

August 12, 2020

RE: **Regional Economic Framework for the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area**

Dear Regional Partners:

The Regional Economic Framework was developed as a partnership between the Metropolitan Council, GREATER MSP, and the Center for Economic Inclusion (CEI). Our three entities play different, but complementary roles with respect to supporting the region, its economy, and its people. The Framework builds off the Minneapolis-Saint Paul regional economic development strategy, *Thrive MSP 2040* and its policy plans, and the economic inclusion work of CEI. Details about the input process is outlined in the attachment.

The Metropolitan Council formally adopts the Framework, but all three entities have contributed to developing and reviewing this work. Both GREATER MSP and CEI support the Metropolitan Council's adoption of the Framework.

In developing and promoting the Framework, each entity has taken on responsibility to reflect, build upon, or garner new input from its members and partners. This includes counties, cities, tribal government, community organizations, universities, foundations, the private sector, and community members. Staff from each of the partners are coordinating messages and sharing information among their networks, co-hosting information sessions, and responding to inquiries and suggestions.

Adoption of the Framework will enable organizations across the region to make applications for U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding, with final decisions determined by the EDA. While we encourage all eligible organizations to apply, our three entities will prioritize the economic needs of the region's most vulnerable people in our efforts to solicit and support applications for EDA funding. This action is an expression of our shared commitment to make significant progress in closing the region's severe racial income and wealth gaps.

Specifically, all three partner organizations are committed to the following:

- Promote the Framework to entities that have explicit goals to mitigate disparate economic impacts on vulnerable BIPOC businesses, workers, and learners (including adaptation and recovery efforts related to COVID-19).
- Encourage all prospective applicants in the region to include explicit racial equity goals.
- Provide technical assistance as requested to non-profits and community-based organizations, and encourage partnerships with eligible grant recipients (e.g., local units of government) and help to facilitate those partnerships as needed.
- Provide letters of support for funding applications that clearly demonstrate a commitment to closing racial income and wealth gaps and which meet multiple regional strategic priorities.
- Each quarter, track and report back to our governing bodies how the Framework is being used for EDA funding applications, the success of those funding applications, and analysis of the impact related to the Regional Economic Framework's strategic priorities.

Sincerely,

Charlie Zelle, Chair  
Metropolitan Council

Tawanna Black, CEO  
Center for Economic Inclusion

Peter Frosch, CEO  
GREATER MSP



# Summary of Framework Inputs and Commitments

## *GREATER MSP*

Since its inception in 2013, GREATER MSP has engaged hundreds of business, government, and civic stakeholders regarding the region's economic competitiveness. This includes the identification and development of nine strategic priorities for the region as part of a regional economic competitiveness strategy. This work forms the foundation of the Framework's strategic priorities.

### **Regional Briefings**

Staff have been briefing and engaging county and city economic development staff, considering their plans and priorities into the overall Framework. Staff also briefed the Regional Council of Mayors on April 13<sup>th</sup>. During the week of May 4<sup>th</sup>, staff briefed GREATER MSP's Board of Directors and their Partner Working Group.

### **Information Sessions**

GREATER MSP has, to date, sponsored three webinars related to the Framework and funding opportunities through the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The June 15<sup>th</sup> session included Nicole Griensewic, Executive Director of Region 9 Development Commission, and Lynn A. Knight, Executive Vice President at the Institute for Sustainable Development. The June 25<sup>th</sup> webinar included Darrin Fleener, our regional representative with the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The July 15<sup>th</sup> session focused on discussion of potential funding applications and their relationship to the Framework's strategic priorities.

## *Center for Economic Inclusion*

The Center for Economic Inclusion has been advancing regional inclusive growth since the Center's inception in 2017. The Center's expertise in racial equity and inclusive economic growth brought capacity and commitment to the Framework's development and implementation. The Center has helped identify implementation examples, goals, and roles for specific Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) in implementation of the nine strategic priorities.

## *Metropolitan Council*

As the organization that adopts the Framework, staff briefed the Council Executive Committee on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Staff representatives from the partner organizations presented to the Metropolitan Council on May 6<sup>th</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, and July 15<sup>th</sup>, prior to formal adoption on August 12, 2020. The Council is supporting the Framework and its implementation through regional research, planning, and engagement.

### **Equity Advisory Committee**

Partner organization staff presented to and sought feedback from the Council's Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) on July 21, 2020. Included in the discussion was a future role for the EAC including work on the upcoming Economic Value Atlas.

### **Tribal Nation Engagement**

Council staff consulted Kirk Crow Shoe, Tribal Liaison for the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Subsequently, Chair Zelle and Senior Planner Michael Larson participated in a briefing call of the State's tribal leaders on May 19, 2020. On June 12, 2020, representatives from Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) sent the Council a letter of support for the Framework process. On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Council staff provided leaders of the following organizations in the region an opportunity comment on a preliminary draft: SMSC, Prairie Island Indian Community, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Minnesota Indian Business Association.