



Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program

Introduction

Sarah Nelson and Krysten Ryba-Tures

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

February 2026



About us

Krysten Ryba-Tures (she/her)

- Community development research staff since 2013
- Currently live on Saint Paul's West Side (originally from Detroit, MI)
- Background in sociology; more recently, web and information design
- Enjoy gardening, walking Saint Paul neighborhoods, movies



Pictured above: Ursa, Krysten's new rescue pup, enjoying her favorite treat right now, Krysten's hair.

Sarah Nelson (she/her)

- Community development research staff since 2023
- Live in Roseville, originally from Chanhassen
- Background in economics and public policy
- Free time is spent walking dogs, playing with dogs, and bringing dogs to patios (in the summer)



Pictured above: Sarah's dogs – Bruce (4) sitting on top of Luna (11).

Today's discussion



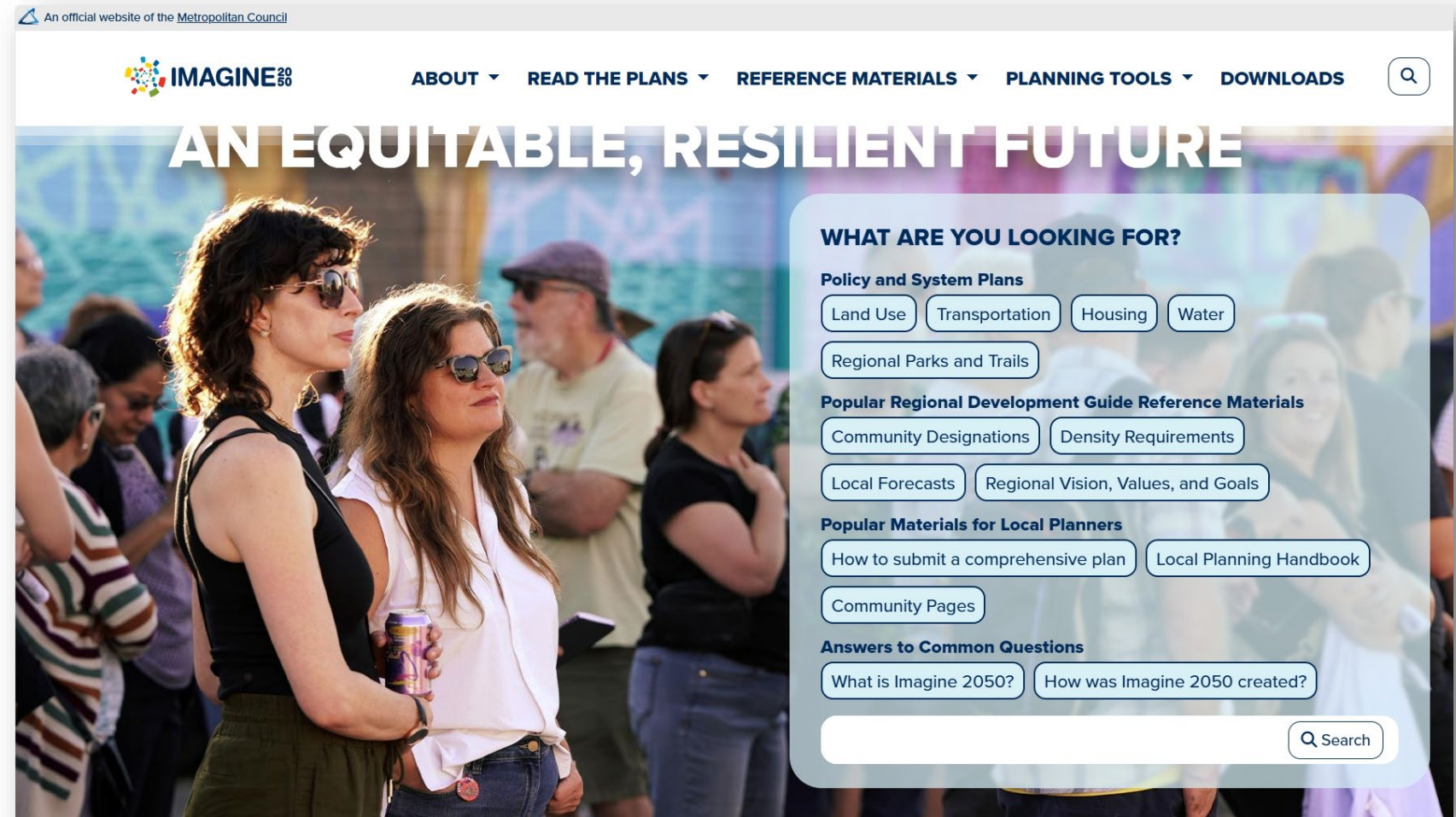
1 Imagine 2050 introduction

2 Outcomes Measurement Program overview

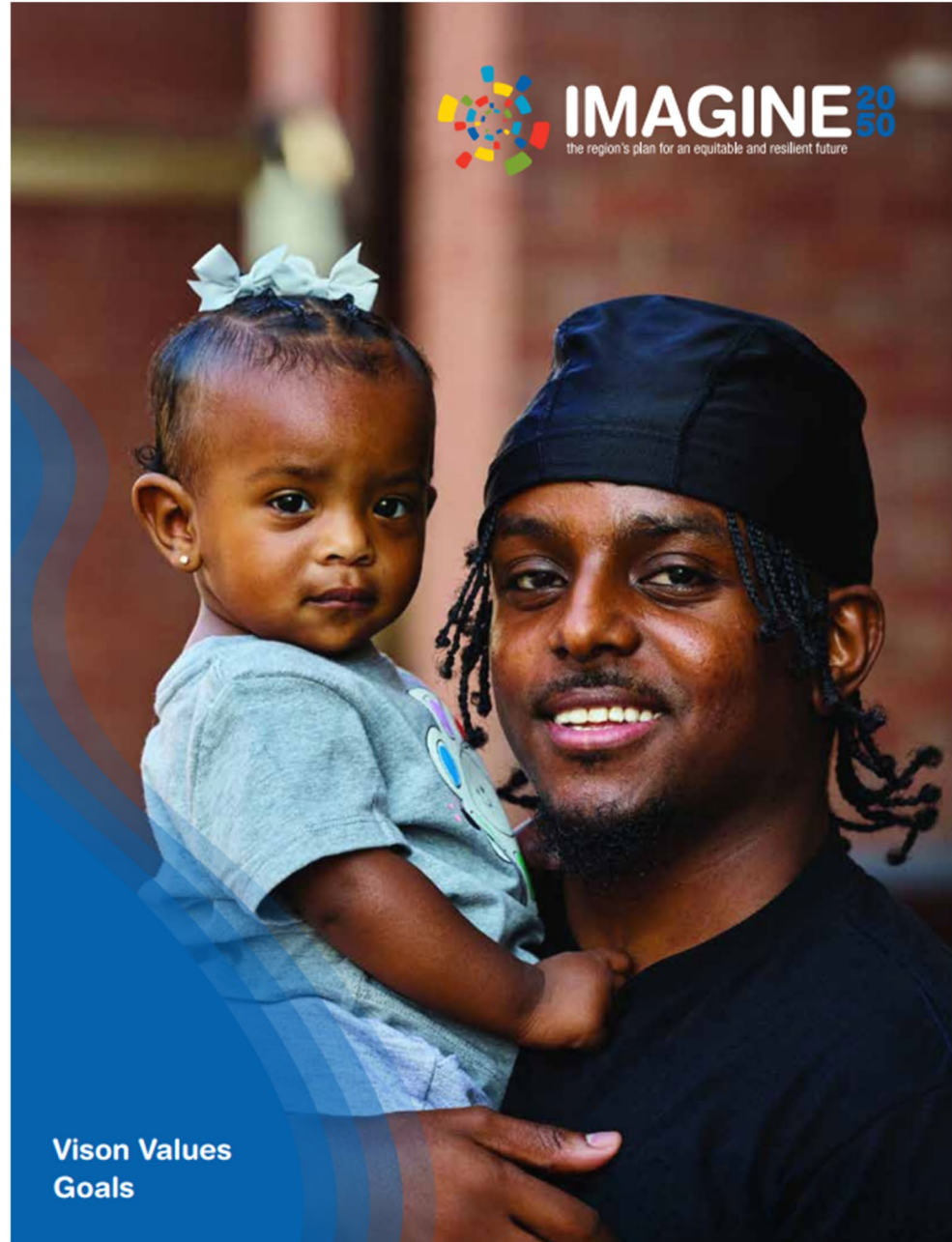
3 Discussion & next steps

INTRODUCTION Imagine 2050

Explore the Imagine 2050 website:
<https://imagine2050.metrocouncil.org>



Statute requires development guide

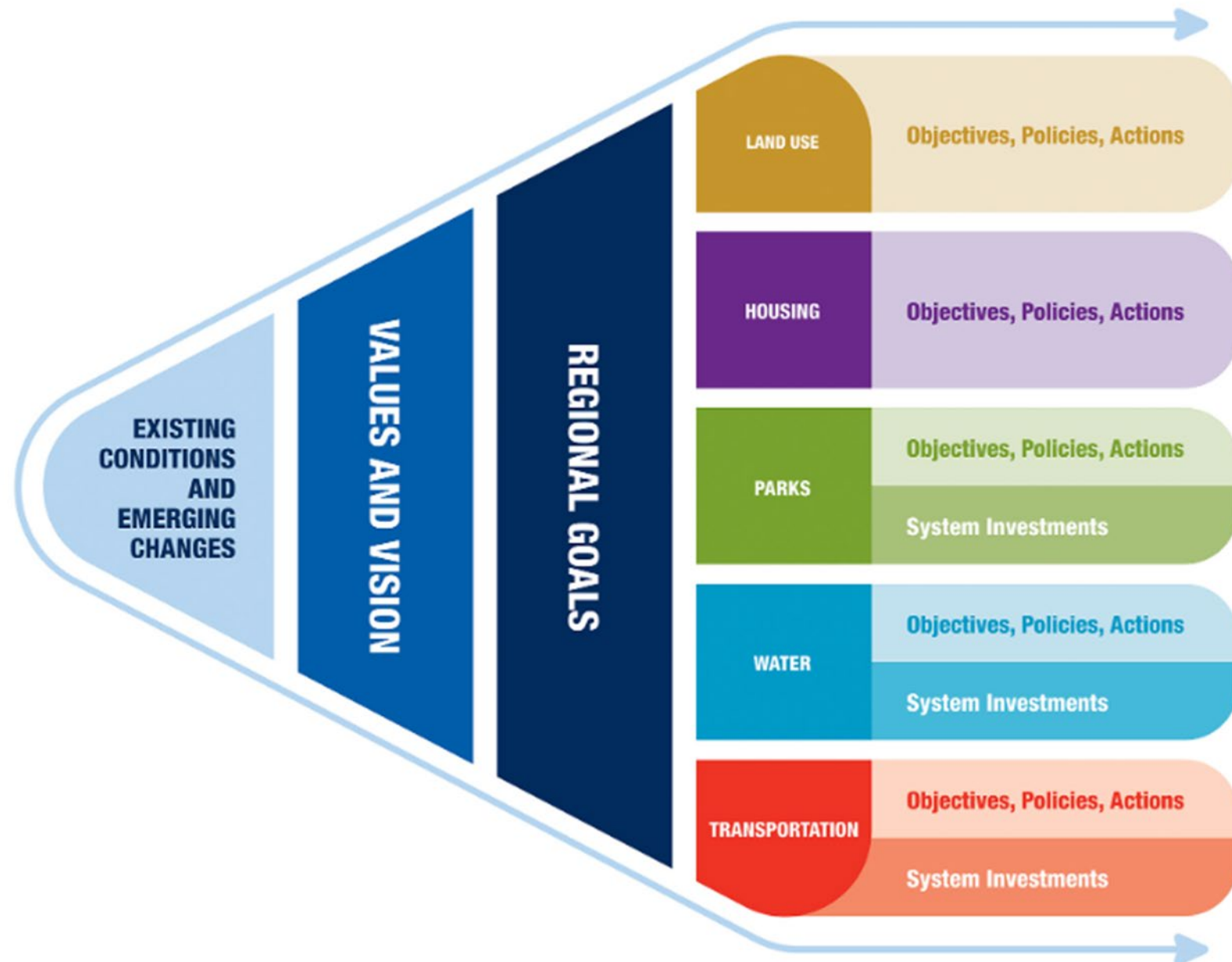


The Metropolitan Council must prepare and adopt ... a comprehensive development guide for the metropolitan area...**prescribing guides for the orderly and economical development, public and private, of the metropolitan area.** The comprehensive development guide **must recognize and encompass physical, social, or economic needs of the metropolitan area** and those future developments which will have an impact on the entire area including but not limited to such matters as **land use, climate mitigation and adaptation, parks and open space land needs, the necessity for and location of airports, highways, transit facilities, public hospitals, libraries, schools, and other public buildings.** (Minn. Stat. 473.145)

Imagine 2050

What's in the guide?

