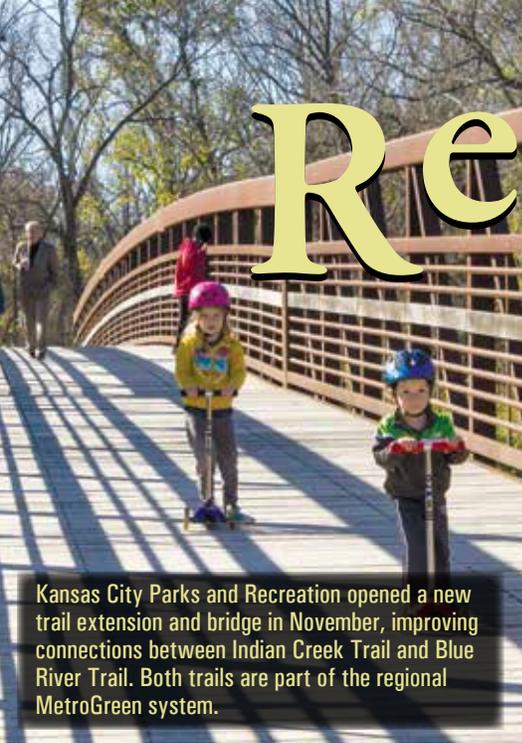


ReMARC

A Publication of the Mid-America Regional Council • December 2016



Kansas City Parks and Recreation opened a new trail extension and bridge in November, improving connections between Indian Creek Trail and Blue River Trail. Both trails are part of the regional MetroGreen system.

Scenario Planning Workshop Dec. 14

What challenges and opportunities will the future bring? MARC will host the first in a series of scenario planning workshops on Wednesday, Dec. 14, from 2–4:30 p.m., at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center, 4801 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, Missouri.

Participants will discuss how key forces such as shifting demographics, global economic trends, emerging technologies and climate change will impact the Kansas City region. Understanding these driving forces will lead to an integrated framework of strategies and policies that can be incorporated into regional plans and position the region for success, no matter what the future holds.

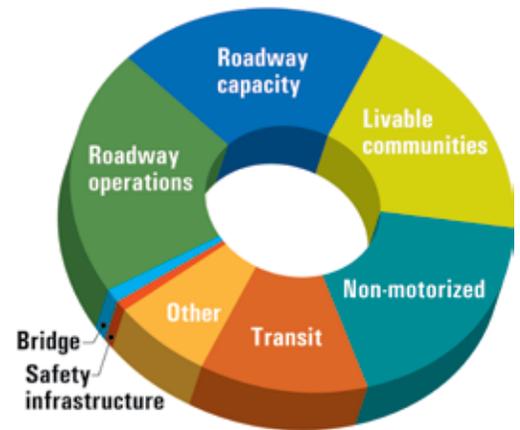
Visit marc.org/scenarioplanning for registration and more information.

\$84.4 million in federal funds awarded to local transportation projects

The Mid-America Regional Council's Board of Directors recently approved the allocation of approximately \$84.4 million in federal funding for 68 projects that will enhance roads and rehabilitate bridges, improve air quality and public transportation, and support focused development in the Kansas City region during the coming years.

MARC works with the Missouri and Kansas Departments of Transportation, city and county

continued on page 7 ▶



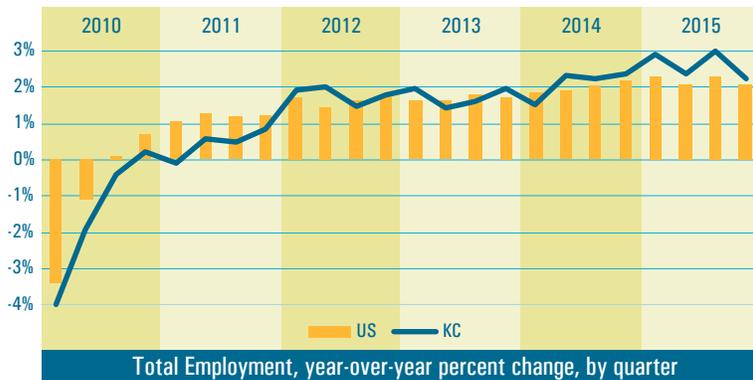
Programming by type

Steady economic growth predicted

In October, MARC presented its annual economic forecast for the region at a breakfast hosted by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. The region's economic output is expected to grow by about 2 percent in the coming year — a rate that is sufficient to keep downward pressure on unemployment and upward pressure on wages, resulting

in rising prosperity that is more broadly shared. Employment is expected to expand at rates similar to recent years. The metro area should end 2016 with 20,100 new jobs. Total job growth is expected to slow slightly in 2017, adding 19,300 jobs, in part reflecting the difficulty in finding employees for high demand occupations in STEM-related fields.

