

# WORKSHOP 2: DATA & STORY SESSIONS/ TOPIC PRIORITIZATION

## Workshop 2 Participant Agenda

### Story Sessions and Issue Prioritization

#### Agenda

- 12:00 p.m. Gather for lunch.
- 12:15 p.m. Reconnect activity
- 12:45 p.m. Introduce workshop activities and goals.
- 1:00 p.m. Story sessions: Your data analysis and personal stories
- 2:45 p.m. Topic prioritization activity: What's most important?

Next workshop: [Put date of next workshop here]

## Workshop 2 Schedule and Script

### Story Sessions and Issue Prioritization

This is the complete script for “story sessions and issue prioritization” workshop two. It includes instructions on how to do each activity and links to the key handouts needed for “story sessions and issue prioritization” workshop two.

#### Supplies needed

- Handouts with data and questions for story sessions (see sample in schedule script and in “activities detail” section)
- Computer with internet and connection
- Projector
- Pencils (mechanical or sharpened)
- Sticky notes for prioritization exercise
- Sticky poster paper for prioritization exercise

#### Tasks assigned to team members:

- Coordinating food order
- Printing
- Waivers- some may still need to return them
- Tracking attendance:
- Archiving materials (collecting & scanning materials; uploading into folder)
- Field notes to capture what participants said (should be done by someone not facilitating)
- Documenting insights from participants (notetaker sits with participants as they work on mapping exercise and other small group discussions)

## Schedule & Script:

**noon**      **Gather for lunch**

**12:15 p.m.**    **Reconnect (activity, 30 minutes)**

Share your name, pronouns if you choose, and something you're passionate about.

Recap kickoff workshop.

- Tested our memory with the name game, learned what we had in common and not.
- Mapped where we live and have lived, our favorite places, and landmarks like churches, schools, soccer fields, parks, etc.
- Learned about the different Metropolitan Council policy areas.

**Ask participants:** What is something you learned about yourself or others with this activity?

**12:45 p.m.**    **Introduce workshop activities and goals**

**Goals for today:**

- Analyze data about the region and connect it to your individual stories.
- Formulate topic priorities to develop recommendations for the region.

**1:00 p.m.**      **Analyzing data in story sessions. (activity, 1 hour 15 minutes)**

**Goals for this activity:**

- Connect participant experiences to policy areas through exploration of regional data.
- Learn more about Met Council data related to topics of interest to participants.
- Build participant capacity to discuss quantitative data.
- Prepare participants to prioritize topics.

Script for story sessions and topic prioritization activities is in the “Activities Detail” section

**2:15 p.m.**      **Topic prioritization: What's most important? (activity, 1 hour)**

**Goals for this activity:**

- Reflect on lived experience and qualitative and quantitative data about the region.
- Brainstorm and write down issues and policy areas that warrant prioritization.
- Build group consensus and identify the group's top priorities.

Script is available [here](#)

## Workshop 2 Activities Detail and Handouts

### Analyzing Data in Story Sessions Explainer and Script

The purpose of the story session is to introduce statistics from the region that touch participants' lives. Their reflections create opportunity to identify priorities. Their words are recorded in audio and typed as *qualitative data* to quote to policy makers to understand community priorities. These words were shared back to participants as they created their presentations in workshop four.

**Total time needed:** 1 hour 15 minutes

#### Materials:

- Phone app or other way to record audio
- Copies of handouts (Sample handout is available [here](#). **NOTE:** The statistics used in each story session were customized to focus on the policy area of interest specific to each organization.)

#### Total staff needed:

- One staff member per group- interviewing
- One staff member per group- notetaking

The notetaker should be ready to take precise notes resembling a transcription.

**Facilitator should read before the session: How to use empathic listening techniques** (adapted from Patty Mulder):

- **Listening includes being kind and curious and kind.** Let them share as much as they need/want for as long as they need/want.
- **Leaders must be aware of our objective:** Learning from group and including their stories in the creation of the regional development guide. We want them to learn about these stories to choose important aspects to include in vision work and reporting back to Metropolitan Council policy makers.
  - We want to understand a person's thoughts, emotions, and motivations, so that we can better contextualize the data and incorporate their advice into policy work. By understanding how young leaders' lives are affected by the trends discussed in the data, youth can define their needs and advocate for change.
- **Facilitators must be genuine.** Ensure participants understand why we are here and what we hope to accomplish.
- **Transparency:** Let folks know that we will include their ideas and direct quotes of what we heard in the final report we are creating. They can potentially use stories from this session to guide their work.