- Assists local governments to create consistent, compatible, and coordinated local comprehensive plans
- Adopted in February 2025, replacing Thrive MSP 2040 (2014)
- Describes four values, five regional goals, 100 regional policies, and over 650 actions across topics



Regional vision

A prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive.



Regional goals



Our region is equitable and inclusive.

Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and every person feels welcome, included, and empowered.

Our communities are healthy and safe.

All our region's residents live healthy and rewarding lives with a sense of security, dignity, and wellbeing.

Our region is dynamic and resilient.

Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and the economy including issues of choice, access, and affordability.

We lead on addressing climate change.

We have mitigated greenhouse gas emissions and have adapted to ensure that our communities and systems are resilient to climate impacts.

We protect and restore natural systems.

We protect, integrate, and restore natural systems to protect habitat and ensure a high quality of life for the people of our region.

2050 Land Use Policy



Eight objectives:

1. Growth management
2. Transit-centered growth
3. Community design
4. Natural systems
5. Housing for all
6. Equity
7. Climate resilience
8. Economic well-being

2050 Housing Policy Plan

Seven related objectives and policies grouped into three themes:

Proximity and Choice

1. Housing choices across the region
2. Affordable options to own and rent

Dignity and Decency

3. Housing Stability
4. Safe, dignified, healthy housing

Connection and Well-being

5. Connected housing and neighborhoods
6. Housing justice and reparative action
7. Climate-resilient, healthy housing



2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy



Seven policies:

1. System Plan
2. Natural Systems
3. Climate Resilience
4. Planning
5. System Protection
6. Recreation, Facilities, Programming
7. Finance

2050 Water Policy Plan



Four guiding objectives and twelve policies:

1. Integrated water
2. Growth and development
3. Water equity
4. Climate change
5. Conservation and sustainability
6. Water reuse
7. Pollution prevention and containment management
8. Monitoring, data, assessment
9. Wastewater service area
10. Wastewater operations and finance
11. Inflow and infiltration
12. Water workforce development