continued on page 6 ▶



INSIDE:

- Sustainable Success Stories 2
- Workforce Summit 2
- Green Commute Challenge 3
- Disaster Preparedness 4
- Downtown Loop Study 5
- Early Learning Summit 5

2016 Sustainable Success Stories recognized

Each year, MARC recognizes Sustainable Success Stories at an event that highlights a cross-section of sustainability efforts. By sharing local successes and challenges, community partners can learn how to replicate high-impact practices with the long-term goal of improving the quality of life for citizens in the Kansas City region. The 2016 competition emphasized exemplary green and complete street projects and initiatives in both urban and suburban settings. The projects honored this year are described briefly below. More information about each project is available online at www.marc.org/SSS2016.

✉ Tom Jacobs, tjacobs@marc.org



- **20th Street Streetscape**, Kansas City, Missouri — Adds bike facilities, wider sidewalks and green infrastructure improvements between Grand and Southwest Boulevards.
- **Grandview Gateway/Main Street Improvements**, Grandview, Missouri — Focuses on low-impact construction and road diet concepts.
- **Healthy Community Corridor**, Wyandotte County/ Kansas City, Kansas — Adopts a “Safe Routes to Parks” approach, with an eye toward improving public health.
- **Ivanhoe Gateway Project**, Kansas City, Missouri — Increases homeownership for low-income residents and offers multifaceted senior housing options along the 39th Street corridor.
- **Johnson Drive Streetscape**, Mission, Kansas — Transforms a main arterial roadway, with stormwater upgrades, new sidewalks, street lights, seat walls, signage and other features.
- **KC Road Diet Initiative**, Kansas City, Missouri — Adds bike facilities and bike buffer lanes, and increased safety for all users along two busy corridors.
- **KC Streetcar**, Kansas City, Missouri — Provides a free, public transit option for all users seeking access to downtown services, jobs and activities.
- **Troost Avenue Streetscape**, Kansas City, Missouri — Includes new curb extensions with bioretention gardens, traffic calming, street trees, energy-efficient lights, new sidewalks and ramps.



2016 Workforce Summit

The seventh annual Greater Kansas City Workforce and Education Summit, held on Dec. 2, offered strategies to reinforce connections between business and education in order to strengthen the region’s human capital — a key driver of the regional economy. More than 125 representatives from colleges, universities, school districts, businesses, local governments, economic development agencies and other organizations attended.

Jan McKeel, executive director of the South Central Workforce Alliance in Columbia, Tennessee, provided the keynote address on moving career pathway programs from promise to scale. Frank Lenk, director of research services at MARC, provided early analysis on the region’s life sciences industry, part of a Talent-to-Industry Exchange currently underway. Tim Carlson, director of human resources at Bayer Animal Health, and Leigh Anne Taylor Knight, with Think Shift/DeBruce Foundation, discussed workforce competencies most in demand across all industry sectors. A panel discussing GradForce KC’s 2016 initiatives included Cedric Deadmon, KC Degrees; Beth Tankersley-Bankhead, KC Scholars; Shanitra Jones and Elizabeth Munteer, FAFSA Challenge; Karin Chang, Summer U Initiative; and Cindy Lane and Susan Wally, Career Academies.

A local panel discussed a broad range of postsecondary education initiatives in the region, including Gradforce KC, the FAFSA Challenge, KC Degrees, KC Scholars, Summer U Initiative and Career Academies.

Two new reports were also released at the summit: the 2016 Education Asset Inventory for Greater Kansas City, and a Common Sector Competencies blueprint.