#### Facilitator role

1. To be an empathetic listener, seeking to understand without judgement. Avoid giving advice or sharing your opinion. Keep the goal of the conversation in mind.
2. Create space for quieter people to have a chance to speak.
3. Ask the speaker to extend or clarify when important.

4. Answer clarifying questions or ask consultant for clarification.
5. Keep process moving, monitoring time so that each topic is covered in the allocated time.

## Story session complete script and process

Begin with a very short introduction of everyone in the room.

### Getting started

Facilitator: "Today, we are going to discuss some important facts about the greater Twin Cities region.

Before we get started, we wanted to let you know to please feel free to get up as you need to use the drinking fountain or restroom. We will be working for about an hour together.

We want to know what you think about the facts related to the Met Council's policy areas. We want to learn how they affect your lives. We want to hear your advice on what needs to happen to have the best possible region going forward into the future.

We want to be able to listen carefully and make sure we can accurately include your ideas in the report. To do this, we would like to record this conversation. The notetaker will use this to revise their notes. No one else will hear the conversation. Is it all right with everyone that we begin recording now?

We will talk about the facts in the handout. These facts are from data analyzed by staff at the Council and by our team. By understanding how your lives connect with the trends discussed in the data, we can understand your views on the region and our future. This conversation will last about 60 minutes.

There are no right or wrong answers. Your ideas are important, and we want to hear them. Are there any questions before we get started?"

**Introductions:** Let's begin getting to know each other.

- To start out, could each of us share our names and a bit of our stories: Tell me a little bit about yourself and the people in your household. Where do you live? How long have you lived in Minnesota? How did your family move to where you live now? [Go around the room].
- Could you please tell me where you go to school and what jobs you do right now?

**Begin the conversation.** Thank you so much. I look forward to hearing more. Next, let's jump into the information we will be talking about today. Please look at the handouts with all the information on them.

We have statistics for the 7-county region and specifically for [participants' community]. These statistics come from the Census Bureau, and the analysis is by the Met Council. We will take a moment to review a topic and its information. Feel free to ask any questions or share doubts about this statistic. We would like to hear your advice on how these facts affect our community and how your experience connects with the information. There are no right or wrong answers.

## Guide to questions:

Numbers correspond to the [handout](#).

After you review the statistic, ask if they have any questions or uncertainties about the data.

Each item has sub questions (for example, Q1A, Q1B, etc.)

### 1. Parks

Regional parks and trails are nature based, focusing on high quality natural resources like forests, lakes, rivers, and prairies. Trails offer biking, walking, and rolling activities. Regional Parks near us include Lebanon Hills, Spring Lake Park Reserve, and Lake Nokomis.

The 2021 park and trail visitor survey analyzed the age demographics of park and trail visitors. This figure shows that young people are the smallest proportion of visitors. They are 10% of park visitors and 7% of trail visitors, even though they are almost 20% of the regional population.

Do you have any questions or uncertainties about these statistics?

- A. What do you think about this figure? What does it make you wonder about?
- B. Why do you think younger people visit parks and trails less often?
- C. How did you develop a strong connection with nature?
- D. As we plan to care for nature through regional parks and trails, what should policy makers consider?

### 2. Transit and future housing.

This figure shows how much of new housing construction was located near sufficient public transportation like buses or trains. The data is not new, but it is still interesting. Permits to build new homes increased between 2010 and 2016. Most years, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of new home permits were located near public transit. Much more new housing will be built in our region between now and 2050.

Do you have any questions or uncertainties about these statistics?

- A. What do you think about this figure? What does it make you wonder about?
- B. What kinds of transportation is possible from your home? (Think about walking, biking, bus, train, ride share, and car) How do the available transportation options affect your daily life?
- C. As our region makes plans for a good transportation system, what should policy makers keep in mind?
- D. What else should be considered when deciding the best places to build new homes?

### 3. Heat islands and trees

Heat islands are hot spots within a city where the temperatures are hotter in the summer. Benefits from trees include cooler temperatures, improved air quality, cleaner stormwater, improved mental health, and enhanced biodiversity. Enhancing and preserving tree canopy cover is an actionable step to create healthy and resilient places. Areas that are dark orange and brown on this map are hotter (“heat islands”) and have less tree coverage. Greener spaces have cooler summer temperatures and more trees. There is a higher priority to plant trees in the orange-brown areas.

