

SUSTAINABLE PLACES POLICY COMMITTEE

July 12, 2024 Meeting Summary

Committee Members

Mayor Dean Katerndahl, Parkville, MO Co-chair
Councilmember Logan Heley, Overland Park, KS Co-chair
Brian Alferman, Johnson County, KS
Jon Birkel, Hunt Midwest
Michael Frisch, UMKC
Ed Lowndes, Housing Authority of Kansas City
Josh Powers, Johnson County, KS
Allison Smith, KDOT
Maddie Bouton, Basehor, KS

Guests

Josh Johnson, Lee's Summit
Krystal Jolly, MoDOT
Kathy Justice, Bridging the Gap
Leslie Karr, Overland Park, KS
Karie Kneller, Mission, KS
Fernando Oliveira, Affinis
Gerald Williams, Kansas City, MO
Juan Yin, MoDOT

MARC Staff Present

Beth Dawson, Ron Achelpohl, Megan Broll, Taylor Cunningham, Darryl Fields, Frank Lenk, Marlene Nagel, Cy Smith, Anna Van Brunt, Lukas Yanni

Welcome and Introductions

Missouri Co-Chair Mayor Dean Katerndahl called the meeting to order. Introductions in-person and online followed.

Approval of May 10, 2024 Meeting Summary*

Kansas Co-Chair Logan Heley called for any additions or corrections to the meeting summary draft; none were suggested. Michael Frisch motioned to accept the meeting summary, Co-Chair Heley seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting summary was approved.

Regional Control Total Forecast Presentation

Director of Research Service Frank Lenk updated the committee on the forecast, noting net economic migration was too low at the beginning of the forecast and possibly too high at the end, and the forecast would add 300,000 new people by 2050 (with about the same number of new jobs). As a result of these adjustments, there is slightly more growth after 2025. The Technical Forecast Committee will review this information and, once approved by the MARC Board, these results can be shared in more detail with the SPPC at a future meeting.

Connect KC 2050 Project Prioritization including Survey Results

Ron Achelpohl, Director of Transportation & Environment, reviewed the progress on the update to the region's transportation plan, *Connected KC 2050*. Work this year focuses on project prioritization, determining what projects will be financially constrained and how they advance the goals and strategies of the plan. The current plan was adopted in 2020, and MARC is working to refresh the data for the plan, testing scenarios of different land use and transportation networks and reprioritizing projects. In addition to other public outreach efforts, MARC commissioned a statistically valid survey to gain a sense of public attitudes about transportation issues, and Mr. Achelpohl shared summary results.

The survey results showed strong public interest in transportation's role in a healthy environment with special consideration to disadvantaged populations, maintaining existing roads and bridge infrastructure, and the affordability of housing. Survey responses were mixed on electric vehicle (EV) ownership. Respondents showed strong support region wide for either regional or county-based taxes for public transportation, and more than half opposed road user charges. In general, survey results reinforce many of the goals of the existing transportation plan, with respondents maintaining consistency between answers on important issues, strategies, and funding. Survey responses will continue to be analyzed, including at demographic and county levels.

A key outcome of the plan update is to identify and prioritize projects for the region based on anticipated funding sources. Mr. Achelpohl reviewed the current financial assumptions for this update. Funding can be affected by federal funding legislation and taxes, transit fares, growth in the region, and operations and maintenance costs. Although the plan does not fund projects directly, it helps categorize projects into high, medium, or low priority for the region and identifies which projects are most likely to be implemented within the region's funding constraints.

The committee discussed how housing is an important issue across the board and how the transportation plan specifically can influence housing, such as providing transportation services in areas of anticipated housing growth.

Regional Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) update

Community Development Director Marlene Nagel noted that as an Economic Development District, MARC prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan every five years to help focus economic investments and address resiliency. The last full strategy plan was adopted in 2020, and multiple stakeholder groups have coordinated efforts to support an updated economic development plan that is consistent with regional plans and strategies. Ms. Nagel shared information presented by Bruce Katz of New Localism Associates, who has consulted with metropolitan planning organizations across the country. Katz is under contract to the Greater KC Civic Council to prepare a regional playbook for the KC area. At both the national and regional level, issues include a review of our defense system, the renewed importance on domestic manufacturing, the exposed vulnerability of supply chains, and the commitment to decarbonize the economy.

Kansas City has a lower growth rate than many comparable metropolitan areas and faces challenges due to a lack of skilled labor and need for strengthening higher education. Ms. Nagel identified new opportunities for regional growth based on federal spending (military spending in particular), critical technologies (such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and

biotechnology), green supply chains (with grid and microgrid, batteries, and electric vehicles being strongest), and increasing exports. Ms. Nagel also spoke to supporting innovation and entrepreneurship with building small businesses through mentorships and education and attracting highly skilled individuals to the Kansas City area to live and work long-term.

