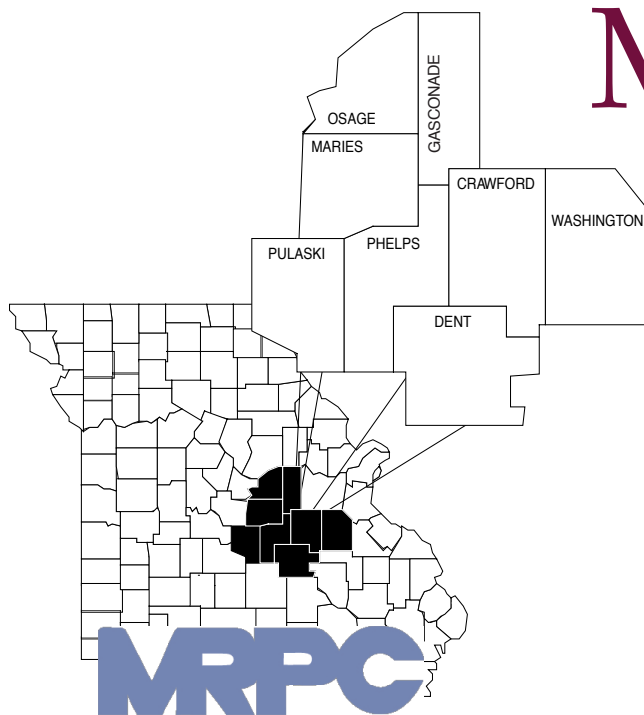


# State Priorities in the Meramec Region



**An Issues Report  
for the Region's Legislative Delegation**

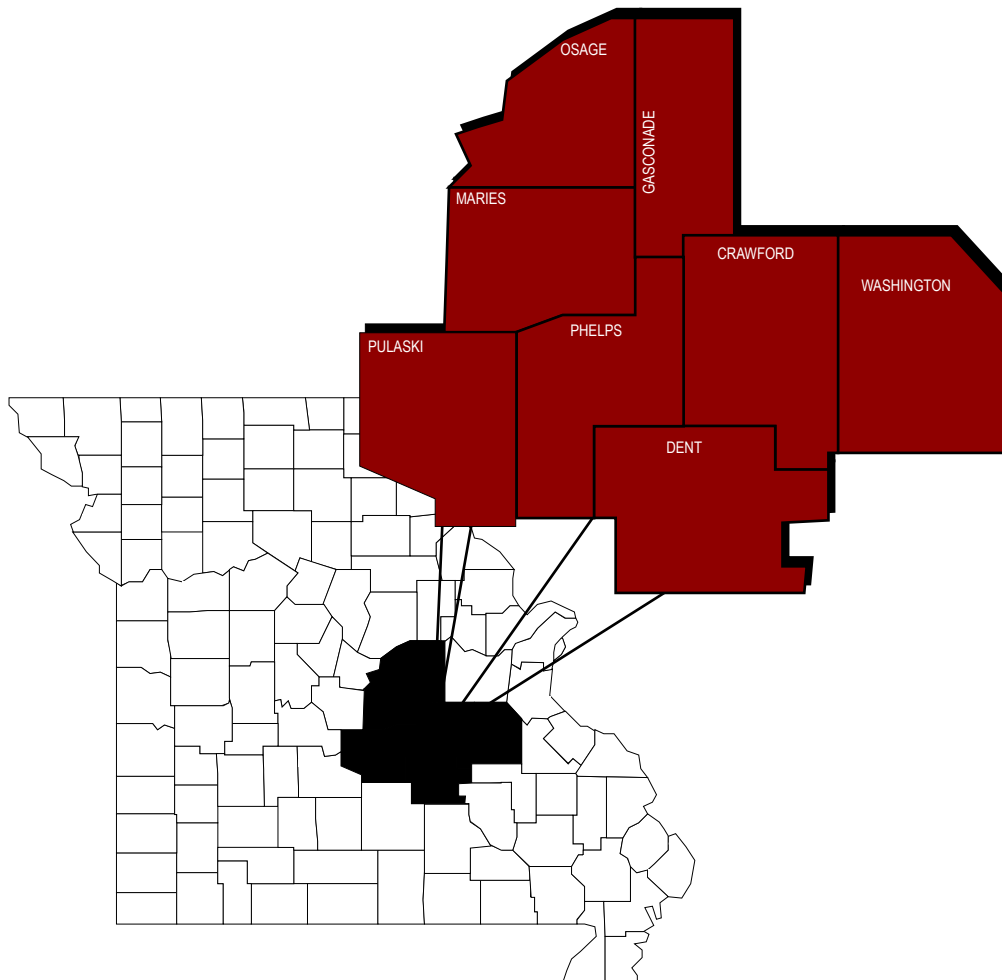
*2011*

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## The Meramec Regional Planning Commission's Mission

*The mission of MRPC is to enhance the quality of life for residents of the Meramec Region. In pursuit of this mission, MRPC will bring about results in these areas:*

- Cleaner, healthier and safer communities,*
- Greater socio-economic and cultural wealth through community and economic development, and*
- A stronger, unified voice in the legislative process.*



The Meramec Regional Planning Commission is a voluntary council of local governments serving the Meramec area. The MRPC area includes the eight counties of Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski and Washington and their respective cities. Those cities are Bourbon, Cuba, Leasburg, Steelville, Sullivan, West Sullivan, Salem, Bland, Gasconade, Hermann, Morrison, Owensville, Rosebud, Belle, Vienna, Argyle, Chamois, Freeburg, Linn, Meta, Westphalia, Doolittle, Edgar Springs, Newburg, Rolla, St. James, Crocker, Dixon, Richland, St. Robert, Waynesville, Caledonia, Irondale, Mineral Point and Potosi.



