

Metropolitan Council

Meeting date: August 12, 2020

Subject: Accept the Public Comment Report and Adopt the Regional Economic Framework

District(s), Member(s): ALL

Policy/Legal Reference: Minn. Stat. § 473.145

Staff Prepared/Presented: Michael Larson, Senior Planner (651-602-1407)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Accept the attached public comment report and adopt the revised Final Draft of the Regional Economic Framework.
2. Commit to an ongoing partnership with the Center for Economic Inclusion and the Minneapolis Saint Paul Economic Development Partnership (GREATER MSP) regarding the implementation, monitoring, and future updates to the Regional Economic Framework.
3. Direct Council staff to engage the Equity Advisory Committee on an ongoing basis with regard to implementation of, and future revisions or amendments to, the Regional Economic Framework.
4. Direct Council staff to help ensure that collaboration among regional stakeholders occurs whenever organizations utilize the Regional Economic Framework to develop programs or solicit funds.
5. Request that staff from each of the partner organizations to prepare joint quarterly reports on the implementation of the nine strategic priorities identified in the Framework, including the use of EDA funds awarded to entities in the region.
6. Use the Regional Economic Framework to guide technical assistance to local governments and other entities throughout the region.

Background

The Metropolitan Council developed the *Regional Economic Framework* in partnership with the Center for Economic Inclusion and GREATER MSP. It serves as an alternative Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDA requires a CEDS equivalent alternative as a prerequisite to access funding opportunities, including supplemental appropriations via the CARES Act.

Any eligible entity in the region can use this document to meet the regional economic planning prerequisite for EDA funding applications. Applications must articulate how their proposed projects or programs support the strategies of the Framework. In the case of our region, those strategies are grounded in addressing our region's greatest challenges around racial economic disparities.

The Council posted the draft Regional Economic Framework for public review on July 9, 2020. During the public comment period, the Council received comments from 12 local units of government, organizations, and individuals via letters and emails. Staff from the Council, the Center for Economic Inclusion, and Greater MSP worked to confirm the direction in the document and finalize language in response to comments. Recommended

revisions in response to the comments and other minor text edits have been incorporated into the Framework.

Rationale

The EDA requires a regional governing body to approve a CEDS equivalent alternative. The *Regional Economic Framework* supports and is consistent with *Thrive MSP 2040* and the region's system plans and policies and is a further articulation of the themes around economic competitiveness contained therein. By adopting the Framework, the Metropolitan Council acts in a regional convening role, supporting the work of the partnership and other parties through research, engagement, planning, technical assistance, and programming.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The *Regional Economic Framework* addresses the Thrive Outcomes of Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability, and Sustainability. In particular, the Regional Economic Framework integrates racial equity into each of nine economic strategic priorities for the region: *Regional Brand & Image, Racial Inclusion, Workforce & Skills, Job Growth, Talent Migration and Retention, Startups and Innovation, New Climate Economy, Transportation & Mobility, and Affordability*.

Funding

The development of the Regional Economic Framework has been part of the Metropolitan Council Community Development Division work plan.

Known Support / Opposition

The leadership of each of the three partner organizations support the *Regional Economic Framework*. There is no known opposition. The public comment period provided opportunity for input on the *Regional Economic Framework*. The attached Public Comment Report documents input received on the public draft, including support and opposition to different elements of the document, along with revisions incorporated in response to the comments.

Attachments

The following documents are included as attachments to this report and posted as separate links to aid review and navigation of the materials:

- Regional Economic Framework Public Comment Report, including responses to comments
- Final Draft of the Regional Economic Framework (August 2020) – changes incorporated
- Final Draft of the Regional Economic Framework (August 2020) – changes tracked