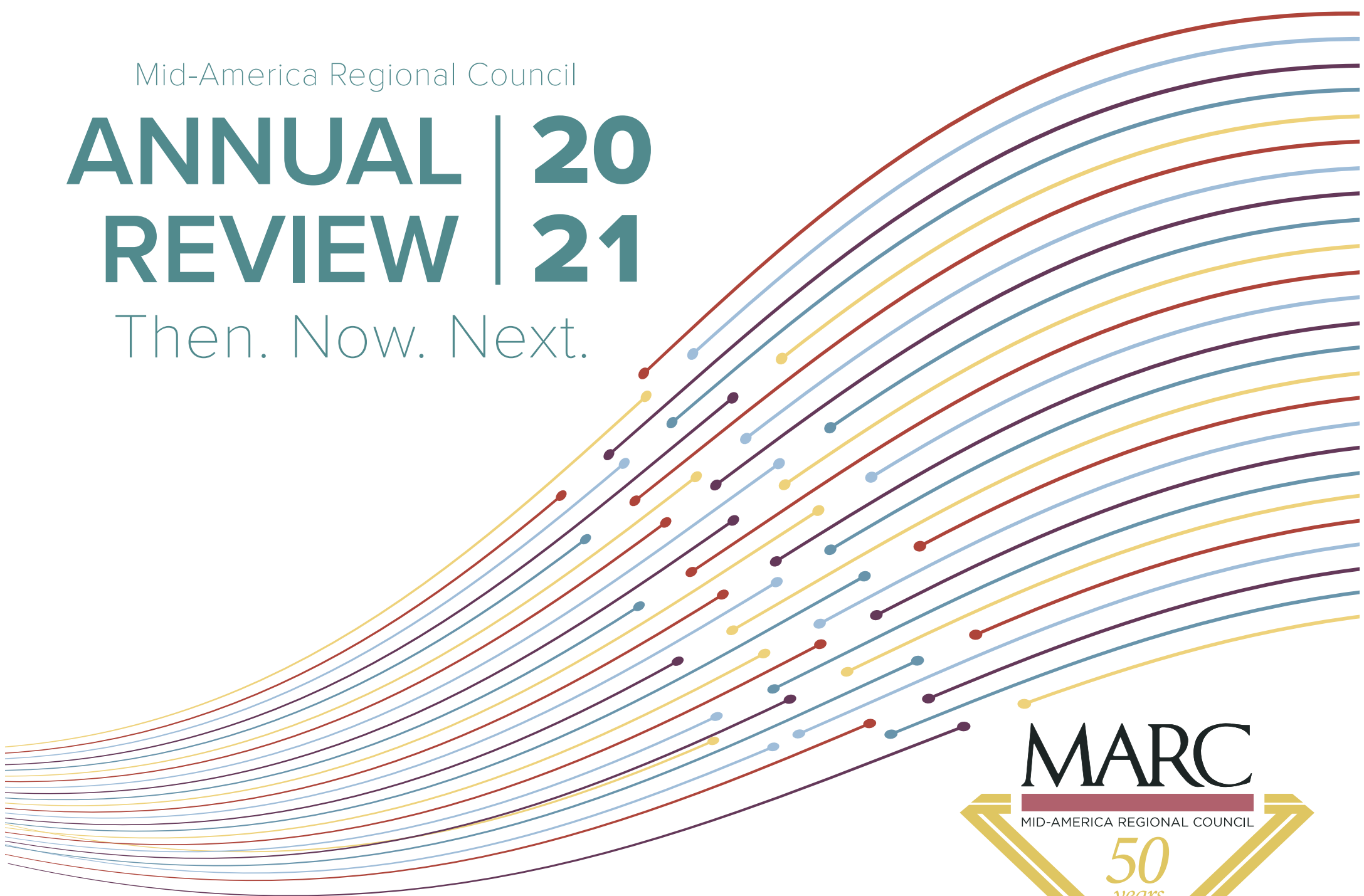


Mid-America Regional Council

# ANNUAL | 20 REVIEW | 21

Then. Now. Next.



**MARC**

MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL

*50*  
years



## A message from our chair



**Harold Johnson Jr.**  
Commissioner,  
Unified Government  
of Wyandotte County/  
Kansas City, Kansas

In 2022, we are celebrating an enormous milestone — 50 years of regional impact through the Mid-America Regional Council .

On behalf of the MARC Board of Directors, I want to say thank you to everyone who has played a part in our regional progress. Your collaboration and partnership have enabled us to address challenges and build innovative systems to move the region forward.

MARC has been and will continue to serve as a forum for the region to come together and address issues that affect us all. The organization exists to help make sure the Kansas City region is a great place to call home — today and 50 years from now.

As we continue to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, we'll have many opportunities to work together to benefit our communities, whether it's through innovative health care delivery systems that prioritize patient care, a new regional Climate Action Plan to increase the region's resilience or working together to identify new funding streams that strengthen our infrastructure.

More exciting work is to come. And we've proven that good things happen when we join together.

I look forward to a wonderful 50th anniversary and to a bright future for the region.

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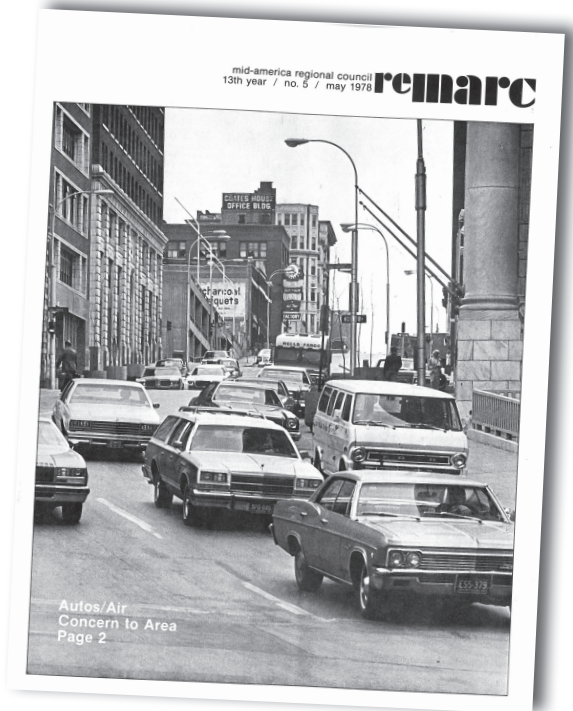
# THEN. NOW. NEXT.

