

# **Project Background and Stormwater Task Force Recommendations Update to and Integration of Regional Stormwater Engineering Standards and Planning Guidelines in Metro Kansas City**

MARC, Kansas City’s regional and metropolitan planning organization is working in partnership with nearly two dozen local cities and counties and the Kansas City Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) to update and integrate regional stormwater management standards and planning guidelines, based upon [APWA Section 5600](#) and the [MARC/APWA BMP Manual](#). These documents were adopted in 2005, and revised in 2010 and 2012, respectively. This document does not prescribe an approach to updating regional standards. Rather, it outlines the general vision and principles that would guide the multi-phase process.

## **Background**

Most local governments in the Kansas City metro area adopt APWA engineering standards, tailoring regional approaches to meet local needs and opportunities. After more than a year of work by the Sustainable Stormwater Task Force, the APWA-Kansas City Chapter Executive Committee voted in October 2021 to update regional standards based upon task force recommendations.

The task force and local community representatives agree that an update to regional standards is timely. Substantial evolutions in practice have occurred since the last major revision to area standards – with respect to technology, data, modeling practices and more. And, the context in which stormwater management takes place has shifted. Questions of resilience, sustainability and environmental justice are now centered, and help frame the need for new approaches.

This update process is intended to complement other regional and local efforts, including the [Regional Climate Action Plan](#), the [Regional Green Infrastructure Framework](#), [Planning Sustainable Places](#), the regional transportation plan, [Connected KC 2050](#), and new standards/approaches developed by the city of Kansas City, Missouri and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas for their respective combined sewer systems.

The Sustainable Stormwater Task Force articulated the following vision and principles, defining the community's approach.

### **Vision**

Resilient stormwater management uses a sustainable watershed management approach that manages risk, enhances value for all, and stewards natural ecosystems.

### **Guiding Principles**

#### **Risk Management**

- Build systems that adapt to ever-changing climate impacts and function beyond our lifetimes.
- Enhance both the community and natural systems.
- Employ inclusive, interdisciplinary, and interagency planning processes to ensure that water infrastructure serves communities.
- Address downstream impacts from the intertwined elements of water quality, volume, and peak flow rates for the full range of rainfall events.

#### **Value**

- Promote that stormwater infrastructure is valuable and of equal importance to communities as other public infrastructure.
- Recognize rainfall is a resource to provide more equitable stormwater systems.
- Connect community and natural systems by blending overland flow, pipe, and green infrastructure systems.
- Design, build, maintain, and evaluate systems that protect and enhance long-term triple bottom line benefits.
- Protect and enhance public health benefits through connected open spaces.

#### **Stewardship**

- Promote activities that create a net-positive watershed-wide contribution.
- Restore the health of receiving waterbodies and the natural environment
- Educate our communities and decision makers about the human connection to water, including through storytelling.
- Incorporate restorative soil and vegetative management practices to maximize infiltration and habitat vitality.