

HIGH-LEVEL INPUT SUMMARY STAFF AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



HENNEPIN COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
September 2016 through March 2017

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400 | Minneapolis, MN 55415-1843



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	3
Idea Forums	3
Idea Roundtables	4
From Issue Areas to Themes	5
Prosperous	7
Livable	9
Sustainable	11



IDEA FORUM & IDEA ROUNDTABLE HIGH LEVEL INPUT SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Across the Twin Cities metropolitan region each county, city and township, including Hennepin County, is taking on an important activity – updating its comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a document or series of documents that help guide future development and inform how important local services are provided. The planning process also provides an opportunity to have a community conversation about shared goals, values and priorities; and to incorporate new trends, new information and include new people into the process for setting the community’s policy direction. State law requires each county, city and township in the seven-county metropolitan area to update its comprehensive plan every 10 years. Current plans must be revised by the end of 2018 and have a planning timeframe up to the year 2040.

Idea Forums

To begin this process and to assist the county’s Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), Hennepin County Commissioners and project staff in guiding the preparation of the comprehensive plan, the county invited some observers of local and regional affairs, or “Thought Leaders” to share their thoughts and perspectives about the key issues and challenges facing the county and region. Between September, 2016 and January 2017 four special PAC meetings were devoted to panel discussions, or “Idea Forums” for listening to the perspectives and suggestions of these thought leaders. From these early discussions several broad issue areas emerged.

- *Prosperity and Competitiveness*
- *Health and Livability*
- *Mobility and Connectivity*
- *Sustainability and Resiliency*
- *Equity and Justice*
- *Innovation and Collaboration*



Idea Roundtables

To test and refine these emerging issue areas and to get feedback on the emerging themes, two “Idea Roundtables” were held in February and March 2017.

- County leadership, as well as staff from the three comprehensive plan technical teams (People & Places, Transportation and Natural Resources), were invited to attend one of two “Idea Roundtables” held on February 8, 2017.
- On March 3, 2017 a larger, Idea Roundtable discussion was held at the Ridgedale Library to get input and feedback from additional thought leaders from the community.

Meeting Goals

To keep participants informed by:

- Letting them know about the County’s comprehensive planning process and timeline
- Sharing the issues & themes emerging from our engagement and analysis efforts so far

To hear from participants by:

- Getting ideas and feedback about trends, issues and opportunities, and
- Getting ideas and feedback about the emerging broad themes

After opening remarks and a short introductory presentation, meeting attendees participated in a facilitated World Café exercise intended to gather input and feedback on the emerging issue areas. Participants had the opportunity to take part in discussions at three of five topic tables; innovation and collaboration was discussed at each table. Discussions began with a brief topic overview by the table facilitator, time to look over a summary of the Idea Forums, followed by an interactive discussion about the opportunities, issues, connections and tensions within these themes. Participants were also asked what their vision for success would look like in each issue area. Following the World Café, participants discussed and gave input on the issues areas themselves.

From Issue Areas to Themes

When we asked the Idea forum and Idea Roundtable participants about the most important challenges we face and what future success could look like, what we heard can be summarized in three aspirational outcomes: that Hennepin County should strive to be **prosperous, livable** and **sustainable**. We also heard that the County cannot be prosperous, livable and sustainable unless that opportunity is available to all residents.

Following is a high-level summary, organized by theme, of the ideas, challenges and ideas to explore that we heard from participants at these meetings. For a more detailed summary of the Idea forums and Idea Roundtable, see the County's 2040 Comprehensive Plan webpage at <http://www.hennepin.us/2040plan>.

Hennepin County leadership and participants

This is a partial list of the people who contributed leadership and ideas to the process summarized in this document. A more complete list will be online and in future drafts.

Hennepin County Board of Commissioners

Mike Opat, District 1
Linda Higgins, District 2
Marion Greene, District 3
Peter McLaughlin, District 4
Debbie Goettel, District 5
Jan Callison, District 6
Jeff Johnson, District 7

Hennepin County administration

David Hough, administrator
Carl Michaud, assistant county administrator
— Public Works
Jennifer DeCubellis, deputy administrator —
Health and Human Services
Rex Holzemer, assistant county administrator
— Human Services
Judy Regenscheid, assistant county
administrator — Operations
Mark Thompson, assistant county
administrator — Public Safety

Comprehensive plan core team

Carol Anderson
Kayla Bromelkamp
Denise Engen
Jason Gottfried
Rachelle Henderson
Jen Kullgren
Vinodh Kutty
Rosemary Lavin
Scott Martens
Dan Patterson
Alisa Salewski
Erica Skinner
Halston Sleets
Carla Stueve
Katie Walker