2050 Transportation Policy Plan

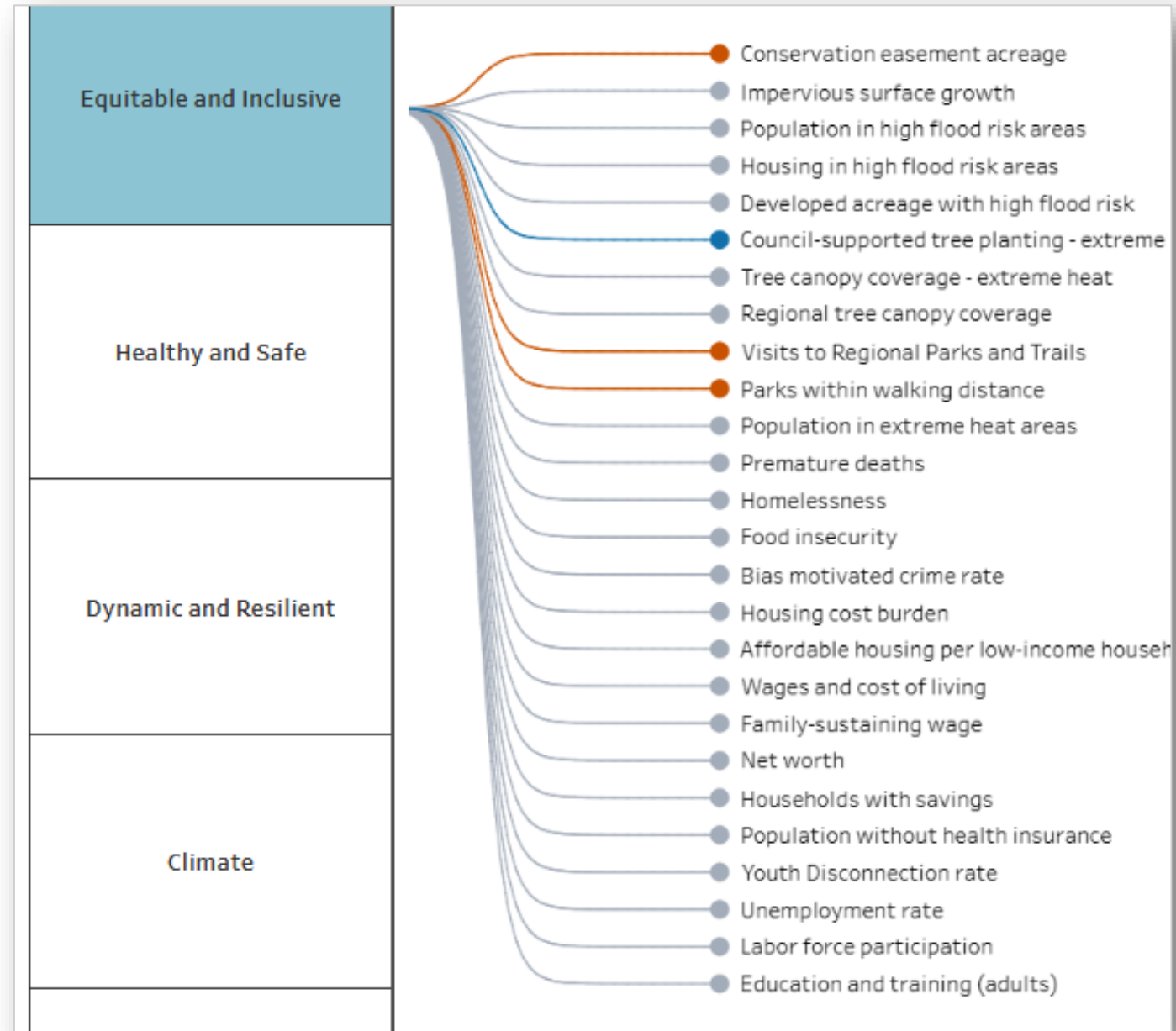


- Sixteen objectives related to regional goals
- Thirty-three policies
- Over 180 actions, identified by:
 - Type: Investment Priority, Local Planning, Technical Capacity Building, Partner, Work Program
 - Lead/support actor: Met Council, MNDOT, Counties, Cities, Transit, Others

