

**EIGHT COUNTIES | 36 CITIES | ONE REGION**  
**A VOLUNTARY COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**  
**SERVING THE MISSOURI MERAMEC REGION**

# **Meramec Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018 Revision**

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to identify regional priorities for economic and community development. The final document is an action-driven plan developed by local and regional representatives from private, public, and non-profit sectors. This CEDS is for the eight-county Meramec Region that includes Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski, and Washington Counties.

## WHY DO WE NEED A CEDS?

An effective CEDS allows a region to maximize its economic development potential, as well as engage with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) and other federal partners to receive infrastructure and technical assistance grants, such as EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Overall, an effective CEDS planning process identifies locally-grown strategies that will guide regional economic development, encourage partnerships and collaboration, and improve economic outcomes and overall quality of life in our region.

## THE ORIGINAL CEDS

The Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) submitted an initial Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) in 1975. That program was updated in 1998, presenting new information on the progress of the region as well as identifying additional needs.

The 2002 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was a product of information gathered in meetings held in each of the seven counties in the Meramec Region, at that time. Since 2002, Pulaski County has joined the region. The list of needs that were identified across the region fell into eight major categories:

- Economic Development/Tourism
- Human Resources and Services
- Physical Environment
- Local Governments
- Transportation

- Housing
- Community Involvement and Communication
- Infrastructure

Based on the updated CEDS guidelines from 2016, the current CEDS Advisory Committee has consolidated the previous list of needs into four main goals that focus on:

- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Strong Communities
- Workforce

## PREPARING THE CEDS

The CEDS document is the result of more than a year-long planning process which included data gathering and input from people who live and work in the Meramec Region. A list of planning partners is provided in the appendices.

Over the course of 11 meetings, the CEDS Advisory Committee:

- Completed a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) for the region
- Prioritized strengths/opportunities and weaknesses/threats
- Reviewed an Entrepreneurship Assessment of the region
- Identified priority goals, objectives and strategies
- Set action items and implementation goals for the next 5 years

A page on MRPC's website was created to track progress, post meeting updates, and provide links to surveys throughout the CEDS process. <https://www.meramecregion.org/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy-2018-update/>. Once the final document is submitted to EDA, MRPC will use the page to track progress in the region. In 2019, MRPC will create a



tracker report to review and compare updated annual data to the baseline data established in this CEDS.

## THE MERAMEC REGION

The Meramec Region was designated as an Economic Development District in 1975 and, since then, has assisted in providing planning and technical assistance to local governments with the goal of improving the quality of life in participating counties. Most communities in the region do not have the resources to maintain professional staff to assist with planning and economic development. The district operates as the Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), created by Governor Warren E. Hearnes in 1969 under the State and Regional Planning and Community Development Act of 1965.



At that time, the region included Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Phelps and Washington counties. Additionally, on November 13, 1997, Governor Mel Carnahan issued Executive Order No. 97-14, adding Osage County to the boundaries of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission. On August 22, 2005, Missouri Governor Matt Blunt signed Executive Order 05-21, amending the boundaries of the Meramec Region to include Pulaski County. Pulaski County petitioned MRPC for inclusion in the region after

withdrawing membership in a neighboring regional planning commission. The county, along with the cities of St. Robert, Waynesville and Dixon, officially joined MRPC in September 2005. The city of Crocker joined in April 2006. Active membership now consists of eight counties and 33 cities. MRPC has a 63-member board. Of these, 42 are



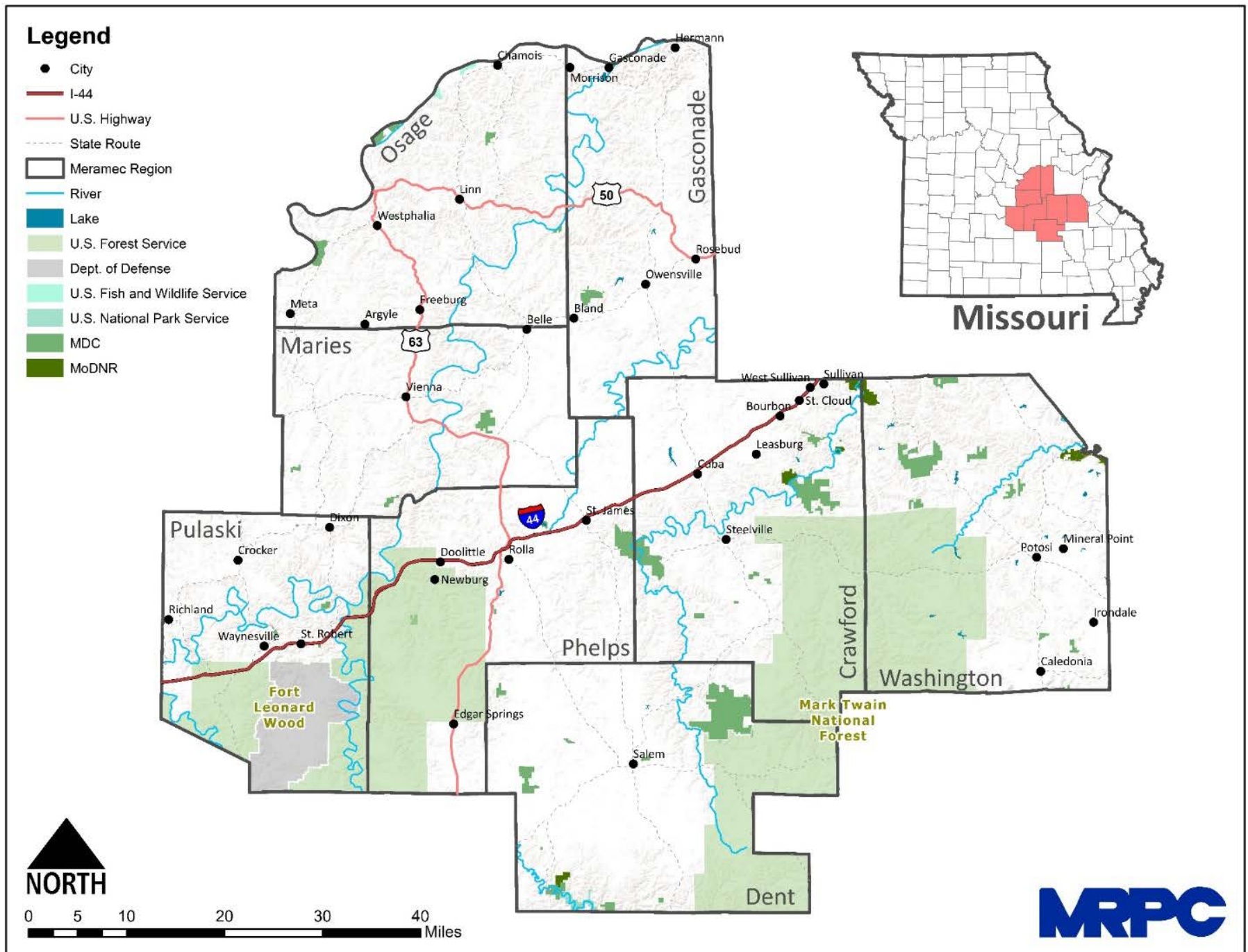
local elected officials or their representatives and 21 are non-government representatives.

The economic development planning and support staff at MRPC consists of:

- Bonnie Prigge, executive director, has been with MRPC since 1991.
- Tammy Snodgrass, assistant director, has been with MRPC since 1992.
- Kelly Sink-Blair, project development and planning manager, has been with MRPC since 2000.
- Anne Freand, senior community development specialist, has been with MRPC since 2016
- Ryan Dunwoody, senior environmental planner, has been with MRPC since 2015
- Maria Bancroft, business loans officer, has been with MRPC since 2006
- Linda Loughridge, fiscal manager, has been with MRPC since 1995.
- Caitlin Jones, communications/marketing coordinator, has been with MRPC since 2016.
- Linda Carroll, secretary, has been with MRPC since 2016.
- Jodie Branson, accountant II, has been with MRPC since 2006.
- Bethany Ferrell, bookkeeper, has been with MRPC since 2018.

A copy of the 2018 CEDS will be made available to all member counties and cities in the Meramec Region as well as local economic developers and other interested groups/individuals.





## THE MERAMEC REGION – Demographic Trends

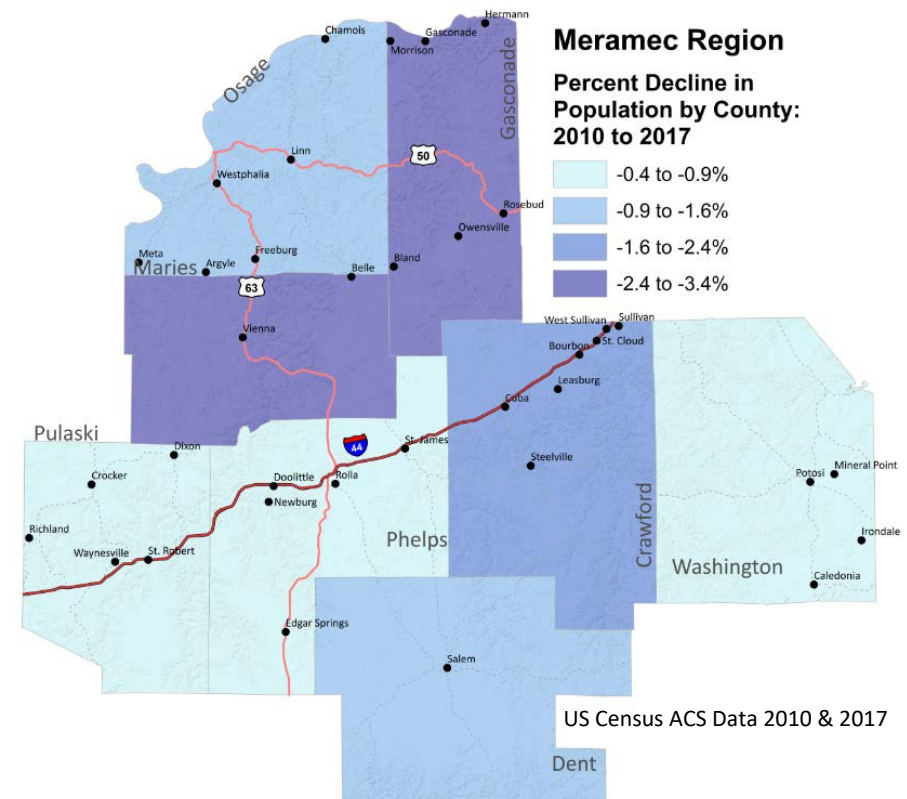
The Meramec region consists of eight counties located in the southeast-central parts of Missouri. The area covers over 5,131 square miles and includes 36 municipalities. The region, comprised of Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski and Washington counties, is marked with gently rolling hills, deep valleys and plateaus. Numerous rivers and streams traverse the region, creating a natural draw for outdoor enthusiasts. Many of the small towns still have major manufacturing plants. Wineries are scattered across the region making it a popular draw for tourists (Meramec Regional Planning Commission). The closest major city is St. Louis, about an hour-and-a-half north-east of the region. Two important institutions in the region are the Missouri University of Science and Technology with approximately 9,000 students located in Rolla (Phelps County) and a major military base, Fort Leonard Wood (Pulaski County) both of which offer many opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs.