Policy Advisory Committee

Cassandra Adler
Stan Alleyne
Steven Belton
Joe Biernat
Tom Cook
Steven Devich
Dan Duffy
Omar Fateh (vice chair)
Jill Garcia
John Gibbs (chair)
James Jackson
Commissioner Jeff Johnson
Semantics King
Anne Mavity
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin
Commissioner Mike Opat
Maureen Scallen Failor
Brad Spencer
Lynn Stetler
Kristine Sundberg
Samantha Vang

Idea forum panelists

Tawanna Black, Northside Funders Group
Susan Brower, state demographer
Ed Ehlinger, state commissioner of health
Yingling Fan, University of Minnesota
Tom Fisher, University of Minnesota
Peter Frosch, Greater MSP
Patrick Hamilton, Science Museum of
Minnesota
Sharon Pierce, Minneapolis Community
Technical College
Anu Ramaswami, University of Minnesota
Sharon Sayles Belton, Thompson Reuters
Deidre Schmidt, CommonBond
Charlie Zelle, state commissioner of
transportation

Hennepin County will be **prosperous**

Key messages

- Disparities drag down the regional economy – addressing them is an economic issue
- Advancing equity will benefit all residents
- Stable, healthy housing is foundational to success in addressing many other needs and issues
- Changing technologies, economy and preferences will change how we travel, work and use space; smart reuse, innovation and partnerships are important.
- Connect the workers we already have to jobs; we also need to compete globally to attract workers

Challenges

- Not everyone has participated in the region's prosperity. The Twin Cities and Minnesota are among the worst in the nation for disparities between whites and people of color.
- The region is projected to lose workers, mostly as a result of an aging population.
- Our population is aging; this trend is permanent and will have long lasting implications for government services, budgets and households.
- People around the country and world have a vague knowledge about the Twin Cities, but it usually centers around cold, hockey and strange accents. When people do get here — especially people of color — they don't find it welcoming, hurting our ability to add people to fill jobs.
- Maintenance obligations for our aging infrastructure already is a burden on our economy; as we build and repair, we must manage future maintenance obligations.
- The population of people of color will increase, making addressing our large income disparities an economic issue; disparities are an economic drag on our region.
- Poverty has increased in suburbs and will continue to do so.
- An aging population brings challenges (services, budgets, needs).
- The state is expected to face a worker shortage.
- From an environmental perspective we cannot be prosperous without a healthy environment (clean water, fertile soil)
- Disparities are an economic drag on our region; addressing our large income disparities is an economic issue. We cannot prosper if we are not socioeconomically integrated; addressing disparities helps overall prosperity and competitiveness.
- College debt is a problem. Huge college debts for people to overcome before they even can get into the workforce – this is a problem!
- Hennepin County identity. People don't think of Hennepin as a place to live in and contribute to; think primarily of city and neighborhood.

Opportunities

- We need to train people who are already here – and connect them to jobs
- Workforce assistance is needed, especially in North Minneapolis, to connect to jobs in the community and beyond.
- Land use: change land use patterns to have less segregation of uses, more connections.
- Make connections to jobs with the transportation system; plan for a changing workforce
- Changing technologies, economy and preferences will change how we travel, work and use space.
- We have a thriving arts community that brings creativity and income while attracting and retaining those who enjoy the art.
- Jobs and services can and should be located near where people already live.
- An aging population brings opportunities (contribute experience, talent).
- Our economy is shifting and we need to position for success; reduced consumption is a trend among some of our population, who are more interested in consuming a service than owning a product.
- The changing nature of work has potential to reduce trips, especially at peak hours.
- Can we keep the current, large population of 25-29 year-olds in Hennepin County?
- What is the role of Hennepin County in education? Education needs to be mentioned; skills gap demands education and access to education.
- Pay attention to what makes us attractive to residents and businesses. “Zoom out” so we are looking at what people and businesses wish to see in HC as a place of residence and employment.
- Redefine what prosperity means. Typically people think of financial gain and there is maybe a more holistic aspect of that.

