

# Information Item

Land Use Advisory Committee



**Special Meeting Date:** April 18, 2024

## Topic

Draft Land Use Policies and Actions for Objective 2 (transportation), Objective 5 (housing), Objective 8 (economic wellbeing)

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## Background

The Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) has reviewed and provided feedback on draft land use objectives for *Imagine 2050*. The most recent discussion at the March 21, 2024, meeting focused on policies and actions for three objectives related to growth management, community design and wellbeing, and equity. At the April 18th meeting, the Committee will briefly review a comparison of *Thrive MSP 2040* land use policies with proposed *Imagine 2050* language, identifying new themes, approaches, and re-emerging ideas under the objectives. The Committee will review land use policies and actions drafted for *Imagine 2050*, for three objectives:

Objective 2: Maximize opportunities for growth in places well-served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Objective 5: Ensure that in all types of communities, people find housing opportunities that align with their needs.

Objective 8: Support the economic wellbeing of our region and its communities.

Objective 2 reflects key policy areas critical to land use and transportation. Objective 5 focuses on housing, and Objective 8 addresses economic wellbeing. The draft language has been shared with the Regional Development Guide Council Member Work Group, Community Development Committee, the Council Member Climate Work Group, and the Committee of the Whole.

The remaining two objectives (below) will be discussed separately.

Objective 4: Prioritize land use and development activities that protect, restore, and enhance natural systems at all scales.

Objective 7: Implement land use and development practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, embed climate adaptation, and create resilient communities.

## Discussion Questions

The Committee will be asked to consider these questions:

- Are new approaches to policies going in the right direction?
- Should existing approaches be refined?
- Are there existing approaches that should not be carried forward?
- Are we missing any approaches in any areas?

## Comparison of land use direction in *Thrive MSP 2040* and *Imagine 2050*

	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i>	<i>Imagine 2050 Objectives</i>
<b>Growth Management</b>	Orderly and Efficient Land Use: Align land use, development patterns, and infrastructure to make the best use of public and private investment.	Respect the relationship with land and water as a foundation for regional growth.
<b>Transportation</b>	Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice: Sustain and improve a multimodal transportation system to support regional growth, maintain regional economic competitiveness, and provide choices and reliability for the system's users.	Maximize opportunities for growth in places well-served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.
<b>Community Wellbeing and Safety</b>	<i>No Thrive MSP 2040 equivalent</i>	Establish vibrant, inclusive, connected, and safe communities for people to live in.
<b>Natural Systems</b>	<p>Natural Resources Protection: Conserve, restore, and protect the region's natural resources to ensure availability, support public health, and maintain a high quality of life.</p> <p>Water Sustainability: Conserve, restore, and protect the quality and quantity of the region's water resources to ensure ongoing availability, support public health, and maintain a high quality of life.</p>	Ensure that development activities contribute to the fullest protection and restoration of natural systems on every level.
<b>Housing</b>	Housing Affordability and Choice: Promote housing options to give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable, and affordable homes.	Ensure that in all types of communities, people find housing opportunities that align with their needs.
<b>Equitable Development</b>	<i>No Thrive MSP 2040 equivalent</i>	Remedy past and present discriminatory land use practices.
<b>Climate Resilience</b>	Building in Resilience: Promote sensitive land use and development patterns to achieve Minnesota's adopted greenhouse gas emissions goals at the regional scale, and to develop local resiliency to the impacts of climate change.	Strengthen the climate resilience of neighborhoods and communities through sustainable land use and development patterns.
<b>Economic Wellbeing</b>	Economic Competitiveness: Foster connected land use options to provide businesses and industries with access to materials, markets, and talent.	Support the economic wellbeing of our region and its communities.



**Objective 2: Maximize opportunities for growth in places well-served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.**

**New themes, approaches, and re-emerging ideas under the objective**

This table includes the policy and action themes that are either proposed into be new in *Imagine 2050*, are similar or the same as *Thrive MSP 2040* policies and actions or reflect re-emerging or evolving approaches from previous regional plans.

