

Outcomes Measurement Slate Update - Regional Parks and Trails System

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
September 4, 2025



Desired Meeting Outcomes

By the end of this discussion, we hope to:

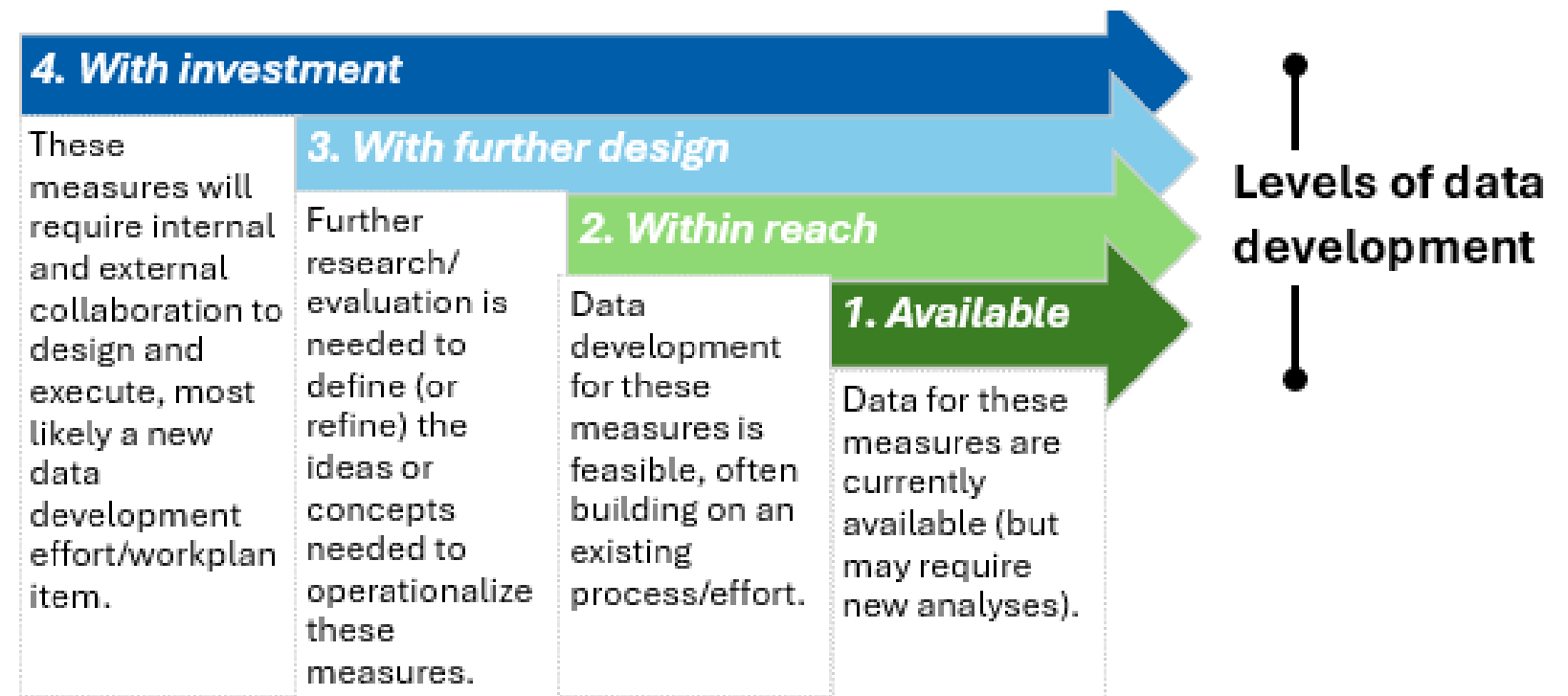
- Understand recent stakeholder engagement and how we got to our current draft set of outcome measures
- Discuss draft measures and further solidify slate
- Identify next steps in the Imagine 2050 amendment process and opportunities for feedback



Where have we been?