The region experienced a slight increase in population during the 2000 to 2010-time period. However, in 2017, the eight-county Meramec Region was home to 198,662 people, a decrease of 1.3% since 2010 decennial census. While the region's population was reduced by 2,592, the State of Missouri's population increased slightly by 2.1%. Individual 2017 county populations range from a low of 8,867 in Maries County to 52,059 in Pulaski County. All counties demonstrated an individual decline from 2010 to 2017, ranging from a high of 3.4% in Maries County to 0.4% in Pulaski County. The largest city in the region continues to be Rolla, the county seat of Phelps County, with a population of 20,293 in 2017, an increase of 734 people since 2010. The smallest city is Morrison in Gasconade County with 91 residents.

According to the 2017 Census estimates, the Meramec Region deviates from the nation and state trends of population regarding racial groups. Only 9.7% of the region's population—19,264 people—are considered non-white, while the same group represents 26.7% of the United States' population and 16.9% of Missouri's population. The region's population is composed of 52.4% males and 47.6% females.

The educational level of the residents of the Meramec Region has increased significantly the last few decades. The percentage of individuals with at least a

high school diploma increased between 2013 and 2017 (82.4% to 83.9%). The percentage of individuals 25 years and older with some college to a professional degree also increased. Currently, Phelps and Pulaski Counties have the highest percentage of college graduates 25 years of age and older, 55.2% and 61.4%, respectively.



Median household incomes in the region increased an average of 5.83% from 2013 to 2017. The median household income for the region is below the state and national averages, partially due to declines in median household income in Maries and Phelps Counties between 2013 and 2017. Additionally, the median household income increased at a slower rate for the remaining six counties, as compared to the state and nation.



County	2017 Median Household Income	2013 Median Household Income	Percent Change
Crawford	\$37,171	\$35,897	3.55%
Dent	\$38,829	\$36,311	6.93%
Gasconade	\$50,687	\$41,392	22.46%
Maries	\$41,715	\$42,566	-2.00%
Osage	\$54,503	\$51,408	6.02%
Phelps	\$41,681	\$41,964	-0.67%
Pulaski	\$51,137	\$49,820	2.64%
Washington	\$37,810	\$34,702	8.96%
Regional Average	\$44,192	\$41,758	5.83%
Missouri	\$51,542	\$47,380	8.78%
United States	\$57,652	\$53,046	8.68%
2009-2013 ACS Data, US Census / 2013-2017 ACS Data, US Census			

The Meramec Region has 89,369 total housing units with 72,036 occupied (according to 2013-2017 ACS estimates.) The average household size in the Meramec Region is 2.55 people as compared to 2.47 for Missouri. Pulaski County has the highest per unit population with 2.83 followed by Washington and Osage Counties with 2.64 and 2.61 persons per unit, respectively.

According to 2013 - 2017 American Community Survey, 16.86% of the Meramec Region families are living in poverty. This figure is down slightly from the 17.06% in 2013. Washington and Dent counties have historically led the region in percent of population meeting poverty guidelines for the past 30 years. In 1979, over 20% met the guidelines in these counties. These percentages increased considerably in 1989, with Washington County showing 27.2% and Dent County with 25.2% persons in poverty. In 2017, Washington and Dent counties continue to record the highest poverty levels in the region at 20.2% and 20.8% respectively. Osage County continues to have the lowest number of persons in poverty, with less than 7% for 2017.

According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, there are 69,269 people who make up the 18-64 age group civilian labor force in the Meramec Region. This is a slight increase over the recorded

69,033 workers in the 2009-2013 ACS Census. In the region, the top three industries by numbers of establishments are health care and social assistance (641 establishments), retail trade (623 establishments) and other services (except public administration) (434 establishments) based on 2016 census data.

The following table provides an overview of household car availability for each county in the region. While a majority of households have access to at least one vehicle, a range of 4.5 – 7.7% has no vehicle availability at all within the Meramec Region.

Meramec Region Household Car Availability (2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates)				
	Crawford	Dent	Gasconade	Maries
Total Households:	9,290	5,889	6,168	3,642
No vehicle available	439	454	275	178
1 vehicle available	2,983	1,811	1,795	1,146
2 vehicles available	3,422	1,957	2,113	1,227
3 + vehicles available	2,446	1,667	1,985	1,091
	Osage	Phelps	Pulaski	Washington
Total Households:	5,046	16,838	15,298	9,045
No vehicle available	271	1,146	883	631
1 vehicle available	1,005	5,721	5,015	2,614
2 vehicles available	1,684	6,453	6,051	3,316
3 + vehicles available	2,086	3,518	3,349	2,484

Three federal highways pass through the region: Interstate 44, U.S. 63 and U.S. 50. Interstate 44 bisects the region in a northeast 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. A majority of the remaining highways in the region are maintained by MoDOT. Several Meramec communities also have airports: Rolla National

Airport located at Vichy; Sullivan Airport; Washington County Airport in Potosi; Salem Airport; Cuba Airport; Hermann Airport; Waynesville-St. Robert Regional Airport in Fort Leonard Wood, and State Technical College Airport in Linn.

Four 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 and Phelps 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 decision is pending from the State of Missouri of accepting the former rail line from Ameren, the current owner. If the state assumes ownership, the proposed Rock Island Trail could be a major tourist destination for the region. 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.



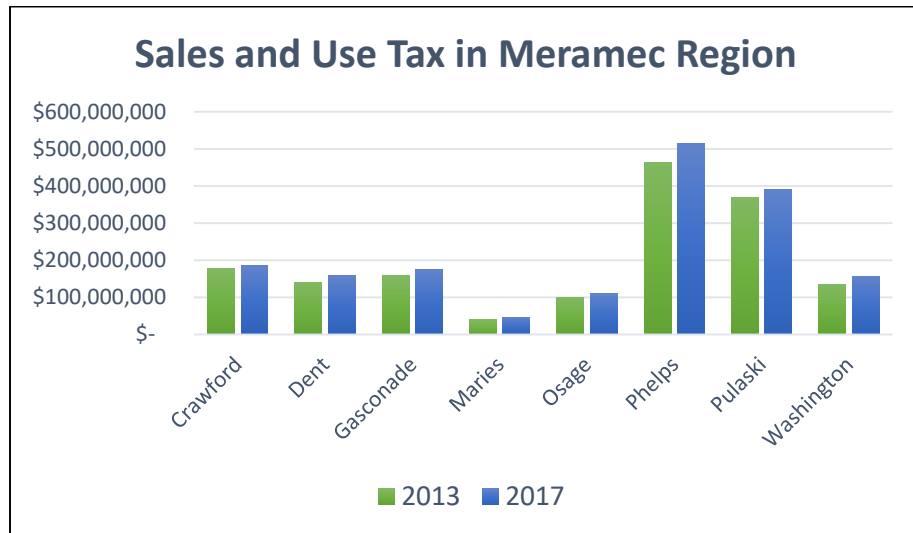
## PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Economic Development Trends

This section aims to establish base statistics and standards consistent with the Performance Measures identified in the Action Plan section of the CEDS. A summary or link to reference each Performance Measure has been provided based on the CEDS' four main goals. This segment of the plan will ensure consistent references are used when reviewing progress over the next five years.

### Goal 1: Seek expansion of the regional economy through diversified business growth

#### Performance Measures

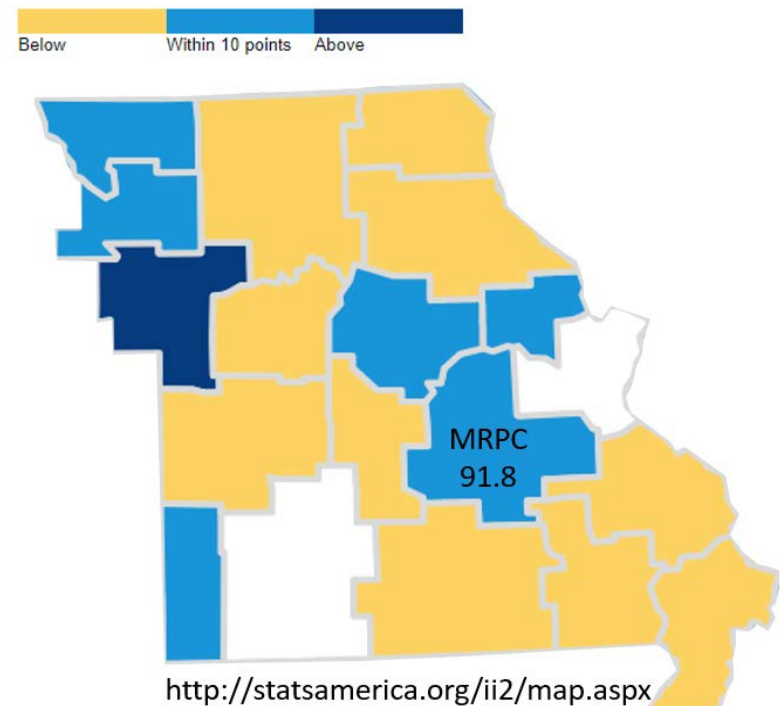
**Track tax revenues:** Sales and Use Tax revenues are provided by the Missouri Department of Revenue and can be found by taxing district or county (<https://dor.mo.gov/publicreports/>). Full year tax revenues for the eight-county Meramec Region increased by almost 10% between 2013 and 2017 to over 1.7 billion dollars. While final numbers are not yet available for 2018, MRPC estimates that the total amount for the region will increase due to several new retailers opening in Phelps County.



**Review of StatsAmerica Innovation Index 2.0:** StatsAmerica is an EDA supported website that provides actionable data for economic developers

to use in site requests, developing metrics, grant writing, and strategic planning. The Innovation Index provides a set of analytic tools that can help regional leaders reach a strong consensus on regional strategic direction. By understanding a region's weaknesses, strengths and potential (<http://statsamerica.org/ii2/overview.aspx>). The "headline" index—the one, high-level summary index—is comprised of five major categorical indexes organized thematically. Those five major indexes are built up from several core indexes that are built up from several measures that are also organized thematically along more precisely defined concepts. The Meramec Region currently has a headline index of 91.8 and is ranked 255 out of 384 Economic Development Districts in the United States. A snapshot of the region's innovation index is provided in the appendices.

## Innovation Index Compared to 100



**Assessed valuation:** Assessed values for the eight-county region reached a total of \$2,410,695,614 in 2017. This is an increase from a total assessed value of \$2,230,829,718 in 2013 (approx. 8%). Assessed values per county are listed online at <http://www.mocounties.com/county-assessed-valuations.php>.

**Unemployment rates:** Unemployment rates within the Meramec Region have steadily gone down since 2013. The average unemployment rate for the eight-county region was 7.31% for the 12-month period based on no seasonal adjustment in 2013. The average rate for the first 10 months of 2018 has only a 3.76% unemployment rate in the region. While the 2018 numbers do not reflect a full calendar year, it is not estimated to significantly impact the current 3.76% average unemployment rate. All monthly statistics can be found at <https://www.missourieconomy.org/indicators/laus/default.aspx>.