## 2011 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES IN THE MERAMEC REGION

As you, our legislative representatives, begin the 2011 legislative session, the board of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission wishes to share some issues with you that are of interest to our organization as a whole and to our individual cities and counties. They are listed below with a brief explanation, in order of priority, as ranked by the MRPC board.

### *MRPC'S TOP STATE PRIORITIES*

#### **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION:**

1. MRPC encourages the development statewide corridors and supports the four-laning of Highway 63 and Highway 50, if new construction funds become available. On Highway 63, MRPC supports improvements from Arkansas to Iowa, with the Phelps, Maries and Osage section being the first priority, followed by the Phelps County to Arkansas section. MRPC supports the four-laning of Highway 50 from Sedalia to Union, a step at a time example: Osage County line to Linn; California to Tipton; etc.
2. MRPC encourages legislators to assist in funding necessary and additional funding for MoDOT and to explore all options of state and federal funding, including fuel tax, sales taxes, mileage tax and tolls dedicated to highways and bridges for automobiles and trucks.

#### **REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

1. MRPC supports financial incentives to attract out-of-state and foreign businesses to Missouri and to encourage expansion of existing industries and entrepreneurship. This may include more friendly tax and regulatory environment.
2. MRPC encourages its state legislative delegation to meet with federal legislators to protect manufacturing and other industries from moving overseas.
3. MRPC encourages mechanisms that would reduce the opportunity for a company to move into area, take advantage of the economic development benefits and then leave when they expire. MRPC encourages using a memorandum of understanding to specify jobs and benefits and tie the mechanisms to industry performances and pro-rating of incentive as some Enhanced Enterprise Zones have done.

4. MRPC encourages the state of Missouri to consider Fort Leonard Wood as one of the state's prime industries and actively work to protect, maintain and expand the mission of the base and jobs located there.

#### **HEALTH CARE/SOCIAL SERVICE:**

1. MRPC encourages legislative support to expand the economic development potential of the Missouri University of Science and Technology, Linn State Technical College, regional community colleges and other higher education entities for programs and projects on campus.
2. MRPC supports better access to quality health care for the uninsured, underinsured and the underserved population in the region via mechanisms such as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs); promote satellite facilities/clinics from existing community health centers. MRPC supports efforts to make medical transportation to larger areas more available.
3. MRPC supports legislation that allows school districts and other governmental entities to join state employee pools for health care.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL:**

1. MRPC supports and encourages the development of alternative fuels using wood, hydrogen, wind, solar and grasses and to shift away from the utilization of grain and other food products.
2. MRPC supports the construction of hydroelectricity production and/or nuclear facilities, thus reducing reliance on diesel and coal as energy sources.
3. MRPC encourages the state to expand/continue state loan and grant programs to improve water system and sewage and treatment facilities and encourages the Department of Natural Resources to make available additional funding mechanisms for small rural communities.

#### **EDUCATION:**

1. MRPC requests that the state legislature ensure that rural areas receive their fair share of education dollars.
2. MRPC encourages the state legislature to support and expand technical training opportunities. This would include (1) the continued development of Linn State Technical College. (2) Technical training for health care services. Education opportunities should

be available in small communities. (3) Technical education that supports economic development and quality improvement for the region.

3. MRPC supports emphasis being placed in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) as appropriate for grades pre-kindergarten through college.

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY/COUNTY):**

1. MRPC supports full funding of state mandates on local governments. For example—Jails, education, wastewater treatment facilities, judicial expenses, i.e., per diem for prisoners in county jails.
2. MRPC supports full funding of regional planning commissions in the state. (The statutory maximum for all 19 RPCs in the state is \$560,000.)
3. MRPC strongly supports a statewide sales tax on internet sales.
4. MRPC supports efforts to change state statutes to allow counties to amend and adjust their budgets throughout the fiscal year as economic conditions warrant.

## Highlights of 2010 Accomplishments

- **MRPC's Impact**

The Meramec Regional Planning Commission had a strong year in 2009-10. For every administrative dollar MRPC spent in Fiscal Year 2009-10, it brought \$4.92 into the region for the benefit of its communities and residents. MRPC's 2009-10 budget was \$2,085,792 while the agency generated nearly \$10.25 million in pass-through dollars. Pass-through dollars are those funds that go through MRPC directly into the region as grants to cities and counties, loans to businesses and housing assistance to landlords and tenants. The impact doesn't end there. Using a conservative multiplier of 2.5, MRPC had an economic impact valued at nearly \$25.6 million in the Meramec Region.

- **Transportation**

The partnership between Missouri regional planning commissions and the Missouri Department of Transportation continues to grow. Federal transportation legislation calls for increased local input into the state's planning programs and specifically mentions the regional development organizations as one of the means to involve local officials. The Framework for Transportation Planning and decision-making continues to be an important tool for increasing local input into transportation planning. This planning framework outlines the process for decision making and how local input, facilitated by regional planning organizations, affects transportation priorities.

MRPC's Transportation Advisory Committee held six meetings in 2010. The group continued to stress the importance of the region's top two transportation priorities—Highways 63 and 50. The TAC continued to make traffic counters available to perform traffic studies. MRPC staff prepared and distributed press releases and conducted radio interviews on transportation issues. MRPC staff also worked with District 9 on the Blueprint for Safety and the Arrive Alive campaigns. Staff worked with eight communities to submit eight funding requests for transportation-related projects. Over \$1,159,000 was granted for projects in the region.