Outcome Measures Sources

- Measures were selected based on stakeholder feedback/recommendations as well as data availability.
 - Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (July 1)
 - Partner Meetings (July 17 & August 21)
 - Climate and Natural Systems Work Group (July 28)
- Outcome measurement slate has been modified based on stakeholder feedback.
- Change from 'Performance' to 'Outcomes' measurement



Recent Engagement Takeaways



July 1 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

- Tracking only dollars spent isn't a good measure. We need to measure the impact of the dollars as well
- Recommendation to explore adding tree canopy data to see how much the Regional Parks and Trails System contributes to carbon sequestration, etc.
- Transit access measures are not useful with Network Now plan. Additionally, transit access to the whole system is not feasible. Recommend finding another metric for multimodal access

Recent Engagement Takeaways

July 17 Partner Meeting

- Dot exercise was conducted to measure interest in proposed slate and identify items that needed clarification/further discussion
- Each agency conducts measures in their own way, generally suggest to leave operational details to agencies and focus on system-wide indicators
- Consider lead and lag measures. Council should consider tracking lag measures to understand past performance
- Agencies had concerns around required workload for certain measures
- Agencies proposed some alternative measures, such as:
 - Explore tracking number of Met Council plan approvals annually

August 21 Partner Meeting

- Existing measures received positive feedback (e.g. Annual Use, Park Acreage and Trail Mileage, Carbon Sequestration rate)
- Emphasis on measuring impact and outcome instead of tracking dollars spent. What is the result of investing in the system, and what happens when we don't?
- Some measures need to define key terms, parameters, and data needs before being impactful
 - Continued conversations needed to shape measures
- Some measures would require a large effort to implement, need to emphasize how Council will help with implementation
- Need to further clarify that measures are being assessed at a regional level, not looking at individual agencies.

Recent Engagement Takeaways



July 28, 2025 Climate and Natural Systems Workgroup

- While acreage/mileage is good, try adding more qualitative data to tell a more complete story
- What is the baseline we are working from for GHG emissions? Does this measure take into account growth of the system?
- How is 'water quality' defined? Is it shoreline restoration in regional parks? How do we define 'restored'?
- Acres converted does not take into account already converted lands and continued maintenance

Met Council Members weigh-in

Committee of the Whole (June 2, 2025)

CMs expressed strong support for an outcomes measurement program that has an intentional “tiered” approach, describing regional indicators/trends, Met Council’s work, and the work of local partners.

Regional indicators

- Population-level (disaggregating where possible)
- Provide context—build shared understanding of past trends and current conditions
- “Big needles” that require collective action to move

Met Council measures

How is Met Council advancing 2050 goals and policies?

- Policies (“provide”)
- Grants and programs
- Processes
- Engagement and relationships (“partner”)

Regional measures

How are local partners advancing 2050 goals and policies?

- 2050 updates and other long-range plans
- Policies and strategies (developed/adopted)
- Programs, fiscal tools, funding
- Engagement and participation

Revised Outcomes Measurement Slate



Cross-Policy Measures

Cross-Policy Measures

Measure	Data Status	Source	Associated Policies	Notes
Visits to Regional Parks and Trails	Available	Council annual park and trail use estimates	2 – System Plan 7 – Recreation, Facilities, and Programming	Section 7 measure would compare with demographics of the region to assess reduced inequity
Park acreage and trail mileage	Available	Council annual GIS dataset	All	

Natural Systems

Natural Systems

Measure	Data Status	Source	Notes
Improved water quality in regional parks and trails	Available	Priority Waters List (Healthy Habitat Scores?)	Opportunity to collaborate with Environmental Services
Possible addition/Further discussion			
Percent spent on natural systems*	Available	Originally Proposed Measure	Consider a focus on Legacy and ENRTF sources or view this measure qualitatively

