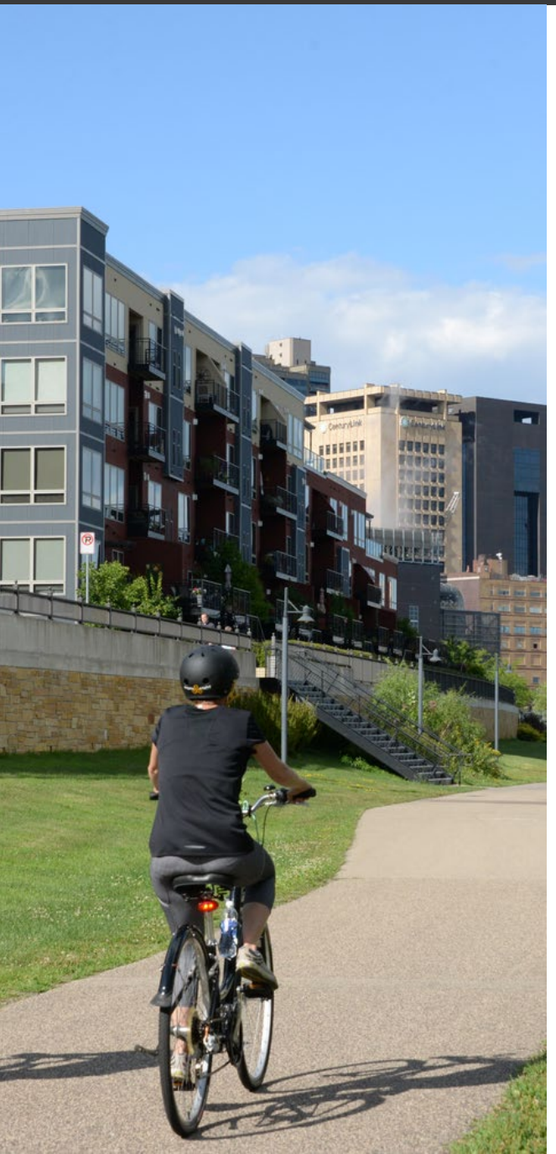


Livable Communities Evaluation Framework Update

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

November 16, 2026

Background



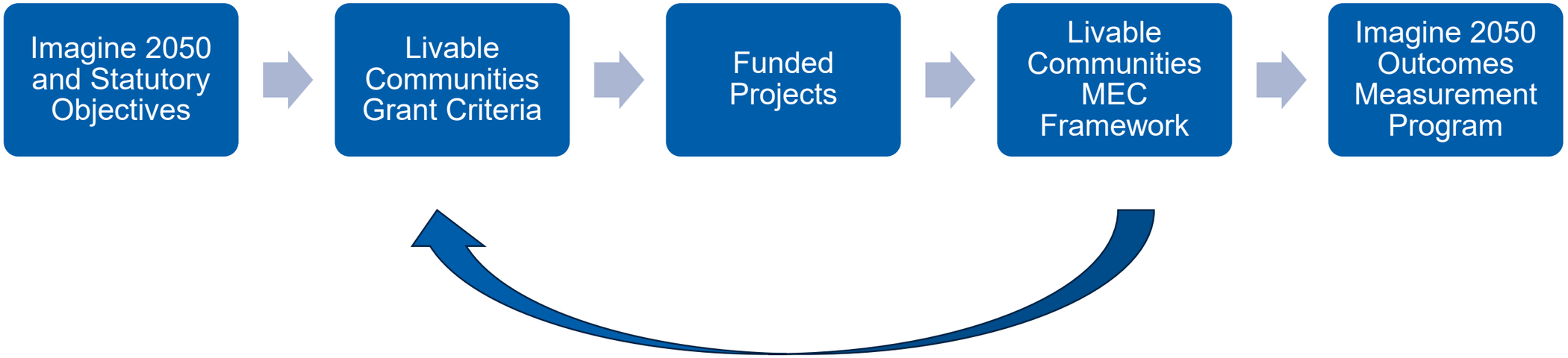
Update to the Livable Communities Program

- In 2026, Met Council launched an update to the Livable Communities program that:
  - Aligned the program with Imagine 2050
  - Simplified the application process
  - Better communicates that creating a livable region requires a wide range of projects in different community contexts.
- Staff committed to developing a formal Monitoring, Evaluation, and Compliance Framework, building on existing activities in these areas for:
  - Transparency
  - Accountability
  - Continuous Improvement

Imagine 2050 Context

Moving towards the same goal

- Imagine 2050 shaped the Livable Communities grant criteria
- Livable Communities monitoring, evaluation, and compliance activities feed into the Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program
- What we learn will drive future updates and improvements



Logic Model

Components of a logic model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
• Resources invested in the program by Met Council	• Actions taken by recipients of the grants	• What is produced as a result of the actions	• Changes or benefits the program desires to influence

Livable Communities Draft Logic Model

Inputs

- Funding
- Time and Expertise
- Technology
- Relationships

Livable Communities Draft Logic Model

Inputs	Activities
• Funding • Time and Expertise • Technology • Relationships	• Set conditions for development through policy and small area planning • Direct funding for development and cleanup • Hire technical advisors