- **Community and Economic Development**

MRPC is a designated Economic Development District (EDD), and through its planning grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, continues to work with its counties and cities to improve the infrastructure and economy of the region. With EDA planning funds, staff prepared funding applications for community and economic development projects. During FY 2009-10, some \$6.7 million in federal and state grant monies flowed through the planning and development department for community and economic development projects. In FY 2009-10, staff assisted member communities with the following funding opportunities:

- Wal-Mart State Giving application for Crawford County Foundation to renovate the Cuba Wildcat football field renovation.
- Wal-Mart State Giving application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- Wal-Mart State Giving application for Phelps County economic development.
- American Family Insurance Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- Department of Public Safety JAG Round 2 application for the Pulaski County Sheriff's Department to purchase new equipment.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Station Construction for the Belle Rural Fire Protection District to construct a new fire station.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Station Construction for the Bland Fire Department to construct a new fire station.
- Dreyer's Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Station Construction application for the St. James Fire Department to construct two new fire stations.
- Missouri Department of Economic Development Neighborhood Assistance Program application for Pulaski County to purchase equipment and conduct workshops.
- Prudential Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- Bakewell Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- Xerox Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.
- David Fleming Foundation application for the Mid Ozark CASA to continue services to children.
- National CASA Rural mini-grant application for Mid Ozark CASA to continue services to children.
- National CASA Bridge grant application for the Mid Ozark CASA to continue services to children.
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails program application for the City of Waynesville to upgrade the Roubidoux Trail.
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails program application for the City of St. James to upgrade the St. James/Meramec Springs trail.
- Department of Health and Senior Services Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing application to assist persons needing or losing housing.
- Christopher Reeve Foundation application for Pulaski County to install ADA doors at Pulaski County Sheltered Workshop.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for the Village of Caledonia to improve downtown sidewalks.

- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for the City of Sullivan to replace water main lines.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for the City of Dixon to improve drainage for sewer access.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for Pulaski County to repair Devil’s Elbow Bridge.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for the City of Steelville to improve drainage.
- MHDC HeRO application for the Meramec Community Enhancement Committee to renovate owner-occupied housing.
- United State Department of Agriculture Rural Business Enterprise Grant application for Linn State Technical College to purchase a shed for heavy equipment programs.
- Sophia & Elmer Oerter Foundation application to build a new American Legion Post in Bourbon.
- DRS Technologies Corporate Giving application to build a new American Legion Post in Bourbon.
- Anthony & Christie de Nocola Foundation application to build a new American Legion Post in Bourbon.
- M&T Foundation application to build a new American Legion Post in Bourbon.
- Department of Public Safety LLEBG application for the Waynesville Police Department to purchase new radios.
- Community Development Block Grant Water and Wastewater Program application for the City of Newburg to construct improvements to the water system.
- Economic Development Administration Economic Development Assistance Program application for the City of St. James to improve electrical distribution.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental - Affordable Rental Housing application for Crawford County to renovate 136 senior apartments.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental - Affordable Rental Housing application for Pulaski County to renovate 15 single family homes.
- Economic Development Administration Planning Assistance application for MRPC to fund planning for 2010-2012.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental - Affordable Rental Housing for Osage County to renovate 94 apartments (senior and family).
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources LWCF application for the City of Hermann to renovate the tennis court and swimming pool.
- USDA Rural Development RBEG grant for the Village of Caledonia to improve sidewalks in the downtown area.
- Missouri Foundation for Health Healthy and Active Communities application for the City of Crocker to improve walking trails.
- Community Development Block Grant Industrial Infrastructure application for the City of Potosi to modify the IDA building for Redwing Shoe.

- NOAA Remote Community Alert System application for the Osage County Emergency Operations Committee to purchase seven new sirens.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of Steelville to improve storm drainage.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the Village of Caledonia to improve downtown sidewalks.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the Village of Caledonia to improve water and wastewater systems
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of Doolittle to upgrade wastewater systems.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of Steelville to upgrade water systems.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for Phelps County to replace a bridge at Boys and Girls Town.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of Cuba to upgrade electrical system to serve businesses and the school system.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of Newburg to replace bridges in the school district.
- Delta Regional Authority State Grant Program application for the City of St. James to improve the city's electrical system.
- Americorps application for Pulaski County's five volunteers to assist Fort Leonard Wood/Pulaski County Sewer and Water partnership.
- Community Development Block Grant Community Facility application for Crawford County to construct a new fire station.
- Missouri Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School application for the St. James Police Department to patrol school zones.
- Missouri Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School application for the Waynesville Police Department to install speed trailer for school zones and material for schools.
- Missouri Foundation for Health Healthy and Active Communities Grant application for the City of Crocker to improve walking trails and park fitness center.
- Community Development Block Grant Other Public Needs application for the City of Salem to improve storm drainage near Salem.
- Community Development Block Grant Other Public Needs application for the City of Chamois to demolish three abandoned homes.
- Community Development Block Grant Other Public Needs application for the City of Steelville to demolish five abandoned homes.
- Community Development Block Grant Industrial Infrastructure application for the City of Bourbon to expand water, sewer and road access for new business.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Food Assistance Program application for the St. James Caring Center to expand the food pantry.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Food Assistance Program application for

Owensville's Helping Hands to expand and repair the food pantry.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters application for the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department to purchase equipment and provide training.
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Supplemental application for the City of Cuba to improve water and sewer systems.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency American Fire Grant application for Ozark Central Emergency Management Services to upgrade equipment.
- U.S. Department of Justice COPS Hiring Program application for the Waynesville Police Department to hire a new officer.
- Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiative application to complete ADA modifications to the Washington County courthouse.
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines Affordable Housing Program application for the Newburg Community Housing to renovate 24 senior apartments.
- Department of Public Safety FY 2010 JAG application for Pulaski County to purchase dispatch equipment and assist officers.
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines Affordable Housing Program for the City of Westphalia to renovate a 16 unit senior apartment complex.
- MFA Oil Foundation application for the Owensville Lions Club to construct a sports complex.