Ideas to explore and recommendations

- Preferences for how people work, live and use space is changing. There is less need for segregation of land uses, and people are mixing work with play.
- Technological advances are accelerating. The economic consequences that used to come once in a generation now are coming every few years. Regions that are hubs for the new economies will have much to gain.
- Our population is becoming more racially diverse. We need to be welcoming and inclusive if we are to be competitive.
- Government needs to at least keep up with accelerating innovation.
- Regional players need to collaborate to compete globally as one.
- Place-based strategies are important; place largely defines outcomes.
- Suburban vs urban: we need to transition to a regional view; Inclusivity.
- Train the people who are already here — and connect them to jobs; workforce assistance is needed, specifically in North Minneapolis, to connect to jobs in the community and beyond.
- Strengthen the capacity of communities, include them in how decisions are made. Communities need a seat at the table so they can address their own issues.
- Increased opportunity and participation in decision-making, services and contracts.
- Provide equal access to housing, jobs, transportation — identify barriers within government programs and practices
- Demographics are part of measuring success. Success also = jobs + livable wage.
- Re-vamp purchasing, contracting and procurement for better access for disadvantaged business enterprises
- Need living wage jobs — that don't require so much travel.
- Childcare and equity in childcare influence economy and transportation.
- Retrain people for the needs of a shifting economy; provide living wages jobs, even for new and low skilled workers.
- Plan for a changing workforce; train people for jobs needed in the new/shifting economy.
- Make connections to jobs with the transportation system; example, 2nd and 3rd shift workers have a hard time getting bus service; connections to/from suburbs (job sites) are poor.
- Need youth education and training (before 25), development and employment, particularly to address racial employment disparities; also, a high return on investment is for early childhood education.
- Provide multiple “on ramps” to education and training; get people into the work force at the right level and in a system where they progress.
- Our natural growth is not adequate; we need immigration — and have to learn to integrate
- Childcare and equity in childcare influence economy and transportation.
- Jobs aren't the end all be all, where do people get their satisfaction?
- Talk about job vacancies — versus unemployment

Hennepin County will be **livable**

Key messages

- Making communities healthy and livable, and our systems and services flexible and people-centered is important
- The aging of our population will have profound & lasting impacts that pose challenges for systems, individuals and families.
- Our methods and approaches need to change to meet a changing population with changing preferences.
- The transportation system is not only about transportation, it's about livability and about making the destinations great; build roadways to address multiple goals; make it better and think differently when it's time to renew and rebuild.
- Mobility is a service, not the infrastructure it relies on. As a service, it needs to meet all people's needs.

Challenges

- The aging of our population will have profound and lasting impacts that pose challenges for systems, individuals and families.
- Affordability of long-term care and life expenses will be a concern for aging households; funding and providing services and maintaining and replacing infrastructure is a challenge for governments.
- There is an important connection between health and housing. Having stable healthy housing is foundational to success in addressing many other needs and issues; think of housing as critical infrastructure.
- The Twin Cities has among the worst racial disparities in the nation, particularly in employment, income, education and health.
- Generational and cultural differences in housing preferences are not adequately accommodated with our housing supply.
- The opportunity to be healthy is not available to everyone.
- The working age population is increasingly people of color; people of color in our county and region experience disparities in income and health outcomes.
- The aging population is a permanent trend with long lasting implications; it also means an increase in people with disabilities
- Concerns that transportation projects are leading to gentrification rather than serving those who needed it.
- "Sanctuary city" (Minneapolis) versus sanctuary county — Hennepin County does not act that way and does the opposite; it cooperates with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, particularly at court or court appointments.

Opportunities

- The changing nature of work has potential to reduce trips, especially at peak hours
- Autonomous vehicles present great opportunities in how we travel, work and use space; we can reduce the footprint of roads — reducing costs while improving safety, the environment and personal freedom.
- When it's time to renew and rebuild our infrastructure, make it better and think differently. Roads are our public spaces. We can use them to address multiple goals; use green infrastructure & district systems to reduce costs. We can create great destinations that also safely and efficiently move people.
- The Twin Cities is a center of culture and arts. The county can benefit from this and support growth.
- We need walkable, connected neighborhoods that keep people — including seniors — connected to their communities.
- Preferences are changing; there is a desire for different living, work and transportation options, which will affect multiple systems and services. Demographic trends & new technology will affect and accelerate these changes.
- What are the service impacts of driverless cars? Has the last parking lot already been built? We might not have DWIs in 25 years.