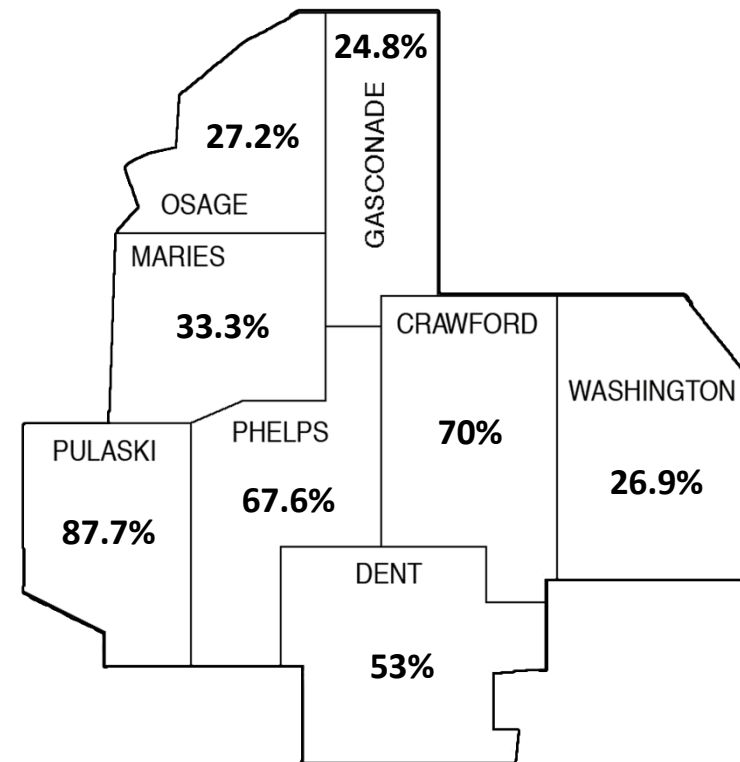
## Goal 2: Maintain, modernize, and expand infrastructure to make the region more competitive for economic development

### Performance Measures

**Number of loan and grant funded infrastructure projects:** Each year MRPC tracks the number of loans and grant funded infrastructure projects through the Annual GPRA EDA Report. In 2018, MRPC's total Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) has financed \$195,428 in public investment, \$641,750 in private investment, and retained/created 69 jobs. MRPC has also obtained Delta Regional Authority (DRA) grant funds for the city of St. James to make public infrastructure improvements to allow for the expansion of Prock Industries, and obtained EDA and DRA grant funds for the city of Potosi to upgrade its natural gas line to increase capacity and meet new/existing business growth.

**Increase of access to broadband in Meramec Region:** The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is required to report annually on whether advanced telecommunications capability "is being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion," and to take "immediate action" if it is not. The *2018 Broadband Deployment Report* continues the practice of recent past reports of examining fixed and mobile broadband deployment, and finds both fixed and mobile services to be capable of

meeting the statutory definition of advanced telecommunications capability. The report also continues to conclude that mobile services are not currently full substitutes for fixed services. The FCC retains the existing speed benchmark of 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload (25 Mbps/3 Mbps) for fixed services and examines the deployment of mobile services with minimum advertised speeds of 5 Mbps/1 Mbps, and those with a median speed of 10 Mbps/3 Mbps or higher. As of December 2016, the FCC provided data by state, county or county equivalent. The Meramec Region currently has a range of 24.8% (Gasconade) to 87.7% (Pulaski) of the population with access to wired broadband 25mbps or faster. Access to county specific data is provided in the appendices of the FCC report found at <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/broadband-progress-reports/2018-broadband-deployment-report>.



% by County with Access to Fixed Terrestrial 25 Mbps/3 Mbps

### Goal 3: Promote revitalized, healthy, safe, and resilient communities

#### Performance Measures

**Evaluate KIDS COUNT data:** KIDS COUNT is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and a premier source of data on children and families. Each year, the Foundation produces a comprehensive report — the [KIDS COUNT Data Book](#) — that assesses child well-being in the United States. The indicators featured in the *Data Book* are also [available in the Data Center](#). (<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>)

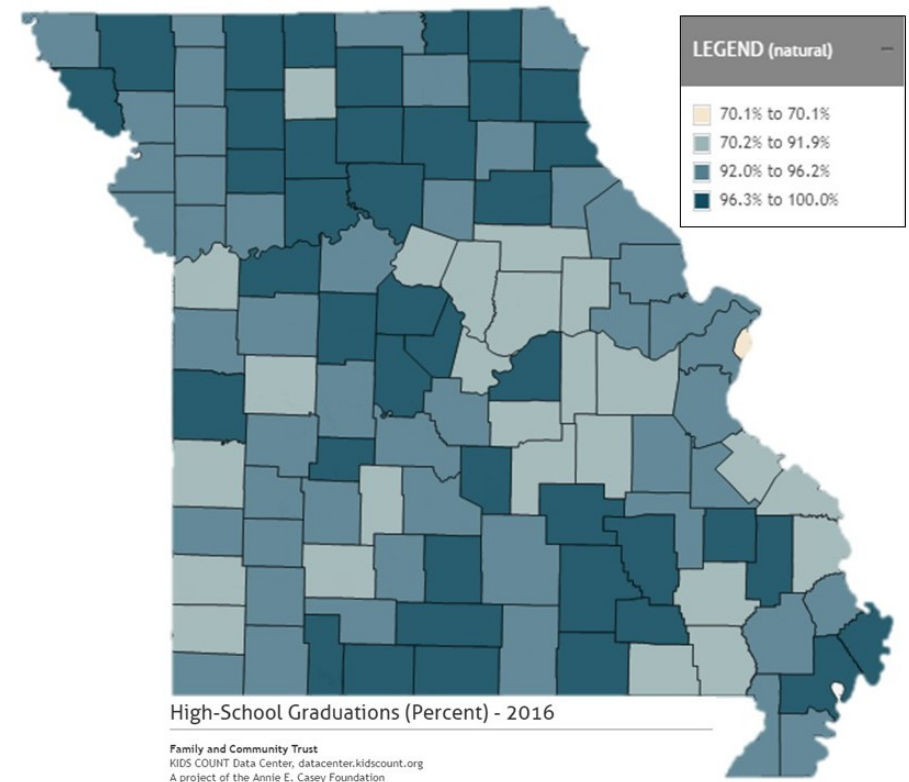
**Number of jobs in healthcare:** The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) provides a quarterly census of employment and wages for each industry by NAICS sectors. Information can be sorted by year and county since 2004. In 2017, the Meramec Region has reached an average employment in healthcare of 6,870 based on NAICS code 62-Health care and social assistance. While Phelps County saw the greatest growth in healthcare and social assistance employment since 2013 (14% increase); however, the overall numbers for the eight-county region decreased by 2.5% since 2013 to 7,047 average employment. (<https://www.missourieconomy.org/industry/qcew/>)

**Annual County Health rankings:** The annual county rankings provide a revealing snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, learn, work and play. They provide a starting point for change in communities' relative to health and other social issues. (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>)

**Increase in workforce housing:** The CEDS' action plan highlights the need for quality affordable housing in the Meramec region. The National Low Income Housing Coalition provides data to create a picture of the need for low income housing across the country based on income and housing factors. The data provided on the website provides a snapshot of lower income housing issues. (<https://nlihc.org/or/missouri>)

**High School graduation rates:** High School graduation rates are provided by county and year through the KIDS COUNT website utilizing data from the MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#MO/5/0/char/0>). The region saw a high school graduation average rate of 93.9% in 2016, an increase of 5.3%

from 2013. The region continues to perform higher than the state of Missouri, which had only a 4.3% increase for the same time period.



**Access to food stores:** In 2019, MRPC will be completing a Food Hub Feasibility Study which will further analyze the region's access to food stores and provide a more in-depth review of food deserts. The US Department of Agriculture provides a mapping tool utilizing 2015 data to show food deserts around the United States of America (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>). Data is updated approximately every 5 years, so 2020 data should be available prior to the next CEDS revision.

**Number of recycling programs:** The Environmental Department with MRPC tracks recycling programs in the region in partnership with Ozarks River Solid Waste Management District. A map on the following page provides an overview of the programs and locations for recycling facilities in the Meramec Region. The region currently has 5 recycling drop-off centers in Gasconade, Phelps, and Pulaski Counties.

**Number of visitors at State Parks in region:** Missouri State Parks provides visitor numbers for each of the parks within the region based on yearly visits and compares the totals to the previous year (<https://mostateparks.com/page/55072/facts-and-figures>). In 2017, 1,702,982 people traveled through the region visiting one of the six state parks which are completely or partially located within the eight counties. This was an increase of 21.5% since 2013 (1,401,840 visitors).

**Goal 4: Create a robust workforce pipeline to satisfy the needs of the business community**

#### Performance Measures

**Review of WorkKeys testing goals:** The Work Ready Communities website (<https://www.workreadycommunities.org/MO>) provides access to each county's statistics and provides a percentage for rating the number of maintaining goals completed. The website also provides numbers of National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC) and employers that recognize or recommend WorkKeys testing. Since the website only provides a snapshot from the start of Work Keys to the current date, summary pages for each county in the Meramec Region can be found in the appendices to highlight each county's levels as of November 30, 2018.

**Number of people with some college or associates degrees:** The 2013-2017 ACS data, as compared to the 2009-2013 data, indicates that the regional population 18 to 24 years of age has seen a decrease of half a percentage point for those individuals with some college or an Associate's degree. However, the population 25 years and over have seen minor increases for those with some college (+0.18%) and Associate's degrees (+1.08%) for the same time period within the Meramec Region.

#### Average county wage:

The ability to measure the average wage per county provides a metric to see if existing industries' pay has increased, as well as if the county is absorbing new businesses with higher paying wages. These figures are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, which is a cooperative program between the US Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Missouri Department of Economic Development. The 2017 data provides a baseline for comparison of average wages over the next five years.

(<https://www.missourieconomy.org/researchandplanning/indicators/countywage.stm>)

#### 2017 Total Wages for All Industries, Public and Private

County	Avg Annual Wages	Avg Hourly Wage
CRAWFORD	\$41,453	\$19.93
DENT	\$29,401	\$14.14
GASCONADE	\$29,901	\$14.38
MARIES	\$30,321	\$14.58
OSAGE	\$34,113	\$16.40
PHELPS	\$38,305	\$18.42
PULASKI	\$37,167	\$17.87
WASHINGTON	\$28,774	\$13.83
REGION	\$33,679	\$16.19
STATEWIDE	\$47,351	\$22.76

Source: MERIC, Quarterly Census of Employment 2017





## Legend

### Recycling Drop-Off Centers

-  City of Hermann
-  City of Richland
-  Dixon Caring Center
-  Rolla Recycling Center
-  St. Robert Transfer Station

### Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off

-  Rolla Recycling Center
-  St. Robert Transfer Station

### Sheltered Workshops





-  Enhancements Inc.
-  Pulaski County Sheltered
-  Phelps County Industrial Solutions
-  Scenic Rivers Industries Inc.

