A message from our chair

As we wrap up this report, the region faces an unprecedented public health crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our region is coming together to mitigate the effects of this crisis, just as we’ve faced myriad social and economic challenges before, strengthened by our very diversity. As I flip through these pages, I am inspired and encouraged by the teamwork represented here.

Our long-standing work in emergency services and 911 allows us to rely on existing collaborative relationships in a truly regional response. Our aging and early learning programs stand on the foundation of their existing networks to quickly meet the needs of older adults and children throughout the region. Our history of collaborating with local governments of all sizes allows us to facilitate conversations and information sharing crucial to response and recovery.

It is this work we do every day — looking across boundaries and pulling together with our neighbors to improve the lives and futures of our residents — that will allow us to not only bounce back from this crisis but to bounce forward as a stronger, more resilient region.

I’m proud to be the chair of the Board of Directors at Mid-America Regional Council because, even in times that are challenging to our nation and region, the work reflected in this report reminds us that we are stronger together.

Rob Roberts
Commissioner, Miami County, Kansas

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MARCs COVID-19 RESPONSE

Although this publication largely documents MARCs work in 2019, the emergence of COVID-19 (coronavirus) in the early months of 2020 cant go without mentioning. Many of MARCs resources were diverted and focused on helping the region reduce the impact of this public health emergency. At the time of this publication, MARC is taking the following actions:

- MARC is facilitating regular planning and coordination calls among emergency management, public health, hospitals, EMS and other health care organizations and public information professionals, local government administrators, nonprofit organizations and others to support one another’s efforts and identify and address emerging issues. MARC stood up a Multi-Agency Coordination Group to coordinate public health and other critical decisions being made at the local level.
- MARC is also engaging civic and political leaders to assist with communication efforts. Working with the public health officials and Metropolitan Emergency Managers Committee to gather information, www.PrepareMetroKC.org is updated frequently, as new information becomes available.
- The Aging and Adult Services staff is working to identify new resources and partnerships to ensure safe home-delivered meal service for older adults. Home-delivered meals were expanded and operations modified to increase the number of older adults served. The department also expanded their information and referral call center staffing from one full-time position to over eight staff people to help respond to increased interest in home-delivered meals and other supports.
- The Early Learning staff is supporting Head Start partners in Clay, Jackson and Platte counties to continue service to children and families through virtual home visitation and educational supports, as well as providing meals, diapers, wipes and formula. Staff are also providing additional support for programs that remain open for essential care.
- MARCs Research Services staff is working to forecast the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Kansas City economy and subsequent policy responses. This work is being done on behalf of KC Rising and is overseen by representatives from area state and local governments, economic development agencies and the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.
- The KC Region COVID-19 Resource Hub was created by MARC to provide public health authorities and the general public in the Kansas City metropolitan region with a tool to track data related to the public health crisis. The dashboard, available at preparemetrokc.org, displays information from freely available sources and is updated daily.

We hope these efforts help reduce the impacts of this virus and the economic and social consequences on our residents while helping to make the region more resilient in the face of future adversity.
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.

**Connected KC 2050**

As the metropolitan planning organization for the Kansas City region, MARC updates the federally required regional transportation plan every five years. Connected KC 2050 will serve as a blueprint for managing the region’s transportation system, identifying transportation improvements for the next 30 years. The three-year planning process began with an update to MARC’s vision and goals for the region followed by a needs assessment that shaped the policy framework.

In 2019, public feedback was collected to reaffirm the goals of the plan. MARC’s Research Services department provided an updated population and employment forecast that informs the transportation system model. A call for projects resulted in 419 applications totaling more than $14 billion, which were assessed and sorted based on projected available funding. The plan goes to the Total Transportation Policy Committee and Board of Directors for approval in June of 2020.

**Rebuilding the Buck O’Neil Bridge**

Beyond the Loop, a 2018 study sponsored by Kansas City, Missouri, the Missouri Department of Transportation and MARC, took a fresh look at options for the Buck O’Neil Bridge and I-70 corridor. The study revealed strong community support for replacing the bridge with a new structure that would strengthen connections to downtown and nearby communities.