- A. Can you find where you live on this map?

- B. What are the problems with living in an area with hotter temperatures in the summer? How can we make sure that everyone shares the benefits of the tree canopy?
- C. How do you think that the issue of heat islands will affect your community as the climate gets warmer?
- D. What advice do you have for policy makers around heat islands and community health?

**4. Water policy and Mississippi River water quality across time**

Dissolved oxygen (DO) - oxygen molecules dissolved in water - is a major indicator of water quality. The survival of aquatic life depends on a sufficient level of oxygen dissolved in water. Low DO is caused by algae growth caused by phosphorus. Human activities are an important source of phosphorus, including wastewater treatment discharge and urban stormwater runoff. This figure shows the level of DO between 1935 and 2020. In 1928 and 2012, our state enacted major standards to improve water quality. The Metropolitan Council protects the Mississippi River by ensuring wastewater meets standards, monitoring water quality on the river, and reviewing local government plans for water quality.

Data Sources: Met Council Environmental Services, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

- A. What patterns in summer dissolved oxygen concentration do you see across time?
- B. What relationship do you observe between water quality standards and the health of the Mississippi River?
- C. Why should The Metropolitan Council focus on water quality to protect habitat? Why else is the health of the river important?
- D. What advice do you have for policy makers around water quality and water in the lives of the region's residents?

**5. The future population of the region.**

The region will likely grow by 818,000 people by 2050. Most of the population growth will be Latino, Asian, and Black residents. These groups are the top three boxes in each bar. The average age of the population will get older as people live longer and fewer babies are born. As you look at this information about the next few decades, please share your ideas:

Do you have any questions or uncertainties about these statistics?

- A. What do you wonder when you see these statistics? What does it make you think about?
- B. What are your biggest concerns or worries about how the region will be in 2050?
- C. What do you hope for the future of your community? What do you want to see in 2050?
- D. What do you want policy makers to consider about the future as they plan for land use, transportation, parks, housing, and water use?

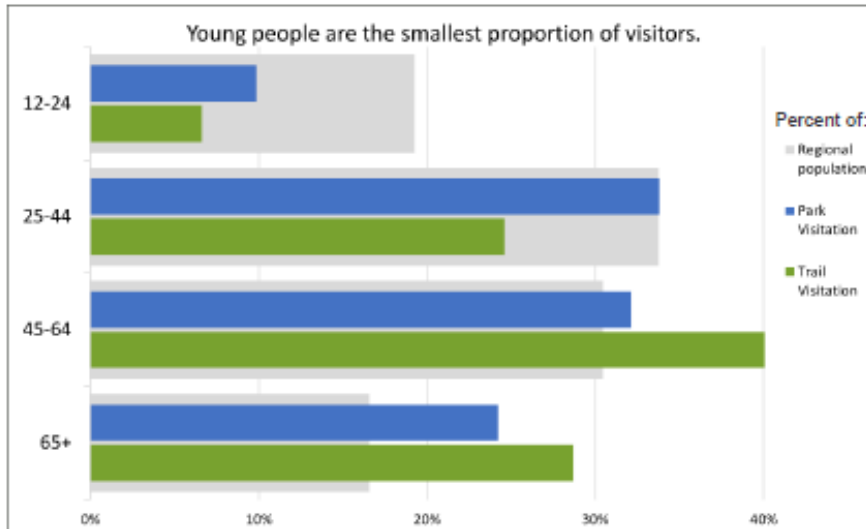




# Sample One STORY SESSION

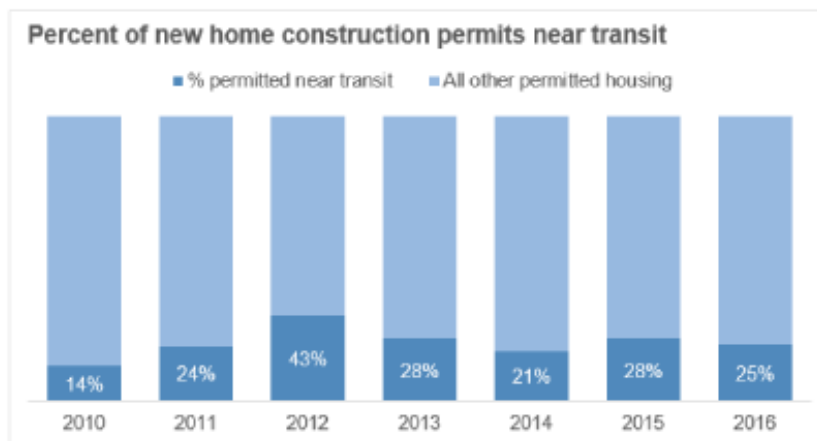
What are the stories behind the statistics? Please bring your real world experience to add perspective about important information.