### Landfill

-  Waste Connections
-  Prairie Valley Disposal

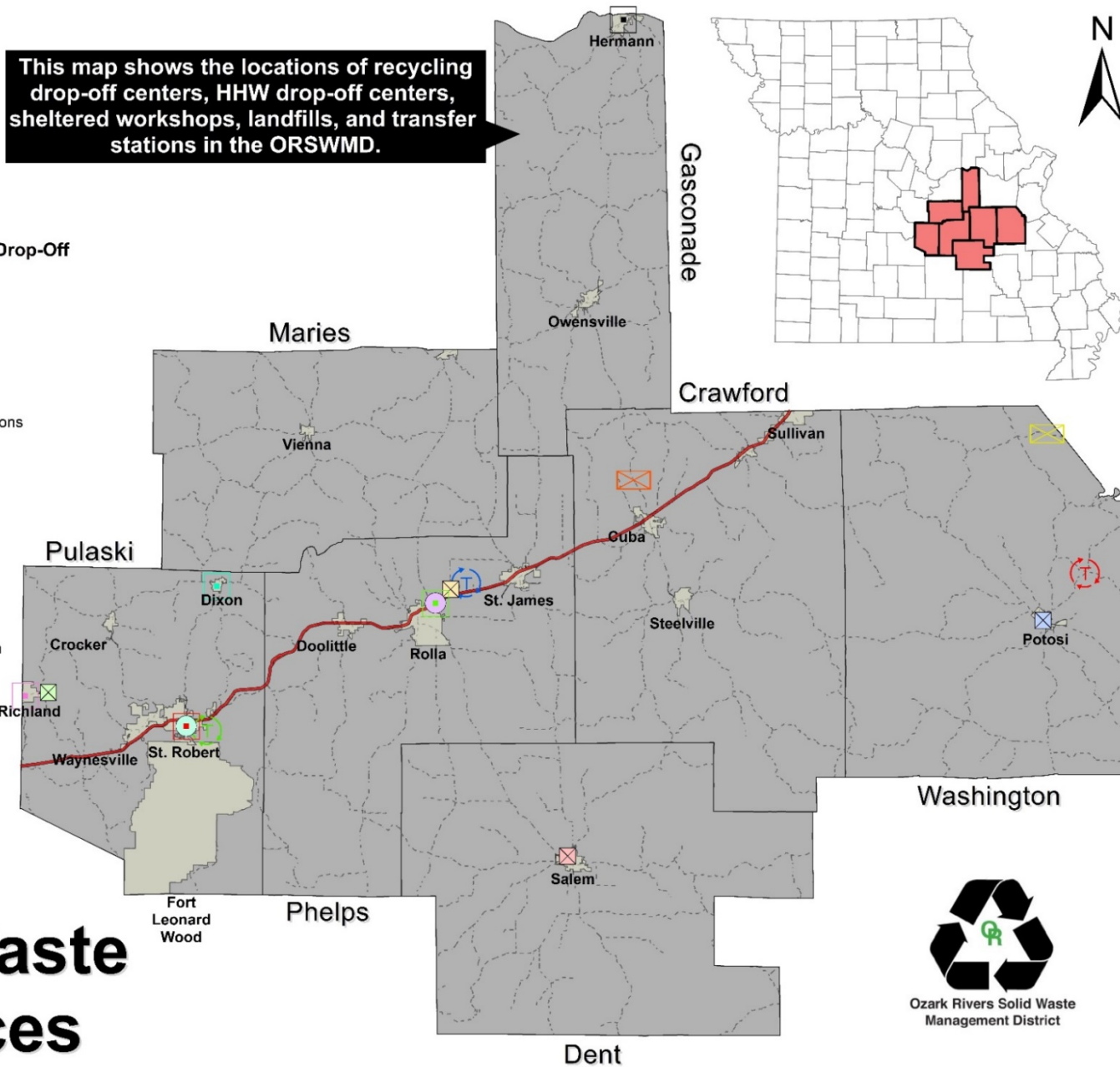
### Transfer Stations

-  CWI - Potosi Transfer Station
-  Phelps County Transfer Station
-  St. Robert Transfer Station

-  I-44
-  City
-  Highway
-  ORSWMD

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 Miles

This map shows the locations of recycling drop-off centers, HHW drop-off centers, sheltered workshops, landfills, and transfer stations in the ORSWMD.



# Local Waste Resources



# SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis is an in-depth review of the Meramec Region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). It acts as a strategic planning tool to ensure that a clear objective is identified by a comprehensive understanding of the region's capabilities and capacity. The SWOT Analysis helps the region classify its competitive advantages, while also identifying other factors that negatively impact the region and impede it from reaching its full potential.

## STRENGTHS

Our region's relative competitive advantages

- Solid small businesses
- Fort Leonard Wood
- Association with MS&T and other public education institutions
- Domestic tourism within the region
- Transportation access for most of the region
- Culture of Collaboration - civic events, youth programs, etc.
- Affordability – cost of living, low taxes, affordable housing, etc.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress

- Expansion of education and on-the-job training to include additional apprenticeship and internship programs
- Programs for business owners to train them on how to invest in their own people
- Creation of more private investment to help in growing regional businesses
- Adoption of Internet sales tax

## WEAKNESSES

Our region's relative competitive disadvantages

- Poverty issues
- Quality of housing stock
- Broadband access and cost
- Aging infrastructure in rural communities - water, sewer, etc.
- Small labor pool – shortage of quality workers
- Lack of transportation funding for existing infrastructure and expansion

## THREATS

Chances or occasions for negative impacts on our region or regional decline

- Federal and State funding cuts
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)
- Increase in drug use and associated violence
- Shrinking/Aging workforce – loss of institutional knowledge and impacts of immigration policy
- Youth exodus
- Declining state budget for education

# ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

Regional economic prosperity is linked to an area's ability to withstand, prevent, or quickly recover from major disruptions to its underlying economic base. In conjunction with the 2013 CEDS revision, the 2018 CEDS update concentrates on identifying ways to respond to impacts to the region's economy, as well as noting the ways the region addresses hazard mitigation.

One of the major economic impacts to the Meramec region includes damages due to weather events, such as flooding or tornadoes. Since 2013, the Meramec Region has experienced 3 major flooding events with two being major disaster declarations from the federal level (2015/2016 and 2017). Floods impact residences, local travel, and also close down major highways and interstates such as I-44. The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) estimates that the closure of I-44 has an economic impact of approximately \$3 million dollars per day to Missouri residents.



\*Gasconade River flooding closes I-44 in 2013

As a result of these flood events, MRPC has worked with local officials on grant applications to demolish structures, buyout repetitive loss properties, and improve water crossings and drainage infrastructure. The region continues to work on steady-state initiatives that help coordinate recovery

efforts and emergency response to road closures and other significant obstacles during and after floods.

Another major shock to the economy could arise from a major employer leaving the Meramec region. This includes the threat of a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) for Fort Leonard Wood. Fort Leonard Wood lost over 2,000 military and civilian positions as the result of the 2012 Army reduction in force. The loss took place between 2013 and 2016. As a result of the announcement of the planned reductions in 2012, the communities surrounding the installation formed the Sustainable Ozarks Partnership (SOP).

As a non-profit, the SOP collaborates with regional communities, governments and federal legislators to make the region a better place to live, work, and play while supporting Fort Leonard Wood's mission and advocating for its sustainment and growth. All of this grew out of the Initial Integrated Strategic Sustainability Plan (ISSP), recognizing the need for a community based organization to represent the cities and four counties surrounding the installation.



The MRPC region continues to actively prepare to mitigate economic impacts from weather, employment, and disaster-related shocks with both

steady-state initiatives, those which plan for and implement resilience, and responsive initiatives, the establishment of information networks. Since 2013, MRPC has worked on a number of steady-state and responsive initiatives to support economic resiliency in the region.

**Steady-State** initiatives include:

- Hazard Mitigation Plans per County – each plan encourages businesses to develop emergency response and resiliency plans specific to their organization
  - Pulaski County – 2015
  - Phelps and Gasconade Counties – 2016
  - Crawford, Osage, and Washington Counties – 2018
  - Dent County – awaiting approval
  - Maries County - 2019
- Meramec Regional Emergency Planning Committee (MREPC)
  - Hazardous Materials Plan – annual updates
- Economic Development Corporations
- Work with Phelps County and the City of Hermann to receive disaster mitigation grants for demolition of damaged structures in the floodplain



\*Damaged home in Phelps County – May 2017 flood

- Region I Homeland Security Oversight Committee (HSOC)

- Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) – 2016 with update to be completed in 2019
- Homeland Security Response Team (HSRT) – Rolla, MO

**Responsive** economic resilience initiatives include:

- Succession Planning for the organization and working with region on similar plans
- Emergency trainings sponsored by the Region I HSOC and Meramec Regional Emergency Planning Committee (MREPC)
- Regional exercises coordinated through the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)

The region continues to implement steady-state and responsive initiatives through various committees. The CEDS Advisory Committee plans to continue to meet and discuss the state of the regional economy, the status of projects which further the four main goals of the CEDS, and identify any resiliency efforts. The Meramec Regional Planning Commission will continue to implement the full resiliency framework identified in the 2013 CEDS revision. The framework is intended to promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property, economic viability, and the natural environment. This can be achieved by increasing public awareness, documenting resources for risk reduction and loss-prevention, and identifying activities to guide the members of the region towards the development of safer, more sustainable communities.

In many communities, no plan exists to prepare the private sector (businesses, trade associations, manufacturers and retailers) for disaster, which can impact whether or not that business stays open after an economic downturn. A well-constructed recovery plan can help to prevent that from happening. The framework, as identified in the 2013 CEDS, provides a tool for our local leaders to substantially and permanently reduce the region's vulnerability to natural hazards and other impacts to the economy, and expedite the recovery. This strategy demonstrates the region's commitment to reducing risks from hazards and serves as a tool to help decision makers direct mitigation activities, increase preparedness, speed response, and guide recovery.



# GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The goals, objectives and strategies identified in this section were based on items identified in the SWOT Analysis, as well as input from various regional stakeholders during several meetings and surveys completed throughout 2018.

