



# *Imagine 2050* Engagement Update and Findings

Land Use Advisory Committee



November 16, 2023

# *Imagine 2050* Engagement Update



## Today's Conversation

- Engagement approach and stakeholder groups
- Resulting engagement themes by regional goal
  - Equitable and inclusive region
  - Healthy and safe communities
  - Dynamic and resilient region
  - Protect and restore natural systems
  - Lead on climate change
- Competing goals and discussion
- Future engagement efforts
- Next steps for land use discussions

# Engagement approach

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- Community-centered, equity-focused
  - Integrated and collaborative
  - Data and values-driven
  - Expansive
  - Recursive and accountable

# Stakeholders

## **Government and private sector partners: Historic and ongoing collaborators**

- Elected & Appointed Officials
- Local Staff
- Private sector
- Nonprofits
- Minnesota & Federal

## **Residents and advocates: Extensive and equity-focused conversations**

- Historically excluded communities
- Residents using Met Council services
- Youth
- New Minnesotans
- Advocates

# Government and Private Sector Partners: Historic and ongoing collaborators



# Residents and advocates: Extensive and equity-focused conversations

## Historically excluded communities

Black, Brown, Indigenous affinity staff and community members

Disabled advocacy staff and community members

Residents experiencing poverty and housing insecurity

## Residents using Council services

Housing Voucher Recipients

Metro Transit, Metro Mobility

Park and trail visitors

## Youth

Young Leaders Collaboration

Young people from historically excluded communities

Transportation needs research

Specialized topic engagement

## New Minnesotans

Affinity groups

Young Leaders Collaboration

East African, Hmong, Latino, and multicultural affinity staff and community members

## Advocates

Climate

Aging, disability and social service

Neighborhood organizations

# Regional Goals

## Working Draft of Regional Goals

### **Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive**

Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and all residents and newcomers feel 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.

# Engagement findings



## Key details:

- Analyzed results are from conversations with over 1,000 stakeholders, hundreds of hours of engagement, hundreds of pages of analysis, and findings across all policy areas.
- Competing priorities are identified.
- Findings are themed by regional goals
- Top-level findings only



# Consistent themes

Major concerns about affordability and accessibility in housing

Desire for native habitat and natural system restoration and protection; recognized appreciation and need for greenspace across the region

Value of natural systems for all aspects of health and wellbeing: mental, physical, cultural, spiritual, communal, environmental

Need for community building and fostering of “3rd spaces,\*” and safe, accessible recreation

Need for support, education, spaces, and activities for youth

Use abandoned or un-used spaces for community wellbeing

\* “3<sup>rd</sup> space” is a term used to describe places unrelated to work or home

# Equitable and inclusive region



**Residents experience challenges accessing Met Council systems and services.**

**Local governments largely support prioritizing equity in Met Council efforts;** they want the Met Council to be aware of local context and to offer clear guidelines and support.

*Photo credit: "Redlining in Minneapolis" story map*

# Healthy and safe communities



**Residents want to live in communities that support social connections and vibrant cultural landscapes.** Stakeholder recommendations include multimodal travel, outdoor access, walkable communities, acknowledging historical inequity, and land use support for small businesses.

**Connection to nature provides physical, emotional, and mental well-being.** Water quality, environmental education, park system maintenance, and transit access were mentioned as helping residents connect to nature. This connection is valued as a refuge from heat and other climate change effects.

**Safety is a multidimensional issue, and a particular concern for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit users.** Rural crashes, affordability-safety tradeoffs are concerns. Conflicting views over use of policing.

# Dynamic and resilient region



**Residents struggle with housing affordability,** lack proximity to desired cultural landscapes, and safety. High housing costs pressure moves from neighborhoods where they'd like to live.

**Community land use needs include spaces for growing food, outdoor recreation, small businesses, and community interaction.**

**Regional thinking, collaboration, accountable policy implementation, understanding local context are key to region's success.**

# Lead on climate change



Government stakeholders expect the Met Council to lead the region on climate change issues.

Stormwater issues and smart growth are top-level climate concerns for local government.

Requests for support around Met Council leadership on climate change include **additional funding, technical assistance, and data resources**. Local government and residents seek idea sharing, funding, messaging assistance, research and mapping support.