New Themes	New Approaches	Same/Similar Approaches
<p>Support for planning processes that incorporate communities, prevent displacement, and weave multiple investments together to achieve multiple goals.</p> <p>Considering the beneficial effects of transit, bike, and pedestrian-friendly land uses on objectives in other policy areas, such as VMT reduction, water usage, and housing choice.</p>	<p>More specific language and support for pedestrian/ bikeable/ transit-friendly areas, aligning the full range of facilities and activities needed to build a supportive environment.</p> <p>Increased consideration for forward-looking alignment of land use effects on other regional responsibilities.</p> <p>Stronger language about supporting regional centers of economic activity.</p>	<p>Partnership between the region and local jurisdictions.</p> <p>Land use impacts on residents' ability to access jobs and services in the region.</p> <p>Aligning impacts between land use and transportation system</p> <p>Importance of land use and transportation systems in supporting regional economic performance.</p> <p>Multi-modal approach to linking land use and community needs.</p> <p>Land development density expectations that leverage transportation investments.</p>

**Objective 2: Maximize opportunities for growth in places well-served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.**

The region includes existing and planned regional transit, bicycle, and walking/rolling infrastructure. Many residents use transit, bicycle, or walk/roll for some or all their daily travel needs due to cost, ability, health goals or simple preference. Additional housing, jobs, and services in places that support these uses can have many benefits, including:

- Increased accessibility of the region for those without access to a personal vehicle.
- Reduced need for vehicle trips and/or their cost and duration.
- Reduced GHG emissions related to transportation and land use.
- Efficacy of regional investment in regional transit/bicycling infrastructure.
- Increased positive health outcomes due to greater physical activity.

Places well-served by transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure can be identified in several ways. Comprehensive Plans and other local plans often call out these places specifically. Transit Market Areas, an analysis maintained at the Council, identify areas with favorable density, walkability, and levels of car ownership. Population analysis such as age (children/elderly), ability, income, and personal preferences can also identify areas with likely non-automobile using residents.

Communities in the region can support and reinforce these areas through planning and implementation that encourages additional density around activity centers and along corridors, a greater mix of uses, and improvement to the walkability and livability of the area. A critical piece of local of local planning is the development of interconnected local streets networks that provide more opportunities to support travel by modes other than a car. The design of the networks, the street layout, the relationship with the surrounding land uses, and the space for people to travel without a car is important in creating effective and safe places for people to be.



## ***Policies and Actions Draft Language***

1. Support community-led planning and anti-displacement efforts to ensure community cohesion during change resulting from public investments and market demand, at all scales of development.
  - a. Consider mitigation measures for displacement due to changes in the built environment including relocation assistance programs, land disposition practices, anti-displacement funding programs, support of commercial and residential land trusts, and others.
  - b. Identify appropriate mitigation measures for different scales of development to provide a consistent and transparent level of planning and engagement.
  - c. Consider implementation of new policies or retrofitting existing ones to better meet the needs of communities vulnerable to displacement resulting from public investments.
  - d. Support community-centered engagement practices and community-led decision-making as part of development and public investment.
2. Focus planned residential and commercial development near available and planned transit and transportation infrastructure.
  - a. Develop and implement transit-oriented development (TOD) policies and design at all levels of development (site plan, subdivision, long-range plan).
  - b. Plan higher density residential developments around public transportation hubs and corridors.
  - c. Provide technical assistance for retrofitting/transitioning from one transit market area to another.
  - d. Provide technical resources related to accommodating additional density, reducing parking and parking impacts, travel demand management (TDM), placemaking/placekeeping, pedestrian networks, and related considerations.
3. Plan for and build an interconnected system of local streets, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities that prioritize the individual experience in planning for transit, bicycling, walking, and rolling.
  - a. Invest in local efforts to encourage growth in locations that support improved access, such as strategic land acquisitions, infrastructure investments, and community/developer engagement.
  - b. Identify regional, state, and federal funding sources to pair with local efforts to access funding through programs like Regional Solicitation for Transportation funding, regional trail acquisition and development funding, federal programs, and new opportunities as they become available.
  - c. Include market studies in local implementation strategies and priorities.
  - d. Support a comprehensive pedestrian network assessment for integration into land use planning and development projects.
  - e. Address network connectivity gaps to improve accessibility and personal safety.
  - f. Pursue partnerships to collaborate on funding programs that enhance biking, walking, and rolling access to centers of economic activity.
4. Support regional centers of economic activity through land acquisition for public investment, pollution cleanup, preservation, accessibility improvements, and other planning support.
  - a. Coordinate with Council programs including Livable Communities programs, water quality grant programs, transportation funding, and housing investments.
5. Prioritize the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of environmental and natural resources near transportation features and areas where transit is available.
  - a. Integrate environmental and natural features in road rights-of-way, along highways and corridors, and other public transportation features, including near transit where available.
  - b. Integrate planning for non-motorized access to transit locations, neighborhoods, employment centers, and parks through various regional, state, and federal funding sources.
  - c. Leverage the development process to integrate natural features that can provide bicycle and pedestrian protections as part of planning for local roads, intersections, connections, trails, sidewalks, and bikeways.