## FOUR GOALS FOR THE MERAMEC REGION

1. Seek expansion of the regional economy through diversified business growth
2. Maintain, modernize and expand infrastructure to make the region more competitive for economic development in the Meramec Region
3. Promote revitalized, healthy, safe, and resilient communities
4. Create a robust workforce pipeline to satisfy the needs of the business community

### GOAL 1: SEEK EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED BUSINESS GROWTH

*Employment in the Region is heavily concentrated in five sectors: Government, Health and Social Services, Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade. Several of the industries' growth or decline over the years is a direct result of the number of troops at Fort Leonard Wood (FLW). Any negative impact to FLW poses threats to the resilience of the regional economy. In order to withstand major economic disruptions—whether triggered by a nationwide recession or the reduction of troops in the Region—employment must be expanded and diversified.*

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Support the maintenance and growth of Fort Leonard Wood

**STRATEGY 1:** Increase advocacy with Federal and State Legislators

**STRATEGY 2:** Support and participate in Sustainable Ozarks Partnership (SOP) and other advisory groups

**STRATEGY 3:** Monitor Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) and emphasize long-term sustainable growth in the region

**STRATEGY 4:** Encourage opportunities for military spouse and family employment/ancillary workforce

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem to support start-up enterprises and strengthen businesses

**STRATEGY 1:** Continue to encourage the concept of entrepreneurship into K-12 curriculum

**STRATEGY 2:** Encourage opportunities for private investment in entrepreneurs

**STRATEGY 3:** Identify issues that are an impediment to growth of existing businesses

**STRATEGY 4:** Educate existing businesses of available assets and programs



\*Dr. Sean Siebert speaking to students at the 2017 Ideas and Innovation Summit in Rolla, MO

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Continue to grow and diversify the region

- STRATEGY 1:** Support and attract more retail establishments within the region
- STRATEGY 2:** Recruit businesses engaged in supply chain and other ancillary support operations for existing manufacturers
- STRATEGY 3:** Support manufacturing and the private sector by ensuring that sites and services are available and address the issues that impact their development
- STRATEGY 4:** Retain, protect, and expand existing public sector employers and encourage more public/private partnerships

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Expand the tourism/agritourism visitation potential and promote the region as a destination

- STRATEGY 1:** Support, promote, and grow Naturally Meramec/Tourism related businesses



\*Meramec region's tourism logo <http://www.naturallymeramec.org>

**GOAL 2: MAINTAIN, MODERNIZE AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*Having adequate infrastructure in place is a prerequisite for economic development if existing businesses are to be retained and new businesses are to be attracted to the Meramec Region. In the past, adequate infrastructure was defined as roads and public water and sewer systems. At*

*present and in the future, expanded and improved telecommunications are one of the highest priorities. If the Region's telecommunications system is not improved and expanded, diversification of the economy will be difficult to achieve.*

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Identify the maintenance needs and funding solutions for existing infrastructure

- STRATEGY 1:** Maintain awareness of infrastructure needs within counties and cities in the Meramec Region
- STRATEGY 2:** Share information on funding opportunities including TIF, CID, NID, TDD, bond issues, grants, etc.



\*Presentations on transportation priorities to the regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) at the December 2017 meeting

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Modernize and expand infrastructure in our region

- STRATEGY 1:** Promote the availability and expansion of broadband/high speed internet across the region
- STRATEGY 2:** Improve major transportation systems in the region, including I-44, 63, 50, 21 & 8, Rail and Air

- STRATEGY 3:** Improve transportation networks, including local routes, highways, and air to support growth of logistical and distribution industries
- STRATEGY 4:** Upgrade utility systems in rural areas and local communities (Water, Sewer, Electric, Natural Gas)
- STRATEGY 5:** Provide modern services and facilities for communities in the region

### GOAL 3: PROMOTE REVITALIZED, HEALTHY, SAFE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

*The Meramec Region considers a high quality of life to be one of its best assets. This standard of living includes safe neighborhoods, quality schools, outdoor recreation, tourism, and a low cost of living. Oftentimes, these local amenities greatly impact a region's ability to retain and attract new workers.*

*Ensuring that the region has numerous employment options in strong communities with quality housing choices, safe neighborhoods with excellent public schools, and indoor/outdoor recreation is an integral component of the CEDS. The following objectives and strategies focus on a number of components that directly impact the strength of our region.*

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Encourage local governments to design a business model that is 21st century driven and globally minded in governance

- STRATEGY 1:** Educate and promote the use of planning
- STRATEGY 2:** Broaden the scope of participation in local government
- STRATEGY 3:** Raise awareness of financing, philanthropy, and management tools available to local communities



\*Meramec Regional Community Foundation (MRCF) representatives present a grant to Caledonia Community Foundation, Inc. in 2018

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Provide quality, patient-centered healthcare in the region

- STRATEGY 1:** Support small hospitals and county healthcare facilities
- STRATEGY 2:** Assist in the fight against substance abuse
- STRATEGY 3:** Encourage utilization of healthcare services and facilities within the Meramec Region
- STRATEGY 4:** Attract and retain healthcare professionals
- STRATEGY 5:** Promote healthy living
- STRATEGY 6:** Advocate on behalf of rural critical access and Federally Qualified Health Center (FHQC) institutions and keep abreast of the issues impacting them



**OBJECTIVE 3:** Encourage lifelong learning in the region

**STRATEGY 1:** Introduce students to all educational opportunities including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships, etc.

**STRATEGY 2:** Assist schools to keep kids safe

**STRATEGY 3:** Promote flexibility for post-secondary education in our region

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Promote smart and sustainable housing developments

**STRATEGY 1:** Improve quality and affordability of housing stock

**STRATEGY 2:** Encourage use of financing tools and incentives at state and federal levels

**STRATEGY 3:** Identify need and increase availability of housing for vulnerable populations

**STRATEGY 4:** Encourage residential development with adequate infrastructure

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Maintain a physical environment that supports healthy communities

**STRATEGY 1:** Educate citizens on best practices related to water quality

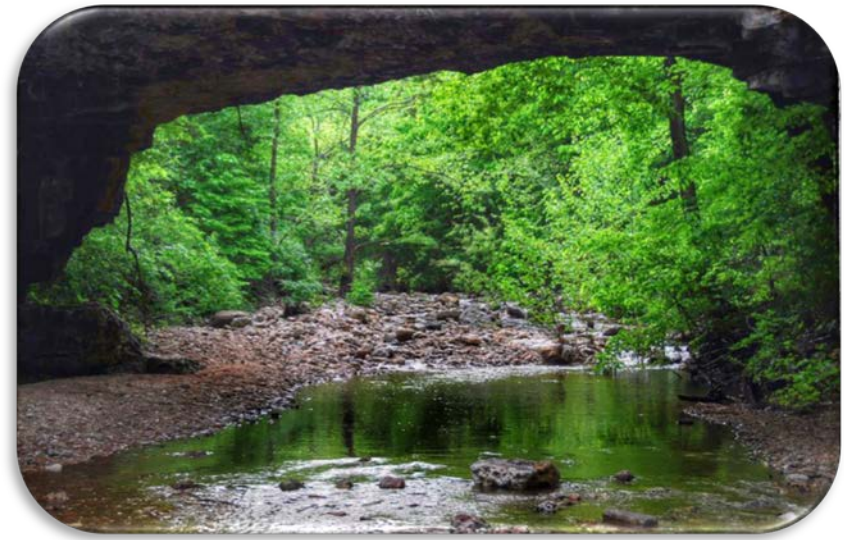
**STRATEGY 2:** Ensure availability and access to state and federal lands for future generations

**STRATEGY 3:** Increase availability and convenience of solid waste management

**STRATEGY 4:** Encourage the development of livable communities

**OBJECTIVE 6:** Promote recreation, cultural activities, entertainment, and place-making within the region

**STRATEGY 1:** Improve existing assets in the region and expand opportunities



\*Natural Bridge on Clifty Creek near Dixon, MO

**GOAL 4: CREATE A ROBUST WORKFORCE PIPELINE TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

*Continued growth in the region will rely upon not only new and more competitive employment opportunities, but also on the creation and promotion of more education and training of potential employees. Extra effort and attention should be paid to educate, train, and incentivize residents throughout the region to create a skilled, reliable, and robust regional workforce.*

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Maximize business engagement

**STRATEGY 1:** Improve communication between businesses and the public regarding job needs

**STRATEGY 2:** Increase the availability of on-the-job training, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships, etc.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Focus on Improving Worker Skills

**STRATEGY 1:** Align career pathway elements and services through education and training systems



**STRATEGY 2:** Improve employees' soft and life skills

**STRATEGY 3:** Expand opportunities for on-the-job training

**STRATEGY 4:** Ensure the counties in the region maintain community WorkReady status and promote business utilization of WorkKeys



\*Maries County, MO receives Certified Work Ready Community status

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Increase career awareness

**STRATEGY 1:** Create an awareness initiative and increase workplace exposure that promotes manufacturing, technical, and health care careers

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Attract and Retain More Talent

**STRATEGY 1:** Encourage employers to improve the work experience

**STRATEGY 2:** Promote sense of community within the region

**STRATEGY 3:** Develop recruitment strategies for attracting quality workforce

**STRATEGY 3:** Identify and address statewide policies that create barriers to expanding the workforce

# ACTION PLAN: IMPLEMENTATION

The action plan answers the question “How do we get there?” and is based primarily on the prioritized goals and objectives of the strategic direction. The action plan distills the vision, goals and objectives into concrete, specific actions to achieve the aspirations of the region’s stakeholders. Building on the well-defined strategic direction, the action plan should explicitly describe how the region will work together to achieve its goals and measurable objectives, including activity ownership, timetables, and committed resources. A detailed, well-considered action plan increases the overall value of the CEDS, and makes it relevant and useful. While the action plan should provide a guide to prioritizing resources and efforts, it should not be used to limit the identification and implementation of other activities that support the strategic direction that was established as part of the development of the vision, goals and objectives within the CEDS. Specific dollar amounts are not attached to each goal or strategy item. The scope of the of this plan is five years with staff time as the anticipated greatest cost. The Meramec Regional Planning Commission plans to partner with other organizations and explore grant and cost sharing opportunities to reduce duplicated efforts and lower costs.

## GOAL 1: SEEK EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED BUSINESS GROWTH

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Track tax revenues, review of StatsAmerica Innovation Index 2.0, assessed valuation, and unemployment rates

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Support the maintenance and growth of Fort Leonard Wood

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Increase advocacy with Federal and State Legislators</b>	Meet with legislators annually to discuss important topics related to FLW and provide ongoing information on significant updates or completion of goals  Encourage military advocate to be a permanent State Cabinet positions	MRPC, SOP, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Support and participate in Sustainable Ozarks Partnership (SOP) and other advisory groups</b>	Regularly participate SOP and similar meetings	MRPC, Local Governments, Phelps for the Fort	Ongoing
<b>Monitor Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) and emphasize long-term sustainable growth in the region</b>	Review and Update the JLUS	MRPC, Local Governments, Economic Development (ED) entities, SOP	2019-2020
	Continue to implement JLUS recommendations	Local Governments	Ongoing
	Create/Implement contingency plans for both expansion and potential decline of Fort Leonard Wood from the impact to the surrounding region	MRPC, Local Governments, SOP	Ongoing

<b>Encourage opportunities for military spouse and family employment/ancillary workforce</b>	Promote database of military spouses looking for employment to employers and Missouri Job Centers to meet the workforce needs of employers	SOP, Central Workforce Development Board (CWDB), FLW	Ongoing
	Create social media presence and host job fairs for FLW spouses to connect with employers	SOP, CWDB, FLW	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem to support start-up enterprises and strengthen businesses

