

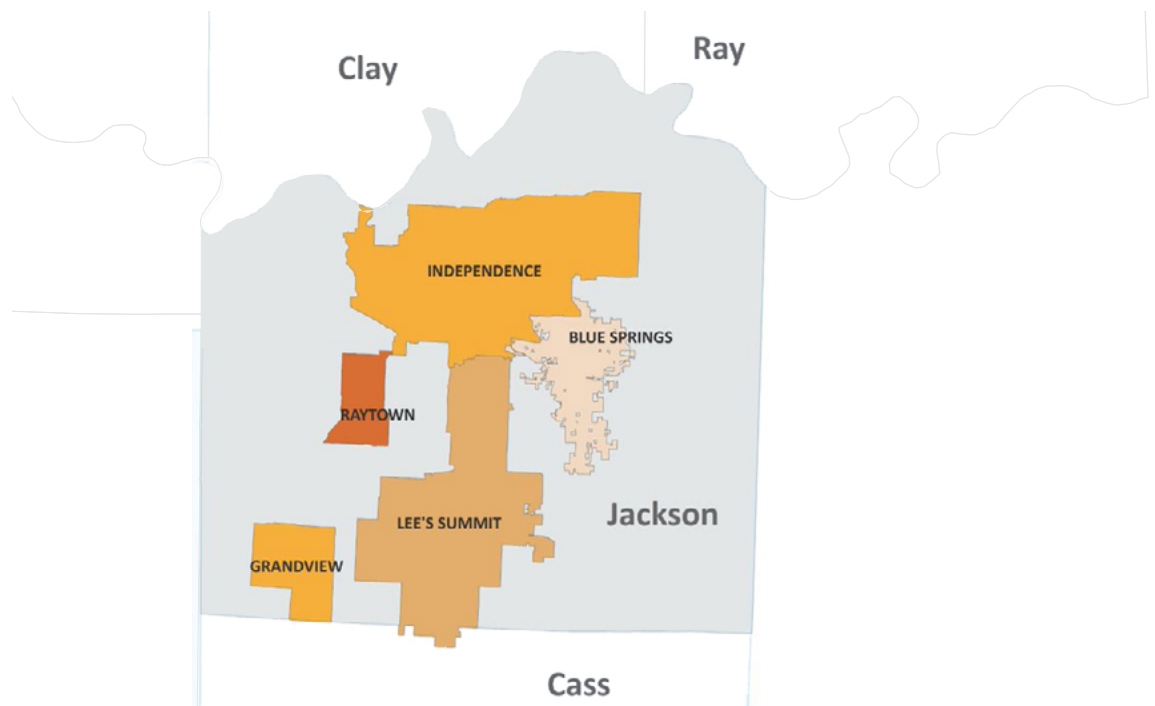
BACKGROUND

By resolution (attached), the City Council adopted a Statement of Common Purpose to Renew and Expand the Eastern Jackson County Shared Service Collaborative Partnership. The partnership emphasizes government innovation and collaborative problem solving for the purpose of exploring various cooperative initiatives among the cities of Blue Springs, Grandview, Independence, Lee's Summit, and Raytown, Missouri with support by the Mid-America Regional Council.

PURPOSE

This report to the governing body provides information on the regional work and positive outcomes occurring among the partnering cities.

PARTNERSHIP AREA



2021-22 ACTIVITIES

Information Sharing: Despite the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the core team found meetings beneficial to exchange information on COVID-19 impacts and strategies such as personnel policies, continuity plans, conversion to remote service delivery, etc. Staff continue to use the partnership as a platform for sharing information on emerging topics. Participants say they enjoy having a sounding board to discuss new opportunities such as ARPA and IIJA funding.

Employee Hotline: MARC is working to renew the cooperative purchasing agreement with StopIt! for a regional ethics, safety and fraud hotline and case management vendor. The partnership advocated for and led the original procurement. Independence and Lee's Summit have adopted the platform, and it is available to all other municipalities in the MARC nine-county region.

Illegal Dumping: An EJC team worked to evaluate community successes and challenges with illegal dumping and pilot strategies to reduce dumping. This work has been integrated with a larger regional effort of the MARC Solid Waste Management District.

Exit Interviews: Blue Springs and Independence continue to partner with MARC to provide independent, third-party surveys and interviews for exiting employees. Participation in the exit interviews increased in 2021 compared to 2020. Other communities may be considering participation in this program or may be conducting their own independent exit interview program, such as Lee's Summit. The current contract expires in September 2022. Blue Springs credits the partnership with helping the city develop the tools to bring this service in-house. The partnership will discuss extending this service among other participating cities.

Key findings from the second-year report:

Positive

- A strong majority of respondents (91%) stated that the job was accurately described upon hire, and most (77%) stated that they were properly trained in the few first weeks of employment. A few comments indicated that supervisor support and ongoing training was lacking.
- Most respondents (72%) experienced a positive relationship with the most recent supervisor.
- A solid majority (64%) indicated that compensation and benefits are good or excellent.
- Over half of respondents (61%) have a positive or neutral opinion of the quality of communication within the department. This was noted as an area of concern in 2020, and the 2021 ratings are considerably improved.

Areas for improvement

- Only about half of respondents (51%) felt their were adequate opportunities for advancement.
- Almost half (47%) stated the city could have prevented them from leaving. The most frequent reason cited was the desire for better pay and benefits.

Co-Responders: The Eastern Jackson County, Missouri Co-Responder Program is a multidisciplinary collaboration funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. The partners are the three city police departments - Blue Springs, Independence and Lee's Summit, and two mental health providers - Comprehensive Mental Health Services (CMHS) and ReDiscover.

MARC administers the grant to provide three additional mental health clinicians who are embedded with law enforcement to respond on mental health calls for service. In the most recent reporting period (Jan. – Mar. 2022), co-responders provided 209 on-site assessments (about one-third of mental health calls for service).

These on-scene interventions help connect people in crisis with mental health services and prevent unnecessary arrests, emergency room visits and future police calls for service. ReDiscover recently identified additional funds to expand the program in Grandview and Raytown. The current federal grant expires in 2023, and the partnership is working to pursue future sources of funding to sustain and expand the program.



"Connected Heart" by Shelly Pinto displayed at 10th & Main in Blue Springs

Networking: A networking event was held over three weeks in October and November 2021 among 52 employees representing the five cities.

Participants were paired with peers in a neighboring community for a job shadow experience.



Participants were surveyed about their experience. 100% of respondents said the event was relevant and useful for their work. 91% said the experience improved their knowledge and skills.

Comments included:

"[It is] nice to have contacts at other municipalities in case we need to follow up."

"I gained an understanding of how larger and smaller cities utilize resources differently."

"Now I have a future contact to network with a better understanding of how other cities operate."

"We can improve efficiency and transparency for citizens by learning from one another."

The next event is tentatively planned for spring 2023.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact the city manager's office for more information or to suggest an initiative for further review by the partnership.