# Protect and restore natural systems



**Habitat restoration and water resource protection are important for ecosystem health.** Drought, as well as water and park pollution, are emerging concerns. Clean water is of essence for current and future generations.

**Preserving and increasing green spaces, tree canopy are important.** Green space in land use, large acreage park reserves, a metro natural resources corridor are desired efforts. Regulatory mechanisms and incentives for green spaces are needed.

**Connectivity is important.** Humans are a part of the environment. We need more connection to nature and across valuable ecosystems.

# Stakeholders articulate competing priorities that transcend either/or thinking



Bold action on key concerns (climate, equity, affordability, water sustainability, natural systems protection) competing with local control, capacity/resources.



Desires for low-density housing and expanded transportation infrastructure competing with addressing climate change, walkable communities, or multimodal transportation options.



Locations of high-quality affordable housing competes with desire for locations with cultural belonging and community ties.



Safety is complex, requires understanding multiple perspectives. A top priority for Transportation Policy Plan government stakeholders competes with police concerns from other stakeholders.



Lack of affordable housing for young, older, and diverse family types competing with goal to maintain historic character, maintain low-density communities



Preservation of agricultural land and green space competing with housing development

# Competing priorities: Land use



## Compact vs. dispersed development

- “I don’t have a license and don’t know how to drive... I want more things close by.”
- “You can’t just focus all in one area. Take up every square inch of the city – more housing and job opportunities, not just in the Twin Cities.”

## Expanding public transit services to suburban edges and emerging suburban edges

- “We have a Blue Line and Green Line, I wish we could add more... to Eagan... or to Roseville, another line out to Brooklyn Park... I wish there were more accessible lines to places further out. Metro Mobility is a lot of work. The trains are better.”
- “I would feel unsafe if there was a bus in [Hastings]... I like to live around working people that have and own cars, not people who ride the bus and hang around the corners. I appreciate that there is no public transportation in Hastings.”



# Discussion

## Questions

- What is your advice to address competing priorities?
- What have you been hearing from stakeholders on these topics as you engage with communities in your district?

## Competing priorities topics:

- Bold action vs. local control, resources
- Low-density vs. climate change or desire for walkable, multimodal options
- High quality housing is not always where residents want to live.
- Safety is complex, with many components. Different feelings and views on policing
- Desire for diverse new housing types vs. historic character and low-density
- Preserving land vs. new development

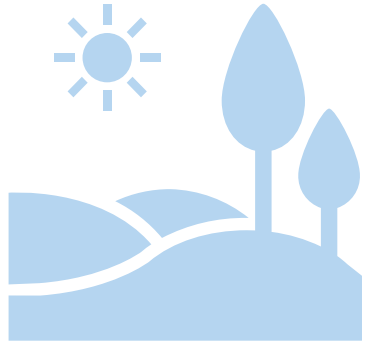
# Future engagement efforts and initiatives



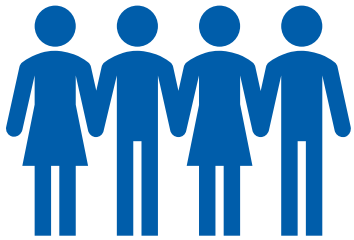
Technical advisory groups working with engagement data



Local government engagement:  
One-on-ones, rural engagement with food producers, topic-based focus groups



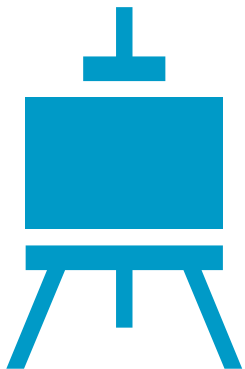
Study results:  
Water Values Survey, Transportation Needs in Everyday Life, Parks Historical Cultural Study, Housing analysis of developers' perspectives



Population forecasts engagement



Second regional land use cohort expands beyond youth



Arts in Policy Planning, "Creatively Imagine 2050"

# Next steps for land use discussions



## Coming up...

- Objectives discussion with Regional Planning Advisory Group (Metro Cities)
- Ongoing density analysis and discussion
- Draft existing conditions and drivers of change analyses
- Introduce revised land use objectives to the Regional Development Guide Working Group and Community Development Committee (CDC)
- Draft land use policies and supporting actions for discussion with LUAC and CDC
- Competing priorities policy discussions



# Questions?

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