

PROGRAMMING POLICY STATEMENT

Background

As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Greater Kansas City, MARC is responsible for facilitating the development of a long-range transportation plan that guides the investment of federal funds for surface transportation projects and programs. This plan, Connected KC 2050, outlines a vision, desired outcomes, and strategies for our regional transportation system, and provides direction for the programming process.

In 2012, Congress passed the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, or MAP-21, a new surface transportation authorization for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. Among the significant policy themes in MAP-21 is an emphasis on streamlining the federal transportation fund program structure and project delivery process and an emphasis on performance-based planning processes. In 2013, MARC conducted a comprehensive review of its transportation programming processes and structures in response to MAP-21. This review resulted in several changes to MARC's processes and committee structure, including the following recommendation:

The Total Transportation Policy Committee (TTPC), with input from the MARC Board of Directors, Air Quality Forum and other MARC policy-level committees, should provide a statement of programming policy direction to the planning and programming committees with each update to the region's long-range transportation plan. For programming activities in 2014-2015, TTPC should provide this guidance based on the policy framework of Transportation Outlook 2040 and its performance measures and targets. With updates to Transportation Outlook 2040 and its successors, this statement should be embedded in the long-range transportation plan.

This document has been reviewed and updated as part of the plan development process for Connected KC 2050 in order to provide policy direction for MARC's transportation programming activities in 2020 and beyond.

Policy considerations

Connected KC 2050 policy framework: It is the policy of the Mid-America Regional Council to award sub-allocated federal transportation funding to eligible local projects that advance regional goals, objectives, strategies and actions as articulated in the plan.

Since 2010, the region has annually tracked performance of the transportation system against policy goals and performance measures established in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. In any programming cycle, investments should be made to improve performance in all goal areas.

Air quality

The Kansas City region is currently designated as an attainment area for all criteria pollutants under national ambient air quality standards. However, it is anticipated that the region may be declared in non-attainment of national ozone standards at some point during the 2050 planning horizon.

In any programming cycle, until a future update to the plan is adopted, all project sponsors and MARC planning and programming committees should consider the potential air quality impacts of projects submitted for funding. Eligible transportation projects that advance goals and strategies of the region's

Clean Air Action Plan, advance other regional transportation goals and objectives, and meet all other programming requirements will be given priority for funding.

Regional growth and land use

In 2010, MARC created the bistate Planning Sustainable Places (PSP) program using Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds from Kansas and Missouri. This program works to advance detailed local planning and project development activities that further the creation of vibrant places that offer a mix of options for housing, jobs, services and recreation; connected places with a variety of transportation options; and green places that support healthy living and a healthy natural environment. The program continues to be funded with STP money.

In any programming cycle, until a future update to the plan is adopted, eligible transportation projects developed through the PSP program (or its predecessor – the Creating Sustainable Places program) that advance regional transportation goals and objectives, and which also meet all other programming requirements will be given priority for funding. Further, the region will continue to fund and support the PSP program.

Missouri and Kansas river bridges

All projects spanning the Kansas or Missouri rivers selected for federal funding by MARC must comply with the regional policy on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on Missouri and Kansas river bridges, adopted April 25, 2006, as amended.

Other policies

All projects selected for federal funding by MARC must comply with other established regional transportation policies, including:

- Congestion Management Process Policy, adopted April 28, 2020, as amended.
- Regional Complete Streets Policy, adopted Dec. 15, 2015, as amended.
- MARC Transportation Program Local Match Policy and Strategy, adopted April 2012, as amended.
- Reasonable Progress Policy, adopted Jan. 28, 2014, as amended.
- Regional Pedestrian Policy Plan, adopted May 2018, as amended.
- Green Infrastructure Framework, adopted in June of 2019, as amended. The plan recognizes that green infrastructure is integral to the region's infrastructure systems, on par with roads, bridges and sewers.
- Regional Climate Resilience Strategy, adopted in 2016. Given the risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change, eligible transportation projects will apply mitigation, adaptation and resiliency measures in alignment with adopted transportation policies and strategies.

Committee roles

Planning committees

In 2013, as part of the review of regional programming processes, the MARC Board of Directors added a new role to the standing planning committees — to provide input to the programming process. It is the role of each planning committee to provide advisory priorities for projects that address their primary transportation mode or function to the programming committees. Planning committees may also provide additional commentary on other projects that may impact their assigned mode or function.

With the adoption of Connected KC 2050, this process is modified with the goal to improve the quality of all applications and increase alignment of submitted projects with the regional vision and plan goals.