✉ Sheri Gonzales Warren, swarren@marc.org
www.kcworkforce.org

Green Commute Challenge reduces emissions

Participants save money and help improve air quality using alternative commute options

Each summer, MARC's RideShare and Air Quality programs host the Green Commute Challenge — a friendly competition to reduce the number of vehicles on the road during peak commute times by encouraging alternatives to driving alone, such as carpooling, riding the bus, bicycling, walking and telecommuting.

Participants form teams with coworkers and log work-related trips on commute calendars to earn points and a chance to win prizes. This year's challenge wrapped up in August 2016 with 44 employer teams and 640 participants who logged a combined 45,553 trips using alternative commuting options. Altogether, the 2016 Green Commute Challenge reduced driving by 560,702 miles — enough to fly to the moon, orbit it 12 times then fly back to Earth. The challenge prevented 431,044 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions and saved \$111,056 in driving costs.

Green Commute Challenge participants celebrated their success at a luncheon where teams with the highest point totals were recognized. This year's challenge winners were:

- Employers with 500+ employees — The city of Kansas City, Missouri.
- Employers with 250-499 employees — SMG Service Management Group.
- Employers with fewer than 250 employees — Kansas City Public Library.

Sponsors of the 2016 Green Commute Challenge included Hallmark, Enterprise Rideshare, UMB Bank, JE Dunn Construction, vRide and Stinson Leonard Street.

Find information about alternative commuting options online at RideshareKC.org.

✉ [Amanda Graor, agrao@marc.org](mailto:agraor@marc.org)
 ridesharekc.org



Use of community health workers expands across region

With support from MARC, the KC Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative hosted a November conference on expanding the use of community health workers (CHWs) in the Greater Kansas City area. The conference attracted 200 health care providers, payers and others interested in using these frontline public health workers to help connect individuals to the health and social services systems.

Shreya Kangovi, executive director of the Penn Center for Community Health Workers and assistant professor of medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine, gave the keynote address. A panel discussion for health care providers included Kenneth Fawcett Jr., Healthier Communities; Adriana Matiz and Patricia Peretz, New York Presbyterian Hospital; and Dennis Dunmyer, KC CARE Clinic. An afternoon panel, focused on how payers of health care services can support CHWs, included Larry Franken, Health Share of Oregon; and Tony Sun, Kathy Brown and Timothy Kling, MO HealthNet. The conference was supported by grants from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City and Humana.

CHWs help individuals understand their medications, make follow-up appointments and self-manage chronic diseases, and also provide other assistance to improve clients' health outcomes. CHWs can help health care professionals understand how patients' home environments affect health outcomes and help clients avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room. CHWs



Dr. Larry Franken discusses how Humana integrated community health workers into health care operations at Humana.

are employed in many different settings, including safety net clinics, health departments, hospitals, schools, senior centers, churches and health insurance companies.

The KC Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative was formed in early 2016 in response to growing interest and transitioned from a regional advisory committee that MARC established in 2011. In addition to monthly collaborative meetings, three working subcommittees focus on capacity building/education, advocacy and sustainability. In addition, community health workers employed in the Greater Kansas City area connect through a monthly CHW forum.

✉ [Marlene Nagel, mnagel@marc.org](mailto:mnagel@marc.org)
 marc.org/communityhealthworkers

Initiative provides disaster preparedness tools for vulnerable populations and support agencies

Being prepared for emergencies is important for any community, but is especially critical for vulnerable populations. Those who have disabilities, those who are economically disadvantaged, children, older adults, people with limited English proficiency, and culturally/geographically isolated individuals may need extra care during an emergency, and it's important for communities to work with vulnerable populations to plan ahead.

Working with local emergency services and community service provider agencies, MARC launched a collaborative Community Disaster Resilience initiative to increase the disaster preparedness and resiliency of vulnerable populations in the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area.

The fundamental goals of the initiative were to identify agencies that serve vulnerable populations, engage them

in preparedness discussions and create stronger links between them and local emergency services agencies.



Funded in part by the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, this research-based initiative led to the formation of a Community Service Provider Network, publication of a Community Engagement Action Guide and development of a Personal Preparedness Inventory Tool.

The Community Engagement Action Guide documents the initiative's planning process, providing a resource that other communities can use to create their own preparedness plans for vulnerable populations.

The Personal Preparedness Inventory Tool is designed to help residents with special needs create a basic emergency kit and emergency plan for themselves and their households. Both documents are available online at marc.org/communityresilience.