## Celebrating the past, present and future

In addition to highlighting the progress made in the past year, this Annual Review features snapshots of the region's past and reflections on what's to come.

These stories show what's possible through collaboration and partnership. They also demonstrate the region's ability to work through MARC to respond to community needs by advancing data and capacity, expanding partnerships, and prioritizing equity.

The past 50 years have demonstrated that we can rise up to meet big challenges. The future is bright for the Kansas City region.



A 1978 MARC newsletter features regional steps under way to improve air quality.

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Dan Hobart, Council Member

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\*Voting Public Transportation Representatives

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Alternate: Dick Jarrold, Vice President of Planning & Development, KCATA  
Michael Moriarty, Chief of Transportation Planning, KDOT  
Alternate: Leroy Koehn, District Engineer, KDOT  
David Silvester, District Engineer, Missouri Department of Transportation, MoDOT  
Alternate: Perry Allen, Asst. District Engineer, MoDOT

# Efficient Transportation & Quality Places

MARC's transportation department establishes priorities, guides investments and supports coordinated operations to implement the region's long-range plan for a safe, balanced and equitable transportation system. It advances the region's vision for quality places, focusing development and redevelopment energy around mixed-use, walkable activity centers and the transportation corridors that connect them.

## Then.

### **A COORDINATED SYSTEM AT THE HEART OF OUR WORK**

**A coordinated regional transportation system is at the heart of MARC's**

**founding. As the Interstate Highway System was taking shape in the early '70s, so was MARC, bringing local jurisdictions together to make sure interstates and roads were connected across boundaries. And every year since 1972, MARC has focused on building and expanding the region's comprehensive transit plan.**

### **RESPONDING TO NEW PLANNING LEGISLATION**

**In 1991, new legislation radically changed how communities developed their transportation systems. MARC quickly retooled its processes, giving local jurisdictions and other interested parties a voice in the decision-making process and taking steps to ensure plans and projects were environmentally sound, economically efficient and aligned with the goals of the region. More than \$50 million in regional highway projects were funded in 1992 and 1993 — more than five times the amount of a normal two-year period.**



## Now.

### **Long-range planning**

Regional transportation partners completed key work in implementing Connected KC 2050, the region's long-range metropolitan transportation plan. Big strides taken include coordinated regional efforts to request new project ideas, partnering with the Missouri and Kansas departments of transportation on priorities and consulting efforts, assessing potential new funding mechanisms and the Total Transportation Policy Committee approving amendments to help ensure projects are financially sound. The MARC Board also authorized a call for projects and federal transportation funding allocations with anticipated totals for the 2025-26 programming period to be \$33,200,000 in Kansas and \$57,400,000 in Missouri. As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Kansas City region, MARC updates the federally required regional transportation plan every five years and it serves as a blueprint for managing the region's transportation system.

### **Federal certification**

As the MPO, MARC completed the four-year federal certification review conducted by the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration along with MPO planning partners. The certification process yielded a number of commendations and positive recommendations.

### **Comprehensive corridor studies**

MARC and its partners led several comprehensive corridor studies throughout the region. In addition to the Bistate Sustainable Reinvestment Corridor — 24 miles between three cities in two states along State Avenue, Independence Avenue and Truman Road — studies are examining possibilities and exploring funding for interstate corridors along I-70, I-29 and I-35. Other studies focus on an east-west transit corridor in midtown Kansas City and a north-south transit corridor that could include streetcar expansion along Burlington and Swift.





### Operation Green Light

This cooperative effort to improve traffic signal coordination and incident response on both sides of the state line secured a federal grant to work with MoDOT, KDOT and other agencies to add advanced signal controllers, vehicle detection systems and closed-circuit surveillance in key regional locations. The cooperative also developed incident response plans for the I-70 and I-435 corridors.

### Planning Sustainable Places

This program, focused on the planning and implementation of vibrant, connected and green spaces, initiated eight projects in Kansas and six in Missouri to support more integrated land use and environmental planning. The program also used the Economic Equity Values Atlas, a tool to visually identify disparities in the region and drive place-based performance evaluation in project selection.

### Regional commuting

In fall, 260 green commuters participated in the RideshareKC Green Commute Challenge to encourage alternative transportation and improve air quality. Together, they traveled 34,741 miles and prevented 51,266 pounds of emissions. The program also led the first-ever Bike Month Challenge in May.

### Transportation safety

In addition to ongoing coordination, annual education campaigns and funding projects, Destination Safe launched an update to its plan that includes strategies and recommendations from Vision Zero. The coalition is made up of multidisciplinary stakeholders dedicated to transportation safety.

## Next.

### CONTINUE WORKING TOWARD A SAFE, BALANCED, EQUITABLE SYSTEM

From highways to sidewalks to transit, MARC will continue its work to create a safe, balanced and equitable transportation system. Similar to the sweeping legislative changes in 1991, MARC will guide the implementation of the once-in-a-generation Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, ensuring investments support growth, development and redevelopment around centers and corridors.

MARC will also continue its leadership role at the intersection of transportation and climate, promoting the creation of a sustainable system that incorporates green infrastructure and promotes modes that produce fewer emissions. MARC will lead the conversation around the constantly changing transportation technology landscape, helping navigate the use of drones, the electrification of vehicles or whatever the next development may be. And MARC will continue its long-standing work to develop a safe, effective and sustainable transit system that works for everyone.