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Continue to encourage the concept of entrepreneurship into K-12 curriculum</b>	Work with school districts to have local entrepreneurs present at schools for a firsthand look at opportunities	MRPC, School Districts, ED entities	Ongoing
	Encourage entrepreneurial efforts among existing high school youth organizations	MRPC, School Districts, ED entities	Ongoing
<b>Encourage opportunities for private investment in entrepreneurs</b>	Develop a contact list of current investors with their geographic and sector funding preferences	ED entities	2019-2020
	Promote existing regional loan programs for start-ups and research the establishment of a micro-loan program (loans less than \$25,000)	MRPC, Local Banks	Ongoing
<b>Identify issues that are an impediment to growth of existing businesses</b>	Survey local business owners in each community to create a list of issues that are impediments to business retention and opening a new business, and share with local jurisdictions  Work with each city to do "How to Open a Business" pamphlets, etc.	MRPC, Local Governments, Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC), Chambers of Commerce, ED entities, Small Business Administration (SBA)	2021-2022
<b>Educate existing businesses of available assets and programs</b>	Offer and/or promote webinar or YouTube videos explaining the programs	MRPC	Ongoing
	Hold business trainings to share best practices	MRPC, Meramec Regional Development Corporation (MRDC), SBDTC, Kauffman Foundation  MRPC, ED entities, Local Banks	Annually

	Refer local businesses to area Small Business and Technology Development Centers (SBTDC) or similar organizations for one on one counseling		Ongoing
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**OBJECTIVE 3:** Continue to grow and diversify the region

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Support and attract more retail establishments within the region</b>	Develop incentives and promote affordable facilities for businesses to relocate to the region	Local Governments	Ongoing
	Market region to retail brokers and identify needs through leakage studies/reports	ED entities	Ongoing
<b>Recruit businesses engaged in supply chain and other ancillary support operations for existing manufacturers</b>	Develop incentives and promote affordable facilities for businesses to relocate to the region	ED entities	Ongoing
	Work with existing business to identify which firms are industries in the supply chain, aggregate the data to identify trends and potential targets for attraction	MRPC, ED entities	2022-2023
<b>Support manufacturing and the private sector by ensuring that sites and services are available and address the issues that impact their developments</b>	Host quarterly meetings with manufacturers and other business owners to determine what their most critical needs are	MRPC, CWDB	Ongoing
	Expand Manufacturing Day activities	MRPC, CWDB, ED entities, Manufacturers	Annually
<b>Retain, protect, and expand existing public sector employers and encourage more public/private partnerships</b>	Understand the needs and challenges of the public sector employers	MRPC, ED entities	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Expand the tourism/agritourism visitation potential and promote the region as a destination

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Support, promote, and grow Naturally Meramec/Tourism related businesses</b>	Implement USDA grants that will grow membership and promote the region. Grant work includes marketing efforts, expanding agritourism businesses, providing networking opportunities, etc.	MRPC, Agritourism businesses, University Extension offices, ED entities	2019-2022



**GOAL 2: MAINTAIN, MODERNIZE AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Review number of loan and grant funded infrastructure projects, and review annual FCC report relative to increase of access to broadband in Meramec Region

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Identify the maintenance needs and funding solutions for existing infrastructure

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Maintain awareness of infrastructure needs within counties and cities in the Meramec Region</b>	Meet with local officials on regular basis to develop a full list of specific infrastructure needs to include broadband, water, sewer, etc.  Consider creation of Infrastructure Advisory Committee (similar to Transportation Advisory Committee)  Work with local governments on asset management utilizing GIS and other tools	MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing
<b>Share information on funding opportunities including TIF, CID, NID, TDD, bond issues, grants, etc.</b>	Host workshops with participating communities and counties to share information on funding opportunities  Provide links to grant funding workshops and seminars	MRPC, ED entities, Local governments, Developers	2020

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Modernize and expand infrastructure in our region

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Promote the availability and expansion of broadband/high speed internet across the region</b>	Identify gaps in broadband/high speed internet services and encourage expansion of service availability	MRPC, IT companies, Rural Cooperatives	2019
<b>Improve major transportation systems in the region, including I-44, 63, 50, 21 &amp; 8, Rail and Air</b>	Promote the increase of transportation funding	MRPC/Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), MODOT	Ongoing
	Prioritize specific projects for major transportation systems	MRPC/Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), MODOT	Annually
	Encourage and support regional Jet Service for FLW	MRPC, SOP	Ongoing
<b>Improve transportation networks, including local routes, highways, and air to support growth of logistical and distribution industries</b>	Promote freight routes within the region for additional funding opportunities	MRPC/TAC, ED entities	Ongoing
<b>Upgrade utility systems in rural areas and local communities (Water, Sewer, Electric, Natural Gas)</b>	Encourage small communities to consider regionalization of utility systems	MRPC, Local governments, Water/Sewer Districts	Ongoing
		MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing

	<p>Assist communities with grant/loan applications for system upgrades</p> <p>Educate the public and local community leaders on costs involved with expansion and modernization of infrastructure</p>	MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing
<b>Provide modern services and facilities for communities in the region</b>	Do an assessment of the communities' physical assets and then determine what it will take to bring them all up to an established standard	MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing

### GOAL 3: PROMOTE REVITALIZED, HEALTHY, SAFE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Evaluate Kids Count data, number of jobs in healthcare, annual County Health rankings, high school graduation rates, increase in workforce housing, access to food stores, number of recycling programs, and number of visitors at state parks

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Encourage local governments to design a business model that is 21st century driven and globally minded in governance

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Educate and promote the use of planning</b>	Offer trainings on how to create and implement community planning	MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing
	Develop and offer a presentation on planning to city councils and other local government entities	MRPC, Local governments	Ongoing
<b>Broaden the scope of participation in local government</b>	Establish a Student in Government Day for high school students to begin interest in becoming the next generation of community leaders	MRPC, School Districts, Local governments	Ongoing
	Sponsor an annual meet and greet for citizens to meet local government officials	MRPC, Local Governments	Ongoing
	Aid in the development of leadership training in the region	MRPC, University Extension offices, Local Businesses, Delta Leadership Institute	2020
<b>Raise awareness of financing, philanthropy, and management tools available to local communities</b>	Form a group of local business owners, investors, and bankers to prepare information on government financing and management tools to inform local communities	MRPC, Local businesses, Financial institutions, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis	2021
	Host workshops and best practices on philanthropy and fundraising	MRPC, MRFC, CFO	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Provide quality, patient-centered healthcare in the region

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Support small hospitals and county healthcare facilities</b>	Include the needs of regional healthcare facilities within MRPC's state and federal priorities and advocacy opportunities	MRPC, Healthcare facilities	Ongoing
<b>Assist in the fight against substance abuse</b>	Implement the Rural Health Opioid Program grant in Crawford, Dent, Maries, and Phelps Counties	MRPC, Local Health departments, Mental Health agencies	2019-2021
	Secure funding to implement the Rural Health Opioid Program grant in additional four counties (Osage, Gasconade, Pulaski, and Washington)	MRPC, Local Health departments, Mental Health agencies	2019
<b>Encourage utilization of healthcare services and facilities within the Meramec Region</b>	Identify gaps in service and promote quality healthcare facilities in the region through existing marketing efforts	MRPC, Local Health Departments & facilities	Ongoing
<b>Attract and retain healthcare professionals</b>	Encourage high school and college career fairs to include healthcare professions and opportunities to mentor and shadow healthcare professions in the region	MRPC, School Districts, CWDB, ED entities, Higher Education institutions	Ongoing
	Review compensation packages to ensure they are competitive and promote the quality of life in the Meramec Region	Healthcare facilities	Ongoing
<b>Promote healthy living</b>	Encourage replication of county programs similar to Healthy Dent County	MRPC, Dent County, Local Governments	Ongoing
	Encourage and expand an increase in recreational opportunities that support healthy living	MRPC, Local communities, University Extension offices, Local Health departments, MO Foundation for Health	Ongoing
<b>Advocate on behalf of rural critical access and Federally Qualified Health Center (FHQC) institutions and keep abreast of the issues impacting them</b>	Access the FHQC data to determine needs and then form a committee of regional healthcare facilities and FHQC leadership to address gaps in service and unmet needs	MRPC, Healthcare facilities, MO Rural Health Association, FHQCs	2022

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Encourage lifelong learning in the region

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Introduce students to all educational opportunities including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships, etc.</b>	Support career days in schools that include both colleges/universities and major employers/professionals  Expose students to local manufacturing sites where STEM, on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs are in place and where employers are actively recruiting for employees  Collaborate with Mo Career Center's Manufacturing Day activities to expose students to jobs in manufacturing	MRPC, School Districts, CWDB, Local businesses, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing
<b>Assist schools to keep kids safe</b>	Assist schools in identifying resources and securing grants to address school safety and security	MRPC, School Districts, Local & State Law Enforcement	Ongoing
<b>Promote flexibility for post-secondary education in our region</b>	Encourage colleges to provide more flexibility for non-traditional learners who may be working, including more evening, weekend, and online classes  Encourage educational institutions to increase the availability of life enrichment classes to the community	MRPC, Local Colleges, CWDB	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Promote smart and sustainable housing developments

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Improve quality and affordability of housing stock</b>	Encourage the development of workforce housing, both owner occupied and rental  Seek resources to improve and/or upgrade existing housing stock  Encourage local communities to adopt and enforce regulations for property maintenance	MRPC, Local Governments, Private Developers, Non-profits	Ongoing
<b>Encourage use of financing tools and incentives at state and federal levels</b>	Share information on existing financing tools	MRPC, Local Governments, State and Federal Agencies	Ongoing
<b>Identify need and increase availability of housing for vulnerable populations</b>	Determine need and encourage development accordingly for transitional youth, veterans, elderly, homeless, etc.	MRPC, Local Governments, Private Developers, Non-profits, State and Federal Agencies	Ongoing



	Seek and share resources to address needs		
<b>Encourage residential development with adequate infrastructure</b>	Work with local communities to adopt development standards to ensure adequate infrastructure prior to development	MRPC, Local Governments	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Maintain a physical environment that supports healthy communities

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Educate citizens on best practices related to water quality</b>	Provide the public with information on what factors influence the quality of their water  Hold or participate in community events that promote best practices related to water quality	MRPC, State and Federal Agencies	Ongoing  2020
<b>Ensure availability and access to state and federal lands for future generations</b>	Educate the public on the value of state and federal lands and support organizations that are involved in their protection  Encourage the development of the Rock Island Trail  Work with local communities to increase and improve access to state and federal lands (i.e. County roads, stream crossings, trails, etc.)  Build stronger relationships with agencies responsible for state and federal lands	MRPC, State and Federal Agencies, Local Governments, Grassroots Support Organizations, other Regionals Planning Commissions	Ongoing
<b>Increase availability and convenience of solid waste management</b>	Encourage/support recycling and reuse  Incorporate recycling into existing and future solid waste management contracts  Seek and secure financing opportunities to establish infrastructure	MRPC, Solid Waste Management Districts, Local Governments, Waste Haulers, Landfill Operators, Non-profits	Ongoing
<b>Encourage the development of livable communities</b>	Sharing information with cities regarding standards and the importance of livable communities  Identify and share financing resources and local incentive opportunities to encourage the development of livable communities  Work with communities on ADA Transition Plans	MRPC, Local Governments, Developers	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 6:** Promote recreation, cultural activities, entertainment, and place-making within the region