A new bridge would cost approximately $200 million. In 2019, MoDOT finalized its $100 million commitment to the project. The Total Transportation Policy Committee and Missouri Surface Transportation Program Priorities Committee jointly pledged $40 million of their federal funds over the next four years. A $25 million Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation completed the funding puzzle. Public input was requested and received, and the environmental assessment was completed in early 2020.
Looking Ahead

HEARTLAND FREIGHT TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Together with MARC, representatives from six metropolitan planning organizations, five state departments of transportation, the Heartland Civic Collaborative and other academic, business and industry representatives from Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska are embarking on the creation of a shared freight technology plan.

Funded by a Federal Highway Administration National Economic Partnership grant, the plan will examine economic connections critical to freight flow within the states and major metropolitan areas and deliver a blueprint for action and implementation.
Competitive Economy

MARC works with regional partners to enhance the performance of the metropolitan economy and expand inclusive economic opportunity, focusing on workforce development systems and postsecondary educational attainment using research and analysis.

Shared Prosperity Partnership
In October, KC Rising partners convened more than 200 leaders representing businesses, local governments and civic, nonprofit, philanthropic and faith-based organizations in the Kansas City region for a Shared Prosperity Forum. Participants reviewed current data and research about racial disparities, leading to open and honest conversations about challenges to inclusive growth and innovative strategies for the Kansas City region.

The event was part of the Shared Prosperity Partnership, an ongoing collaborative effort between national and local leaders to promote inclusive prosperity. A central focus is to ensure that those most impacted by growth and development decisions are included in the discussion and that decision-making works from the bottom up, using an equity lens to evaluate choices.

Educational Asset Inventory
Building strong connections between education and industry requires a clear understanding of currently available educational credentials. Each year, through the GradForceKC initiative, MARC partners with education, workforce, civic and nonprofit leaders to produce the Education Asset Inventory, a report that captures the postsecondary credentials available in the Kansas City region for five industry sectors important to the regional economy: advanced manufacturing, engineering and architecture, finance and insurance, information technology and life sciences.

The inventory provides a comprehensive overview of degree programs in these specific high-growth sectors that are available at public, private and nonprofit postsecondary institutions located within the region. The report surveyed 33 public, nonprofit and for-profit colleges and universities to find out they offer a total of 2,261 credentials in these sectors.
Updated CEDS plan

In 2019, MARC updated the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan, which provides an economic roadmap to help diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The plan provides an analysis of the current regional economy, integrates human and physical capital into economic planning, and offers metrics for evaluating progress.

KC Degrees

KC Degrees continues its work helping adult learners in the region build pathways to new career options by earning a high-quality credential or degree. In 2019, working with the DeBruce Foundation, KC Degrees rolled out the Agile Work Profiler, a college and career exploration tool that identifies career-related agilities and matches those skills with potential occupations.

KC Rising

KC Rising brings together civic and business partners to strengthen the regional economy and foster inclusive prosperity. In 2019, MARC continued tracking the “big dots” — metropolitan gross domestic product (GDP), quality jobs and median household income — and other metrics that compare us to peer metros, offering insight on the impact of identified strategies.

Economic Forecast

According to MARC’s annual economic forecast (issued before the COVID-19 public health crisis), the region can expect continued economic growth over the next two years, but at a slower pace than the previous two years. The region’s gross domestic product and employment are both expected to slightly outpace the nation’s growth rate through late 2020. In 2021, the region will revert to its historical pattern of growing slightly slower than the national average.

Quality of Life Report

According to the 2019 report, more than three quarters of adults in the metro area rate their quality of life as good or excellent. The annual resident survey measures satisfaction with access to quality education, health care, financial well-being, a sense of physical safety and connection to community.