Staff continued to disseminate funding information to member communities through grant alerts, workshops and seminars. Additionally, staff continued to improve methods of resource research by placing more emphasis on searches via the Internet and expanded their knowledge on new funding opportunities. MRPC, working in cooperation with the Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation continued efforts to assist communities in meeting the need for affordable housing for low-to-moderate income families. Staff continued to work with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy committee. This group provides oversight and input into the region's overall economic development strategy.

### • **Business Loan Programs**

MRPC assists in developing the region's local economies by partnering to promote and assist the growth and development of businesses through innovative financing. MRPC continues to manage a U.S. Small Business Administration Certified Development Corporation providing SBA 504 loan programs. Additionally MRPC operates the region's revolving loan fund (RLF), which was created with an EDA grant and local matching funds. This fund was recapitalized in 2010 with \$375,000 of additional funding. In 2006-07, USDA provided a \$500,000 loan to MRPC to establish new intermediary relending program, which was loaned out in 18 months. MRPC applied for, and received, an additional \$175,000 in IRP funding in 2010. MRPC was also awarded \$125,000 in Missouri Department of Economic Development Microloan funding.

These three programs are important to rural Missouri as they provide much needed gap financing. Many rural banks are unwilling to make higher-risk commercial loans, however, the subordinated financing available through the SBA 504, the IRP, RLF and microloans reduce the banks' exposure. All loans are made in partnership with local private financial institutions. Eligibility for financing in these programs is dependent on saving and/or creating jobs in the region, as well as financial stability and use of proceeds. The Meramec Region has used the SBA 504 program since 1982 and the RLF since 1985, to assist in financing business start-ups and expansions.

Through the SBA 504, some 1,078 jobs have been created or retained in the Meramec Region for an average investment of \$16,367 per job. SBA's requirement is one job for every \$65,000 in investment. Using the RLF program, the local development board has created or retained 814 jobs at a cost of \$7,172 per job. EDA's requirement is one job for every \$20,000 in investment. The initial \$400,000 grant, plus 25 percent matching funds provided by member communities, has fully revolved. Some 53 loans worth \$3,033,926 have been made through the RLF over the life of the program. In two years, staff has made nine loans under the IRP program. Nearly 77 jobs have been created or retained through the program and the total amount loaned is \$642,534.

- **Homeownership**

One of the major barriers to economic development in Missouri is the availability of affordable housing. This is a problem across the state as well as the Meramec Region. For some time now, MRPC has been involved with programs that help families move off the welfare roles and into self-sufficiency. This natural progression typically includes homeownership, however, with the lack of affordable housing, many families are having a difficult time achieving the American dream. Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation and MRPC worked together this year to continue providing homeownership opportunities to the region's low-income families.

With the program, homes are purchased and renovated to meet federal housing-quality standards and equipped with a new range and refrigerator. Grant funds are available to cover closing costs and can subsidize the down payment. Homebuyers must complete 25 hours of homeownership training and contribute 75 hours of sweat equity as well as obtain their own financing for the home. Some 30 homes have been rehabilitated and sold since 1994, and one home in Cuba has been renovated and is currently for sale.

The MRPC homeownership program originated with \$793,000 in state and federal funding. Since then, over \$333,800 has been donated in cash, material, labor and a house. Sales proceeds, in the amount of \$1.5 million, have been reinvested in the program. The program

continues to benefit from contributions of community volunteers, who actually help with the renovation work, as well as skilled professionals and businesses who donate their services and supplies.

- **Solid Waste Management**

The MRPC contracts with the Ozark Rivers Solid Waste Management District, a seven-county area that includes seven of the region's counties. The solid waste district is one of only two districts in the state with an approved solid waste plan, which outlines how the district will reduce by 40 percent the amount of solid waste being landfilled. MRPC has been assisting the district in implementing its plan. Over the past 19 years, the region's solid waste situation has changed drastically. When the district's plan was being prepared, seven landfills served the area; these have all closed, and the region now has three transfer stations and two landfills, so solid waste management is even more crucial. With funding assistance from USDA Rural Development, MRPC worked with the district to update its solid waste plan. This was completed in 2004.

So far, according to estimates provided by the state of Missouri, the state has reduced the amount of waste being landfilled by 40 percent, and the district has played a role in that effort. The district has focused heavily on education and providing technical assistance. Taking a hands-on approach, the district, through MRPC, has addressed household hazardous waste by first providing one-day paint collections in each of the seven counties. In 2002, the district helped provide the first full-scale HHW one-day collection in the region and followed up with several more one-day events. In 2008, the district established two satellite collection facilities that accept HHW throughout the year. The district has held 20 electronics waste collections since April 2003, 13 collections for appliances and 17 collections for tires since 2005. The district has also conducted, for the past few years, local government tire collections and sponsored poster and trash art contests to illuminate the solid waste problem locally. Staff works with the Missouri University of Science and Technology-Rolla on planning and coordinating a campus-wide Earth Day event. Staff provided an informational booth and displayed winning art from the poster and trash art contest. For the third year, staff assisted with the annual Earth Day celebration at Fort Leonard Wood.