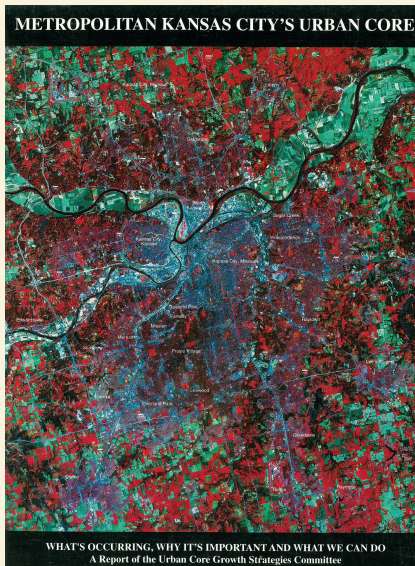
# Competitive Economy

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

## Then.

### FORECASTING THE FUTURE

Since its founding, MARC has been responsible for the production of long-term forecasts predicting how much the region's population and economy would grow in order to support investments in transportation and other infrastructure. In 1991, in partnership with the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, MARC also started producing short-term forecasts of the region's growth in jobs and GDP relative to the nation. In 2006, MARC sought and secured designation by the Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District for the Kansas City region.



*The 1993 Urban Core Report was one of the first MARC research reports that explicitly examined racial and economic disparities in the Kansas City region.*

## Now.

### Workforce development

Numerous organizations are working together to strengthen the region's workforce development system, preparing youth and adults with the necessary skills to fill jobs and grow the region's economy. MARC has continued to work with colleges and universities, other training providers and community organizations to support adults through career navigation to identify career options, remove barriers to advancement and enroll in technical training or college. Through KC Degrees, 109 adult learners enrolled in college in 2021. Since the program's inception, 163 participants have earned a postsecondary credential ranging from certificate programs to graduate degrees.

MARC joined local organizations in launching a program to support Wyandotte County residents with career navigation, training and employment services. In addition, MARC worked with small business assistance organizations to help entrepreneurs and minority- and women-owned businesses with training and technical assistance to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and grow their enterprises. The annual Workforce and Education Summit brought together local and national experts to focus on growing prosperity in the Kansas City region. The meeting remained virtual for the second year in response to the pandemic.

### Economic recovery

Throughout the pandemic, MARC's Research Services team monitored the economy and developed economic forecasts to track and project the region's recovery. The forecasts show the Kansas City economy has come a long way toward recovering its job losses from the COVID-19 recession, while acknowledging job growth has been uneven at times. The region's workforce data and analysis website, KCWorkforce.com, tracked economic sectors in real time and provided data resources to support job training and economic development efforts.





### **Economic Equity Values Atlas**

The Economic Equity Values Atlas (EEVA) is a new tool to help decision-makers prioritize equity. It's a web-based mapping application that can identify disparities by answering questions like, "Where do low-wage workers live geographically?" or "Where are health outcomes above average?" to help support a regional economy that grows for everyone. MARC staff incorporated the KC Rising Pillars of Prosperity into the EEVA so it displays metrics regarding the strength of the pillars and how they interact in neighborhoods across the region.

### **KC Rising**

KC Rising brings together civic and business partners to strengthen the regional economy and foster inclusive prosperity. In partnership with KC Rising, MARC completed the redesign of KC Rising metrics to align with their seven Pillars of Prosperity. Through KC Rising's PLACE Committee, work also advanced around public transit and digital equity.

### **2020 census**

When data from the 2020 census was released, MARC received, processed, analyzed and presented findings with support from the REACH Healthcare Foundation. The census results showed increasing diversity and increasing amounts of growth in all parts of the region, with significant and positive changes in urban neighborhoods in Wyandotte and Jackson counties.

MARC's earlier census efforts included defining census geography with local governments and convening the Kansas City Regional Complete Count Committee to promote the census and work with diverse partners to encourage response, especially in undercounted neighborhoods.

## **Next.**

### **A PROSPEROUS REGION FOR ALL**

**The work underway today will help build a strong economy with opportunities for everyone.**

**MARC will continue engaging with community partners to strengthen the region's workforce system and serve adults with career navigation services. MARC will also remain the organization local governments and others rely on for economic analysis and forecasts, as well as tools to use data to inform land use and public investments.**

**Together, the region is creating the assets needed to become an innovation leader, attract talent and investment, and establish the capital to keep people and businesses in the region.**

# 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.

## Then.

### PLANNING ASSISTANCE

**A 1978 MARC report outlined the ways in which MARC supported cities and counties with technical planning and grant information. That year, the state of Missouri asked MARC to solicit and recommend local government applications from the Ozarks Regional Commission, resulting in the construction of a skill-training center to serve the region. Likewise, the state of Kansas asked MARC to notify eligible governments and make funding recommendations for state of Kansas 701 Local Planning Assistance Funds.**

*“Grant information is only one form of local government assistance” offered by MARC, reads a report from 1978.*



## Now.

### Affordable housing

The Regional Housing Partnership was launched in 2021 in response to increasing concerns about housing affordability, quality and availability across the Kansas City region. The partnership, convened and supported by LISC Greater Kansas City and MARC, is working with partners to build regional capacity for housing production, data analysis, first-time homebuyer support and more. Seed funding of \$860,000 from the Marion and Henry Bloch Family, Health Forward and Hall Family foundations jump-started this effort and will help propel affordable housing options across this region. The partnership is bringing together cities, community development organizations, neighborhood leaders, developers, bankers, builders, homeowners and renters around the goal of creating and preserving more homes of greater variety and at different price points across the region.

### Public Sector Career Expo

In partnership with CORE4 and other participating local governments, MARC supported the first virtual Public Sector Career Expo. Over 4,000 middle and high school students interacted with more than 50 public sector employees in live sessions. The event featured 29 specific jobs within 10 public sector career areas. The event was an effort of the Government-to-University initiative, which brings together representatives from local governments and colleges and universities to build a strong public sector workforce for the future.

### Local Government Services department

MARC established a Local Government Services department in 2021 to broaden engagement with government partners and enhance collaboration. The department houses functions for public safety and 911 communications, emergency services, the Government Training Institute, shared services and the Regional Housing Partnership.