Planning committee involvement includes the following objectives:

- Elevate the role of planning and policy committees by involving them earlier in the process.
- Strengthen alignment of projects that compete for funds with the plan vision, goals and policies.
 - Reinforce role of Congestion Management Process for roadway capacity projects.
 - Advance higher scoring projects and encourage sponsors to improve quality of applications.
 - Provide project sponsors guidance on how to better align projects.

In general, each planning committee's priorities should be grouped as high, medium and no alignment with transportation plan based on the relevant sections of the plan and other related plans.

Programming committees

It is the role of each MARC programming committee to evaluate and recommend projects for funding by their assigned federal programs. Each programming committee should consider policy guidance from TTPC, project scores, advisory priorities and commentary from planning committees and other relevant information to develop funding recommendations for TTPC and the Air Quality Forum, as appropriate.

Specific program guidance

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality

The CMAQ program is intended to manage congestion and improve air quality. MARC currently receives these funds through voluntary allocations by KDOT and MoDOT. MARC has historically assigned funding targets to different categories of eligible CMAQ projects. These targets were last revised in 2014.

Federal legislation currently requires a performance plan for the CMAQ program in air quality non-attainment areas. If the Kansas City region's attainment status changes in the future, this may require revisiting MARC's policies for allocating these funds.

CMAQ funds will be distributed as follows for competitive selection of projects, after deducting funds for the regional Air Quality Public Education Committee, RideshareKC and Active Transportation programs:

- 11% of total funding to the Air Quality Forum for eligible alternative fuels, diesel retrofit, electric vehicle supporting infrastructure, outreach and other projects.
- 15% of total funding to the Active Transportation Programming Committee for eligible bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- 37% of Kansas funding to the Kansas STP Priorities Committee for eligible traffic flow projects.
- 37% of Missouri funding to the Missouri STP Priorities Committee for eligible traffic flow projects.
- 37% of total funding to the Regional Transit Coordinating Council for eligible public transportation projects.

A workgroup composed of members of the Air Quality Forum, Active Transportation Policy Committee, the Kansas and Missouri STP priorities committees and the Regional Transit Coordinating Council will be convened in advance of each programming round. The group will develop recommendations to be

approved by TTPC and Air Quality Forum and forwarded to each of the programming committees for final action.

This list of funding recommendations will address:

- The full mix of eligible project types under their purview.
- Regional policy goals and objectives as described above.
- Project scores.
- Planning committee priorities.
- Project sponsor priorities.

The workgroup can also review allocation percentages for various eligible CMAQ-funded project categories and may forward recommendations to TTPC for reallocation to other categories. If the workgroup does not forward recommendations for revisions, MARC will continue to abide by allocation targets specified above.

Surface Transportation Program

The hallmark of the STP created in ISTEA is its inherent flexibility, intended to fund a wide range of project types addressing multiple modes of transportation.

The STP priorities committees will provide funding recommendations that address:

- The full mix of eligible project types.
- Regional policy goals and objectives as described above.
- Project scores.
- Planning committee priorities.
- Project sponsor priorities.
- Other concerns — the committee will develop written programming guidance in advance of each round.

Transportation Alternatives Program

The TAP is intended to create safe, accessible, attractive and environmentally sensitive communities where people want to live, work and play.

The program provides funding for a wide range of active transportation project types that were previously eligible under the discontinued Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails programs.

The Active Transportation Programming Committee will provide funding recommendations that address:

- Eligible active-transportation project types.
- Regional policy goals and objectives as described above.
- Project scores.
- Planning committee priorities.
- Project sponsor priorities.
- Other concerns — the committee will develop written programming guidance in advance of each round.

Section 5310

The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) provides funding to organizations and local governmental authorities that offer services to older adults and/or persons with disabilities. The funds can be used for various purposes. A minimum of 55% should be used to purchase/replace vehicles or fund capital projects, and the remaining 45% can be spent on any type of project, including New Freedom-type operations projects.

The Mobility Advisory Committee will create a prioritized list of projects that will help guide the Regional Transit Coordinating Council in their effort to create funding recommendations. The funding recommendation for 5310 will address:

- Eligible project applicants.
- Eligible 5310 project types.
- Regional policy goals and objectives as described in the plan.
- Adherence to regional transit goals and vision.
- Planning committee priorities.
- Project sponsor priorities.
- Other concerns — the committee will develop written programming guidance in advance of each round.