A few years ago, a region-wide survey was completed of illegal dumps in the region. As a follow-up to that survey, MRPC secured funds from USDA Rural Development to implement a dump cleanup program. This project takes a watershed approach by educating the public on how illegal dumping can endanger water resources. In 2004 and 2005, some 17 dump sites were cleaned up, "adopted" by local landowners and elected officials, and monitored for reoccurrences of dumping. MRPC fostered partnerships with local governments, landowners, local, state and federal agencies to get the sites cleaned up. Since 2004, more than 75 dump sites have been cleaned up. In doing so, an estimated 600 tons of trash has been removed and properly disposed; 65 tons of metal have been recycled and 6,300 tires have been collected for recycling. The district also assists member counties with

the disposal of illegally dumped tires picked up by county road crews. To date, over 575 tons—or 57,500 passenger tires—have been picked up along county roads in the district and recycled.

MRPC also works under contract with the Meramec Regional Emergency Planning Committee, which is responsible for maintaining and updating the region's hazardous materials response plan and Community Right-to Know records. The MREPC also provides training and educational opportunities for emergency responders and local elected officials in the region. This year, MREPC coordinated two awareness level hazardous materials classes, two operations level HazMat trainings and one chemical suicide class.

- **Homeland Security Program**

In 2006, MRPC entered into a contract with the State Emergency Management Agency to provide administrative and fiscal agent support to the Region I Homeland Security Oversight Committee. This local committee of volunteers is tasked with awarding homeland security grant funds in the six-county region, which includes Crawford, Dent, Maries, Phelps, Pulaski and Laclede counties, and serving as a conduit between local emergency responders, local governments and schools and the state-level Homeland Security Advisory Committee.

Region I HSOC was awarded \$305,123 in 2009, the same amount as in 2008. The four year total for Region I is \$1.47 million. As fiscal agent, MRPC is responsible for all procurement and payment of all vendors. From that grant program, MRPC was awarded funds to develop a regional interoperability communications plan, to establish advisory committees for interoperable communications and volunteers and shelters, to assist in establishing a network of shelters in the region and to train and establish CERT teams in each of the six counties. CERT trainings have been held in all six counties. Staff has worked with trainers to develop a CERT for Teens program, and training has been held in the area. Staff also coordinated and facilitated two tabletop exercises on pandemic flu for Region I. Staff coordinated the second annual Region I HSOC meeting in October 2010 to showcase equipment purchased with grants and raise awareness of the HSOC and its programs. Staff also performed the NIMSCAST roll up for all six counties in Region I in September 2010, as it did previously in 2008 and 2009.

- **Hazard Mitigation Planning**

MRPC is under contract with SEMA to update Hazard Mitigation plans for Phelps, Gasconade, Osage, Crawford and Washington counties. MRPC will also contract to complete an initial Hazard Mitigation plan for Pulaski County in 2009. Phelps, Gasconade, Crawford and Pulaski county plans have been submitted to SEMA for review. Osage and Washington counties will be completed in 2010.

- **HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program**

In 1976, MRPC began operating the HUD Section 8 Housing Program. The program provides very-low income families with greater access to decent, safe and modest housing in the six original counties. (Osage County is served through the Boone County housing agency. Pulaski County is served by Missouri Ozarks Community Action, Inc.) Through the Housing Choice Voucher program, MRPC assisted, on average 710 families by providing \$2.6 million in rental assistance each year. PHA staff also performed 1,483 tenant inspections.

- **HUD Section 8 Homeownership**

In 2006, the Phelps County PHA, which is administered by MRPC, began the Section 8 Homeownership Program. The homeownership program allows first-time homeowners to use their voucher subsidy to meet their monthly mortgage payment and other homeownership expenses. Clients have purchased homes in Phelps, Washington and Crawford counties. Laclede, Franklin and Pulaski counties allow the PHA to administer the program in their counties. To date, 13 homes have been purchased by clients through the Section 8 Homeownership program.

- **Family Self-Sufficiency**

The HUD Family Self-Sufficiency program, administered by MRPC, empowers participants to become free of welfare assistance. All 73 mandated program slots are filled. Once a participant signs up, a housing/FSS coordinator aids that participant in assessing current and future needs, then assists in the development of an action plan. This plan will enable the family to reach the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency. A database is established to ensure that a participant is contacted frequently and progresses toward goals that can be assessed. Enrollment in vocational training or post secondary education, which leads to higher paying professional positions, is encouraged for participants and hopefully will launch them into more proactive lifestyles.

The FSS program also offers an incentive program that establishes an escrow account in the participant's name. As a participant pays more of his or her rent, HUD makes a contribution equal to the increase in the portion of the rent paid by the participant. This savings account has the potential to grow into thousands of dollars. Upon successful completion of the contract, this money is paid to the participant. Of the 84 families in the FSS program, MRPC is assisting 35 families with \$42,679.25 in total escrow. In FY 2009-10, five clients successfully completed their FSS contracts and received their escrow accounts. The five shared some \$10,582.64 with four each receiving checks in excess of \$1,500.