Workforce and Education Summit

In December, more than 100 people gathered at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center to discuss pathways for inclusive regional prosperity. The event featured keynote speaker Tawanna Black, founder and chief executive officer for the Center for Economic Inclusion. Panel discussions tackled issues such as advancing equity in education and creating a system to support adult learners.

Looking Ahead

TALENT TO INDUSTRY EXCHANGES

Work is underway on two new Talent-to-Industry Exchange (TIE) reports to be released in 2020. The Technology TIE will examine the connection between education and workforce in information technology and computer engineering. The Public Sector TIE will look at careers in local, state and federal government.

TIES are replicable public/private partnerships that bring industry and education groups together to solve workforce challenges. This business-led, sector-based system is designed to improve the labor supply in key industry sectors, growing the human capital necessary to attract and retain companies in the region. Each TIE process has an economic and labor analysis, a workforce action plan and an implementation plan.
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.

G2U Initiative and GEAR Challenge Award

In 2019, MARC partnered with the Volcker Alliance to launch the new Government-to-University (G2U) Initiative in Kansas City, focusing on growing the region’s talent pipeline for public sector jobs, developing new skills among public sector employees and conducting applied research. As part of the initiative, MARC convened a regional coalition of G2U partners who identified the development of a data academy as an early priority to “upskill” public sector workers at all levels.

Also in 2019, the U.S. General Services Administration awarded a $300,000 Government Effectiveness Advanced Research (GEAR) Center Challenge award to MARC. The GEAR award will support a collaborative effort with the Volcker Alliance and Johns Hopkins University to train 250 federal practitioners across the region in data management, analytics and communicating with data.

Regional housing summit

In July 2019, members of the First Suburbs Coalition, regional stakeholders and national experts attended a regional housing summit in Gladstone, Missouri, to discuss workforce housing challenges and their impact on economic development in first-tier suburbs.

The summit focused on challenges around housing affordability and economic development in first-tier suburbs, opportunities to build and maintain workforce housing, and best practices for regional solutions.

Through 2020, the First Suburbs Coalition will work to implement the pilot project’s recommendations by sharing case studies of successful policies in the region and creating opportunities for cohorts of cities with similar housing issues to work together on joint solutions.
Government Training Institute
MARC’s Government Training Institute (GTI) continues to provide training for local governments in the Kansas City region. During the past year, 9,030 people attended 237 GTI training classes and events. More than 60 people successfully completed program requirements for one of GTI’s certificate programs focusing on supervision, customer service, administrative professionals and facilitation. GTI also provided 27 customized training programs to local governments with 1,094 participants.

Shared services
MARC encouraged cities and counties in the Kansas City region to complete the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review self-assessment in 2019. The assessment helps identify ways to reduce cybersecurity risk, and align policy and approaches to managing risk. MARC also executed a regional purchasing contract for cybersecurity training software, issued an RFP for shared IT services and renewed the master agreement with the Institute for Building Technology and Safety for building, development and planning services.

Cooperative purchasing
In 2019, the Kansas City Regional Purchasing Cooperative (KCRPC) helped local governments save more than $833,578 on shared contracts for commonly used products and services, as well as higher-priced items, such as fire trucks, ambulances and public works equipment. Since its inception in 2003, KCRPC has helped local governments save $13.1 million.

Youth Career Expo
More than 3,200 students and teachers from 50 metro-area high and middle schools attended the 2019 Public Service Youth Career Expo to explore high-demand careers in public service. Hosted by cities and counties in the region, the expo highlighted key sectors of public service, including law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire safety, parks and recreation, health and human services, public works, courts and legal services, human services, information technology, community development and public administration.

Managers Roundtable
In 2019, the Managers Roundtable celebrated its 40th year of networking and regional problem solving. The bimonthly meetings of city and county administrators include presentations focusing on the legislative agendas for Kansas and Missouri, downtown redevelopment, economic development projects in suburbs, how cities can reenvision their aging commercial corridors, and growing the next generation of city and county managers.