### **Government Training Institute**

MARC's Government Training Institute (GTI) provides quality professional development at an affordable cost to local governments. In 2021, GTI expanded on-demand course offerings for technical training and diversity, equity and inclusion training to address emerging needs. More than 400 people participated. GTI also provided customized consulting support for special projects, such as the Jackson County Arts & Culture Strategic Plan in partnership with ArtsKC and the KU Public Management Center.

### **Shared services**

MARC administered a cross-jurisdictional U.S. Department of Justice grant to embed mental health co-responders in three police departments in eastern Jackson County: Blue Springs, Independence and Lee's Summit. This coordinated effort resulted in better data sharing among the agencies and better service delivery to those experiencing a mental health crisis. The model in eastern Jackson County was designed with guidance from colleagues in Johnson County, Kansas, who were early adopters, and the program has expanded into Grandview and Raytown in Missouri.

### **Preparing for 988**

In summer 2022, phone service providers will begin directing 988 calls to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. MARC responded to a community need to prepare for this change by supporting six community mental health centers in Missouri through strategic planning in coordination with Kansas partners. MARC helped identify goals and philanthropic support for the effort. Final recommendations are expected in July with implementation to take place over time.

## **Next.**

### **MAGNIFYING IMPACT**

**MARC will continue to strengthen the capacity of local governments through cooperative efforts, such as training opportunities, grant administration and consulting services that help governments work effectively and sustain public trust. Upcoming efforts include revamping the Managers Roundtable to further engage area managers in regional affairs and provide exceptional local professional development opportunities.**

**Local government in our region works and works well. MARC will remain dedicated to leveraging resources, ensuring partnerships with federal and state agencies and community organizations align with regional strategies, and magnifying the impact of local government.**

# Safe & Secure Communities

MARC manages the ongoing operation, maintenance and state-of-the-art enhancement of the regional 911 system, and the coordination of 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.

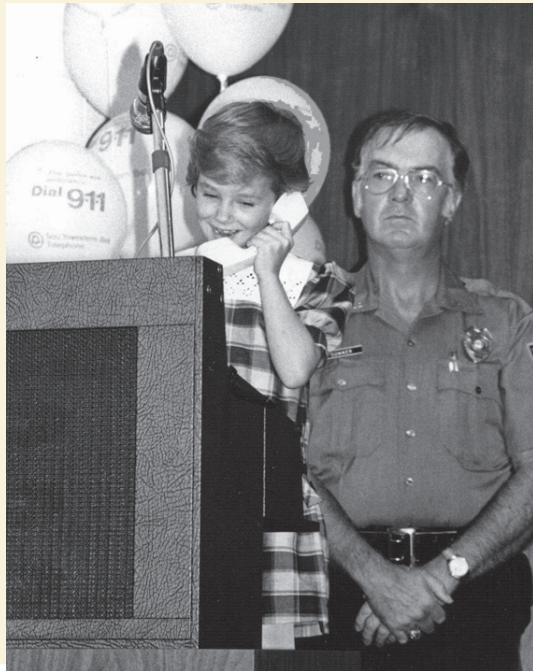
## Then.

### 911 LIFELINE LAUNCHED

**In 1983, 911 became the lifeline for more than a million residents in the Kansas City region. That's when MARC and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company launched the regional emergency telephone system, uniting more than 100 area police, fire and emergency medical numbers under the easy-to-remember, three-digit number in 65 cities in six counties. Operated by MARC, counties that shared the regional system contributed funds, based on population, to pay for the infrastructure that made the system work.**

*On Feb. 14, 1983, Cassie Soule, the daughter of former Sugar Creek Police Chief Herb Soule, placed the first 911 call in the region.*

*Soule made the ceremonial call to show that calling for help during an emergency is so simple, "even a child can do it."*



## Now.

### Regional COVID-19 response

As the region continues to emerge from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, MARC is supporting the transition from response to recovery by providing information, support and services. The region is conducting an after-action review to identify lessons learned from the pandemic response, strengths and modifications needed for the future.

In 2021, the regional Multi-Agency Coordination System and Health Care Coalition effectively shared information and resources with cross-jurisdictional and cross-agency partners, including elected officials, community leaders, medical professionals, public health representatives, schools and businesses. The region's preparedness website, PrepareMetroKC.org, was continually updated with information about vaccinations and testing, and displayed data about cases, hospitalizations and vaccination rates. Also, the COVID-19 Regional Response and Recovery Fund, a partnership of the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, LISC Greater Kansas City, United Way of Greater Kansas City and MARC, distributed more than \$25 million to over 300 local organizations to keep people in their homes, feed the hungry and increase access to health care.

### Trainings and exercises

The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee (RHSCC) provided 65 trainings and exercises for health, medical and emergency services organizations, including operational leadership and other community partners. Area law enforcement agencies continued to provide counterterrorism response training to increase readiness for well-trained attackers. The Regional Cybersecurity Task Force hosted a series of cybersecurity-related exercises. HEPA, the Hazardous Emergency Preparedness Alliance, planned and conducted a hazardous materials exercise. Additionally, the Metropolitan Emergency Manager Committee, in cooperation with the Community Disaster Resiliency Network, designed and conducted a virtual exercise enabling community organizations to test internal plans and procedures.





### **Emergency response planning**

In the past year, the MARC Emergency Services Program updated the regional hazardous materials response plan, continued work on Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack planning, completed a communications assessment, updated the Health Care Coalition preparedness and response plans, and developed a supplemental plan to improve capacity and capabilities to manage large numbers of casualties focused on the special needs of children.

### **Regional 911 system upgrades**

MARC's Regional Public Safety Communications Program continued to implement system improvements, replacing 60 public service answering point (PSAP) workstations across the region. The program moved forward with the installation of a new microwave system to increase bandwidth in the region and ensure continued high-quality system operations. With the assistance of contractors, MARC neared completion of replacing analog selective routers with digital routers in the region. The new routers will facilitate emergency call handling during the transition to Next Generation 911, a new technology that could allow the public to share videos, images and texts with emergency call centers. A group of 911 map superusers assisted with a selection process to recommend new mapping software for the region's PSAPs. The cloud-based solution will be installed in 2023 and will offer additional features and functionality than what has been available in the past.