- **Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)**

The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) is funded by the Homeless Prevention Fund (HPF) created under Title XII of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act or ARRA) of 2009. The Department of Social

Services (DSS), Family Support Division (FSD) is a grantee of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administers this award for the state of Missouri. The purpose of the HPRP is to provide homelessness prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless – many due to the economic crisis – and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are experiencing homelessness. The funds under this program are intended to target individuals and families who would be homeless but for this assistance. The funds provide for a variety of assistance, including: short-term or medium-term rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services, including such activities as mediation, credit counseling, security or utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and case management.

Phelps County is the lead grantee for seven counties in the Meramec Region: Crawford, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski and Washington, and these counties were awarded \$528,202. The HPRP funds are divided between four agencies who deal with different counties or aspects of the program. The Washington County Community Partnership (WCCP) is the provider agency for applicants in Washington County. The Missouri Ozarks Community Action Agency (MOCA) is the provider agency for the counties of Crawford, Gasconade, Maries, Phelps, and Pulaski. The Central Missouri Community Action Agency (CMCA) is the provider agency for Osage County. Finally, Phelps County contracted with Meramec Community Enhancement Corporation (MCEC) to serve as grant administrator and provide financial assistance services. Since Oct. 1, 2009, more than \$400,000 has been expended in the seven counties.

## Meramec Facts

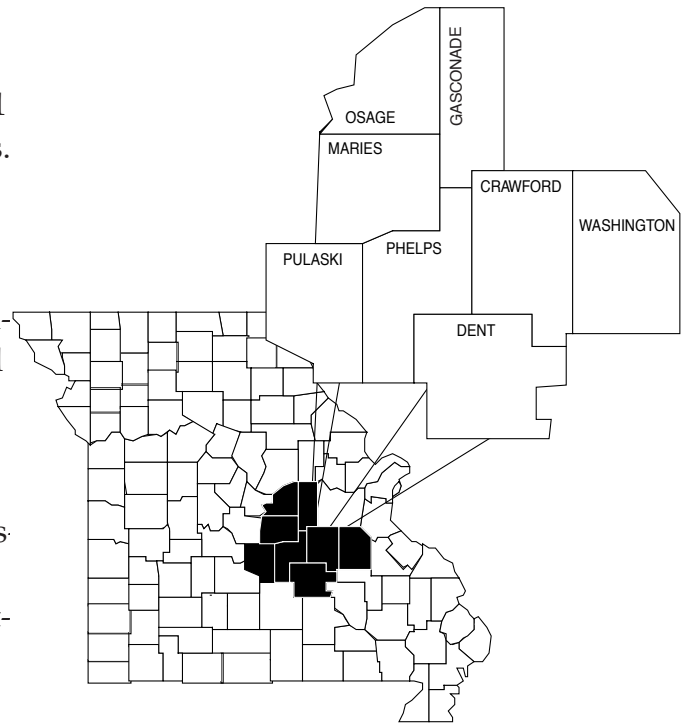
The Meramec Region is an eight-county area located in the southeast-central portion of Missouri. The area covers over 5,131 square miles and includes 35 municipalities. The region is marked with gently rolling hills, deep valleys and plateaus. Numerous rivers and streams transverse the region, creating a natural draw for outdoor enthusiasts. Many of the small towns are industrial havens, yet the small farmer is still prevalent. Many wineries dot the countryside, making it a popular draw for tourists.

The Meramec Regional Planning Commission took on a new look in 2005, when Gov. Matt Blunt issued an executive order adjusting the boundaries of MRPC to include Pulaski County, which borders the southwest portion of the region. Pulaski County had requested inclusion in MRPC, and the board agreed and, together, requested the boundary change.

### General Demographics

In 2000, the eight-county Meramec Region was home to 179,372 people, an increase of 9.5 percent since 1990. This was three times the growth rate of the 1980s. The region grew at a faster pace in the 1990s than the state, which posted a 9.3 percent increase in population from 1990 to 2000.

Demographics 2000	
Population.....	179,372
Male.....	50.8%
Female.....	49.2%
White .....	93.6%
Black.....	3.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander .....	1.7%
American Indian.....	1.4%
Source: 2000 U.S. Census	



Individual 2000 county populations range from a low of 8,903 in Maries County to 41,165 in Pulaski County. All counties demonstrated individual growth from 1980 to 1990, ranging from a high of 18.9 percent in Crawford County to 8.7 percent in Osage County. The largest city in the region continues to be Rolla, the county seat of Phelps County. It has 16,367 people. The smallest city is Morrison in Gasconade County with 123 residents.

The population center of the United States remains in the Meramec Region and moved westward from the 1990 center near Steelville in Crawford County to near Edgar Springs in Phelps County.

The region's population in 2000 was fairly evenly divided between male and female. The region's median age in 2000 was 36.4 years, which is slightly older than the median age in the state and nation.

The region is predominantly white with a

6.4 percent minority population. This is up from 2 percent in 1990. Pulaski County is the region's most racially diverse county. It is home to the Department of Defense's Fort Leonard Wood.

### Income, Poverty and Unemployment

**Incomes** in the Meramec Region continue to be lower than the state or region. The region's median income, based on 2000 Census information, was \$31,916. The state median income was \$37,934 while the U.S. median income was \$41,994.

The region's median income is 84 percent of the state's rate and only 76 percent of the nation's rate.

While the majority of families in Missouri and those families in the nation make

Population by Age	
Under 5.....	6.6%
5-19 .....	25.8%
20-64 .....	60.9%
65+ .....	13.4%
Median Age.....	36.4 years
Source: 2000 U.S. Census	

\$35,000 or more a year, the majority of the families in the Meramec Region make between \$15,000 and \$34,999, according to 2000 Census data.