Salary Survey
More than 43 local governments and organizations participated in MARC’s annual salary survey in 2019. The survey provides participants with easy online access, searchable by job type, to compare salary and benefit packages with peer cities and counties.

Looking Ahead
WORKFORCE HOUSING
Following up on the First Suburbs Coalition Regional Housing Summit in July 2019, MARC will convene partner agencies over the next year to coordinate strategies aimed at addressing the need for workforce housing across the metro.

As part of this effort, MARC will partner with United Community Services of Johnson County to develop a public awareness toolkit to help local governments communicate with residents about affordable housing issues and implement action steps from the summit report. MARC will also continue discussions with community partners, such as LISC Greater Kansas City, the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City and others, to pursue forming a regional housing partnership.
Regional 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

Regional partners prepare for CCTA

In collaboration with local governments and community partners, in 2019, MARC continued the important work of helping cities and counties prepare for Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attacks (CCTA). Led by the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee and in collaboration with regional partners, the CCTA Task Force combined what was learned through jurisdiction assessments and previous training to solidify a core CCTA training curriculum, develop a CCTA annex with a planning guide and a Special Incident annex for the Regional Coordination Guide. In addition to developing and offering training courses, numerous exercises have been conducted. In 2019, the region participated in 58 training courses and nine exercises in preparation for CCTA. Awarded in July 2017, this three-year $2.25 million grant was scheduled to end in September 2020.

Regional 911 System Expansion

In 2019, MARC continued work to connect Douglas and Atchison counties in Kansas to the regional 911 system. Participating counties agree to implement a modernization of the 911 equipment used by public safety answering points and share the operational, administrative and maintenance costs of the regional 911 system on a per capita basis.

Over the past year, MARC also created a replacement plan for 911 equipment across the region, invested in new smart technologies, such as digital selective routers to allow for migration to NG911, and started planning to increase the bandwidth on the 911 microwave network that will allow photos and videos to eventually be sent as part of 911 calls.
Peer Support Program
Now recognized as a national model, MARC’s Peer Support Program continues to help first responders in the Kansas City metropolitan region cope with personal and job-related stress. The program, which promotes mental well-being through confidential support and stress reduction training, is available to any employee of a public safety answering point (PSAP) within the MARC region. In 2019, the program handled hundreds of peer requests for support and responded to over 50 critical incident stress debriefings at PSAPs.

911 operations
In 2019, 911 staff upgraded equipment at three PSAPs — American Medical Response, Kansas City Kansas Fire Department and Kansas City Kansas Police Department — to the VESTA 9-1-1 platform. The upgrade of these three PSAPs marks the completion of a multi-year transition of all regional PSAPs to a NG911 capable solution.

Preparing vulnerable populations for disaster
The Community Disaster Resilience Network (CDRN) launched public awareness campaigns in 2019 to educate vulnerable populations, such as young children and older adults, about the risks of flooding, severe weather and extreme heat. Through targeted outreach, the campaigns also highlighted proactive steps people can take to prepare for these types of emergencies.

Dispatcher training
MARC’s public safety program provided 63 training courses to approximately 781 dispatchers and call takers in 2019. Last year’s program introduced several new and modified courses addressing first responder and civilian secondary trauma, including alternatives to unhealthy coping; the basics of nutrition; and the benefits of meditation and mindfulness as ways to mitigate stress, regulate emotions and improve health.

Regional coordination
The Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee (RHSCC) continued to oversee coordination of planning, training and exercises, and sharing of information and resources, with a focus on emerging threats, lessons learned and effective use of resources and assets. The RHSCC administered federal and state grants totaling more than $6.6 million in 2019.

Training and exercises
In February 2019, the RHSCC hosted the region’s annual Training and Exercise Planning Workshop to identify training and exercise priorities to strengthen regional capabilities. Over the past year, the RHSCC’s Training and Exercise subcommittee coordinated training for 120 courses and eight conferences, and hosted 35 tabletop, functional and full-scale exercises.