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Improve existing assets in the region and expand opportunities</b>	Identify and share available resources with local governments and non-profits  Promote regional collaboration around cultural activities and entertainment	MRPC, Local Governments, Non-profits, Businesses, Naturally Meramec, Federal Resources, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing

**GOAL 4: CREATE A ROBUST WORKFORCE PIPELINE TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY****PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Review of WorkKeys testing goals, number of people with some college or associates degrees, average county wage**OBJECTIVE 1:** Maximize business engagement

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Improve communication between businesses and the public regarding job needs</b>	Host, convene and support regular business/community forums where area business leaders can share their current and forecasted employee needs and skill requirements with elected officials, school and higher education leadership, economic development professionals	MRPC, Local Governments, School Districts, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Development, US Department of Labor – St. Louis office	Annually
	Encourage job fairs and employer open-houses	MRPC, CWDB, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, Businesses	Annually
<b>Increase the availability of on-the-job training, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships, etc.</b>	Encourage businesses to establish formal internship/apprenticeship programs that can be promoted through workforce development centers and college placement offices	MRPC, Businesses, CWDB, Colleges	Ongoing
	Promote successful apprenticeship programs by identifying business champions who can share their success stories and advocate for additional apprenticeships		
	Advocate for on-the-job training funds to meet the needs of regional manufacturers	MRPC, State and Federal Legislators	Ongoing
	Encourage schools to permit job-shadowing between students and local businesses	MRPC, School Districts, Businesses	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 2: Focus on Improving Worker Skills**

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Align career pathway elements and services through education and training systems</b>	Support existing models of business/community advisory committees that is utilized by State Technical College to include more local business leaders serving on appropriate educational institution advisory committees	Educational Institutions, Businesses	Ongoing
	Encourage employers to complete job profiling to require National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC)	Businesses, Workforce Development, CWDB	Ongoing
<b>Improve employees' soft and life skills</b>	Expand emphasis on soft and life skills through existing programs such as FFA, 4-H, FCCLA, and Junior Achievement	School Districts, Local Organizations, University Extension offices	Ongoing
	Encourage businesses to host trainings for current employees relative to improving skill sets	Businesses, Workforce Development, CWDB	Ongoing
<b>Expand opportunities for on-the-job training</b>	Convene workshops between educators, employers, and workforce development to discuss on-the-job training issues	MRPC, Educational Institutions, Businesses, Workforce Development, CWDB	2021
	Encourage the use of shorter-term training models and make education and skill attainment programs more accessible and affordable for all workers	Businesses, Workforce Development, CWDB	2022
<b>Ensure the counties in the region maintain community WorkReady status and promote business utilization of WorkKeys</b>	<p>Maintain ongoing efforts to earn and retain WorkReady status for each county within the region</p> <p>Encourage employer participation in WorkReady communities</p> <p>Promote and highlight businesses that require or prefer National Career Readiness Certificates to improve certification value and encourage more workers to take the exam</p>	MRPC, Local Governments, Economic Developers, CWDB, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing

**OBJECTIVE 3: Increase career awareness**

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Create an awareness initiative and increase workplace exposure that promotes manufacturing, technical, and health care careers</b>	<p>Continue to coordinate annual Manufacturing Day tours for students, high school counselors and advisors</p> <p>Expand Manufacturing Day model into technical and healthcare fields, building trades, etc.</p> <p>Provide better and more accessible career data – occupational demand, wages, and education requirements – for use by students, parents, counselors, and educators</p>	MPRC, Businesses, Economic Developers, CWDB, School Districts, MO Enterprise	Annually

**OBJECTIVE 4: Attract and Retain More Talent**

Strategy	Action Items	Partners and Stakeholders	Timeline
<b>Encourage employers to improve the work experience</b>	Expose business leaders within the region to the worker retention strategies	Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing
	Survey companies with long-term employees to see what are these employers doing to retain staff and then share data with regional businesses	MRPC, Businesses, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing
<b>Promote sense of community within the region</b>	Promote employer participation in community events where employees are paid to help out in identified and supervised projects in the community	MRPC, Chambers of Commerce, Businesses, Tourism	Annually
<b>Develop recruitment strategies for attracting quality workforce</b>	Encourage communities within the region to establish alumni associations in order to encourage alumni to return to their hometown	Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, Local Governments	Ongoing
	Assist businesses with development of a recruitment strategies plan tailored specifically to each job	MRPC, Businesses, CWDB, Local Governments, Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing
<b>Identify and address statewide policies that create barriers to expanding the workforce</b>	Participate in statewide Department of Economic Development (DED) and Chamber efforts to identify policies and then advocate for change at the state level	MRPC, State Agencies, State Legislators	Ongoing

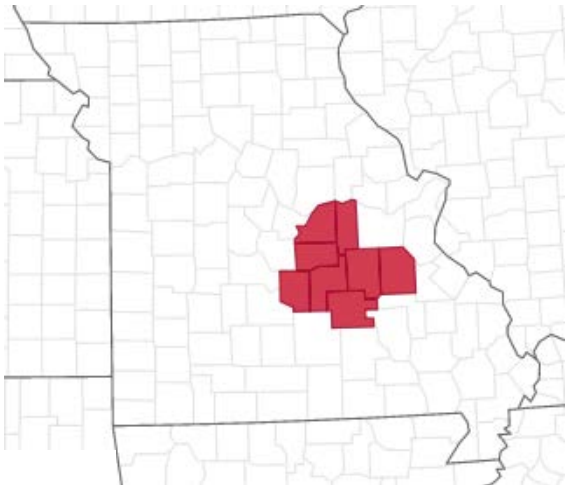


# APPENDICES



## Innovation 2.0

Type a geography name and select: Meramec Regional Planning Commission



*Innovation Index for Economic Development Districts*

### Meramec Regional Planning Commission

91.8

Headline Index

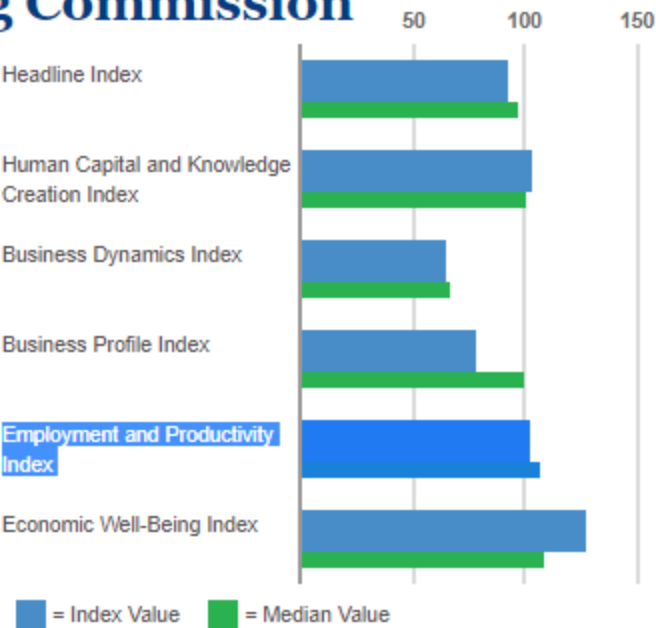
255

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has normal relative capacity for innovation.**

About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services





## Meramec Regional Planning Commission

**102.4**

Human Capital and Knowledge  
Creation Index

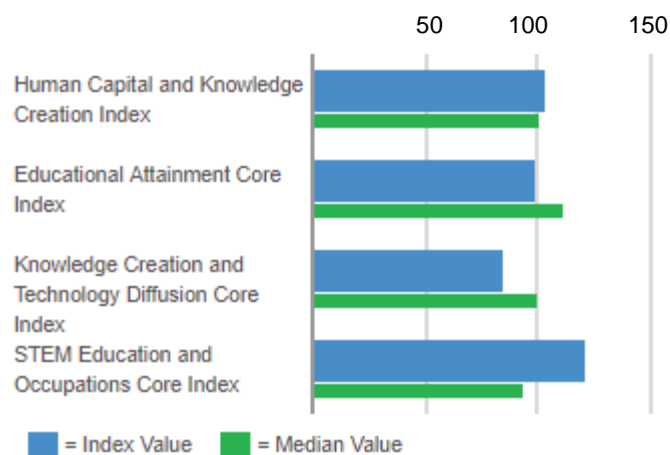
**182**

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has a normal human capital and knowledge creation level.**

About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services



This major index is composed of the following measures:

Measure	Index	Rank
❖ "Salad Days" Population Growth (Ages 25-44)	123.6	<a href="#">128</a>
<b>Educational Attainment Core Index</b>	<b>98.3</b>	<b><a href="#">251</a></b>
❖ High School Attainment (Ages 18-24)	169.0	<a href="#">55</a>
❖ Some College, No Degree (Age 25+)	74.8	<a href="#">295</a>
❖ Associate Degree (Age 25+)	86.0	<a href="#">244</a>
❖ Bachelor's Degree (Age 25+)	71.6	<a href="#">302</a>
❖ Graduate Degree (Age 25+)	90.1	<a href="#">187</a>
<b>Knowledge Creation and Technology Diffusion Core Index</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b><a href="#">263</a></b>
❖ Patent Technology Diffusion	73.4	<a href="#">309</a>
❖ University-Based Knowledge Spillovers	97.8	<a href="#">144</a>
❖ Business Incubator Spillovers	81.2	<a href="#">271</a>
<b>STEM Education and Occupations Core Index</b>	<b>120.2</b>	<b><a href="#">93</a></b>
❖ STEM Degree Creation (per 1,000 Population)	199.7	<a href="#">5</a>
❖ Technology-Based Knowledge Occupation Clusters	69.6	<a href="#">318</a>
❖ High-Tech Industry Employment Share	91.4	<a href="#">188</a>



# Meramec Regional Planning Commission

**63.9**

Business Dynamics Index

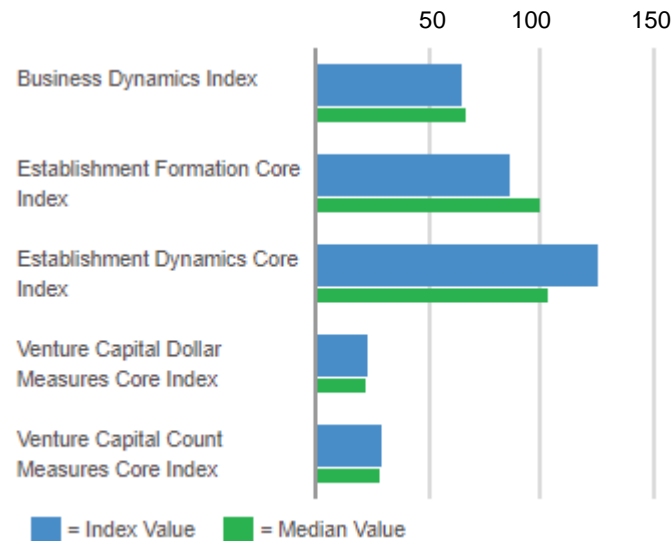
**206**

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has a normal business dynamics level.**

About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services



This major index is composed of the following measures:

