



Position Statement: MARC Transportation Outlook 2040
Adopted by the Board of Directors February 9, 2010

According to MARC's economic model, the Kansas City region can expect to be home to 2.5 million people and 1.5 million jobs in 2040, up from 2 million people and 1.2 million jobs today.

MARC's Technical Forecast Committee, composed of planners from area governments, has aggregated local comprehensive plans to forecast future development, and created two growth scenarios showing alternate ways of accommodating the region's expected overall growth. The baseline scenario shows how the region would look if past development trends were extended into the future. The adaptive scenario shows how the region might look if the trend in local plans toward sustainable growth patterns is extended into the future and carried out at a regional scale. The committee then developed metro-wide policies needed in order to achieve the adaptive scenario by 2040.

The Chamber has studied the two scenarios and associated policies and drawn the following conclusions:

- The City of Overland Park has embraced policies of redevelopment and sustainability along priority corridors in its Vision Metcalf plan. The Chamber participated in the development of the plan, and supports Vision Metcalf as a model to encourage and incentivize redevelopment, sustainability, walkability and transit options in our community.
- Vision Metcalf and other metro community plans like it provided some of the basis for the MARC adaptive scenarios. While the Chamber in general supports local planning that adapts to citizen desires for sustainability, increased density and redevelopment, we do not support MARC's goal that redevelopment should be 40% of all new growth. This aggressive goal runs counter to historic trends in our region. A more reasonable and attainable goal would be the 10-15% redevelopment goal set forth in the Vision Metcalf proposal.
- The Chamber supports policies which promote growth through redevelopment and development advanced by market forces, not through policies which dictate sewer capacity thresholds, or density minimums.

- The Chamber opposes establishment of intra-county or other intra-local tax base sharing policies which attempt to limit competition for economic development projects, as this infringes upon the very basis of our free-market system. These strategies interfere with the natural market progression that has proven to be effective in the growth of our communities. Alternatively, goals of sustainability and redevelopment in strategic corridors can be achieved through well-designed incentives. New development should not be restricted or discouraged in other areas of our communities; it can simply develop with fewer or no incentives than that in redeveloped areas.
- The Chamber opposes intra-local agreements which pre-establish restrictions on the use of incentives for greenfield economic development unless determined to be for the greater “regional good”. Such policies are subjective and run counter to the free market system which is better able to determine what is in the best interest of local business and local governing bodies than pre-determined agreements.

Conclusion: The Adaptive Growth Scenario is unachievable unless the free market system is severely restricted and consumer choice is limited. Implementation of these policies would have a negative impact upon the market-driven patterns of growth that have to this point been the hallmark of our successful communities. Once adopted, these policies, while well-intentioned, restrict growth and have impact upon future investment of transportation funding for our regional needs, so it is crucial that the ramifications of each policy are considered before adoption. The consequences for each community in the metropolitan area are considerable.

The City of Overland Park this year celebrates its 50th anniversary, and since incorporation, our leadership has been committed to planning models that facilitate a balance between residential and commercial needs. In recent years our discussions have focused upon renewal and redevelopment in aging sectors of our community, the need for housing diversity, transit and sustainability for the future. As a community we strive to be a model of the type of planning that will meet the needs of the marketplace and our citizens, and set a standard for the region. MARC’s policies should enhance our collective communities’ abilities to reach these goals of balanced growth and sustainability, rather than restrict them.