Looking Ahead
LOCAL JURISDICTIONS UPDATE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN
Every five years, cities, counties, school districts, public colleges and other special districts are required to prepare and update a hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for certain FEMA grants.

Over the past year, MARC has helped local jurisdictions in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties prepare a 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan. Focusing on five priority natural hazards, the plan is designed to increase resilience and reduce loss of life, property, human suffering, economic disruption and disaster assistance costs from natural disasters.

Due to the current public health crisis, it is expected that the plan will be completed by late summer 2020.
Evidence-Based Programs
MARC’s enhanced focus on offering Evidence-Based Programs (EBP) for our communities resulted in a significant increase in service, from 32 to 205 participants in 2019. The EBPs include workshops designed to empower adults to take charge of their health and learn self-management skills. The workshops address chronic conditions and focus on setting goals, developing action plans, problem-solving, reducing falls, managing medications, communicating with health providers and increasing healthy eating habits, physical activity and community engagement.

MARC serves as the network hub for Area Agencies on Aging throughout Missouri to offer health education and support programs in our communities. The hub provides centralized administration, licensing, distribution of funds, training and support for facilitators, oversight and quality assurance for the statewide network.

2020 Census engages hard-to-count populations
MARC partnered with local government and community leaders in 2019 to promote the importance of a complete and accurate census count. With regional funding support, MARC convened a coalition of stakeholders to promote the 2020 census through locally based, targeted outreach efforts.

The Kansas City Regional Complete Count Committee was formed in early 2019 and includes local governments, community-based and faith-based organizations, businesses, schools and others. The committee is coordinating a regional awareness campaign and engaging hard-to-reach populations to complete the survey online, by phone or by mail.

Census data guides the use of more than $675 billion in federal funds each year to support vital community services for housing and food assistance, schools, hospitals, highway construction and public safety. An undercount of only 1% could cost the Kansas City region more than $48 million per year.
Double Up Food Bucks redeemed by SNAP users for fruits and vegetables

Looking Ahead

DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

In 2019, MARC concluded a Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant from USDA that supported Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB), an incentive program that allows SNAP users to double their purchases for fresh produce. More than $2 million in incentives were redeemed during the four-year grant, with the majority of participants reporting that their families ate healthier while using the program. Local and regional funds were obtained to continue the program in the Kansas City area and parts of Kansas and Missouri. Approximately 50 farmers markets and 19 grocery stores will participate in the 2020 DUFB project. K-State University Research and Extension us in joining the partnership and will help coordinate farmers markets in Kansas.
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.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

Training for child care providers

Since August 2018, MARC’s Early Learning department has provided oversight for the Educare program. Educare provides resources, training opportunities and technical assistance at reduced costs to child care providers in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri. Child care providers can attend workshops in child development, cognition, motor skills, behavior problems, and child abuse and neglect. In 2019, the program provided quality improvement coaching visits to 61 providers, supporting technical, business development and curriculum planning efforts. The Educare program held 82 trainings with more than 1,300 early child care providers. In 2019, the Educare courses focused on providing creative spaces for children, helping children with trauma, supporting language development and standards for professionalism. The Missouri Department of Social Services provides funding for Educare and the majority of funding goes to direct service providers.

Successful federal reviews

In 2019, MARC’s Head Start program completed two successful federal reviews. During the first review, the Office of Head Start learned more about the MARC Head Start program design and how community health workers empower Head Start families to become self-reliant and engaged in their community. During the second review, MARC staff demonstrated how a high-quality program can promote positive outcomes and school readiness for children. The Office of Head Start also conducted interviews with leadership, reviewed data and visited 16 partner sites.

Each federal review focused on multiple aspects of the program’s design and implementation, including management, child development services, enrollment and attendance, and community engagement. The program performance summary gave MARC’s Head Start program and the direct service providers a positive assessment, reflecting the value and efficacy of the program’s new delivery structure.
Looking Ahead

HEAD START WEBSITE

MARC’s Head Start program is working with an outside technology firm to create a new website. The new website will be used as an outreach tool for families who are not yet enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start programs. Parents with children already enrolled in a Head Start program will be able to receive program updates on the new website.