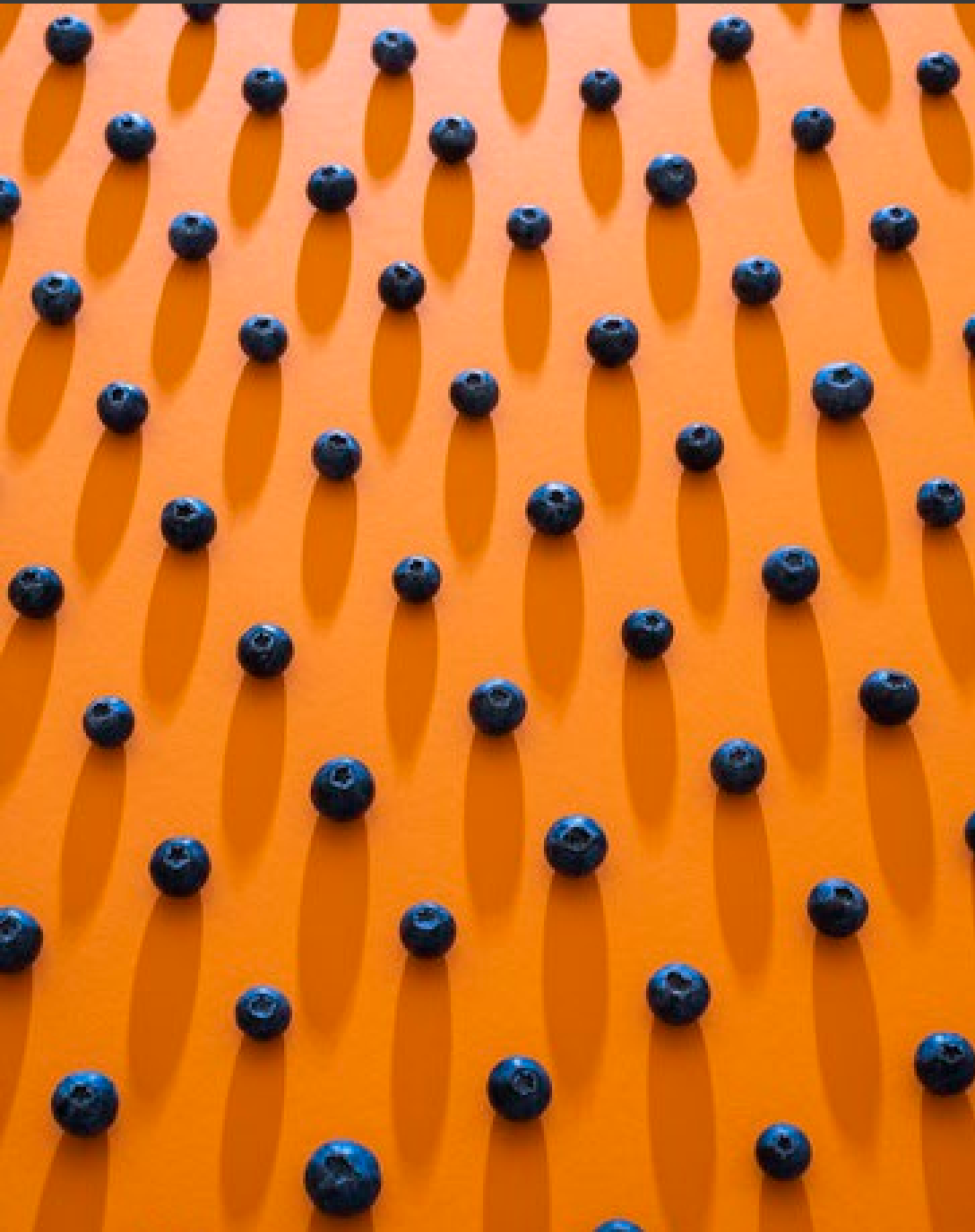
OVERVIEW

Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program

Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program:
<https://metro council.org/Imagine2050Outcomes>



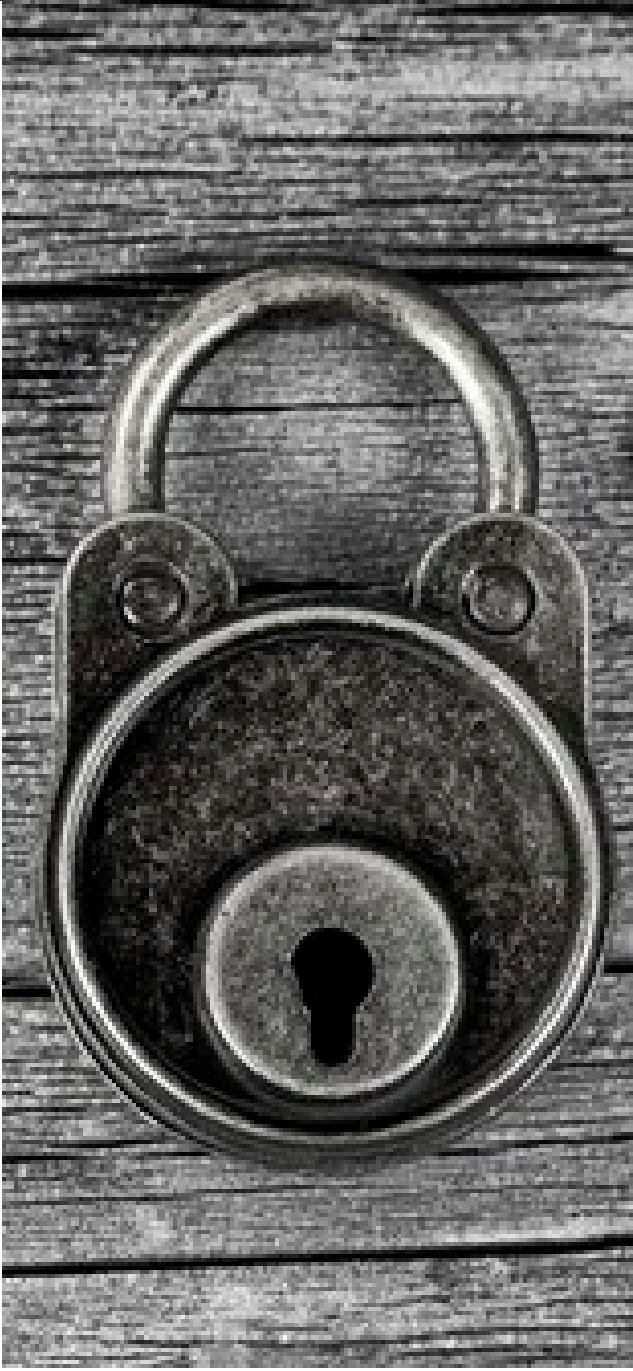
A new approach for Imagine 2050



Strategic alignment of research and monitoring for shared understanding

- Imagine 2050's value of accountability
- Creates opportunities for regional dialogues about trends, change, and progress
- Leverages new information and methods
- Fosters systems thinking about regional goals and policy
- Supports holistic, data-informed decisions and policy

Program commitments



To implement this program, Met Council commits to...

