

Information Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting Date: February 1, 2024

Topic

Preliminary Local Forecasts to 2050

District(s), Member(s): All
Policy/Legal Reference: Minn. Stats. §§ 473.146 and 473.859
Staff Prepared/Presented: Todd Graham (651-602-1322)
Division/Department: Community Development / Research

Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed at this time.

Background

Minnesota Statutes 473.146 and 473.859 assign the Metropolitan Council responsibility for developing long-range forecasts and using forecasts as a foundation for coordinated planning. This memo describes progress in preparing forecasts for Imagine 2050.

The forecasts describe likely and reasoned expectations of regional growth based on an understanding and modeling of regional dynamics. Regional totals were published in April 2023.

Local forecasting at Metropolitan Council involves the geographic allocation of regional employment and households totals to specific places. Preliminary Local Forecasts, Version 1, are published at <https://metro council.org/forecasts>

Metropolitan Council uses UrbanSim, a real estate market simulation model, to develop the local forecast set. The local forecast set describes the geographic pattern of expected future growth. The logic of UrbanSim is the market sorting of real estate demand and creation of new supply in locations that are the most preferred and available. The main determinants of local forecasts are location characteristics and amenities, activity patterns and accessibility.

Preliminary Local Forecasts, Version 1, is substantially a “clean slate” look at the pattern of likely development without new policies and without new regulations.

The Version 1 results do not yet reflect known developments that are proposed; do not yet reflect any (recent) update of transportation model results; do not reflect water supply analysis; and do not yet reflect any new regional policies. Those features, any new regional policies, and associated limits or implications for spatial planning are the homework assignment for the next version.

Proposed Local Forecasts, Version 2, in summer 2024, will introduce new regional system characteristics, including a refresh of the planned transportation and transit networks. It will further introduce new regional policies and associated limits or implications for spatial planning; Council staff are asking direction on new policies from the Council’s Imagine 2050 work groups.

We invite local governments and partners to send comments and questions, by February 29, 2024, to todd.graham@metc.state.mn.us

Table 1: Timeline for new 2050 forecasts.

Timing	Milestone
April 2023	Regional total results were published
January – February 2024	Preliminary Local Forecasts, Version 1: published January 2024; comments solicited and discussion with local governments and stakeholders, January – February 2024
March – June 2024	Metropolitan Council staff will re-run its forecast model, incorporating any new or modified regional policies, updates to transportation projections and transportation network data, and any other forward-looking data inputs.
August – October 2024	Proposed / Public Hearing Local Forecasts, Version 2, to be published; public hearing process, August – October 2024.
December 2024	Local Forecasts, Version 3: expected to be substantially Version 2 with minor adjustments; to be published December 2024 or January 2025; Council action, February 2025, with the adoption of Imagine 2050.
February 2025	Council action, February 2025, with the adoption of Imagine 2050.