Staff working for direct service providers will use the website to learn about upcoming trainings and access resources.

Throughout this process, MARC staff is working with designers to create a new brand for the Head Start program.

MORE 2019 ACTIVITIES

Assessing children’s development
Early learning teachers at MARC Head Start schools and centers use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) early childhood assessment system to track and support children’s progress toward goals for their learning and development. Three times each year, educators review each child’s developmental progress. Most children demonstrated progress in all levels across the DRDP continuum during the program year.

CHWs support families
During its 2018–2019 program year, MARC’s Head Start program continued contracts with two Community Health Workers (CHWs) who provided support for Head Start families. The CHWs helped families complete their health requirements, which included identifying a medical and dental home, scheduling medical and dental appointments, and applying for or renewing health insurance.

Early learning landscape
Early learning staff worked with MARC’s research services team to develop the Greater Kansas City Early Learning Landscape (GKC-ELL) regional data tool. This tool was designed to provide accessible and reliable information to policy makers, community leaders and early education administrators. The GKC-ELL includes interactive maps to display demographic, economic, health care and community asset information. The tool can also generate printable reports.

ELPP expansion
Building on a successful 2018 quality improvement pilot program, early learning staff implemented the Early Learning Program Profile (ELPP) at 12 additional sites in partnership with Wyandotte County’s Start Young program. The ELPP includes assessments, baseline indicators, quality improvement goals, technical assistance, professional development and modest grant funding.

Partnerships for professional development
The Early Learning Workforce Development Technical Work Group collaborated with the University of Central Missouri to launch a pilot program that gives early education teachers the opportunity to earn microcredentials. This program involves a series of three certificates, each serving as stackable credentials for teachers to earn credits toward a bachelor’s degree at about half the cost of traditional courses.

Parents supporting parents
In 2019, MARC’s Head Start program received a grant to support Parent Cafés and associated trainings. Parent Cafés are structured discussions where parents and caregivers talk openly about the struggles and joys related to raising a family. The grant provided funding for four Parent Café Training Institutes, which taught parents and community partners how to lead their own Parent Cafés.

MORE 2019 ACTIVITIES

2,336 families received services and supports
MARC Head Start centers and classrooms served 321 children with a diagnosed disability.
86% of Head Start children had up-to-date physical exams.
87% of Head Start children had up-to-date oral health exams.
Healthy Environment

MARC develops policies, processes and projects that help keep the region's air and water clean, reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, protects and conserves green infrastructure, and promotes climate resilience.

Climate Action Playbook

In 2019, MARC’s Transportation and Environment department collaborated with more than 100 regional elected officials involved in Climate Action KC. The goal of the group is to advance climate solutions on a local and regional level.

The collaboration included multiple workshops and the publication of the Climate Action Playbook, a collection of climate strategies based on regional and national success stories. The playbook’s launch event in December 2019 drew 250 attendees and used live polling technology to develop a consensus on the highest priority focus areas for the region. The playbook highlights locally proven strategies to slow down or reverse climate trends and provides a template that local governments can adapt to their own unique resources and challenges. In 2020, partners will formulate a regional Climate Action Plan to facilitate climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

Green Infrastructure Framework

Green infrastructure is an important part of restoring the natural management of stormwater in the region and creating a healthier environment. In 2019, MARC released the Green Infrastructure Framework, a document with detailed recommendations for better integration of traditional metal and concrete infrastructure with natural green elements like rain gardens, street trees and native landscaping.

