

2026 Missouri State Policy Agenda

Mid-America Regional Council

About MARC

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is the association of city and county governments and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) serving the bi-state Kansas City region, including Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri and Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte counties in Kansas. In addition to our nine member counties, many of MARC's programs and services support communities across the two-state area. MARC is governed by a board of locally elected officials, and convenes nonprofit organizations, economic development organizations and other groups to address the priority areas addressed in this document.

About this policy platform

This policy platform represents a consensus of policy positions and priorities of the Kansas City region as discussed and discerned in various committees, working groups, and public engagement forums supported by MARC. It is approved by the elected leaders comprising the MARC Board of Directors as a statement of regional consensus and does not necessarily reflect the views of individual board members.

The Missouri General Assembly is encouraged to consider the following critical needs in the Kansas City region as they deliberate policy issues and appropriate funds in fiscal year 2026.

Funding overview

The state receives grant funds from many federal agencies to support programs at the local and regional levels. Missouri has worked cooperatively with local governments and regional organizations on the efficient and effective use of these federal resources. The state is encouraged to continue to pass through these grants to sustain important programs and services.

Examples of programs **supported by the federal funds that come through the states** include:

- **Transportation:** Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Rideshare, Active Transportation and Air Quality; Planning Sustainable Places; MoDOT COVID Overlay Project; Operation Greenlight System; Consolidated Planning
- **Aging:** Area Agency on Aging services; Diabetes Self-Management Program Network
- **Emergency preparedness:** Bioterrorism Prevention and Response; Homeland Security
- **Early learning:** Program Support Network

Examples of state funding opportunities that could **replace reductions in federal funds**:

- Older Adult Services, including funds for home-delivered meals.
- Funds to address food insecurity, including replacing federal grant reductions in the SNAP program and additional funds to match USDA grants.
- Support for environmental needs in areas of solid waste disposal, brownfield clean-up and revitalization, water quality, and environmental problems in housing (mold, lead, etc.).

- Support for housing development through state low-income housing tax credits to use along with the federal program.
- State funds to support infrastructure needs that cannot be addressed with federal funds such as local roads and bridges, water and sewer system improvements, etc.

Local government authority

MARC supports local government decision-making and authority. MARC supports the ability of local governments, school districts and other special districts governed by local elected officials to make decisions for their communities, particularly tax and revenue decisions, to ensure efficient, effective and quality operations, infrastructure and other investments.

Transportation

MARC supports policies that guide investment and support coordinated efforts to achieve a regional vision for people, places and communities, including:

- Transportation **funding** and **planning** policies to ensure the Kansas City region receives appropriate resources as a major economic hub, with multi-modal transportation options, and a safe and secure transportation system.
- Maintaining strong relationships among MoDOT, regional planning agencies and local governments through the planning framework for transportation decision-making process to **align transportation investment priorities** and expedite delivery of federally funded projects.
- Support expansion of passenger rail to connect communities across Missouri.

Economy & Housing

MARC supports policies that enhance the performance of the metropolitan economy and expand economic opportunities through regional growth and housing, including:

- Regional **economic development projects** in key industries that offer the opportunity to transform regional and state economic prosperity.
- Policies to achieve safe, stable, and **attainable housing** that meet the needs of families and older adults.

Environment

MARC supports policies that help keep the region's air and water clean, reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, and restore green infrastructure, including:

- Policies and regulations that enable local governments to address **solid waste and recycling** in ways that respond to their community's needs.
- The Kansas City region's efforts to **reduce ozone** and fine particulate matter pollution and maintain its status in compliance with national ambient **air quality** standards.
- State and local plans that protect water resources and protect residents from the risk of **extreme weather conditions**.

Safety & Security

MARC supports policies that strengthen the region's ability to protect, prepare, respond and recover, including:

- Continued support for the locally owned **Kansas City Regional 911 System** and improved interoperability across the state line.
- Regulations that enable EMS agencies to ensure a quality, time-critical diagnosis program and provide **reimbursement payments and program regulations** for high-quality, pre-emergency care.

Health

MARC supports policies to improve health and wellness outcomes for all, including:

- Funding to fully maintain and expand access to **healthy foods** for families and older adults.
- Investment in strong state and local public health infrastructure to ensure that communities are protected from, and able to respond to, **public health threats**.
- Allowing agencies that use community health workers to be **reimbursed through Medicaid** and other public health care programs.
- Continued support for a strong, **accessible Medicaid program** for all Missourians.
- Supporting high-quality, pre-emergency care through **reimbursement payments** along with continued integration with behavioral health centers.
- Support additional state resources for behavioral health services to students and correctional facility inmates.
- Implementation of forthcoming **Rural Health Transformation Program** funding through preventive and pre-hospital services, use of community health workers, technology-based services and local regional community care hubs.

Early Learning

MARC supports policies that help to build a system with strong families, skilled teachers, quality programs, sustained and sufficient funding, and multi-sector collaboration, including:

- State resources to build a robust **child care system**, including affordable services and a quality workforce pipeline including credentialing and recruitment, while increasing access for families. Support Child Care Works with continued state funding and tax credits.

Aging

MARC supports policies that help strengthen systems for the region's most at-risk residents, including older adults, by promoting healthy, active lifestyles and nutrition for residents including:

- Supporting additional funding and flexibility for Area Agencies on Aging and community care hubs to respond to the growing needs of **older adults**.
- Continued support for the strong statewide **congregate and home-delivered meals infrastructure** and offer Medicaid-supported home delivered meals at rates recommended by a recent state study.
- Support funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.