

## **SUSTAINABLE PLACES POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **July 14, 2023 Meeting Summary**

#### **Committee Members**

Councilmember Logan Heley, City of Overland Park, Kansas Co-chair  
Jon Birkel, Hunt Midwest  
Michael Frisch, UMKC  
Ed Lowndes, Housing Authority of Kansas City Missouri  
Janet McRae, Miami County, KS  
Erin Ollig, City of Overland Park, KS  
Gloria Ortiz-Fisher, Westside Housing Organization  
Michael Park, City of Lee's Summit  
Melissa Schmitz, MoDOT  
Allison Smith, KDOT  
Scott Wagner, Clay County, MO  
Maddie Waldeck, City of Basehor, KS  
Jeffrey Williams, City of Kansas City, MO

#### **Guests**

Krystal Jolly, MoDOT

#### **MARC Staff Present**

Ron Achelpohl, Megan Broll, Karen Clawson, Taylor Cunningham, Beth Dawson, Raymart Dinglas, Jonathan Feverston, Tom Jacobs, Kiley Meierarend, Marlene Nagel, Martin Rivarola, Patrick Trouba, Ryan Umberger, Natalie Unruh, Selina Zapata Bur

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Kansas Co-chair Councilmember Logan Heley called the meeting to order. Introductions in-person and online followed.

#### **Approval of May 12, 2023 Meeting Summary\***

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

#### **Priority Climate Action Plan**

Co-Chair Heley introduced Tom Jacobs, Chief Resilience Officer and Environmental Programs Director and Karen Clawson, Air Quality Program Manager and Principal Planner, to present information on the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant that informs the development of prioritized pollution reduction strategies. Mr. Jacobs reviewed the work of the Climate Environment Council (CEC), and asked for feedback on addressing social equity and environmental justice. The EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant provided funding to support climate planning to metropolitan areas and states, so connecting regional work to state-wide efforts is a priority. In an effort to maximize involvement and set up a project pipeline, MARC plans to host two charettes in September. Ms. Clawson noted that projects need to prioritize Justice40 and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions (Justice40 tracts have

been mapped and are available through MARC). The committee discussed encouraging participation from various stakeholders and developing priorities based on local needs. Chair Heley noted that while some communities may not have Justice40 tracts, they do have Justice40 residents that may be spread throughout their communities. He also noted the importance of compensating local organizations that have existing connections in their communities, and to consider hiring a market research firm or partner organization to manage focus groups; Mr. Jacobs confirmed that resources have been budgeted for this purpose.

Discussion continued about modeling cost/benefit analyses and strategizing around multiple benefits, and assessing corridors and transit. Current modeling shows vehicle types (electric/decarbonized) to have a greater impact than changes to the public transportation system (between now and 2050); patterns of development and community size also affect the potential impact of public transit.

### **Complete Streets Policy Review and Discussion**

Chair Heley introduced Patrick Trouba, Transportation Planner II to present a policy update on Complete Streets. Mr. Trouba defined Complete Streets and addressed the need for an update to the current policy, noting opportunities to clarify and enhance language, and integrate the Complete Streets Network Assessment planning tool into the policy. The policy is available on MARC's website at <https://www.marc.org/transportation/plans-and-studies/complete-streets>, and the Complete Streets Network Assessment is available at <https://marc-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=181a6f69a5df4fbb9912ee2210776bb6>. Mr. Trouba reviewed how the policy is applied and how compliance is monitored, and identified some strengths and weaknesses of the Complete Streets Network Assessment.

Mr. Trouba posed several questions to the committee; asking how different modes are served by the Complete Streets Policy, by majority committee members responded that pedestrians and cyclists were served fairly, city transit and transit users were served fairly to poorly, motorists were served excellently, and freight users were served average to well. Mr. Trouba also asked the committee to consider what elements of the policy are most important, what could be added or removed, what role the Complete Streets Network Assessment could play in the Complete Streets Policy, and how green streets/green infrastructure treatments should be integrated into the policy. Committee members discussed how rural areas may be represented in assessments and how that could potentially impact suballocated scoring criteria; Mr. Trouba noted that different streets are classified as urban, suburban, and rural, and they are considering an additional classification for small town streets. Jon Birkel commented that current and future housing density should be included in scoring criteria, and the committee discussed how issues immediately adjacent to the right of way that foster the implementation of the Complete Streets goal should be considered. Factoring in how a street "feels" to various users and tree canopy were also suggested for incorporation into the Complete Streets Network Assessment. A survey to contribute additional feedback is available at:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=TxwyA6IG80OHrD7qcCv42f5nYWurKShBlxywebNPgWhUNTZKNVIXOFBTWExQS1RQMIIzUVYyUzc2MC4u>.

### **Housing Plan Review**

Chair Heley introduced Taylor Cunningham, Transportation Planner III, and Johnathan Feverston, Transportation Planner I, to present the findings of their review of local jurisdiction's housing plans. Ms. Cunningham reminded the committee of the recent Comprehensive Plan Review, and that a deeper review of housing policies was conducted to determine the relationship between regional and local goals. The process included reviewing housing language in Comprehensive Plans, MARC regional housing plans, state housing studies, reviewing county-wide and local housing studies, and distributing a housing survey to cities in the MARC region. MARC received around 50 responses to the survey; when asked if their organization had an adopted housing plan or study, 76% said no. When asked if they plan to adopt or create a housing plan or study, roughly half said yes or maybe (expressing interest in developing a plan or study if funding were available); many cities are using their county-wide housing study, but the extent to which they adopt those plans is still being reviewed.

In addition to keyword searches, this review examined thirteen housing themes; housing development, stock, and choice were common themes, and workforce housing, equity and vulnerable populations, and tenant-based subsidized housing policies were mentioned less frequently. Mr. Feverston provided details and examples of the housing themes, describing the differences between themes that may overlap (such as defining affordable housing and workforce housing). Major takeaways from the housing study review showed the goal to provide housing choices was integrated across multiple themes (and a variety of housing types and price points was important), housing partnerships of varying parties and missions are of interest, and housing policies addressing equity and vulnerable populations were considered, but few had existing implementation strategies.

Committee members discussed how ideas can be prioritized and targeted in communities, and Taylor Cunningham noted that MARC's purpose was not to prescribe action but to assess current conditions and help connect communities to funding opportunities, and provide a starting point of understanding local housing policies. The committee discussed shortage of affordable housing units and its ties to production; there is a gap between what can be built and what is affordable, and a shortage of contractors available to build. Committee members noted the rising age of first time home buyers, and its ripple effects on the rental and housing market. They also discussed the limitations of using Annual Median Income (AMI) in a regional study with large differences in income between parts of the region. Alternate forms of housing (such as modular or manufactured housing), right-sizing, and speeding up the permitting process were discussed as ways to help address the production issue.

### **Other Business**

Co-Chair Heley invited committee members to share any upcoming events, and announced the next SPPC meeting will be held on September 8, 2023. Gloria Fisher announced the annual Westside Housing Organization event will celebrate 50 years and be held September 12<sup>th</sup> from 5-7pm at Boulevard Brewery. Co-Chair Heley adjourned the meeting.