The framework introduced layered diagrams of green infrastructure in a built environment that serve as a centerpiece to the Green Infrastructure Executive Summary and provides guidance in the development of office parks, public spaces and neighborhoods. The Green Infrastructure Advisory Committee will continue to work with local governments and area stakeholders to update ordinances to promote the use of native plants in public places and incentivize the protection of existing green resources like tree canopy.
AIR QUALITY

Education campaigns
The Air Quality public education committee uses advertising and social media to inform the public about the health impacts of air pollution and simple actions people can take to reduce emissions that lead to ozone formation.

The committee also works with area businesses through the Workplace Partnership, engaging 160 area businesses in efforts to keep the region’s air clean. Participating organizations receive monthly newsletters with tips on alternative transportation, energy reduction and other ways to help reduce ozone pollution.

Community outreach
During the spring and fall, MARC’s air quality program partnered with local governments to host nine voluntary emissions and gas cap testing clinics. The events help area residents learn about air quality, save money and reduce pollution by identifying if their car may need simple maintenance.

In 2019, MARC air quality program staff attended six outreach events, including concerts, back-to-school fairs and movie nights. During these events, MARC staff handed out air quality education materials, including children’s books, bike maps, fliers and tire pressure gauges.

WATER QUALITY

Stormwater conference
The MARC Water Quality Public Education Committee held the third KC Urban Stormwater Conference in 2019. The conference convened stormwater professionals from across the country to discuss pollution caused by stormwater runoff in urban areas and what steps residents and local leaders can take to mitigate that pollution. There were 201 registered attendees who heard ideas from nonprofit organizations, regulatory entities, engineering firms, parks departments and professionals in planning, public works and utilities.

Messaging and outreach
The award-winning water quality educational videos continued to run, illustrating the impact of litter on water quality. The star of the videos — an animated water droplet — was also featured in messaging campaigns telling residents, “If it’s on the ground, it’s in our water.” This friendly character was also the subject of a naming contest among area grade school students and will continue to show up in branded giveaways, playing cards and even educational video games in 2020.

Plogging event
WQEC also held its first ever Plog-a-thon event. “Plogging” is a combination of jogging and picking up litter, a practice that has become popular worldwide among people wanting to improve their personal health as well as that of their local environment. With support from Run 816 and the KC Marathon, participants netted 283 pounds of litter along a 3-mile course spanning Westport, Brush Creek, the Plaza and other parts of southern Kansas City.

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.

In 2019, the committee awarded six grants totaling $25,000. Recipient organizations included Green Works, which provides real-world entrepreneurial guidance and experience for area students focusing on consumer products with green innovations, as well as Missouri River Relief, a group that organizes community cleanups, focused on non-point contamination and debris.

2019 ozone season
From March to October each year, MARC issues a daily SkyCast forecast to alert area residents of potentially high levels of ozone pollution. During the 2019 ozone season, an exceptionally rainy summer helped keep ground-level ozone in check. No ozone alerts were issued, and ozone monitors showed no exceedances of the federal health-based standard for ground-level ozone set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA uses a rolling three-year average to determine compliance with the standard. Based on the rolling average, the region remained in attainment, with average ozone levels below the EPA standard of 70 parts per billion.
The Climate Action Playbook provides 59 suggested actions for local governments.

More at Work program and answered 1,106 telephone calls on the district’s recycling information line.

RecycleSpot.org, the district’s recycling education website, served more than 101,000 users in 2019, an increase of 22% from the previous year.

Household hazardous waste collection
Since 1997, the SWMD has coordinated household hazardous waste collection events around the region to help residents safely dispose of toxic household products. In 2019, 36 communities participated in the program, collecting 193 tons of waste at 11 mobile community events. Between mobile and permanent facilities, a total of 909 tons of household hazardous waste was collected in 2019.
Data management and analysis — MARC collects and analyzes data to inform policy making and planning using a variety of advanced tools, including GIS, statistical modeling and data visualization. In 2019, research services provided metrics for KC Rising and prepared data and shared information on the region’s quality of life via the Quality of Life website.