### **911 training**

In 2021, MARC's Public Safety Training Program conducted online and in-person trainings to ensure state-level minimum training guidelines were met. Nearly 800 dispatchers participated in courses focusing on public safety, wellness, police, fire/EMS and leadership. A nationally recognized model, 30 dispatchers and 66 commanders serve on MARC's Peer Support Teams, which help 911 and other emergency response professionals cope with personal and job-related stress. Additionally, the Pause First Academy now offers online mental health resiliency training for dispatchers.

## **Next.**

### **ENHANCED SAFETY**

**Due to ever-changing threats, MARC continues to work with the region's stakeholders to assess current capabilities. In 2023, MARC is planning an exercise involving multiple agencies and organizations to test response to a complex coordinated attack. The region is also developing a response plan for large-scale incidents resulting in a surge of burn patients. Looking ahead, MARC will continue to identify wise investments to help prevent, protect, mitigate and respond to a range of threats and hazards.**

### **IMPROVED 911 SERVICE**

**The region's 911 service will continue transitioning to Next Generation 911 solutions and, once implemented, geographic information systems will serve a critical role. This new technology will route 911 calls to the appropriate emergency call center using geographic coordinates and other information based on the caller's location.**

# Thriving Older Adults & Communities

MARC programs help strengthen support systems for the region's most vulnerable residents, including older adults and disadvantaged populations, creating communities that support healthy living and active lifestyles for all residents.

## Then.

### LAUNCHING NEW SERVICES

**In 1973, MARC's Department of Aging Services was designated by the State of Missouri Office on Aging as the Area Agency on Aging for Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties.**

**A November 1973 publication listed their services as: home services, creative opportunities, nutrition, major aging programs (Social Security and Medicare information), transportation and information-referral follow up. The article states, "Through these programs, many older Americans' fondest dream: to live a life in later years filled with dignity, purpose and activity, is coming true."**

*Dial-a-Ride began service to older adults living in the northeastern part of Kansas City, Missouri, in November 1973. For 25 cents each way, persons over 60 could be driven to medical appointments, recreational activities or other destinations.*



## Now.

### Integrated care

The health care system is adapting to the rapid growth in the number of older adults and individuals of all ages living with chronic disease — one of the largest demographic shifts in human history. Regional partners came together through MARC in 2021 to drive the expansion of integrated health care models, such as the Mid-America Community Support Network (formerly the Managed Services Network), to improve health, reduce costs and increase satisfaction. The network integrates a variety of community-based services into the health care delivery system known to improve health outcomes and quality of life, as well as reduce health care costs. Services include whole-person interventions, in-home supports, coordination of administration functions, and centralized intake and referral services.

### Nutrition

An increasing number of area households can't obtain or afford nutritious foods. Launched in 2015, the Double Up Food Bucks program provides a dollar-for-dollar match for Supplemental Nutrition Incentive Program (SNAP) recipients, up to \$25 a day, for fresh produce purchases at participating grocery stores, farmers markets and farm stands. Now operating with new USDA and matching private foundation and corporate contributions, the \$12.7 million program will reach SNAP shoppers in more than 115 communities at over 150 locations across Missouri and Kansas by 2024.

Efforts continue to ensure older adults have access to healthy food. After COVID-19 temporarily closed senior centers, MARC significantly expanded the home-delivered meal program. This expansion continued after the centers re-opened and provides a local, community services approach to meal delivery. Through community partners, 278,633 total meals were delivered to 2,241 clients in 2021. More than half of these clients live alone, and nearly half were over 75 years old and considered to be of lower income.





### **Veteran-directed care program**

In 2021, MARC connected nearly 100 veterans to services from the VA Medical Center. The veteran-directed care program helps veterans control their long-term care options. Based on the level of care needed, veterans receive a monthly budget to spend on supports and services to remain in their homes. MARC also implemented a new level of support for veterans living with significant disabilities, resulting in about four times the amount of care than the previous maximum.

### **Communities for All Ages**

The Communities for All Ages program recognized four communities in 2021 for becoming more age friendly. The Johnson County government achieved Bronze Level status, the first county to receive this distinction. Merriam, Kansas, was also recognized with a Bronze Level award. Grain Valley, Missouri, earned Silver Level status and Excelsior Springs, Missouri, attained Gold Level status. Nineteen jurisdictions have earned honors to date, with 10 reaching the Gold Level.

### **Community Health Worker Collaborative**

Since 2015, MARC has supported the KC Regional Community Health Worker collaborative. Community health workers (CHWs) are trusted members of the community who serve as a link between the patient and health organizations. In 2021, MARC continued to provide support to the regional collaborative through virtual convenings and trainings. The collaborative focused on encouraging the use of CHWs to meet patient needs, in part due to COVID-19, through advocacy. MARC and collaborative members worked to outline a toolkit to help agencies secure reimbursement for CHW services from public and private payers. The number of agencies employing CHWs increased by 155% over the past five years. CHWs also play a role in integrated care as a key connection between community services and health care entities. These activities provide mission-extending revenue to nonprofit community organizations.

## **Next.**

### **IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR ALL**

**As the increase in the older adult population is expected to persist in the foreseeable future, MARC's integrated support team will continue to expand services to meet the needs of a diverse and older population. By offering health and wellness workshops through contracts with health care providers and payers, and by promoting the use of community health workers, MARC strives to improve health outcomes and increase health equity for everyone in the region.**

### **COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES**

**MARC will work with local communities through Communities for All Ages to guide plans and policies to meet the need of their residents.**

### **FOOD INSECURITY**

**With partners, MARC will continue to address food insecurity for vulnerable populations in the region, including low-income residents and older adults, through nutrition support services like home-delivered meals, as well as Double Up Food Bucks, an incentive program for SNAP recipients.**

# Quality Early Learning

MARC's early learning and Head Start programs provide 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.