The region's poverty rate also runs higher than the state and nation's. Some 20,558 Meramec residents were living in poverty in 2000, which represents 14.9 percent of the population. Some 11.7 percent of all Missouri residents live in poverty while 12.4 percent of all U.S. residents were living in poverty in 2000. Washington County had the highest poverty rate in the region with 20.8 percent. The lowest was Osage County with 8.3 percent.

The region, in the past, has been plagued with high unemployment rates. Washington and Dent counties experienced mine closings while other counties lost shoe and textile manufacturers. At one time, Washington County's unemployment approached 20 percent. The 2005 unemployment rate for the region was 5.6 percent. The state average was 5.4 percent.

Median Household Incomes	
Meramec Region .....	\$31,916
Missouri .....	\$37,934
U.S.....	\$41,994
Region as % of State.....	84%
Region as % of Nation.....	76%
Source: 2000 U.S. Census and MRPC Analysis	
Family Income	
Families in the region .....	47,774
Under \$10,000.....	7.0%
\$10,000-14,999 .....	5.7%
\$15,000-24,999 .....	15.8%
\$25,000-34,999 .....	16.9%
\$35,000 & over .....	54.6%
Source: 2000 U.S. Census and MRPC Analysis	
Persons in Poverty	
Meramec Region .....	13.5%
Missouri .....	11.7%
U.S.....	12.4%
Source: 2000 U.S. Census and MRPC Analysis	

Unemployment	
Employed (2009 Average) .....	83,953
Unemployed (2009 Average) .....	8,361
Total Labor Force (2009 Average) ...	92,314
Region's 2009 unemployment rate...	9.0%
State's 2009 unemployment rate.....	9.3%
Source: Missouri Department of Economic Development, MRPC Compilation	

## Housing

The Meramec Region has 78,513 total housing units with 66,974 occupied, according to the 2000 Census. The average population per unit in the region is 2.51 people, which almost mirrors the state average of 2.48 people.

Of the 66,974 occupied units, 47,949 are owner occupied while 19,025 are renter occupied, according to the 2000 Census. In 2000, the average value of a home in the region was \$69,263, compared to a state average of \$89,900. The average monthly rent for a home in the region in 2000 was \$374 while the state average was \$484.

Over half of the housing stock in the region—nearly 51 percent—was built between 1960 and 1989. Some 20 percent of the homes have been built since 1990, the 2000 Census indicates.

## Education Levels

Some 73 percent of the region's popula-

### Housing at a Glance

Number of housing units in region.	78,513
Number occupied .....	66,974
Number owner occupied.....	47,949
Number renter occupied .....	19,025
Vacant units .....	11,539
Persons per unit in region.....	2.53
Persons per unit in state.....	2.59
Median value in region .....	\$69,263
Median value in state.....	\$89,900
Median monthly rent in region .....	\$374
Median monthly rent in state .....	\$484
Housing units in region built before 1939 ...	9,847
Housing units in region built 1940-59 .....	12,927
Housing units in region built 1960-1979 ...	25,164
Housing units in region built '80 & after ...	28,485

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and MRPC analysis

### Education Levels

2000 percent of adults 25 years and older with at least a high school diploma.

Meramec Region .....	73.0%
Missouri .....	74.1%
U.S.....	84.0%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

tion aged 25 and older have at least a high school diploma, according to the 2000 Census. This percentage is considerably less than state and U.S. percentages. When compared to the 1990 percentage of 60.7 percent, the region improved in the percentage of adults 25 years and older who had at least a high school diploma.

The region's most educated county in 2000 was Pulaski, which would be expected given the presence of a U.S. military base with several branches of state universities on post. Slightly more than 85 percent of Pulaski County's adults have at least a high school diploma.

## The Economy

Over the years, the region has diversified its economy—after taking hard hits in the mining and textile industries. In the region, services was the largest employment sector, followed by manufacturing and retail trade. Over half of those employed in the service sector were in health care or education. The number of manufacturing firms in the region has continued to increase.

Based on U.S. Census reports, in 1997, the region had 220 manufacturing firms, compared to 226 in 1992. The *2010 Missouri Directory of Manufacturers* listed 275 manufacturing firms in the region, compared to 302 in 2008.

The major public employer in the region

Regional Medical Center with 1,583 employees and the Missouri University of Science and Technology—Rolla with 1,200 employees. The region’s top major private manufacturing employers are the Wal-Mart Distribution Center with 1,175 employees. It is located in Phelps County,

While the number of jobs in the region increases, many residents still travel outside their home county to work and the region as well.

### Transportation

Only three federal highways pass through the region: Interstate 44, U.S. 63 and U.S. 50. Interstate 44 bisects the region in a north-east to southwest direction and serves as the major highway between St. Louis and Springfield with Rolla being about the half way point.

U.S. 63 connects Vienna and Rolla with Jefferson City, and U.S. 50 runs east and west through Gasconade and Osage counties. Most highways in the region are state highways, and most are narrow, winding and curvy.

Several Meramec communities have airports. The Waynesville Regional Airport at Forney Field in Pulaski County is located on the Fort Leonard Wood military base, yet is accessible to the public. Flights from American Connections bring passengers to and from St. Louis three times each day. The airport is the only one in the region featuring an air traffic control tower.