1. Center diversity of knowledge and expertise, including from those who live the experiences being measured
2. Apply adopted Imagine 2050 equity frameworks
3. Value and reflect multiple pathways to progress; as tensions arise, prioritize respectful dialogue over achieving consensus
4. Cooperation and collaboration within and across Met Council's divisions and between Met Council and partners; balance the benefits and burdens of new data development and data sharing
5. Make information and practices transparent and accessible to partners and stakeholders

Guiding principles

Iterative

- Measure focused
- Relevant topics, data sources or availability, and methods will change
- Continuous improvement driven by collaborative and transparent process

Adaptable

- Reporting and engagement focused
- Ongoing practice of understanding what regional audiences want and need from this work

Meaningful

- Program focused
- Outcomes not outputs
- Intentional measurement design, common units, and plain language

Measures capture different levels of action

Regional indicators

- Population-level (disaggregating where possible)
- Provide context—build shared understanding macro conditions
- “Big needles” that require collective action to move; no single actor or sector

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

Met Council measures

How are we advancing 2050 goals and policies?

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

Measurement development and iteration



Selection considerations

- Related to at least one of Imagine 2050's regional goals, policies, objectives, or actions
- Informed by evidence-based practices and developed with technical experts and policy staff
- Two or more data points over the 10-year planning cycle
- Disaggregation potential

Iterative process

- Changes in data availability or methodology may lead to revisions or removals (trend no longer viable)
- Regional measures resulting from new data development may be changed/refined
- New measures from new work, research, data sources
- Big disruptions or other emergent topics

Equity in Outcomes Measurement

Imagine 2050 Equity Framework:

Contextualized

Ensures solutions are addressing a systemic inequity



Community-Centered

We are working with the impacted population to co-create solutions



Reparative

Creating solutions that are commensurate with what caused the inequity

Our region is equitable and inclusive



- “Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and all people feel welcome, included, and empowered.”
- Equity is integrated across Imagine 2050 and the Outcomes Measurement Program

All measures are evaluated for disaggregation:

Demographic groups

- Housing cost burden
- Parks and Trails visitors
- Population without health insurance

Spatially

- Housing in flood risk areas
- Tree canopy coverage in areas with extreme heat
- Impervious surface growth

Adopted equity frameworks

1

Environmental Justice Framework

 <p>People-centered, data-driven decision making</p>	 <p>Prioritized engagement with overburdened communities</p>	 <p>Community benefits beyond harm mitigation</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2

Anti-Displacement Framework

 <p>Met Council investments go through an anti-displacement risk assessment</p>	 <p>Prioritize projects that support community connection and anti-displacement in our grant programs</p>	 <p>Provide best practices and resources through engagement and collaboration with overburdened communities</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

3

Community-Centered Engagement Framework

- Equity
- Respect
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Cultural competence

Implementation of these frameworks within Met Council is underway; measures will follow.

American Indian Advisory Council

Met Council commitments

- Land, Water, and People Acknowledgement Statement
- Updating Tribal Consultation Policy
- Increasing American Indian staff representation
- Developing training materials for staff and partners

Commitments within policy plans

- Regional Parks and Trails
- Transportation
- Land Use
- Water
- Housing

Next steps



More to come...

- Additional presentations about the policy plans, followed by measurement discussions in 2026
- Outcomes measurement website and dashboard with data will be published in 2027
- Ongoing narrative-building sessions through next regional development guide adoption



Imagine 2050 Outcomes Measurement Program

<https://metro council.org/Imagine2050Outcomes>

Sarah Nelson

Senior Researcher,
Community Development Research

sarah.nelson@metc.state.mn.us

Krysten Ryba-Tures

Strategy & Product Design Manager,
Community Development Research

krysten.ryba-tures@metc.state.mn.us