**Objective 5: Ensure that people in all types of communities find housing opportunities that align with their needs.**

**New themes, approaches, and re-emerging ideas under the objective**

This table includes the policy and action themes that are either proposed to be new in *Imagine 2050*, are similar or the same as *Thrive MSP 2040* policies and actions or reflect re-emerging or evolving approaches from previous regional plans.

New Themes	New Approaches	Re-emerging Ideas
<p>Inclusive and diverse housing options.</p> <p>Inclusive and equitable decision-making, engagement, and approach.</p> <p>Stronger emphasis on community connection and belonging, and consideration and integration of cultural norms and values in housing needs.</p> <p>Repurposing/redevelopment of existing infrastructure.</p>	<p>Collaborate and co-create with community in decision-making processes.</p> <p>Stronger acknowledgement of housing needs for diverse households including multigenerational households, seniors, people with disabilities, and indigenous people and communities of color.</p> <p>Stronger, more coordinated approach to promote housing choice across the region to allow people to choose where they live.</p> <p>Recognize, reflect on, and remedy historical land use and housing discriminatory practices.</p>	<p>Focus on promoting housing options for diverse needs.</p> <p>Proximity to job centers and economic opportunities.</p> <p>Partner with internal and external stakeholders to provide guidance and technical assistance to communities.</p> <p>Collaborate with internal and external housing stakeholders to analyze local markets and identify housing needs.</p> <p>Participation in regional programs and grant funding.</p>

**Objective 5: Ensure that people in all types of communities find housing opportunities that align with their needs.**

The housing affordability crisis that persists in our region limits people from choosing the location and type of housing in which they want to live. Instead, people must look outside of their desired community for stable and affordable housing options. The issue is further compounded for those who use housing vouchers or are disabled, because they are already severely limited in their housing options. Planning for a diverse housing stock supports housing choice by providing options for all ages, incomes, and abilities. Lower cost units help meet affordable housing needs, while housing variety allows people to transition to housing that better meets their evolving needs. The location of housing types within a community impacts choice regardless of its diverse housing stock.

A diverse housing stock facilitates lifelong residence within one's community and enables people to remain in place as long as desired which deepens community connections. Essential to this vision is the availability of an ample supply of affordable housing distributed across the region and within communities, with the freedom for people to have housing choices. Embracing a diverse range of housing options within a community facilitates individuals' ability to stay rooted in their preferred neighborhoods across different life stages.

To cultivate strong community connections and foster a sense of belonging, people need to be at the center of decision-making. This necessitates implementation of inclusive land use planning policies, inclusive approaches and zoning to implement land use policies, and community-centered engagement practices to reflect the diverse perspectives and lifestyles of our region. Policies need to be expansive, consciously steering away from imposing norms derived solely from the dominant culture and class values.