Livable Communities Draft Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
• Funding • Time and Expertise • Technology • Relationships	• Set conditions for development through policy and small area planning • Direct funding for development and cleanup • Hire technical advisors	• Plans, studies, assessments, design documents • Policies or programs adopted • Development projects built • Contamination cleaned up • Emerging developers supported • Transit connections

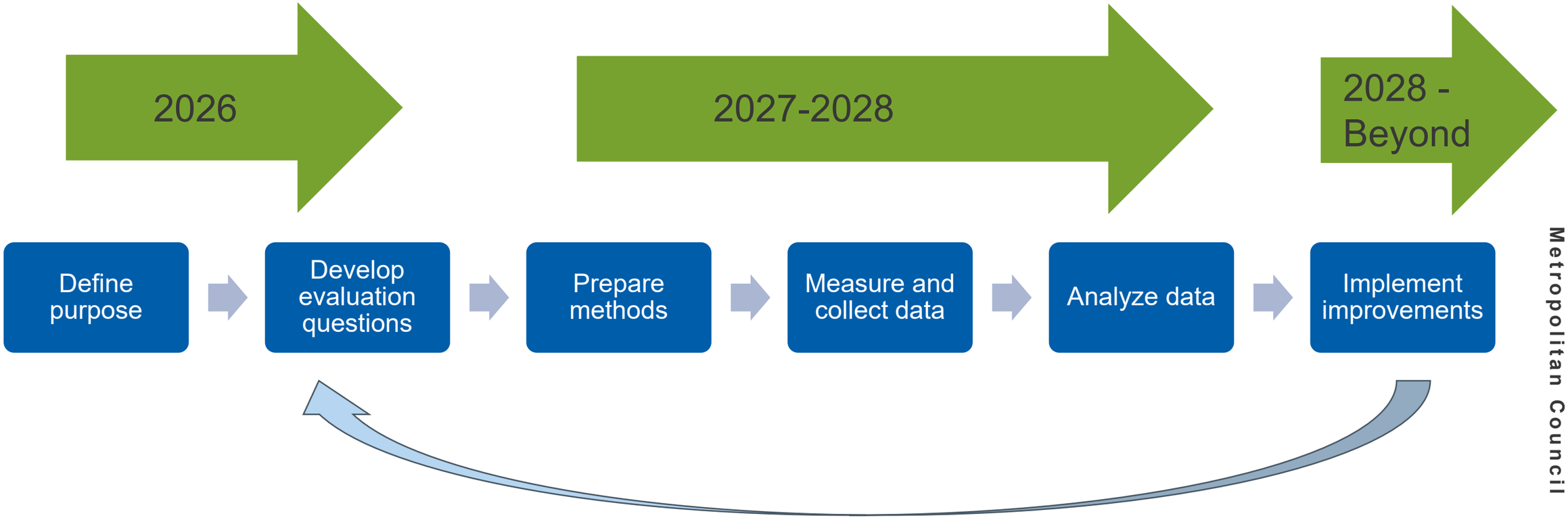
Livable Communities Draft Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
• Funding • Time and expertise • Technology • Relationships	• Set conditions for development through policy and small area planning • Direct funding for development and cleanup • Hire technical advisors	• Plans, studies, assessments, design documents • Policies or programs adopted • Development projects built • Contamination cleaned up • Emerging developers supported • Transit connections	• Expand housing choices across the region • Everyone can meet their needs in their community • Improved safety • Build wealth

Evaluation Plan



Evaluation Cycle



Draft Evaluation Questions

How effective is the Livable Communities program at grant-making?

What are the obstacles grantees face in achieving outcomes?

To what extent are grant outcomes being achieved?

Data collection and methods

Possible measures

- Ease of application for developers, city staff
- Clarity of grant program goals
- Connection between application scoring criteria and desired outcomes
- Numbers of new development proposals, studies, plans, etc.
- Housing unit mix of funded projects
- Properties that meet environmental standards for development

Possible data sources

- Administrative data (Fluxx system)
- 3rd party data, like CoStar real estate data
- Interviews or surveys
- Other Met Council or State of MN data

Analysis plan

Test with a small sample

- Retrospective approach—look at recently closed grants
- Start with a small sample of convenience
- Develop the evaluation process and set up capacity for evaluation of current grants

Constraints

- Timing of data availability
- Development projects occur over long periods of time
    - Benefits are realized even longer after the project is complete
- Projects are not always directly comparable
- May require more participation from city staff and development partners
- Staff capacity

Discussion

Logic Model

- What resonates with you about the logic model?
- Are the outcomes you expect included in the logic model?
- Is the logic strong enough?

Evaluation Plan

- What resonates with you about the evaluation plan?
- Are the evaluation questions what you want to prioritize knowing?
- Is there something missing?



Sarah Rodman

Business Analyst II, Livable Communities
Sarah.Rodman@MetC.State.MN.US

Emily Seddon

Manager, Livable Communities
Emily.Seddon@MetC.State.MN.US

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