

Business Item

Metropolitan Council



For the Metropolitan Council: November 12, 2025

Business Item: 2025-289

Release 2025 Regional Economic Framework for public comment

District(s), member(s):	All
Policy/legal reference:	U.S. Economic Development Administration Guidelines for CEDS Imagine 2050, Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient (p. 79)
Staff prepared/presented:	Baris Gumus-Dawes, Planning Analyst, (651) 602-1331
Division/department:	Community Development Division

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Release the 2025 Regional Economic Framework (the region's updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Alternative) for public comment.
2. Authorize a public comment period from November 13, 2025, to December 22, 2025.
3. Conduct a public hearing at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at the regularly scheduled Metropolitan Council meeting.

Background

In August 2020, the Metropolitan Council adopted the region's first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Alternative, known as the Regional Economic Framework. The Council developed the plan in collaboration with Greater MSP and the Center for Economic Inclusion, with financial support from the McKnight Foundation.

The Framework described the state of the regional economy and identified shared priorities and strategies to advance economic health and prosperity for people across the region. It outlined nine priorities shaped by extensive stakeholder input:

Regional Brand and Image	Talent Migration and Retention	New Climate Economy
Racial Inclusion	Job Growth	Affordability
Workforce and Skills	Startups and Innovation	Transportation and Mobility

Purpose of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a planning document that informs a region's economic development efforts. The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires each region to create and adopt a CEDS or a CEDS-Alternative every five years to remain eligible for EDA grants and funding opportunities.

Before 2020, the seven-county metropolitan area did not qualify for EDA funding because it did not have an approved CEDS or CEDS-Alternative. The Metropolitan Council and its partners led the effort to produce the region's first CEDS-Alternative, ensuring that local governments, nonprofits,

and public-private partnerships within the region are now eligible to apply directly for EDA funding.

2025 Regional Economic Framework Components

The EDA provides clear guidelines for the required content of a CEDS or CEDS-Alternative. Each plan must include:

- An overview of the regional economy, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Economic development priorities, based on input from key stakeholders who shape the regional economy.
- Strategies and actions for the priorities, including examples of existing or emerging initiatives.
- An implementation framework and indicators of success.
- Plans for economic resilience that identify potential shocks to the economy and how the region would respond and recover.

2025 Update of the Regional Economic Framework

The Metropolitan Council's regional infrastructure, systems, and policies form the foundation of the region's economic health and functionality. The 2025 update of the Regional Economic Framework is closely aligned with the goals and policies outlined in Imagine 2050, which were shaped by extensive public engagement and input from communities across the region over several years.

The 2025 Regional Economic Framework update is being led by the Metropolitan Council, with support from consultants at the University of Minnesota. Although Greater MSP is not a formal partner in this update, their staff have collaborated with Council staff throughout the process.

Engagement

The EDA emphasizes that a CEDS Alternative must represent a collective and collaborative vision for a region's economy. For the 2025 update, the Council's engagement efforts have gone beyond those of the 2020 Regional Economic Framework, incorporating multiple avenues for regional input, including:

- A 26-member CEDS Committee composed of a wide range of economic stakeholders
- Individual interviews with economic subject matter experts
- A survey distributed to more than 200 municipal staff and officials
- Small group discussions with the Land Use Advisory Committee, Metro Cities Regional Planners Advisory Group, and an American Indian focus group
- A public hearing and comment period on the draft 2025 Regional Economic Framework

More detailed information about the Regional Economic Framework project and the stakeholder engagement process can be found on [the project website](#).

Updates

On [August 27, 2025](#), Council staff provided an update to the Council on the 2025 Regional Economic Framework. Since that briefing, Council staff and the consultant team have developed a draft version of the Framework, which was presented to the Committee of the Whole on [October 15, 2025](#). The [draft 2025 Regional Economic Framework](#) document, which is also posted separately on the Council's November 12, 2025 Council meeting agenda, incorporates the revisions made in response to the feedback received during the October 15, 2025 Committee meeting.

This action establishes the public comment period and schedules the public hearing date. A draft public notice is included in Attachment A.

Rationale

After two years of engagement and analysis, the draft content for the 2025 Regional Economic

Framework is ready for public comment ahead of the Council's final adoption scheduled for February 11, 2026. The Council included a public hearing and comment period in the scope of work for the 2025 Regional Economic Framework. Additionally, the public hearing and comment period will provide an opportunity for Council staff to engage with organizations and residents who were not directly involved earlier and to gather their feedback.

Imagine 2050 lens analysis

On February 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. The 2025 Regional Economic Framework advances the Imagine 2050 goal of "Our region is dynamic and resilient. Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and economy including issues of choice, access, and affordability." The 2025 Regional Economic Framework was heavily informed by the Dynamic and Resilient Region section of Imagine 2050 and directly advances the commitment to update the Regional Economic Framework with a committee of stakeholders ([Imagine 2050, Regional Vision, Values, Goals, p. 79](#)).

Funding

Funding for this project comes from the Community Development Division annual budget. Having a current Regional Economic Framework that meets the CEDS Alternative requirements also opens up eligibility for entities across the region to compete for and receive funding from the U.S. EDA.

Small business inclusion

There are no direct impacts to small businesses with the proposed action.





2025 REGIONAL ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ALTERNATIVE) PUBLIC COMMENT NOTICE

11/12/2025

Metropolitan Council takes public comment on the 2025 Regional Economic Framework (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Alternative)

The Metropolitan Council is taking public comment on the [2025 Regional Economic Framework \(CEDS Alternative\) draft](#) developed through partnership with [regional stakeholders](#). The Framework is a regionally driven, place-based planning process that supports effective economic development across the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region.

Background

The 2025 Regional Economic Framework offers a snapshot of the evolving economic development ecosystem in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region. To be eligible for [U.S. Economic Development Administration](#) funding, regional organizations must update their region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy every five years.

The [2025 Regional Economic Framework draft](#) builds on the [nine key economic priorities](#) that were identified in the [2020 Regional Economic Framework](#). It updates the targeted strategies and actions needed to help advance these priorities. The 2025 update informs discussions on how the region's economic landscape has evolved in the last five years and how that evolution should inform refreshed strategies and action plans.

Public Hearing

The Met Council has scheduled an in-person public hearing for 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 3 at the Metropolitan Council meeting.

If you'd like to offer public comment at the December 3 meeting, please pre-register by emailing public.info@metc.state.mn.us or recording a message at 651-602-1500. On request, we will provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

Submit a comment

The Met Council is scheduled to adopt the framework on February 11, 2026. We value your input. Please share your comments, feedback, suggestions, or questions by 5:00 p.m. December 22, 2025.

Submit your comment by [filling out the form](#), emailing public.info@metc.state.mn.us, recording a message at 651-602-1500 (TTY 651-221-9886), or mailing comments to 390 Robert Street North, St. Paul, MN 55101-1805.

The full Met Council will review the public comments and consider the strategy following the public comment period.