**Highlighted items indicate a modification to an existing measure*

Climate Resilience

Climate Resilience

Measure	Data Status	Source	Notes
Metric tons of carbon sequestration per sq. km. for system acquisitions	Available	Council analysis based on USGS data	
Possible additions/further discussion			
Percent increase in tree canopy (within compatible land cover)	Within Reach+	Agency Proposed	NEW addition. Could also be a dual measure for Natural Systems

**Green cells indicate a newly added/proposed measure*

The plus (+) denotes an assumption of data availability; this was an agency proposed measure

Planning

Planning

Measure	Data Status	Source	Notes
Percent of Long-Range Plans that are 0-5, 6-10, 11-15, 20+ years old*	Within reach+	Agency Proposed	Changed from average age of all LRPs
Possible addition/Further discussion			
Average travelshed to parks and trails decreases for overburdened communities	Within reach	Parks and Trails GIS; overburdened communities as defined by Environmental Justice section of Equity Chapter; travelshed calculation by MTS	NEW addition.
Share of the system’s ADA accessibility	With further design	Grant/funding records, long-range plans, programs	NEW addition. Opportunity to focus on qualitative measures

**Highlighted items indicate a modification to an existing measure, while green cells are newly added/proposed metrics
The plus (+) denotes an assumption of data availability; this was an agency-proposed measure*

System Protection

System Protection

Measure	Data Status	Source
Possible additions/further discussion		
Exploring collaboration with Local Planning Assistance for a joint measure related to local comprehensive planning action^	TBD	TBD
Percent of land dedicated to natural resources vs. recreation amenities	With Further Design+	Agency Proposed

**Highlighted items indicate a modification to an existing measure, while green cells are newly added/proposed metrics*
The plus (+) denotes an assumption of data availability; this was an agency-proposed measure
^ Not a proposal for a measure, but acts as a placeholder for a future measure

Recreation, Facilities, and Programming

Recreation, Facilities, and Programming

Measure	Data Status	Source	Notes
Additional miles of regional trails funded with Active Transportation grants*	Within Reach+	Agency Proposed	Modified “percent of Council Active Transportation funding going to develop RT network” measure
The demographics of people involved in the regional parks and trails system more closely reflects that of the region	With Investment	Originally Proposed Measure	“People involved” means paid staff, volunteers and policy-making and advisory bodies

**Highlighted items indicate a modification to an existing measure*

The plus (+) denotes an assumption of data availability; this was an agency proposed measure

Finance

Finance

Measure	Data Status	Source	Notes
Annual funding gap, including capital and operations & maintenance (O&M funding)	Within reach+	Annual O&M reporting to legislature	Potentially tease apart capital and O&M
Possible addition/Further discussion			
Annual funding by source (local, regional, state)*	Within reach+	Agency proposed	Was formerly “Capital improvement” measure
Equity Grant Program build Agencies’ capacity to serve marginalized populations	Within reach	Future grantee reporting from EGP	

**Highlighted items indicate a modification to an existing measure*
The plus (+) denotes an assumption of data availability; this was an agency-proposed measure

Discussion



Discussion Questions

- Do the modifications or newly proposed metrics reflect your feedback?
 - If not, what recommendations or modifications do you have to improve this slate?
- Does this revised slate broadly capture the work/role of the Regional Parks and Trails in the region?
- Do the proposed measures adequately capture our shared commitment and work to advance equity?

Program next steps

AUGUST

Finalize draft measures

- All policy areas have draft measures
- Program team will continue to work with staff liaisons to refine measures
- Interactive tool under development to identify connections, gaps

SEPTEMBER

Engagement

- Create web page for draft measures and related materials on metro council.org
- Host live virtual feedback sessions, and online survey
- Information Items at committees

Q4 – JANUARY '26

Amendment

- Continue refinement of measures into an integrated amendment to Imagine 2050
- (Tentative) October 22, release amendment for public comment
 - Public comment period 10/23 – 12/22



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