✉ Erin Lynch, elynch@marc.org



Above average rainfall contributes to quiet ozone season

A temperate spring and a wet summer contributed to low levels of ground-level ozone in the Kansas City region during the 2016 ozone season. Ground-level ozone forms when volatile organic compounds and oxides of nitrogen from emissions react in heat and sunlight. When there is also a lack of wind, ozone concentrations can reach unhealthy levels.

Throughout the ozone season, MARC issues a daily SkyCast — an ozone pollution forecast that corresponds with the Air Quality Index (AQI), an information tool that associates colors and health messages with ranges of air pollution concentration. During the 2016 ozone season, MARC issued 68 yellow or moderate SkyCasts and three Orange Ozone Alerts for the Kansas City region's air quality maintenance area.

Ozone monitor readings showed only four incidents in 2016 when the Kansas City region exceeded the federal health standard for ground-level ozone set by the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA set a stricter National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone of 70 parts per billion in 2015. EPA uses a rolling three-year average to determine whether a region is in compliance with the standard. Once 2016 monitor readings are validated, they will be combined with values from 2014 and 2015 to evaluate whether Kansas City still meets the standard.

In 2017, ozone monitoring will begin on March 1 to meet a new federal requirement to observe pollution levels earlier in the season. The ozone season will still end on Oct. 31.



✉ Amanda Graor, agraor@marc.org



Study of downtown loop, bridge is underway

In October 2015, a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study began in an area that includes the U.S. 169 corridor, Buck O'Neil Memorial Bridge (also known as the Broadway Bridge) and the Interstate 70 "North Loop." The study will evaluate a range of transportation options, identify preferred long-term improvements and set the stage for future investments.

The PEL process provides an opportunity for early coordination with the public, as well as local, state and federal agencies. The study team is divided into working groups:

- An Executive Leadership Team includes leaders from each of the three project sponsors: The city of Kansas City, Missouri, the Missouri Department of Transportation and MARC. This group will convene at key milestones throughout the study to weigh in on critical study decisions.
- A Study Management Team, with representatives from the three project sponsors and project consultants, Burns & McDonnell and Hg Consult. This group will meet at least once a month to discuss issues related to contract compliance and progress reports.
- A Technical Advisory Group will include members of the Study Management Team and other stakeholders with a direct interest in the project — primarily governmental agency representatives from adjacent jurisdictions.
- A Key Stakeholders Group will include business owners, environmental organizations and neighborhood groups with connections to the study area.

The plan includes continuous face-to-face and online outreach to engage the community throughout the study and should be completed by Spring 2018.

✉ [Martin Rivarola, mrivarola@marc.org](mailto:Martin.Rivarola@marc.org)

Summit addresses early learning workforce needs

In early November, early learning professionals — including faculty and deans from early childhood university programs, employees at state and local social service agencies and funders — met at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center for the Early Learning Workforce Summit. Attendees discussed competencies required of early learning educators and strategies to increase the number of qualified educators in the Kansas City region's workforce.

Stacie Goffin, principal of Goffin Strategy Group, was the keynote speaker at the summit. Goffin has served as the founding chair of the Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative, a university professor and a preschool educator. She provided an outline that distinguishes between an occupation and a profession, and offered guidance to elevate the conversation about how early learning can become known as a profession.

"Early childhood education is gaining credibility across the country, but not its practitioners," Goffin said.

"Professions are structured to create a unified system of preparation, practice and responsibility."

Jovanna Rohs, MARC's director of early learning and Head Start, opened the summit with sobering statistics about the availability of quality early learning teachers for children across Kansas and Missouri: to provide quality early learning for all children who live in poverty, Missouri would need to add 12,000 early learning teachers and Kansas would need an additional 8,000 teachers.

The majority of early learning employees in Kansas and Missouri are childcare workers, not kindergarten or preschool teachers. The difference between these roles is reflected not only in job title, but in salary and the quality of care provided.

Goffin stressed that building the field's capacity and competence should not be solely the responsibility of policy makers. "It really is up to us to step forward and assume responsibility for early learning practitioners as a field of practice."

✉ [Jovanna Rohs, jrohs@marc.org](mailto:Jovanna.Rohs@marc.org)

Keynote speaker Stacie Goffin addresses participants at the Early Learning Workforce Summit.



