

## **SUSTAINABLE PLACES POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **November 12, 2021 Meeting Summary**

#### Committee Members

Jon Birkel, Hunt Midwest  
Katie Jardieu, City of Raymore  
Erin Ollig, City of Overland Park  
Gloria Ortiz-Fisher, Westside Housing Organization  
Michael Park, City of Lee's Summit  
Allison Smith, KDOT  
Marisela Ward, MoDOT  
Jeffrey Williams, City of Kansas City, MO  
Edwin Lowndes, Housing Authority of Kansas City, MO  
Janet McRae, Miami County, KS  
Michael Frisch, UMKC Urban Planning + Design  
Tom Scannell, City of Independence  
Josh Powers, Johnson County, KS  
Maddie Waldeck, City of Basehor

#### MARC Staff Present

Beth Dawson, Frank Lenk, Marlene Nagel, Martin Rivarola, Patrick Trouba, Jay Heermann, Sara Hintze, Tom Jacobs, Rachel Cannon

#### Welcome and Introductions

Meeting started at 9:02am. Individual introductions were eschewed.

**Approval of September 2021 Meeting summary** – Due to the absence of both co-chairs, no vote was taken on the agenda. Marlene asked for any edits, but none were offered.

#### **Activity Center Map for Suballocated Call for Projects 2022**

Martin Rivarola, Frank Lenk, Jay Heermann, and Sara Hintze presented this update to the activity center map. The map has had a big role in the projects that are chosen for the transportation plan. MARC wants to update it for the upcoming call for projects and is soliciting feedback on the new map.

The activity center map was first developed in 2015-2016. It identifies activity centers based on activity and walkability and has three hierarchical levels. MARC emphasizes this map to support the strategy of “activity centers and corridors” due to the benefits that accrue when development activity is centered around these areas.

In suballocated funding scoring, points are awarded to projects that are located inside the designated activity centers. More points are awarded for location inside higher-intensity/walkability activity centers.

MARC is developing an update because the existing map features data that is outdated, the methodology yields imprecise “blobs” on the map, and the methodology is difficult to replicate.

Sara Hintze reviewed the data and methodology that went into the new activity centers map. The methodology is intended to be replicable.

Comparison maps were shown; definition of activity is at the parcel level instead of “blobs.”

MARC wants to solicit feedback from the committee on the data and what MARC may have missed. This will occur over the next month. Deadline for feedback is December 15.

## Discussion:

- Janet McRae – How does this affect small communities compared to large? Frank Lenk: methodology allows small communities to turn up as moderate activity centers, but we also want members of small communities to evaluate the preliminary results.
- Jon Birkel – if it is possible to show darker colors more sharply, might highlight areas of development catalyst. Frank: we can certainly work on the symbology.
- Jeff Williams: The resource's ability to break down activity by land use/NAICS codes would be helpful. Could help us identify concentrations. Frank: can turn on different layers in the map; can add layers such as land use. Meant to get at where activity is walkably intense.
- Marlene: map may be useful for identifying information for freight purposes.
- Michael Frisch: map is doing a good job getting at origins and destinations in a way that the previous version didn't and can address pedestrian concerns.
- Janet McRae – having the precision and detail is helpful, but also shows how communities that don't have transit may have trouble scoring higher in their projects. SPPC will want to work with Frank and others on how often this data gets updated. Frank: our desire is to update the map annually. For the PSP program, map not used to deny a project, but highlights the changes a project can make.
- Jon Birkel – interesting to see the parcel level in terms of walkability because it can relate to transit access. Can also relate to the densities needed to support transit. Would like to see how redevelopment and higher densities supporting transit have an economic benefit. Frank: accounting for property tax would be easier than sales tax. Would need to make sure that our jurisdictions would support that kind of analysis.
- Katie Jardieu – Not quite understanding what Jon was saying about sales tax; could favor areas with higher tax bases. Jon: sales taxes can represent areas that are greener and more walkable. Frank: in small cities there are still going to be areas of higher activity; can show where redevelopment would be more efficient and beneficial. Katie: map could be read as low-tax base areas as being not worth investment. Jon: map could show areas with old infrastructure as worth reinvestment.
- Jeff Williams: how can this be integrated into communities' comprehensive plans? Martin: this is data driven, and it can be helpful for communities to see the data. Map will eventually highlight what can be added to an activity center to graduate to the next level.

## **Complete Streets Network Assessment: How complete are our complete streets?**

Martin Rivarola, Jay Heermann – MARC has been working on an analysis that explores how complete the complete streets are and what it looks like from a regional level.

Complete streets are accessible, safe, green, and context sensitive. They have benefits ranging from safety to air and water quality to good health and long-term savings.

Set out on this project to develop a common understanding of how complete the street network is, identify gaps in the network and understand priorities for system improvement. Started with a wide network for the project but narrowed it down. Phase 1 anticipated to be complete in early 2022.

For analysis, it was important to break down corridors into manageable segments. Data that was used includes: AADT totals, speed limits, street lighting, sidewalk and crosswalk presence, presence of buffer to street, driveways, ramps, transit stops, and bike facilities.

## Discussion:

- Jeff Williams: tool looks helpful; KCMO has an extensive program for bringing ramps up to ADA standard, but haven't seen ramps laid out so comprehensively. Martin: have formed a working group for the project; have not yet done outreach to stakeholders. Jeff: don't know what it would look like to keep this map up to date. Jay: map could reveal that we need to connect

some complete streets corridors. For maintenance: have set up tools for jurisdictions to enter updates in the map.

### **Planning Sustainable Places Program Look Ahead to 2022 – Call for workgroup to develop new 2022 application**

Beth Dawson: new data basis means that applicants are going to show how projects improve an area. Beth needs help with preparing the PSP application for the next funding round. If anyone is interested in helping, contact Beth.

### **2022 Work Plan**

Marlene Nagel: MARC staff have been working on different projects that appear in the 2022 SPPC work plan. Something that may come up in the agendas is the federal infrastructure funding that will be coming. The last meeting of 2022 is on Veterans Day, so that will need to be moved. Jim Walters was not re-elected, so the committee will new a new Kansas co-chair who is a MARC Board member.

### **Discussion**

- Jon Birkel: regarding the future infrastructure funding: can MARC look into where transportation dollars have been invested and what private investment has followed? Marlene: Frank may know, but MARC can look at land use. Shawnee has been tracking the investment they made in their PSP project and the private investment that has followed. Can be a case study for the region. Jon: Shawnee has allowed uses by right to allow investments to happen.

### **Committee Member Updates**

- Josh Powers: Johnson County passed \$15 million in transit investments.

### **Other Business**

The next meeting of the committee is January 14, 2022. The committee will receive some information discussed today by email. The next meeting will be hybrid. The meeting was adjourned.