Council research has shown that single family neighborhoods, both existing and planned, dominate the residential landscape. The lack of residential diversity within neighborhoods limits a household's ability



to stay in neighborhoods as their lifestyle needs change. By embracing equitable development practices in land use planning and policymaking, the needs and preferences of all residents are integrated into the built form. Inclusive housing options for diverse populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, multigenerational households, and communities of color involves creating housing that accommodates different family structures and individual needs. When affordable housing options are located near job centers, people are further enabled to live near their workplace and this intersection of land uses supports familial relationships.

### ***Policies and Actions Draft Language***

1. Support the creation of diverse housing types which are integrated and connected within neighborhoods.
  - a. Encourage land use categories which support more than one housing type to allow for higher densities, mixed uses, and mixed income developments.
  - b. Support local controls and fiscal devices which allow mixed use developments and diverse housing types by right, including modular homes in single-family districts, cooperative housing, and multi-generational housing options.
  - c. Accommodate manufactured home communities and educate residents about modular housing benefits.
  - d. Support local land use controls and fiscal devices that incentivize the creation of affordable homeownership opportunities.
  - e. Support fair housing initiatives and housing programs that remediate historic inequities in land use policy implementation and development practices.
  - f. Support revision of local regulations and fiscal controls as well as local policies, procedures, and practices to remedy historic land use and housing discriminatory practices.
  - g. Provide guidance and technical assistance to support housing and land use policy implementation in local comprehensive planning.
2. Identify the specific housing needs of the region's growing aging population and people living with disabilities.
  - a. Support the integration of supportive services within or near housing developments such as healthcare facilities, social services, and recreational programs.
  - b. Promote universal design for residential uses of all types to provide more opportunities for seniors and people with disabilities.
3. Prioritize a variety of housing types across all income levels close to local destinations including neighborhood centers, public parks, transit nodes where applicable, and community gathering spaces.
  - a. Improve transportation choices to connect senior housing and affordable housing to essential services, healthcare facilities, and recreational amenities.
  - b. Design and retrofit neighborhoods to reduce auto-dependency.
  - c. Incentivize public transportation hubs and multimodal connections within and adjacent to housing developments, where transit services are available.
4. Repurpose existing vacant or underutilized buildings for affordable housing.
  - a. Explore opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing buildings, such as repurposing vacant schools or commercial properties into affordable or senior housing developments.
  - b. Identify opportunities to streamline local development review processes, programs, and incentives that may help realize adaptive reuse for affordable or senior housing developments.



## Objective 8: Support the economic wellbeing of our region and its communities.

### New themes, approaches, and re-emerging ideas under the objective

This table includes the policy and action themes that are either proposed to be new in *Imagine 2050*, are similar or the same as *Thrive MSP 2040* policies and actions or reflect re-emerging or evolving approaches from previous regional plans.

New Themes	New Approaches	Re-emerging Ideas
<p>Emphasis on racial equity by reducing and eliminating economic disparities and injustices in the region.</p> <p>Prioritization of workforce development strategies and resources.</p> <p>Greater emphasis on climate change and environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>Place-based support to ensure economic wellbeing and vitality.</p> <p>Increasing equitable access to a diverse range of jobs and workforce development resources.</p> <p>Integration and consideration of culture and art to preserve cultural assets and support business districts in communities of color.</p>	<p>Focus and integration of economic competitiveness strategies in the region.</p> <p>Collaboration and partnerships with agencies, stakeholders, and communities to promote economic wellbeing.</p> <p>Plan, partner, and provide research to understand regional economic needs.</p>

### Objective 8: Support the economic wellbeing of our region and its communities.

The region historically has had a robust and diverse economy, often leading our peer regions with growing industries that have competitive advantages. However, racial economic disparities, and economic injustice are significant and chronic challenges that our region must confront. Disparities in employment, poverty, income, and homeownership by race and ethnicity persist in the Twin Cities and—in some cases—are the largest nationwide. As our region continues to grow in racial diversity, it is imperative to address these disparities in a meaningful way to ensure prosperity for all residents of the region. This dynamic becomes even more important as we recognize that job relocations to the region, as well as international immigration, have been waning. Regional and local economic conditions have significant impacts on the wellbeing of places important to our region and communities. These include our downtowns, other regional job and industrial centers, local main streets, and neighborhoods.