## Then.

### INITIATING CHANGE

**In 1989, Kansas City region leaders came together to address the growing demand for child care. In response, MARC created the Metropolitan Council on Child Care (now the Metropolitan Council on Early Learning) to support a system-based approach to improving the quality of child care in the region.**

**Years later, Partners in Quality for Early Childhood Education was chartered in 1996 as the key community collaborative body for early learning in the region with a focus on school readiness, fiscal sustainability, expanding access and increasing members of the workforce.**



*In a MARC newsletter from 1989, Yale professor Dr. Lynn Kagan was shown addressing the newly formed Metropolitan Council on Child Care.*

## Now.

### Child care crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic hit early care and education hard. Over the course of the past two years, our region has seen more than 5,000 child care slots disappear due to program closure, both temporary and permanent. Through MARC, the region is creating, expanding and deploying strategies to strengthen the regional early care and education workforce, including collaborating with high schools on credentialing programs, recruiting Head Start parents to earn their credentials as teacher assistants and making it easier for people pursuing higher education to obtain an associate degree. This work grew out of MARC's partnership with the Early Childhood Education COVID-19 Collaborative, which assesses the needs and concerns of early care and education providers to implement solutions, and will be carried forward by a newly formed Early Learning and Care Workforce Action Tank.

### Mobile medical services

KidsCARE, a collaboration between MARC Head Start and Swope Health Services, is helping children get back on track with their well-child visits. The collaboration received a federal P4 (Promoting Pediatric Primary Prevention) Challenge award to support the development of new strategies for getting children up to date on their well-child visits and immunization schedules. KidsCARE uses telehealth and mobile medical clinics. The clinic in the P4 Challenge program is located in Emmanuel Family and Child Development Center and mobile units were deployed to the Excelsior Springs School District (ESSD) Head Start Program. The collaborative is removing barriers to high-quality care for kids and has already provided 197 well-child exams and 208 dental exams, and has resulted in Swope Health Services and ESSD partnering to bring a clinic on site.





### **Parade of Hearts**

The colorful artwork seen around the region as part of the Parade of Hearts is supporting the MARC Early Learning Department to help reopen and expand child care facilities. The Parade of Hearts aims to strengthen the region by providing grants to organizations that are helping those greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The other beneficiaries are: AltCap, Visit KC Foundation, the University of Kansas Health System, and the local and regional artist community.

### **Educare**

MARC's Early Learning Department partners with the Local Investment Commission to implement the Educare program. Educare provides resources, training opportunities and onsite technical assistance to improve the quality of care and education provided to children receiving a child care subsidy in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties. Educare expanded programming in 2021 with a grant from the Kauffman Foundation. The program provides both in-person and virtual clock-hour trainings and facilitated grants for providers who achieved quality improvement goals.

### **Quality initiatives and training**

MARC Head Start provided high-quality training for child care professionals. Professional development focuses in 2021 included cultural humility and trauma-informed care practices. More than 100 Head Start staff were trained through the "Conscious Discipline" week-long intensive institute. For parents and families, the Parent Café peer-to-peer learning program continued to build bridges between parents and increase access to resources.

## **Next.**

### **STRONG STARTS FOR ALL KIDS**

**In the coming years and decades, the region will continue to demonstrate its steady commitment to our youngest residents.**

**MARC will work with partners to remove barriers for families accessing early learning and care programs to enter and stay in the workforce. Early learning and care will be valued as a key economic driver, and the region will be a model to the nation for layering funding streams to create wage parity and affordable access — along with a robust workforce pipeline and skills training.**

**The future will also focus on bringing care to families. MARC Head Start will lead the way in creating access to physical, dental, and mental health care and supports while removing barriers to access.**

# 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.

## Then.

### “AIR POLLUTION DOES NOT RESPECT BORDERS”



*Cars with pre-EPA standards clog I-35 in 1973.*

The early 1970s saw the launch of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts in the United States, as well as the Missouri Solid Waste Law. Almost immediately after MARC was formed, the region sought grants from the fledgling EPA. In 1973, MARC created the Air Quality Forum, a regional program to collaborate on reducing air pollution — and a shining example of much-needed holistic solutions across local jurisdictions. As its founders said at its formation, “Air pollution does not respect borders.” Fifty years later, we know much more about carbon emissions and the alarming effect they have on climate change. And regionalism works today like it worked 50 years ago, allowing Greater Kansas City to tackle big, national problems in ways that any one contributing municipality cannot.

## Now.

### Climate action

In pursuing its mission to draw down the region's greenhouse gas emissions, Climate Action KC, in partnership with MARC and other area contributors, assembled the first-ever Kansas City Regional Climate Action Plan. The plan proposes a flexible framework to help mitigate climate change by achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Adopted by the MARC Board in March 2021, 14 cities and regional agencies across the region have also adopted the plan. A new Climate and Environment Council will guide implementation and ensure strong community engagement reflective of the plan's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Climate Action Plan received the 2022 Award for Excellence in Sustainability from the American Planning Association as well as the Most Outstanding Plan of the year award from the Missouri Chapter of the APA in 2021.

Other milestones include the second Climate Action Summit, held in April 2022, with more than 600 people in attendance to hear from local and national leaders on the progress, challenges and strategies for addressing climate change. The event also featured an expo with electric buses and LEED-certified tiny houses — plus local musicians and artists.

MARC also supported Climate Action KC in establishing the Building Energy Exchange KC, an initiative to decarbonize buildings. Accomplishments so far include hiring an executive director, bringing together national and local partners to develop an energy efficiency investment fund, launching an energy efficiency-focused business accelerator in partnership with the Kauffman Foundation and launching a website ([be-exkc.org](http://be-exkc.org)).





### **Ozone monitoring**

From March to October each year, MARC issues a daily SkyCast forecast to alert area residents of potentially high levels of ozone pollution. A moderate summer led to seven high ozone days in 2021. Based on the rolling average, the region remained in attainment, with average ozone levels below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standard of 70 parts per billion. MARC also launched a fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) work group to evaluate PM 2.5 pollution in the region and how to effectively share messages about safety with the public. Efforts to expand the monitoring network through a partnership with KC Digital Drive and US Ignite resulted in over 30 new low-cost air quality sensors.

