

Information Item

Community Development Committee



Meeting date: September 15, 2025

Topic

Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program – 2050 Policy Outcomes Measurement

District(s), member(s):	All
Policy/legal reference:	Minn. Stats. §§ 473.145-147
Staff prepared/presented:	Sarah Nelson, Senior Researcher (651-602-1396); Krysten Ryba-Tures, Research Manager (651-602-1821)
Division/department:	Community Development / Research

Background

With the adoption of Imagine 2050 in February comes the opportunity to develop a new measurement program that centers outcomes related to intersectional regional policy direction and regional goals.

Input on program direction

On June 4, 2025, community development research staff shared final updates for indicator projects under Thrive MSP 2040 (the previous regional development guide) to Committee of the Whole. Discussion included the trade-offs between:

- “Indicator project” approach—a limited number of high-level indicators selected to describe progress on pre-defined outcomes or goals; or
- “Programmatic” approach—a strategic alignment of monitoring, research, and policy that uses thematic structures to organize expansive sets of direct and indirect measures.

A programmatic approach to Imagine 2050 outcomes measurement received the strongest support. This approach includes pairing regional indicators with measures that describe the efforts of regional partners as well as Met Council’s direct roles for a more holistic understanding of regional change.

On September 3, 2025, community development research staff shared an update on program direction in the context of Imagine 2050’s five regional goals to Committee of the Whole. Staff reviewed the programmatic approach to outcomes measurement and presented a slate of proposed measures for the regional goals. While discussion was limited due to time constraints, the direction of the outcomes measurement program received support.

Additional conversation centered on the importance of further evolution as this work develops – including measurement about the implementation of Imagine 2050’s equity frameworks and commitments to the American Indian Advisory Committee. Staff explained that further refinement will be needed as data sources at both the federal and local level continue to evolve. The discussion concluded with a request for additional time and conversation about the outcomes measurement program.

Imagine 2050 amendment

Staff have continued the development of the Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program. In addition to the Committee of the Whole presentation on September 3, additional conversations are

scheduled in September and October. These presentations “build” to a full picture of proposed measures for regional goals and policy outcomes:

- September 15 – Community Development Committee
 - Proposed outcome measures for the 2050 Housing Policy Plan, 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, and 2050 Land Use Chapter
 - Dedicated webpage on metro council.org/Imagine2050
- September 23 – Environment Committee
 - Proposed outcomes measures for 2050 Water Policy Plan
- October 8 – Metropolitan Council
 - Draft of Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program Amendment
 - Part A – Program description (Draft)
 - Part B – Technical appendix of revised, proposed measures for policy outcomes and regional goals
- October 15 – Committee of the Whole
 - Placeholder for additional conversation about the regional goal measures and/or Outcomes Measurement Program (if needed)

At Metropolitan Council’s October 22 meeting, staff will seek authorization via business item to release the Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program amendment for public comment (October 23 to December 22, 2025) and set a public hearing date of December 10, 2025.

Proposed measures for Imagine 2050’s policy areas

With input on program direction, we have continued our development of the Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program. At the September 15 Community Development Committee meeting, research staff will present proposed measures for the three 2050 policy chapters: Land Use, Housing, and Regional Parks and Trails. Each set of proposed measures was developed with policy staff, technical information experts, and researchers, and informed by 2050 community engagement and evidence-based public policy research. Staff will review and discuss each area, offering clarity and input on proposed measures and whether additional measures on key topics or areas of Met Council’s work are required for the initial amendment slate.

Documents detailing the full list of proposed measures for each community development policy area are provided as “additional material” for this information item.