The economic vitality of our region requires active support of the region's economic assets, such as export industries and sectors of strength. We must commit to addressing the place-based and accessibility needs of industries and businesses, recognizing the importance of equitable access to resources and opportunities especially for emerging entrepreneurs and small businesses. The Metropolitan Council should actively promote reinvestment and innovation in underutilized areas, aiming to revitalize and maximize the potential of these communities. We must also strive to enhance the accessibility of jobs for the region's workforce, facilitating greater opportunities for employment and economic participation. With our commitment to inclusive growth, we focus on meeting the needs of industries and enhancing the earning potential of workers through education, training, and mentoring programs which can be accomplished through partnership and collaboration. We strive to eliminate income and wealth disparities by race, advocating for equity and justice in economic opportunities. We are dedicated to creating accessible economic pathways for immigrants, acknowledging their valuable contributions to our region's diversity. Through these multifaceted efforts, we strive to build a resilient, inclusive, and thriving economy that benefits all people.

#### ***Policies and Actions Draft Language***

1. Support efforts to keep the region affordable for residents, travelers, and businesses.
  - a. Conduct ongoing research to understand the place-based and accessibility needs of the region's industries, businesses, and communities.



- b. Disseminate research both conducted by the Council and by others related to the dynamics of the regional economy and its needs.
  - c. Develop and/or support programming that preserves the affordability of housing and commercial space in places experiencing significant private investment.
  - d. Develop programming (e.g. grants) that reduces the cost-burden and uncertainties for industries, businesses, and entrepreneurs seeking to locate and/or expand in fully developed areas (i.e., redevelopment / renovation / re-use).
2. Support industries that directly contribute to addressing climate change and promoting environmental sustainability.
    - a. Partner and collaborate with other agencies and regional stakeholders to expand workforce development opportunities across climate and environmental sustainability fields.
    - b. Partner with others to support and provide tools, resources, and technical assistance to businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to develop business models that integrate sustainable and eco-friendly business practices.
  3. Value and promote economic growth and wellbeing of black, indigenous, people of color, immigrants, people of all ages, and all abilities in the region through equitable access to economic resources.
    - a. Promote equitable access to quality education, skill-building, mentorship programs, and diverse job training programs for all residents regardless of age, race, disability, or immigration status. Where possible, the Council will model skill building, mentorship, and internship programs that support equitable workforce development.
    - b. Expand culturally responsive access to financial services and resources for underserved communities, including immigrants and people of color (ex. credit building, sharia compliant financing, etc.).
    - c. Collaborate with agencies and other regional stakeholders on planning and programming that promote the economic wellbeing of the region, prioritizing efforts that reduce racial economic disparities.
  4. Advance economic equity and wellbeing in historically underserved communities by fostering growth of small and local businesses, entrepreneurship, and diverse industries.
    - a. Integrate arts and cultural considerations into regional planning processes to ensure that cultural assets are recognized, preserved, and integrated into the fabric of the community.
    - b. Preserve and support business districts in communities of color.
    - c. Encourage businesses and developers to adopt diversity and inclusion initiatives aimed at recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees from diverse racial and immigrant backgrounds.
    - d. Collaborate with historically underserved communities to identify community economic development strategies that preserve and support their local business districts and resources.
    - e. Establish local controls and fiscal devices to preserve business districts that have historically served and been focused on the needs of historically marginalized or vulnerable communities.
    - f. Create opportunities for the Council to support and partner with organizations that support entrepreneurship and small business development among historically marginalized and immigrant communities by providing access to affordable loans, mentorship programs, business incubators, and technical assistance.