### **Education campaigns**

MARC uses advertising, social media and other tactics to inform the public about health and environmental issues related to air quality. The 2021 campaign included an increased focus on reaching vulnerable communities in the region through social media, print media and streaming ads. Key messages were responsive to COVID-19 impacts and maintained a focus on safety while reducing emissions.

### **Water quality grants**

Each year, the Water Quality Education Committee offers funding opportunities to local nonprofit and educational organizations for education and outreach to help reduce stormwater runoff and improve the quality of local waterways. The committee awarded \$16,000 in grants to four nonprofits for stream cleanups, school-based water quality education, water-quality focused events and green infrastructure installations. The committee also distributed nearly 600 decks of “Go Fish” themed playing cards for water quality education.

### **Stormwater**

MARC participated in conversations around revising stormwater engineering standards and planning guidelines. With a grant from the Federal Highway Administration, MARC partnered with Kansas State University, Johnson County, Kansas, and the city of Kansas City, Missouri, to assess how potential changes in extreme precipitation may affect the Blue River Watershed using the federal Vulnerability Assessment Framework. Additional activity will involve working with local communities to implement vacant lot transformation and stormwater management strategies as well as implementing a \$50,000 grant to provide policy and planning guidance to regional stormwater initiatives.

### **Green infrastructure**

Green infrastructure incorporates natural elements into the built environment, such as trees, rain gardens, native landscaping and bioretention. It’s an important part of restoring the natural management of stormwater in the region and creating a healthier environment. In 2021, MARC started developing a Green Infrastructure Training Center for residents and contractors and promoted policies and efforts to advance the green infrastructure framework through public education. In partnership with area jurisdictions, MARC developed model ordinances for tree protection and native landscaping. The region is now gearing up to host regional workshops and provide direct technical assistance to a small number of cities.

### **Brownfields**

MARC supports the assessment of potentially contaminated commercial and industrial sites in partnership with the city of Kansas City, Missouri, Jackson County, Missouri, and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. In 2021, MARC established the KC Regional Brownfields Coalition memorandum of understanding and executed contracts for technical assistance and environmental services. As part of this effort, MARC solicited vendors for projects and issued public notice seeking proposals for additional site assessment projects.

# Now.

## Recycling and composting efforts

The MARC Solid Waste Management District (SWMD) continued its outreach to educate residents about resources available to them at RecycleSpot.org, the district's recycling and waste reduction education website. The site will be redesigned in 2022 to improve its functionality and make it even easier to recycle properly. SWMD staff also organized three virtual workshops to promote recycling and compost market development. Staff helped communities respond to changing recycling markets through outreach and education about the importance of clean recycling streams.

## District grants

In 2021, the SWMD awarded grants to 15 projects totaling over \$677,809 to encourage waste reduction and recycling, including projects that increase capacity for recycling glass, urban trees, mattresses, food waste, paint, pharmaceuticals, electronics and more. Other projects dealt with youth education, zero-waste initiatives and online tools to help residents find regional recycling service providers.

## Household hazardous waste collection

Since 1997, the SWMD has coordinated household hazardous waste collection events around the region to help residents safely dispose of their toxic household products. In 2021, 36 communities participated in the program. Between mobile and permanent facilities, a total of 318 tons of household hazardous waste was collected. To help properly dispose of pharmaceuticals, the SWMD mapped Missouri take-back opportunities for unwanted prescription drugs while working with the industry to promote voluntary product stewardship. A Missouri product stewardship process for unwanted paint is underway.

## Food waste reduction

In the United States, more than 30% of all food is wasted. The EPA awarded the SWMD a \$175,000 grant in 2021 to address food waste reduction in the Kansas City region by convening stakeholders to develop a regional food waste action plan and preparing to design a web-based map to identify regional food system organizations, facilitate food recovery, and to produce a strategic education campaign to raise awareness and provide information on food waste reduction. In 2021, the EPA also recognized the SWMD for its notable achievements and innovations in the EPA's Food Recovery Challenge, including the SWMD's food waste prevention webpage and presentations to organizations.

## Illegal dumping

The MARC SWMD initiated a collaborative effort to address illegal dumping in the region. Staff hosted listening and planning sessions with area residents and other stakeholders to discuss preventative measures utilizing infrastructure, data, education and enforcement.

# Next.

## IMPLEMENTING THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

### Flooding. Drought. Extreme heat.

**These are the threats the region faces due to climate change. The hazards won't fall on residents equally — people of color, people with low incomes, and indigenous communities will be the first ones affected and the hardest hit.**

**The next step is implementing the Climate Action Plan in partnership with communities across the region. Together, partners will tackle the work that they've been wanting to do anyway — things like increasing building efficiency, reducing food waste and food insecurity, improving public transportation, creating more jobs, planting more trees and cleaning up streams.**

**Planning down to the neighborhood scale will be increasingly important as MARC continues taking a people-centric, systems-based approach, as well as supporting cities as they increasingly engage in climate action.**



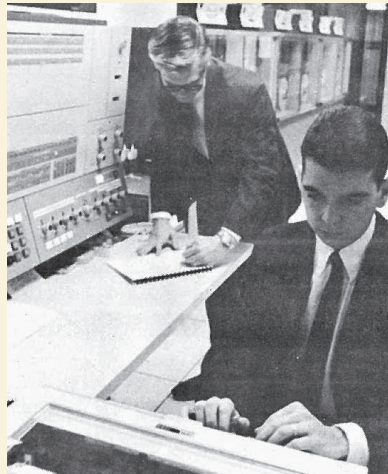
# Exemplary Core Capacities

In addition to its programmatic work, MARC's core back-office functions ensure and maintain the agency's capacity to support internal and external partners through shared services, effective use of data, technology, financial services and innovative approaches to regional problem-solving, providing core functions necessary to ensure effective operation of all programs, including financial management, human resources, information technology, data management and communications.