The Rolla National Airport, located at Vichy and operated by the city of Rolla and the Sullivan Airport, operated by the city of Sullivan, are defined as B-2 airports and are used primarily by airplanes with approach speeds up to 120 knots and wingspans up to 79 feet. Other airports in the region—Wash-

## Regional Industrial Employment

Employed Persons 16 and over ....	89,263
Natural resources & mining .....	232
Construction .....	1,899
Manufacturing.....	7,480
Trade, Transportation/warehousing & utilities .....	11,228
Information.....	549
Finance, insurance, real estate & rental/leasing .....	1,954
Professional, scientific, mgmt., admin. & waste mgmt. ser. ....	2,545
Educational, health & social ser.....	4,876
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food ser.....	5,823
Other services .....	2,157
Public Administration .....	4,325

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and MRPC analysis

ington County, Salem, Cuba, Owensville, Hermann and Linn State Technical College— are classified as B-1s, which means they serve airplanes with approach speeds up to 120 knots and wingspans up to 49 feet.

Three railways serve the region. Burlington Northern operates the most miles of track in the region. That rail line follows the general route of I-44 through Crawford, Phelps, and Pulaski counties.

Rail service in the region is not as prevalent as it once was. Several miles of the former Rock Island rail have been abandoned for many years, however a new company has purchased this line of track in hopes of providing rail service to the Meramec Region and central Missouri. Amtrak also crosses the Meramec Region and stops at its very northeast point at Hermann.

Navigable water transportation is provided at three locations in the region, all on the Missouri River. Those sites are Hermann, Gasconade and Chamois.

# Meramec Regional Planning Commission's Board of Commissioners

## **CRAWFORD COUNTY**

Leonard Armstrong, mayor of Bourbon  
Kathy Byrd, chairperson of Leasburg  
Mary Heywood, representing the unemployed  
Kathy McCann, representing mayor of Steelville  
Bob Baldwin, representing the mayor of Cuba  
J.T. Hardy, mayor of Sullivan  
Franky Todd, representing seniors  
Leo Sanders, presiding commissioner

## **DENT COUNTY**

Gary Brown, mayor of Salem  
Earl Brown, representing the disabled  
Marcus Maggard, representing tourism  
Darrell Skiles, presiding commissioner  
Donald Dodd, representing transportation

## **GASCONADE COUNTY**

James Decker, representing industry  
John Tracy, representing mayor of Owensville  
Shannon Grus, mayor of Rosebud  
Ron Jost, presiding commissioner  
Jim Grebing, representing mayor of Hermann  
Trish O'Dell, mayor of Bland  
Carl Stephens, representing mayor of Gasconade

## **MARIES COUNTY**

Leslie Darr Jr., mayor of Vienna  
Tony Gieck, mayor of Belle  
Ray Schwartz, presiding commissioner

## **OSAGE COUNTY**

Dr. Donald Claycomb, representing higher education  
Chris Dickneite, mayor of Westphalia

Darryl Haller, chairman of Freeburg  
Tom Klebba, representing lending institutions  
Harold Libbert, mayor of Meta  
Dwight Massey, mayor of Linn  
David Luker, representing the mayor of Chamois  
Joe Schmidt, chairman of Argyle  
Russell Scheulen, representing presiding commissioner

## **PHELPS COUNTY**

Laura Antolak, representing small business  
Paula James, representing mayor of Edgar Springs  
Corlelius Root, mayor of Newburg  
Dennis Wilson, mayor of St. James  
John Butz, representing the mayor of Rolla  
Paul Smith, mayor of Doolittle  
Randy Verkamp, presiding commissioner  
Janet Walker, representing minorities

## **PULASKI COUNTY**

Norm Herren, representing mayor of St. Robert  
Darrell French, mayor of Dixon  
Cliff Hammock, mayor of Waynesville  
Linda Wilson, mayor of Crocker  
Gene Newkirk, presiding commissioner

## **WASHINGTON COUNTY**

Kraig Bone, representing emergency management  
Leo Dickey, representing farming  
T.R. Dudley, mayor of Potosi  
Ron Kennon, mayor of Irondale  
Robin Huskey, chairman of Mineral Point  
Marvin Wright, presiding commissioner  
Robert Vinyard, chairman of Caledonia  
Nick French, representing labor

## **2010 Associate Members**

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### **PLATINUM MEMBERS**

AmerenUE  
Bank of Crocker  
Belgrade State Bank  
C.M. Archer Group  
Hermann Industrial Development Authority  
Legends Bank  
Linn State Technical College  
Manchester Packaging  
Phelps County Bank  
Southeast Missouri Transportation Service  
Unico Bank  
U.S. Foodservice

### **GOLD MEMBERS**

Argyle Catering  
Town & Country Bank

### **SILVER MEMBERS**

BJPJ Insurance  
Brewer Science  
Central Federal Savings & Loan  
CenturyTel  
Citizen's Bank of Newburg  
Community Bank of Owensville  
Community Foundation of the Ozarks  
First Community National Bank  
Integrity Engineering  
Hurst-Rosche Engineers/Design Architects (formerly Metropolitan Engineering & Surveying)  
Missouri Baptist Sullivan Hospital  
Missouri Enterprise  
Missouri S&T  
Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company  
Steelville Telephone Exchange

Three Rivers Electric Cooperative  
USA Tours  
Verkamp & Malone  
Wallstreet Insurance Group  
Wells Fargo Advisors

### **EXCHANGE MEMBERS**

Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce  
Cuba Chamber of Commerce  
Salem Area Chamber of Commerce  
St. James Chamber of Commerce  
Sullivan Area Chamber of Commerce  
Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce  
Waynesville-St. Robert Chamber of Commerce



For more information, contact



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