## 1. Young people and park/trail visits



- A. What do you think about this figure? What does it make you wonder about?
- B. Why do you think younger people visit parks and trails less often?
- C. How did you develop your strong connection with nature?
- D. As we plan to care for nature through regional parks and trails, what should policymakers consider?

## 2. Transit and future housing

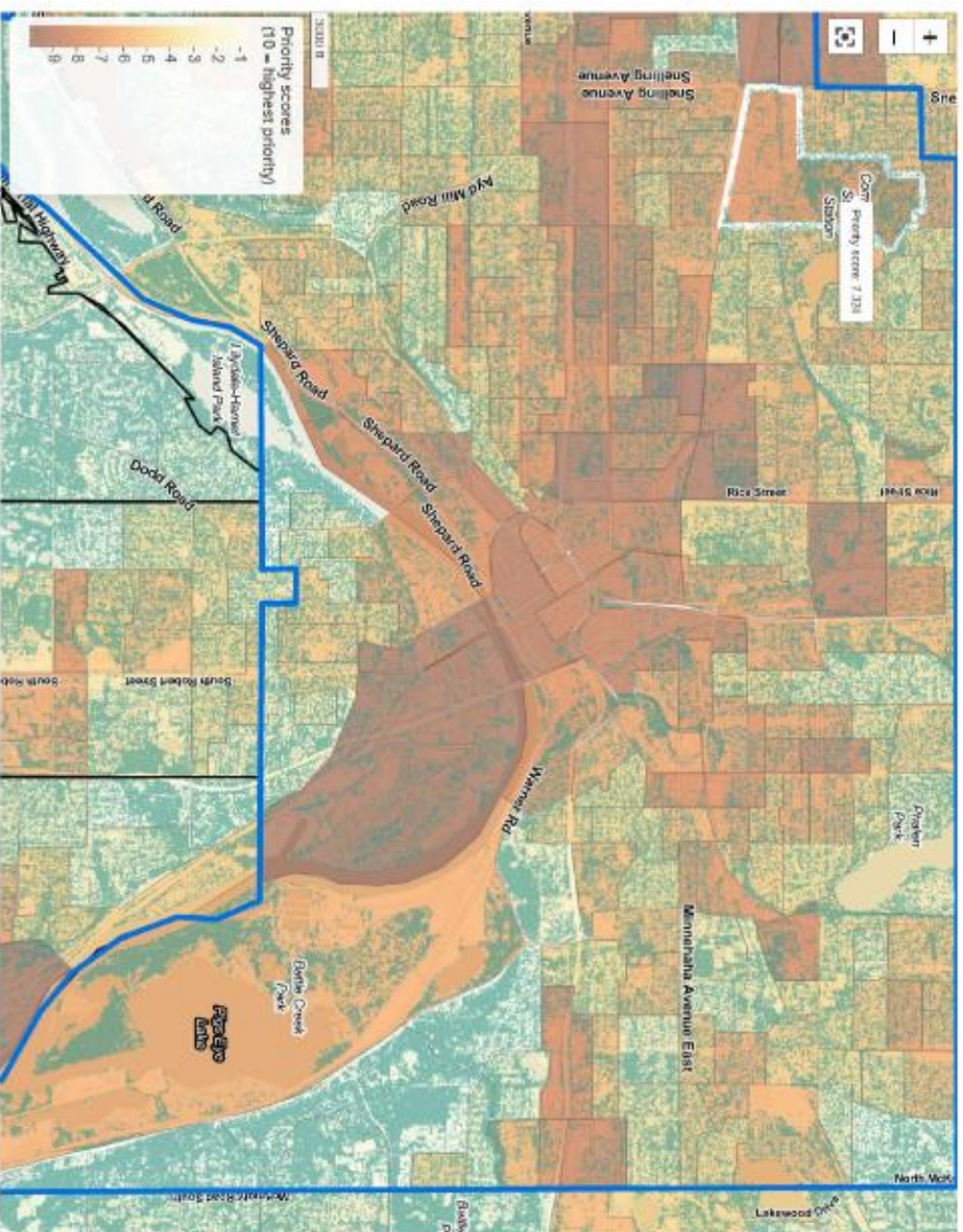


Permits to build new homes increased between 2010 and 2016. Most years, about 1/4 of new home permits were located near public transit. Much more new housing will be built in our region between now and 2050.