MEET THE MARC BOARD

The MARC Board of Directors is made up of 33 elected officials from the nine counties and six the largest cities in the MARC region.

FRANK WHITE JR. joined the MARC board in January 2016. White was elected to represent the 1st District At-Large on the Jackson County Legislature in 2014. In that role, he chaired the county’s Land Use Committee and served on three other committees – Budget, Public Works, and Health and Environment. His fellow legislators voted to appoint him to fill the vacant office of county executive in January 2016. Re-elected in November 2016, White will continue to serve as county executive for the remainder of the current term that ends in 2018.



CHRIS WHITING was appointed to the MARC board in May 2016. He was elected to the Independence, Missouri, city council in a special election in 2012 and re-elected in 2014. Whiting also serves as mayor pro tem and is a member of the city’s Audit and Finance Committee, Employee Advisory Committee and Japanese Sister City Committee. He chairs the City Judicial Commission, and serves as an elected trustee on the Board of the Metropolitan Community College.



STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW HIRES

- ROBERT COLE, Emergency Services Planning and Exercise Program Manager
- SARA HINTZE, GIS Data Developer/Analyst
- PAUL BUSHORE, GIS Data Developer

ANNIVERSARIES

- 45 years – JACQUI MOORE, Director of Aging Services
- 15 years – AMY JACOBY, Receptionist/Accounting Clerk
- 15 years – CINDY TERRYBERRY, Nutrition Services Coordinator
- 10 years – BECKY HALL, Accountant III
- 10 years – HASSAN AL-RUBAIE, Public Safety Communications Technician III

RETIREMENTS

JACQUI MOORE, Director of Aging Services, November 2016

New GTI training certificate focuses on communications

Smart phones, tablets, laptops and other technologies continue to change today’s workplace. Many employees now send text messages, photos and files on the go. While this may improve efficiency, these changes in digital technology are impacting professional business communication.

MARC’s Government Training Institute (GTI) has launched a new certificate program to help employees improve their ability to effectively communicate in a mobile world. Titled “Communication Strategies for Today’s Workplace,” the program offers five half-day sessions where participants will learn how to:

- Meet workplace communication challenges.
- Write successful corporate communications, avoiding common grammar errors.
- Integrate four major communication skills – writing, etiquette, grammar and oral presentations with PowerPoint – to improve job performance.

Each class will incorporate hands-on, small-group activities where participants will write, correct, revise, speak, create and collaborate. For more information, visit www.marc.org/gti and look under Certificate Programs.

✉ [Jonathan Morris, jmorris@marc.org](mailto:Jonathan.Morris@marc.org)

Economic forecast — from page 1

The regional economy is expected to closely reflect the national economy. After growing slightly slower than the U.S. in 2015, recent acceleration in job growth will push the regional economy slightly ahead of the nation in 2016, growing 2 percent compared to the nation’s 1.9 percent. In 2017, regional growth in GDP is expected to remain steady at 2 percent.

Service sectors are expected to add a significant number of jobs, with retail gaining an average of 2,100 jobs annually from 2016 through 2018. Accommodation, food services and administrative services will add an average of more than 2,000 jobs annually. Two sectors, manufacturing and information, are expected to lose ground, falling by 200 and 1,500 jobs per year, respectively.

The region continues to recover from the Great Recession, with little sign of losing momentum. The principal negative trend on the horizon is the slow growth of labor productivity. Rising productivity leads to higher standards of living and more prosperity, but retaining the region’s recent gains will require investments in physical capital – infrastructure, plant and equipment – as well as investments in human capital.

✉ [Frank Lenk, flenk@marc.org](mailto:Frank.Lenk@marc.org) marc.org/economicforecast

Transportation funds — from page 1

governments and other local stakeholders to review funding applications that align with priorities and strategies established in the region’s long-range metropolitan transportation plan. The projects selected for funding will help make progress on a broad range of policy goals identified in *Transportation Outlook 2040* (www.marc.org/2040).

“We saw an impressive number of applications during this funding cycle — 152 applications totaling \$290.5 million in requested funds, more than three and a half times the amount available,” said Carson Ross, mayor of Blue Springs, Missouri, and co-chair of MARC’s Total Transportation Policy Committee (TTPC). Chuck Adams, councilmember for Edwardsville, Kansas, and co-chair of TTPC said the committee faced a difficult task, but “We relied on our evaluation of project benefits, local and regional priorities, public comments and equity considerations to rate each project and fund as many as possible.”