Measure	Index	Rank
<b>Establishment Formation Core Index</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b><a href="#">282</a></b>
Establishment Births to All Establishments Ratio	118.2	<a href="#">117</a>
Traded Sector Estab. Births to All Estab. Ratio	70.3	<a href="#">320</a>
Jobs Attributed to Estab. Births to Total Employment Ratio	96.2	<a href="#">196</a>
Change in Estab. Births to All Estab. Ratio	59.4	<a href="#">381</a>
<b>Establishment Dynamics Core Index</b>	<b>124.8</b>	<b><a href="#">104</a></b>
Estab. Expansions Divided by Estab. Contractions	110.4	<a href="#">146</a>
Estab. Births Divided by Estab. Deaths	80.2	<a href="#">302</a>
Traded Sector Establishment Dynamics	183.9	<a href="#">28</a>
<b>Venture Capital Dollar Measures Core Index</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b><a href="#">181</a></b>
Venture Capital (Average Annual \$)	91.0	<a href="#">96</a>
Expansion Stage Venture Capital \$	0.0	<a href="#">136</a>
High-Tech Venture Capital \$	0.0	<a href="#">148</a>
Change in Venture Capital \$	0.0	<a href="#">108</a>
<b>Venture Capital Count Measures Core Index</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b><a href="#">165</a></b>
Initial Public Offerings	0.0	<a href="#">30</a>
Venture Capital Deals (Average Annual)	85.3	<a href="#">156</a>
Change in Venture Capital Deals	0.0	<a href="#">102</a>



# Meramec Regional Planning Commission

**77.0**

Business Profile Index

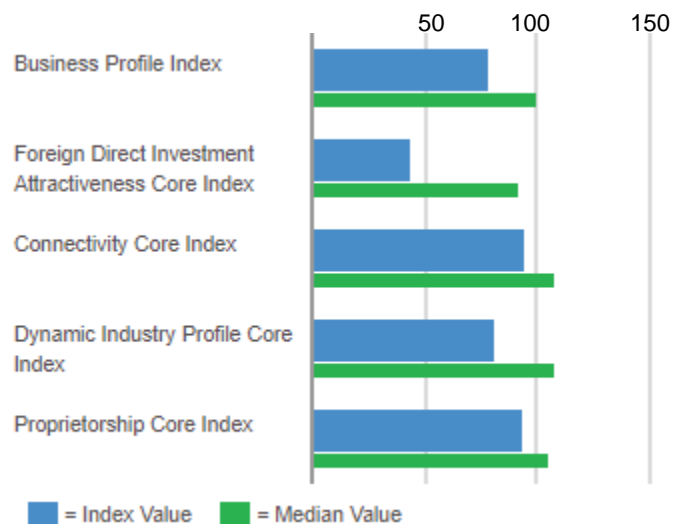
**357**

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has a very low business profile level.**

About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services



This major index is composed of the following measures:

Measure	Index	Rank
<b>Foreign Direct Investment Attractiveness Core Index</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>313</b>
FDI Employment Index, Foreign Source.	0.0	258
FDI \$ Investment Index, Foreign Source..	0.0	258
FDI Employment Index, National Source...	81.0	219
FDI \$ Investment Index, National Source....	93.3	180
<b>Connectivity Core Index</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>278</b>
Residential High-Speed Connection Density	63.7	307
Change in Residential High-Speed Connections	125.1	156
Farm Operators with Internet Access	90.4	252
<b>Dynamic Industry Profile Core Index</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>352</b>
Small Establishments (Average)	92.1	190
Large Establishments (Average)	65.9	317
High-Tech, Early-in-Life-Cycle Establishment Ratio	83.1	235
<b>Proprietorship Core Index</b>	<b>92.6</b>	<b>277</b>
Proprietorship Rate	86.7	234
Change in Proprietorship Rate	95.5	190
Proprietor Income to Total Wages and Salaries	98.5	167
Availability of Capital from All Banks	89.9	251





## Meramec Regional Planning Commission

101.6

Employment and Productivity  
Index

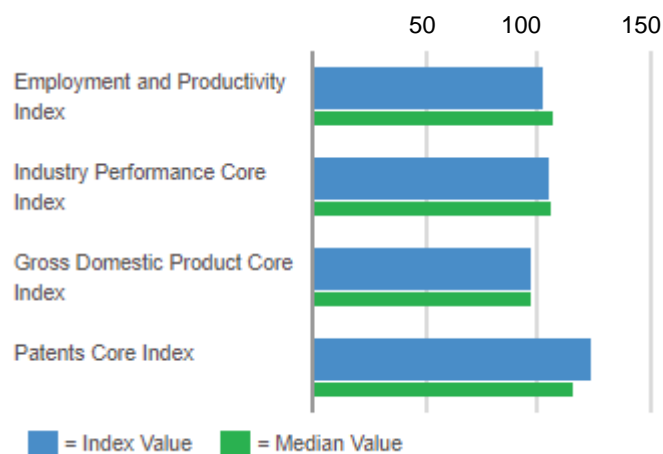
245

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has a normal employment and productivity level.**

### About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services



This major index is composed of the following measures:

Measure	Index	Rank
Job Growth to Population Growth Ratio	89.6	<a href="#">210</a>
Change in Share of High-Tech Industry Employment	71.3	<a href="#">309</a>
<b>Industry Performance Core Index</b>	<b>104.8</b>	<b><a href="#">196</a></b>
Cluster Diversity	85.4	<a href="#">253</a>
Cluster Strength	103.8	<a href="#">96</a>
Cluster Growth Factor	125.0	<a href="#">107</a>
<b>Gross Domestic Product Core Index</b>	<b>96.8</b>	<b><a href="#">189</a></b>
GDP per Worker	80.0	<a href="#">290</a>
Change in GDP per Worker	113.5	<a href="#">136</a>
<b>Patents Core Index</b>	<b>122.8</b>	<b><a href="#">150</a></b>
Change in Average Patenting Rate	103.2	<a href="#">146</a>
Patent Diversity	142.4	<a href="#">145</a>



# Meramec Regional Planning Commission

**126.5**

Economic Well-Being Index

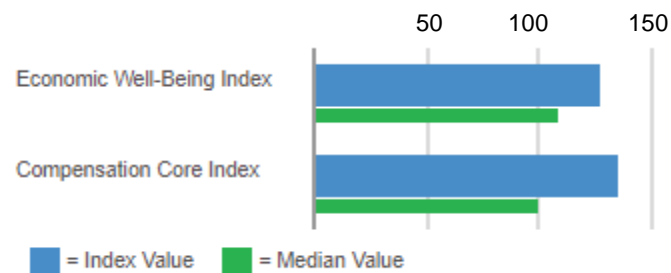
**105**

Rank of 384 EDDs

**This area has a high economic well-being level.**

## About this Area

Largest City/Town:	Rolla city
Population:	198,662
Per Capita Income:	\$36,214
Dominant Sector:	Health Care and Social Services



This major index is composed of the following measures:

Measure	Index	Rank
Per Capita Personal Income Growth	88.7	<a href="#">236</a>
Income Inequality (Mean to Median Ratio)	175.0	<a href="#">35</a>
Poverty Rate (Average)	94.3	<a href="#">230</a>
Unemployment Rate (Average)	93.6	<a href="#">207</a>
Dependency Based on Income Sources (Ratio)	90.9	<a href="#">231</a>
Net Migration (Average)	199.8	<a href="#">1</a>
<b>Compensation Core Index</b>	<b>134.8</b>	<b><a href="#">78</a></b>
Growth in Wage/Salary Earnings per Worker (Average Annual)	120.4	<a href="#">109</a>
Change in Proprietors' Income per Proprietor (Average Annual)	149.1	<a href="#">81</a>

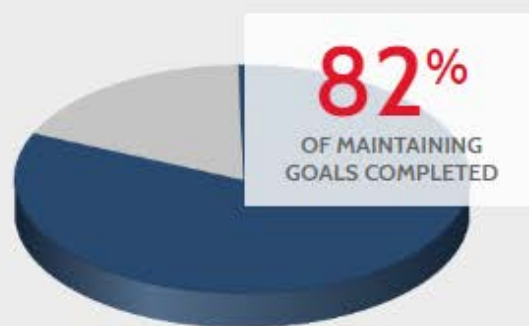
# CRAWFORD COUNTY

United States › Missouri › Crawford ›  
change change

Crawford County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce	Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	133	120
Current ✓	41	121
Transitioning	208	196
Workforce category not identified		0

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	13	9

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	37
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	34
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	5

# DENT COUNTY

United States > Missouri > Dent >  
[change](#) [change](#)

Dent County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	82	440
Current	✓	25	87
Transitioning	✓	109	190
Workforce category not identified			+

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	15	1

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	28
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	27
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	6



# GASCONADE COUNTY

United States > Missouri > Gasconade >  
change change

Gasconade County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ①

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	132	244
Current	✓	38	109
Transitioning	✓	79	80
Workforce category not identified			0

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	21	11

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	27
① New and reaffirming employers support goal	24
① New and reaffirming employers support actual	9

# MARIES COUNTY

United States › Missouri › Maries ›  
change change

Maries County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	77	221
Current	✓	13	87
Transitioning	✓	68	84
Workforce category not identified			+

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	2	3

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	11
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	8
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	4

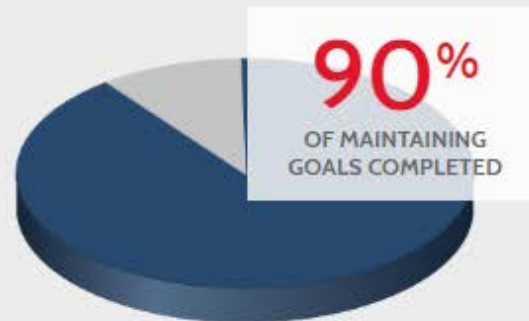
# OSAGE COUNTY

United States › Missouri › Osage ›  
change change

Osage County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals <sup>1</sup>

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	110	255
Current	✓	36	91
Transitioning	✓	57	68
Workforce category not identified			0

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	13	7

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	18
<sup>1</sup> New and reaffirming employers support goal	14
<sup>1</sup> New and reaffirming employers support actual	4

# PHELPS COUNTY

United States > Missouri > Phelps >  
change change

Phelps County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	274	279
Current	✓	54	177
Transitioning	✓	231	411
Workforce category not identified			0

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	25	14

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	63
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	59
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	8



# PULASKI COUNTY

United States > Missouri > Pulaski >  
change change

Pulaski County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	346	379
Current	✓	43	114
Transitioning	✓	225	244
Workforce category not identified			+

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	17	6

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	42
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	42
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	1



# WASHINGTON COUNTY

United States › Missouri › Washington ›  
change change

Washington County is a **certified** Work Ready Community that is actively engaged in **maintaining** their status.

Showing: Jan 1, 2012 to Nov 30, 2018

Goals updated only for participating counties



[Visit County Website](#)



## Maintaining Goals ⓘ

Workforce		Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	✓	173	328
Current		217	198
Transitioning	✓	223	343
Workforce category not identified			0

	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	11	14

## Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	46
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support goal	41
ⓘ New and reaffirming employers support actual	20