Water and Planning Connect

Alecia Kates, Water Quality Planner
Mid-America Regional Council
Agenda

- MARC Overview – Regional Green Infrastructure Plan

- KC Water Overflow Control Program

- Local Neighborhood Revitalization and Workforce Development
The **Mid-America Regional Council** (MARC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and council of governments for the bi-state Kansas City region.

- Nine counties, 119 cities
- Governed by a 33 member board of city and county elected officials


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
planned and managed natural and semi-natural systems which provide multiple benefits.

The Nature Conservancy

Green infrastructure planning work includes goal setting, strategies and measures for:

• People
• Physical infrastructure
• Organizational capacity
Green Infrastructure Framework: Atlas + Playbook
Atlas
Regional Opportunity Areas

Identifies opportunities at a watershed-scale level

Nexus of highest ecological value and need:
• Transportation investment
• Metrogreen corridors
• Transportation equity
• High impact land use
• Designated activity centers
• Social system challenges.
Playbook
Opportunity Areas

Identifies sub-watershed networks of green infrastructure projects

Highlights model projects to inform and inspire potential partners interested in integrating green infrastructure into projects and communities
Phase 3 Policy and Strategy, 2018
An Equitable Water Future/Pillar Two

*Maximize the community and economic benefits of water infrastructure investment*

Issue Areas

**Neighborhood Revitalization**
- Channel Green Infrastructure to disinvested neighborhoods
- Cultivate Resident and community stewardship of water projects

**Workforce Development**
- Build water career pipeline
- Align workforce training with employer needs at a regional level
Target Green Marlborough

*Workforce Development & Neighborhood Revitalization*

- KC Water Overflow Control Program
- Investment of more than $17 million in green infrastructure pilot projects
- Middle Blue River Basin
- Marlborough Community Coalition Planning a Nature + Play Green Infrastructure Festival
- Maintained by Green Stewards
Green Stewards

Workforce Development

• Launched in 2018 KC Water in partnership with Bridging The Gap

• Hires people with significant barriers to employment

• Maintain City of Kansas City, Mo’s green infrastructure installations
Green Stewards

Workforce Development

- Stewards maintain over 150 rain gardens, bioswales, detention ponds and more
- Program pays living wage and full benefits
- Provides transportation
- After 2-3 years qualified for career with City’s Water, Parks and other Departments.
- Five Green Stewards certified through the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program
Green Spaces and Urban Farms Action Group

- Vacant Lots Task Force Recommendations
- Resident focused resource
- Mini-grant and technical assistance

A Guide to Working with Lots

- Inspired by Detroit Future Cities Working with Lots Program
  [https://detroitfuturecity.com/tools/a-field-guide/](https://detroitfuturecity.com/tools/a-field-guide/)

- Local Effort Funded by EPA

uni-kc.org/initiatives
Field Guide

Focus Group

   Neighborhood input on usefulness
   Prioritized design templates

Guide Contents

• **Working Together**
  Project Group
  Neighborhood Priorities

• **Getting Organized**
  Analyze Lot
  Determine Capacity
    *Time*
    *Resources*

• **Design Selection**

• **Resource Directory**
Design Templates

Converted six of the 38 DFC templates

Technical Team

• Reviewed templates
• Vetted plants for KCMO planting zone
• Considered codes

David Dods, AECOM
Elliott Duemler, Applied Ecological Services
Hilary Noonan, Syntax Land Design, LLC
Kitty Steffens, Mid-America Regional Council
Lisa Treese, Kansas City Water Services
Roberta Vogel-Leutung, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Vera Williams, Surface Water Solutions
Design Templates

Template Components

- Lot Layout
- Shopping List
- Tools
- Materials List
- Step by step
- Design
- Construction Package
Design Templates

For more details, visit UNI Vacant to Vibrant: A Guide to Working with Lots located at www.uni-kc.org

Volunteer

Professional

Volunteer + Professional

Four Seasons
Greater KC Health Care Foundation Grant

**Vacant to Vibrant: Linking Green Infrastructure to Public Health**

Connects high level planning and policy, community engagement and neighborhood implementation to demonstrate how green infrastructure can deliver multiple benefits with emphasis on health and community revitalization.

**Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI)**
- Vacant Lots
- Asset Based Community Development

**Kansas City, KS**
- UG and Central Business Association
- Clifton Park

**Project Activities**
- Resident Engagement
- Implementation Projects/Training
- Connect findings to GI Playbook and Policy