Innovation — Through work of the chief innovation officer in 2019, MARC reviewed, streamlined and modernized several key internal processes. Enhancing data management, analysis and accessibility continued as a priority in all areas of MARC. Work to increase regional capacity to identify, access and share data and information occurred through trainings, workgroups and partnerships with higher education and local governments, and will continue into 2020.

Grant management — MARC’s finance team administered more than 100 unique funding streams in 2019, documenting expenses and reporting to funding agencies as required.

Facility and event management — The MARC conference center provides a venue to convene local, state and federal officials to advance regional efforts, provide training and conduct committee work and public meetings. MARC’s staff also provided logistic support for large events in outside venues.

Publications and online communications — MARC’s public affairs team uses a variety of printed and electronic communications to provide information, engage stakeholders, share best practices and promote positive change. In 2019, the “On the MARC” blog was launched and the use of interactive tools for online presentation of data and analysis increased.

In addition to its programmatic work, MARC’s core back-office functions ensure effective operations that include financial management, human resources, information technology, data management and communications. MARC also uses these core capacities to support external partners through shared services, effective use of technology and innovative approaches to regional problem solving.

Exemplary Core Capacities

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
- Jovanna Rohs, Director of Early Learning and Head Start
- James Stowe, Director of Aging and Adult Services
2019 Budget

REVENUES

- Federal, state & private grants $50,661,750
- Local government dues $1,650,852
- Fees for services $10,872,503
- Contributed services (non-cash) $9,956,801
- Internal transfers $8,589,727
- Investment income $199,397

EXPENSES

- Direct program expenses $31,653,938
- Contractual services $17,440,845
- Contributed services $9,956,801
- Transfer to other funds $782,016
- Personnel $22,156,903

Note: Approximately 72.8% of cash revenue was passed through to local governments and service providers in 2019.

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.

2019 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 Transportation
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. National Park Service

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- 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 Conservation  
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
- Missouri Department of Public Safety  
- Missouri Department of Social Services  
- Missouri Department of Transportation  
- Missouri State Emergency Management Agency  
- Missouri Housing Development Commission  

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES*  
- Nine counties and 119 cities in the MARC region  
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City  
- Kansas City Area Transportation Authority  
- Regional hospitals and emergency services agencies  

FOUNDATIONS AND NONPROFITS  
- DeBruce Foundation  
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation  
- Family Conservancy  
- Francis Family Foundation  
- George Baum Family Foundation  
- George H. Nettleton Foundation  
- Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation  
- Hall Family Foundation  
- Health Forward Foundation  
- Heartland Conservation Alliance  

- KC Scholars  
- KC Healthy Kids  
- Margaret A. Cargill Foundation  
- Menorah Heritage Foundation  
- Missouri Foundation for Health  
- National League of Cities  
- REACH Healthcare Foundation  
- reStart, Inc.  
- Sosland Foundation  
- St. Louis University  
- Truman Heartland Community Foundation  
- United Way of Greater Kansas City  
- University of Missouri  
- Washington University  
- Wyandotte Health Foundation  
- 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
- KC Communities for All Ages Advisory Board
- Homelessness Management Information System Oversight Committee and Users Committee
- Sustainable Places Policy Committee
- GradForce KC Steering Committee
- Regional Workforce Intelligence Network
- Regional Community Health Workers Collaborative
- Cybersecurity Task Force
- 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:
  - Law Enforcement
  - Geographic Information Systems
  - Port Security
  - KC TEAM
  - KC Regional Fusion Center
  - Policy
  - Public Health
  - Training and Exercise
  - Functional and Access Needs

PUBLIC SAFETY
- Public Safety Communications Board and subcommittees:
  - Public Safety Communications Users
  - Regional Interoperability 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
  - Connected KC 2050 Steering Committee Work Group
  - Operation Green Light Steering Committee
  - Sustainable Places Policy Committee
  - Total Transportation Policy Committee and subcommittees:
    - Regional Transportation Plan 2050 Steering Committee
    - Aviation Committee
    - Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory 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