2027 Kansas State Action Agenda

November 2026

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

MARC's state agenda is grounded in regional needs and the priorities of its members. MARC engages in a nonpartisan manner, working with legislators and administrations of any party, and focuses on program design, funding stability and local decision-making.

1. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING, EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

Strong relationships will be the foundation of MARC's intergovernmental relations success. Building them with the Kansas legislators who represent the region and with key state agencies will be foundational to our activities in the 2027 session but will continue throughout the year.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING PRIORITY	
Why it matters	MARC's positions are most effective when legislators and state agency leaders already know MARC, understand the region's needs and view MARC as a trusted source of data and analysis. Relationships built before bills are filed allow staff to respond quickly and credibly as the session evolves.
Who we engage	• Legislators representing Districts from Kansas City region and their staff. • Executive branch leadership and key state agencies, such as the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Office of Early Childhood
What we will educate stakeholders about	• What MARC does and the services it provides to the region. • The region's needs and priorities. • The value of regional councils and regional collaboration.
What we will do	• Share examples of regional collaboration that make efficient use of state and federal funding. • Provide policy intelligence and information on regional impacts of proposed legislation, funding or regulatory changes. • Engage civic partner organization and issue-specific coalitions to share information and engage collectively. • Share regional data and needs assessments to build awareness of the region's priority issues.
How it supports the postures	Relationship building supports work in any posture. It is coordinated across MARC departments so that contacts are known, messages are aligned and staff can move quickly when an issue is elevated.

2. LEGISLATIVE REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Bill prefiling begins Dec. 1 and closes at 5:00 p.m. on Jan. 8, 2027. The 2027 Kansas legislative session convenes Jan. 11, 2027. Specific bills and legislative direction will not be known until the session takes shape. As a result, the Board will initially approve priority issues, starting positions and starting postures; staff will use these filters to review filed bills and executive

actions. Staff will keep the Board informed and look to the Board for guidance throughout the session.

- **Proactive:** MARC will actively work to inform policy, funding or administrative outcomes with significant fiscal or regional consequences and a credible opportunity for action in the 2027 Kansas legislative session.
- **Monitor:** MARC will track a defined set of issues where state action is reasonably plausible and consequences could be significant, assess impacts and recommend targeted engagement when warranted.
- **Reserve:** MARC will maintain awareness of established interests and engage selectively when state action has material implications for MARC or the region.

Staff flexibility: Postures are starting points. Staff will adjust timing, methods and partners as bills advance, stall or change, consistent with the positions the Board adopts.

2027 AGENDA

The Board is asked to endorse the policy topics below, each with a starting posture. Each topic appears under its highest posture. Staff will apply the postures to specific bills as they are filed and may adjust as the session evolves.

PROACTIVE

MARC will actively engage on these topics where state policy, funding or administrative outcomes have significant fiscal or regional consequences and there is a credible opportunity for action in the 2027 session.

HEALTH	
Why it matters	Access to healthy food, public health capacity, Medicaid and behavioral health services shape resident well-being and depend on state funding and program design. Community-based organizations also rely on state funding. Rural Health Transformation Program funding is forthcoming.
MARC position	• Maintain and expand funds for access to **healthy foods** for families and older adults. • Support investment in strong state and local public health infrastructure so communities are protected from, and able to respond to, **public health threats**. • Maintain a strong, **accessible Medicaid program** for all Kansans. • Support implementation of forthcoming **Rural Health Transformation Program** funding through preventive and pre-emergency care, use of community health workers, technology-based services and regional community care hubs. • Support additional state resources for **behavioral health services** to students and correctional facility inmates. • Strengthen non-profit and community-based organizations through funding for the **Mid-America Community Support Network (CSN)**.

HEALTH	
Starting focus	• **Proactive:** funding for access to healthy foods (SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks) and funding for the Mid-America Community Support Network (CSN). • **Monitor:** Rural Health Transformation Program implementation and accessible Medicaid program. • **Reserve:** state and local public health infrastructure and Medicaid access

MONITOR

MARC will track these topics where state action is reasonably plausible and consequences could be significant. Staff will assess impacts and recommend targeted engagement when warranted, and will adapt as bills move.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY	
Why it matters	Local governments, school districts and special districts rely on their own tax and revenue decisions to fund services for their communities. Several bills in the last session had a direct impact on local development regulations and zoning.
MARC position	• Support **local government decision-making and authority**, including 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.
Starting focus	• **Monitor:** proposals affecting local decision-making and authority.

TRANSPORTATION	
Why it matters	The region's transportation investment depends on state funding and planning policies. Funding cuts proposed in the state budget would be a concern.
MARC position	• Support **modal funding** and **planning** policies to ensure the Kansas City region receives appropriate resources, with multi-modal transportation options and a safe and secure transportation system. • Support the expansion of **passenger rail** to connect communities across Kansas. • Maintain strong relationships between the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), regional planning agencies and local governments to **align transportation investment priorities** and expedite delivery of federally funded projects.

TRANSPORTATION	
Starting focus	• **Monitor:** modal funding and planning policies (especially any proposed budget cuts) and passenger rail. • Relationship building with KDOT continues under Section 1.

ENVIRONMENT	
Why it matters	Local governments need the ability to address solid waste and recycling based on community needs, and the region must maintain compliance with national air quality standards.
MARC position	• Support 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. • Support state and local plans that protect water resources and protect residents from the risk of **extreme weather conditions**. • Support policies and regulations that enable local governments to address **solid waste and recycling** in ways that respond to their community's needs.
Starting focus	• **Monitor:** local authority over solid waste and recycling, and state and local plans for water resources and extreme weather. • **Reserve:** ozone and fine particulate matter reduction and air quality compliance.

RESERVE

MARC will maintain awareness of these established interests, and any issue not listed, and engage selectively. Staff will review newly filed bills at prefiling and elevate a topic when state action has material implications for MARC or the region, as described in the trigger.

Topic	MARC position	Trigger for elevation
Early Learning	**Why it matters:** Affordable, high-quality child care supports families, providers and the regional workforce, and depends on state funding, tax policy and subsidy design.	Elevate if a filed bill would materially affect childcare reimbursement, early educator workforce pipeline and expanded child care tax credits.
Economy & Housing	**Why it matters:** Regional economic development projects and housing that meets residents' needs shape regional prosperity. • Support regional **economic development projects** in key industries that offer the opportunity	Elevate if a filed bill would materially affect regional economic development projects or housing supply and affordability, and MARC has a clear role. Relationship building and

Topic	MARC position	Trigger for elevation
	to transform regional and state economic prosperity. • Support policies to achieve safe, stable and **attainable housing** that meets the needs of all residents across the region.	data sharing continue in the meantime.
Safety & Security	**Why it matters:** A locally governed 911 system, interoperable emergency communications and EMS agencies depend on state policy, funding and governance. • Sustain the locally governed **Kansas City Regional 911 System** through supportive policies, funding and governance structures, and advance interoperable emergency communications across the region. • Support 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, along with continued integration with behavioral health centers. • Support **community paramedicine programs** that allow EMS agencies to improve care for patients in their homes.	Elevate if a filed bill would materially affect the Kansas City Regional 911 System, emergency communications funding or governance, or EMS regulations, reimbursement and community paramedicine programs.
Aging	**Why it matters:** Agencies serving older adults depend on state funding and flexibility to respond to specific local needs. • Support additional funding and flexibility for regional and local agencies to respond to specific needs of **older adults**.	Elevate if a filed bill would materially affect funding or flexibility for agencies serving older adults, and MARC has a clear role. Relationship building continues in the meantime.