- A. What do you think about this figure? What does it make you wonder about?
- B. What are the transportation options near where you live?
- C. As our region plans for housing and the transportation system, what should policymakers consider?

### 3. Heat islands and trees in St. Paul

Heat islands are hot spots within a city where summer temperatures are hotter. Trees cool the temperatures, improve air quality, clean stormwater, improve mental health, and enhance biodiversity. Enhancing and preserving tree canopy cover is an actionable step to create healthy and resilient places. Areas that are dark orange-brown on this map are hotter ("heat islands") and have less tree coverage. Greener spaces have cooler summer temperatures and more trees. There is a higher priority to plant trees in the orange-brown areas.



- Can you find where you live on this map?
- How do you think that the issue of heat islands will effect St. Paul as the climate gets warmer?
- How can we make sure that everyone shares the benefits of the tree canopy?
- What advice do you have for policy makers around climate, trees, and community health?

## 5. The future population of the region



The region will grow by 818,000 people by 2050. Most of the population growth will be Latino, Asian, and Black residents. The average age of the population will get older as people live longer and fewer babies are born.

- What do you wonder when you see these statistics?
- What are your biggest concerns or worries about how the region will be in 2050?
- What do you hope for the future of the region? What do you want to see in 2050?
- What do you want policymakers to consider about the future as they plan for land use, transportation, parks, housing, and water use?

## 6. Other ideas?



Before we say goodbye, allow us to ask if there is anything else you want to say or advise about the region as it is or in the future?



## Topic prioritization activity

**Total time needed:** 1 hour

### Materials needed:

- For each participant – five single colored 3” x 5” post it notes, felt tip pen, sheet of paper, dot stickers (5 green, and 3 orange per person).
- 6 sticky poster papers (one for each policy area/topic).

### Total staff needed:

- One staff member facilitating per group/pair.
- One staff member passes out materials.

### Script for topic prioritization activity:

#### Step 1: Introduce activity, brainstorming (7 minutes)

Now that we’ve discussed the current reality, let’s talk about the future. Think about the data that was presented to you, the stories you all shared, and your own life experiences for this exercise.

This activity will help us identify what we all care about and want to have an impact on the future in our region.

We will break up into small groups/pairs (depending on group size) and within each group you will discuss the following question: **What do you want for the future?**

Your group will have **5 minutes** to brainstorm your answers and write **ALL** those ideas down on a sheet of paper. Try to write as much as you can. **While the group is brainstorming, other team members will:**

- put up sticky paper on wall for each policy area + other topics.
- walk around to listen to conversations.

#### Step 2: Narrow down ideas (12-15 minutes)

- **7-10 minutes:** Each person will pick 3-5 ideas mentioned in the brainstorming session that are most important and want to prioritize.
  - Everyone will write their (3-5) prioritized ideas on the 3” x 5” sticky note cards. **One sticky note per idea.**
- **5 minutes:** Categorize sticky notes under the appropriate policy area and/or topic by adding sticky notes to the poster papers.
  - Take a few minutes to skim through everyone’s ideas/sticky notes.

#### Step 3: Begin to review and organize ideas. (5-7 minutes)

- Get into pairs/groups with a facilitator.
  - Each group will be assigned a policy area/topic.
  - Partners/groups will organize cards further into columns and until they are moved logically (ex. ideas around rent control, cost of housing, and production of affordable apartments, would be moved into a column as they relate to affordable housing).

- Facilitator may step in to assist and to answer questions.

#### **Step 4: Prioritization (15-20 minutes)**

Team member(s) pass out dots: 5 green and 3 orange.

- **5 minutes:** Each person will walk around the space, read through the sticky notes, and place **green dots** on sticky notes **they agree with (prioritize)** and **orange dots** on sticky notes **they do not agree/are not priorities**.
- **10-15 minutes:** Report priorities to the group (sticky notes/columns of sticky notes with the most green dots) and work to narrow down group priorities to 3-5 topics.
  - Discuss with the group to reach a consensus within the group.