## Then.

### CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY

In MARC's early years, computers were used at "an ever-increasing pace" to support land-use and funding decisions. A 1967 report for Metroplan, a precursor organization of MARC, also highlighted the need to integrate data from other agencies.



*A 1967 Metroplan report shows staff using computers.*

## Now.

### Safe return

As staff began coming back to the office, MARC put in place new technology, protocols and activities to assure protection of staff and guests against COVID-19, facilitate hybrid meetings and sustain a strong engaged culture. Further automation of processes is ongoing.

### New marc.org

Have you visited the new MARC website? The redesigned marc.org makes it easy to learn about regional initiatives and get involved. The new website features easy-to-access information, a searchable calendar and the latest MARC news.

### Data Forward plan

This plan continued to advance agency wide goals around data to increase capacity to sort, access and interact with data in support of regional initiatives.

### Diversity, equity and inclusion

MARC leadership and staff advanced diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts through various strategies, including monthly peer education opportunities and cross-agency participation in professional DEI training, followed by an in-depth review of internal processes.

### Financial excellence

MARC continued its tradition of financial excellence, receiving both the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2020 annual financial report and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2020 Budget and Work Plan.

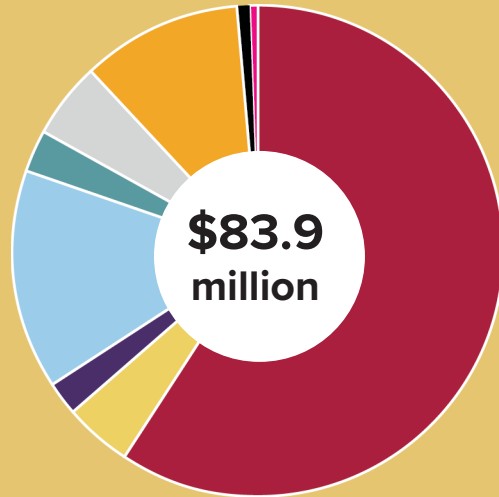
## Next.

### BUILDING FUTURE CAPACITY

MARC will build on 50 years of service to the region by enhancing data collection and evaluation to provide the region with meaningful analysis that can serve as a strong foundation for good decision making on key initiatives. Continued expansion of communications

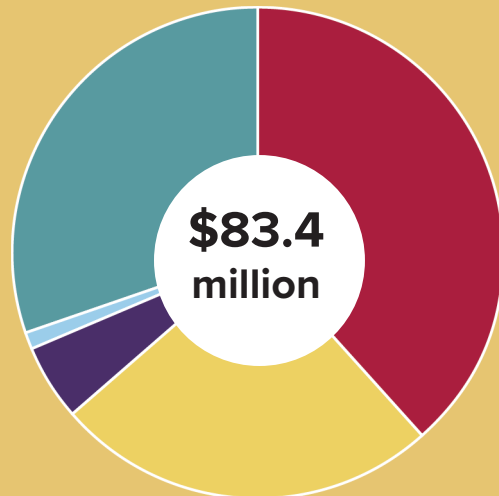
and engagement tools will also enhance decision making through broadened opportunities for engagement with diverse audiences and community partners.

# 2021 Budget



## REVENUES

- Federal and state funds \$49,819,875
- Private funds \$3,590,250
- Local dues and fees \$1,992,568
- Other local funds \$12,139,679
- Fees for services \$2,228,388
- Contributed services (non-cash) \$4,183,158
- Indirect allocation to clearing fund \$8,804,084
- Transfer from Other Funds \$876,744
- Investment income \$254,374



## EXPENSES

- Direct program expenses \$32,172,885
- Contractual services \$20,971,702
- Contributed services \$4,183,158
- Transfer to other funds \$876,744
- Personnel \$25,190,407

*Note: Approximately 71.2% of cash revenue was passed through to local governments and service providers in 2021.*

*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.*

## MARC Management Team

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



## 2021 Funders

### FEDERAL

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- 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 Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Interior / National Park Service

### NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- The 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 Health and Senior Services
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Public Safety
- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- 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
- Center for Nutrition
- BlueKC
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- Family Conservancy
- Francis Family Foundation
- Kresge Foundation
- Goodwill
- The Graduate! Network
- Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation
- Hall Family Foundation
- Health Forward Foundation
- Kansas Health Foundation
- Kansas University Medical Center
- KC Scholars
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- Menorah Heritage Foundation
- National College Access Network
- REACH Healthcare Foundation
- Roger A. and Corinne R. Durkee Fund
- School Smart KC
- Sosland Foundation
- St. Louis University
- Stanley H. Durwood Foundation
- United Way of Greater Kansas City
- University of Missouri
- Washington University
- Wyandotte Health Foundation
- William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank, Trustee
- 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
- GradForce KC Steering Committee
- Regional Workforce Intelligence Network
- Regional Community Health Workers Collaborative
- Solid Waste Management District Management Council
- Household Hazardous Waste Task Force
- Solid Waste Management District Grant Review Committee

## EARLY LEARNING

- Partners in Quality (subcommittees listed on website)
- Head Start Policy Council
- Head Start Advisory Committee
- Head Start Health Advisory Committee

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee and subcommittees:
  - Cybersecurity Task Force
  - Law Enforcement
  - KC Regional Fusion Center
  - Policy
  - Public Health
  - Training and Exercise
  - Functional and Access Needs
  - E-RAPIO
  - Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Task Force
- MARC Health Care Coalition Hospitals Committee
  - Northern and Southern Health Care Coalitions
- Area Maritime Port Security Committee
- Community Disaster Resiliency Network
- Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee (subcommittees listed on website)
- Mid-America Local Emergency Planning Committee
  - Training
  - Planning
  - Industry
- Mid-America Regional Council Emergency Rescue

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- Public Safety Communications Board and subcommittees:
  - Public Safety Communications Users
  - Regional Interoperability Committee
  - 911 Peer Support Advisory Committee
- Metropolitan Area-Wide Regional Radio System (MARRS) Board

## RESEARCH SERVICES

- 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:
  - 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