\$290.5 million | Funds requested



\$84.4 million | Funds available



Three federal programs provided funding:

- Surface Transportation Program funds for fiscal years 2019–2020 are used to enhance roads, rehabilitate bridges, support livable communities, enhance bicycle and pedestrian options, expand public transportation options and improve safety and operations.
- Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program funds for fiscal years 2018–2020 are allocated for projects that reduce congestion and improve air quality by decreasing vehicle emissions.
- Transportation Alternatives Program funds for fiscal years 2019–2020 are used to improve transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails and safe routes to school programs.

Forty-one percent of funds were apportioned to roadway capacity and operations projects and 19 percent to livable communities projects, with the balance going toward transit, non-motorized transportation, bridges, safety infrastructure and other projects. The Kansas City Area Transit Authority will receive more than \$10 million to create bus rapid transit service along Prospect Avenue, to purchase clean diesel buses for better efficiency and reduced emissions, and to put technology in place to enhance fare collection and real-time monitoring. For a full list of funded projects, visit marc.org/browse2016CFP.

✉ [Ron Achelpohl, rona@marc.org](mailto:Ron.Achelpohl@marc.org)

GOVERNMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE

Computer Skills

- Dec. 6Basic Word
- Dec. 13Intermediate Word
- Dec. 20Advanced Word
- Jan. 5Fundamentals of Excel
- Jan. 10Intermediate Excel
- Jan. 20Advanced Excel

Customer Service

- Dec. 6Unbeatable Customer Service
- Dec. 13Workplace Boundaries
- Jan. 10Understand Yourself and Others
- Jan. 17Serving Diverse Customers
- Jan. 24Personal Accountability
- Jan. 31Customers from #*^\$
- Feb. 7Stress Survival Skills
- Feb. 14Fantastic Fixers
- Feb. 28Serving Internal Customers

Supervision

- Dec. 8Tools for Problem Solving
- Dec. 15Motivational Management
- Jan. 5Guiding Principles of Public Sector Leadership
- Jan. 12Personal Strengths & Leadership Styles
- Jan. 19Managing Performance
- Jan. 26Teamwork in Action
- Feb. 9Managing Conflict
- Feb. 16A Positive Approach to Corrective Action

PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING

- Dec. 13Refresher GeoLynx
- Jan. 9Leadership in the Communications Center
- Jan. 10Bullying in the PSAP
- Jan. 129-1-1 Equipment and TTY Training
- Jan. 19Violence in Public Settings
- Jan. 24Interoperable Communications
- Jan. 269-1-1 Liability
- Jan. 30–Feb. 2Communications Training Officer (CTO)
- Feb. 6–10Basic Telecommunicator Training
- Feb. 16PDS: Telecommunicators and the Autism Spectrum: What You Need to Know
- Feb. 21Refresher GeoLynx
- Feb. 239-1-1 Stress Management

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MARC

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MARC serves as the association of city and county governments and the metropolitan planning organization for the bistate Kansas City region.

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Pilot program expands home-delivered meals

Since October, older adults in MARC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) service area have had a new option for home-delivered meals. MARC recently began a pilot program with GA Foods to start weekly deliveries of frozen meals to clients who qualify for Medicaid. The pilot program delivers five frozen meals each week to 338 Medicaid clients in the AAA's five-county area.

This is a change to the home-delivered meals program, which continues for other clients in the area. The existing meals program delivers hot meals from central distribution centers daily, but is limited by the service areas that can be reached in a timely manner with hot food. The new frozen meals program will help extend the home-delivered meal service, in some cases reaching people who live outside the service area for the hot meal program.

Current home-delivered hot meal recipients who are eligible for the new frozen meal program were notified of the change by phone. Through the pilot program, the AAA was able to eliminate its waiting list for home-delivered meals and add new clients.



Pictured from left: Jacqui Moore, MARC Aging Services director; Brian Mabry, GA Foods field service representative; and Cindy Terryberry, MARC nutrition services coordinator.

 [Cindy Terryberry, cterryberry@marc.org](mailto:c.terryberry@marc.org)