Next steps for the CEDS update include working with the CEDS Strategy Committee on the draft plan, releasing for public review and comment, and convening the Regional Workforce Intelligence Network (RWIN) for its third quarter meeting to plan revisions and a final recommendation.

The committee discussed the potential vulnerability of residents in lower economic areas being priced out of housing after economic development; Ms. Nagel noted that some objectives and strategies in the policy framework are directly connected to the regional housing partnership between MARC and LISC to address these concerns, and that the availability and affordability of housing is important to connecting workers to jobs.

Centers and Corridors Panel

Co-Chair Heley introduced panelists from four municipalities who recently updated their comprehensive plans: Karie Kneller, City Planner of Mission, KS; Leslie Karr, Planning and Development Director for Overland Park, KS; Gerald Williams, Division Manager of Long Range Planning and Preservation from Kansas City, MO; and Josh Johnson, Director of Development Services of Lee's Summit, MO.

Karie Kneller described Mission as a relatively small community with one major corridor (Johnson Drive), that is landlocked and completely built out. The city is focusing on higher density (building up instead of out) and transition zones between single family neighborhoods and the primary corridor.

Leslie Karr noted that Overland Park's Metcalf corridor changed the city's approach to planning when the city created its Vision Metcalf plan in 2008. The city started thinking about activity nodes and how those nodes connect with different types of transportation, and it marked the first time the planning department gained some equal footing with the public works department so they could better work together to plan land use. The recent comprehensive plan focuses on "character areas" instead of specific land use, providing some predictable flexibility for communities and developers.

Gerald Williams shared that Kansas City's size (320 square miles and half a million people) presents a challenge of developing a common vision forward with so many disparate and diverse experiences and perspectives. Their comprehensive plan was supplemented with area plans for 18 areas across the city, addressing the needs of those individual communities. Kansas City looks at activity centers as a base layer, then refines that with land use data about employment and population to guide not only land use planning but transportation planning as well. The city is in the process of creating different sets of guidelines for nodes and corridors based on different contexts (such as suburban and downtown).

Josh Johnson of Lee's Summit noted that one of the five major themes of the city's comprehensive plan is to support commercial and multifamily development across five special activity centers; three of those centers are already developed (downtown and two big-box retail

centers), and two are areas previously held by the LDS Church that allow for new, unique development. The planning commission and city council are interested in slightly higher density in those areas. Mr. Johnson spoke of the corridors between activity centers and downtown being akin to a “wheel and spoke” concept.

With regard to defining and utilizing centers and corridors, Overland Park identifies character areas as regional/local activity areas with a higher mix of uses, and primary corridors help support the city with focused economic development. Gerald Williams noted the Kansas City comprehensive plan has broad concepts related closely to centers and corridors, but that the 18 area plans have more details of where they are, what they should be, what kind of improvements they need, and what kind of land use regulations they need to shape those areas. Lee’s Summit activity centers are defined in the comprehensive plan, and the 2025 budget plans for work to update design and architectural standards across the city as a whole. Mission noted their activity centers were somewhat obvious, focused around their main corridor of Johnson Drive.

Panelists shared that successful centers and corridors include mixed-use land use and development patterns, transportation options, walkability and connectivity to neighborhoods and the natural environment, and establish the character of an area. Challenges include development pressure and budgetary constraints that require patience. Panelists also commented on having sensitivity to affordability of housing in activity centers and having more stock and diverse housing available. Leslie Karr expressed that housing is often faced with opposition in Overland Park, but Karie Kneller noted that housing development was generally well-received in Mission, perhaps as a result of outreach and education.

The panelists discussed updating zoning codes and noted that combining funding opportunities and demonstrating reduced maintenance costs can help public works departments get on board with new comprehensive plans. Mission is currently in the process of redoing their zoning codes, and Kansas City will be creating a 3D model and will then create guidelines around the model to codify. The committee also discussed how showing the value of land with regard to density from land development and sales tax can help make an argument in favor of higher density.

Other Business

Co-Chair Heley shared that Overland Park is spending \$34m on a new farmers market downtown. Beth Dawson also shared a Fox 4 News item on the Sustainable Places Program was highlighted last night, and the report encouraged the public to comment on project applications.

The next SPPC meeting will be a special meeting on August 9th. Co-Chair Katerndahl thanked the panelists and committee and adjourned the meeting.