

Information Item

Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole



Meeting Date: January 17, 2024

Topic

Imagine 2050 Proposed Vision Statement

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stat. § 473.145
Prepared/Presented:	Michael Larson, Planning Analyst, Community Development Council Member W. Toni Carter, Chair, 2050 Regional Development Guide Work Group
Division/Department:	Community Development / Regional Planning

Background

The 2050 Regional Development Guide (RDG) Work Group has drafted a brief and overarching vision statement for Imagine 2050. At their first meeting on November 15, the group reviewed the set of regional values and goal statements that the Council had endorsed last summer. They also reviewed vision statement examples from other regional and national organizations and considered what characteristics make an effective vision statement.

At their meeting on December 20, the Work Group finalized the following draft Imagine 2050 Vision Statement for consideration by the full Council:

“A prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive.”

The Work Group discussed an alternate phrasing in the form of a sentence. It incorporates the word “imagine,” which is a nod to the name Imagine 2050. The Work Group does not prefer this alternative, as they are concerned that the “we” can be misinterpreted.

“We imagine a prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive.”

Vision Statement Guidance

According to Toni Hoy of BoardEffectⁱ (information shared by Council Member Cederberg), a quality vision statement has the following qualities:

- Clear
- Concise
- Forward-thinking
- Broad
- Abstract
- Aligned with mission, core values, and culture.

Along these lines, the Work Group wanted to share examples of other vision statements, which include the following:

City of Portland

"Portland is a prosperous, healthy, equitable, and resilient city where everyone has access to opportunity and is engaged in shaping decisions that affect their lives."

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Division

"Clean water for future generations."

Habitat for Humanity

"A world where everyone has a decent place to live."

National Alliance on Mental Illness

"NAMI envisions a world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares."

Oceana

"Oceana seeks to make our oceans as rich, healthy, and abundant as they once were."

Overall Process to Date

The Council's engagement on values, vision, and goals began in March of 2022 with much of the core work completed that year. Staff came back to the Council several times to engage and consider feedback from stakeholder input. Furthermore, early policy engagement work provided opportunities to test this language.

Below is a list of milestones associated with this work:

3/9/22	Council introduction to vision, values, and goals process
6/11/22	Review of early engagement
8/17/22	Synthesis of emerging themes from ongoing engagement
11/30/22	Naming of significant cross-cutting regional issues
2/1/23	Endorsement of values and detailed vision statements
3/15/23	Briefing of new Council
6/1/23	Endorsement of reconstituted vision statements as goals*

* During the first months of 2023, staff realized that our detailed vision statements functioned better as cross-cutting regional goals.

Regional Goals

The language for regional goals has been durable and well-received, but there are two points of feedback for Council consideration as introduced to the Work Group on November 15.

Staff are recommending a change to the first goal statement, as indicated below. This recommendation is the result of feedback staff received from members of the Equity Policy Development Team for the Transportation Policy Plan. Calling out "newcomers" did not set well with them, as newcomers are also residents. The original intent of this language was to acknowledge that people new to the region often report that they do not feel part of the community. Staff are suggesting replacing "all residents and newcomers" with the more expansive phrase "every person".

The second consideration is whether the term "productive" is appropriate for the second goal. The goal may inadvertently suggest that all residents should or need to be productive. Staff are recommending that it be struck. The idea of productivity in relationship to the economy may be more closely related to the third goal, but staff are not recommending any changes to that goal.

Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive

Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and ~~all residents and newcomers~~ every person feels welcome, included, and empowered.

Our Communities are Healthy and Safe

All our region's residents live healthy, ~~productive~~, and rewarding lives with a sense of security, dignity, and wellbeing.

Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient

Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and the economy including issues of choice, accessibility, and affordability.

We Lead on Addressing Climate Change

We have mitigated greenhouse gas emissions and have adapted to ensure that our communities and systems are resilient to climate impacts.

We Protect and Restore Natural Systems

We protect, integrate, and restore natural systems to protect habitat and ensure a high quality of life for our region.

Regional Values

Staff are not recommending any changes to the statements of regional values. They are shown below for reference:

Equity

We value the people and communities of our region. Our region is economically and culturally vibrant. We also recognize, however, the harm and disparities that injustices, including racism, have created.

We are dedicated to creating systems, policies, and programs that repair and heal past harm, foster an equitable future, and eliminate disparities. Communities that have been marginalized in the past will be at the center of this work in leadership roles.

Leadership

We value those in our region who inspire and motivate others for positive change. Our region is known for its civic engagement. We need broad and inclusive leadership to help confront the significant challenges we face around equity, climate change, safety, and other pressing issues.

To maximize the potential of our region and its communities, we turn to leadership that is diverse, collaborative, culturally competent, and innovative. We encourage this kind of leadership across all sectors including business, government, non-profit, and education.

Accountability

We value being effective in our work and achieving measurable outcomes. Our region is known for its research, initiatives, and collaborations. We must be open to criticism and clearly understand when we are not achieving results or have harmed communities.

We recognize that we can maximize our effectiveness by being in partnership with others. We will also be transparent and flexible so that we can change course when needed.

Stewardship

We value our region's resources. Our resources include our natural, economic, and financial resources as well as our infrastructure. We recognize that these resources may be vulnerable over time to changing conditions, including from climate change.

We must design our systems and allocate our resources in ways that can be sustained over time and support the needs of future generations.



ⁱ BoardEffect is a brand of Diligent Corporation, which supports governance leaders of nonprofits, higher education institutions, etc. <https://www.boardeffect.com/blog/what-vision-statement-why-important/>

