

SUSTAINABLE PLACES POLICY COMMITTEE

January 14, 2022 Meeting Summary

Committee Members

Brian Alferman, Johnson County, KS
Jon Birkel, Hunt Midwest
Katie Jardieu, City of Raymore
Erin Ollig, City of Overland Park
Gloria Ortiz-Fisher, Westside Housing Organization
Edwin Lowndes, Housing Authority of Kansas City, MO
Rob McKim, Retired Architect
Janet McRae, Miami County, KS

MARC Staff Present

Beth Dawson, Frank Lenk, Marlene Nagel, Martin Rivarola, Patrick Trouba, Jermain Whitmore

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting started at 9:00am and individual introductions followed.

Approval of September 2021 & November 2021 Meeting summary – Janet McRae moved to approve the minutes. Jon Birkel seconded, and the motion passed.

Activity Center Map for Suballocated Call for Projects 2022

Frank Lenk, Director Research Services and Sara Hintze, Data Developer/Analyst, all of MARC, presented a finalized version of the Activity Center map. The map will be used for the upcoming suballocated call for projects that will open in March.

MARC is developing an update because the existing map features data that is outdated, the methodology yields imprecise “blobs” on the map, and the methodology is difficult to replicate. For the updated activity center map, data and methodology; activity will be measured by density of employment, business office/retail buildings, office/retail space, multi-family units, and K-12 school enrollment. The methodology combines and classifies those levels of activity at the parcel level. It classifies parcels into a 4-level hierarchy of Low, Medium, High and Very High.

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

These activity center maps will be one of the key items in future planning work such as the 2022 Programming of Sub-allocated funds, Complete Streets Network Assessment, Inform development of Transportation EVA focusing on activity center characteristics (for PSP project selection), launch of 2025 ConnectedKC 2050 update, just to name a few.

One of the committee members questioned if this includes layers of bus lines and include street with street parking, which are big factors of use. Mr. Lenk replied that this version doesn't, but the next one will. Can also add in street parking as well.

Jon Birkel moved to approve the Activity Center Maps. Edwin Lowndes seconded, and the motion passed.

2020 Census Regional Growth Analysis

Frank Lenk, Director Research Services, MARC, presented an analysis of where regional growth occurred in our region between 2010 and 2020. There wasn't much data other than population by race, housing unit, household, vacant units, and voting age which is used for redistricting at the census block

level. However, at the block level, the data may be confusing and not make sense as there are more factors that come into play.

A committee member suggested that one of the things missing is the growth and pattern of moving, which could be due to school districts and other factors.

Integrated Land Use: What it is. What it isn't. Where to apply in our region?

Beth Dawson, Principal Planner, MARC, provided an introduction to integrated land use. It is the land use policy focus that the committee identified in 2021 for its 2022 work plan.

The first of two types of integrated land use planning is vertical planning. In situations where vertical integration is taking place it is the interaction between two or more levels. Frequently this type may be the result of state law that requires particular actions by a region or a local community or it can be a regional requirement that is carried out at the local level. An example of this, the state of Washington has a Growth Management Act that requires integrated comprehensive planning, including identifying and protecting critical environmental areas, developing coordinating regional and subregional (typically county-level) policies, and crafting local comprehensive plans. This means that planning at the county, regional and local levels are coordinated.

The second of the two types of integrated land use planning is horizontal planning. In situations where horizontal integration occurs the interaction is between two or more focus areas. Generally, this approach is needed when a broad set of planning concerns are perceived to require action at a scale that doesn't match jurisdictional boundaries. Topics that are frequently looked at together include transportation, economic development, environmental factors such as air quality and water quality, housing affordability, and greenhouse gas emissions.

There has been a progression over time of the integration of topics to be addressed over time. In the 90s, the introduction of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act looked to integrate land-use and transportation planning. Clean Air Act Amendments required regional transportation plans to demonstrate how they would conform to regional air quality standards.

Our Creating Sustainable Places and its initial demonstration projects that evolved into the continuing Planning Sustainable Places program, were a result of funding that came out of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Our response was to further integrated planning that addressed transportation, land use, and the environment.

Over time, the Planning Sustainable Places program has expanded the topics that applications address, incorporating questions about existing infrastructure, housing and partnerships with equity and community groups to name a few, in an effort to acknowledge the many aspects that contribute to the health of an activity center or corridor.

The latest addition has been the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which officially brings housing, climate change and resiliency into the mix. Rulemaking is still pending so the extent of integration remains to be seen.

Retail Report

Patrick Trouba, Transportation Planner II, MARC, presented the draft retail report that has been updated with 2020 data and the initial impacts that COVID has had on our region's retail and services. This is the second of an annual series of reports on the state of retail in the Kansas City region, and reviews employment and establishments data not only on the retail sector, but related industry sectors. It explores the data on taxable sales and the balance of trade between the nine counties and is intended to inform discussions about how land and transportation are used for retail.

There were graphs and charts presented to show how things are trending. Retail Trade and Services employment declined during the COVID-19 pandemic in both the nation and the Kansas City region. The number of establishments for both sectors did not experience the same sudden drops.

There was a comment that Zona Rosa is having considerable financial difficulties. It is also likely that the largest retail centers saw the largest hit from the increase in on-line sales, as destination retail has likely been hurt the most while close to home retail benefited (along with on-line sales).

A committee member suggested that low-income jobs play a major factor in some of these trends and a missing piece between housing and those jobs is transportation.

Review of Conflict of Interest/Whistleblower policies

Marlene informed the committee of the annual reminder of the Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower policies, which are distributed to committee members for their review and awareness.

Committee Member Updates

- Janet McRae reported that they are seeing an uptick in commercial development in Paola, and most of their communities are doing comp. plan updates as well.
- Gloria Ortiz-Fisher announced that they have an affordable house available in the Manheim neighborhood.
- Erin Ollig mentioned that they have put out their 1st RFP for comprehensive plan assistance, and submittals are due January 28th.

Other Business

Marlene informed the committee of topics for the next meeting which will take place March 11, 2022, and will possibly be a hybrid. The meeting was adjourned.