Ideas to explore and recommendations

- Create places designed to be enjoyed year-round, not just in the few warm months. Embrace our long and cold winters; find ways to help people enjoy them.
- Transportation connects A to B. Often it is more efficient, productive and less destructive to make A and B closer together in an existing system than to create new connections.
- Make our spaces more flexible — buildings and roads don't have to be just commercial or just residential, they will change based on demand and should be designed with that in mind.
- Addressing disparities will improve health and livability for all in the county and region.
- There is an important connection between health and housing. Having stable healthy housing is foundational to success in addressing many other needs and issues; think of housing as critical infrastructure.
- Access to health care via transportation and technology. People need greater access to health care and transportation systems plays a big part. Should advance telemedicine and other remote service delivery to meet people where they are.
- It is very difficult to find housing for level 3 sex offenders. Residents don't want them living in their community, yet their numbers are increasing.
- Addressing disparities in children. As our population becomes more diverse, the need to address disparities in education, health and elsewhere will gain urgency.
- Need greater diversity in housing stock. Generational and cultural differences in housing preferences are not adequately accommodated with our housing supply. I
- Access to services can be improved and reimaged. Organize services so everyone has access to what they need to contribute to society.
- Connect people to parks equitably. Transit focuses on commerce or entertainment. How do we get to parks?
- Focus on addressing the social determinants of health. Make the housing and health connection.
- Document positive stories of success – best practices; instead of deficits lets look at an asset based approach.
- Countywide campaign on truth telling about structural racism.
- It's about livability, not infrastructure: when it's time to renew and rebuild our infrastructure, make it better and think differently. We can build roadways to address multiple goals; use green infrastructure & district systems to reduce costs.
- Key for health is nature/wildlife/clean water/fresh air.
- Provide safe cities and transportation, such as zero traffic injuries/ fatalities
- Create cities that are functional, promote health of residents and the environment, and that are livable.
- Protect green space.
- Housing: provide greater flexibility in requirements and allow greater density; make affordable choices available.
- Prioritize/pay more attention to what seniors need to live and to thrive in their communities (aging in place); transportation, health, housing choices.
- Missing: public safety. Not a single thing, criminal justice system (racial disparities) in Hennepin County.
- The transportation system has become much safer over the years; but we need to keep improving safety
- How to be smart about programming right of way w/ the flexibility of use that is going to be different? How to achieve multiple common good purposes?
- Foster connections between modes — walk to bus, bus to car, bike to bus, shared vehicles
- Transportation needs to be respectful, welcoming, people-oriented, safe and honoring people's needs. Users should not be second-class because of their mode choice or, for example, because they work second shift and rely on transit.
- Mental health and well-being – create space that is supportive for mental well being

Hennepin County will be **sustainable**

Key messages

- Climate change brings challenges for the future health, livability and sustainability of our communities and our environment
- Resiliency concerns are challenging us to rethink how we provide infrastructure and services – and call for new ways to live, work and renew our communities; it's part of a new economy
- Climate change will make operations different; resiliency concerns cause us to rethink how we provide infrastructure and services;
- The county plays a key role in environmental sustainability and social & economic resilience through its policies and how it invests in its residents, communities and infrastructure

Challenges

- The infrastructure we rely on is aging and needs extensive maintenance. We may have overbuilt our systems; they can be right-sized.
- Our region is one of the areas projected to be most affected by climate change, bringing challenges to health, livability and sustainability of our communities and environment.
- The county needs to make significant steps to stay on track toward its 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emissions goals.
- Climate change brings challenges to health, livability and the sustainability of our communities and environment.
- Resiliency: What to do when the weather beats up our infrastructure? Climate change will make operations different.
- Climate change and resiliency concerns are forcing us to rethink how we provide infrastructure and services.
- Climate change threatens our future way of life -- and brings challenges to health, livability and the sustainability of our communities and environment.
- More invasive species expected w/climate change; county, state & others must prepare to identify and address threats.
- Change in population – who's going to replace employees that are retiring? How do we support an aging population? Integrated community setting for aging population.

Opportunities

- Preferences are changing; there is a desire for different living, work and transportation options, which will affect multiple systems and services.
- The county plays a key role in social and economic resilience in how it invests in its residents, communities and infrastructure.
- Retrofitting public buildings and infrastructure can reduce energy use and cost while supporting jobs.
- An electric motor vehicle fleet can reduce local emissions and potentially all emissions, depending on the energy source. Their better reliability and longer lives can reduce other waste (acknowledging that batteries have their own life cycle issues).
- As our infrastructure ages, the county will have opportunities to rethink how it provides infrastructure and services to increase resiliency, as part of a new economy and to serve residents.
- Defining the County's role in committing to carbon reduction and in climate change mitigation.
- Developing systems that protect resources & are restorative (beyond sustainability), for example groundwater recharge.

Ideas to explore and recommendations

- Autonomous vehicles amplify both the good and the bad societal and personal effects of automobiles. Policy at a state and national level will determine how those effects are managed — whether we move to a “featureless plain” model of automotive mobility where motor vehicles dominate or a system that prioritizes people and placemaking.
- Ultimately the county's and nation's economy will have to wean itself from oil, whether due to resource exhaustion, environmental impacts, cost or more competitive sources. The most competitive places will make this transition early.
- Increase representation in leadership of our communities of color: staffing, commissions, and commissioners.
- Change our narrative to consider people and social responsibility. Planning for people and their needs is important; equity is a challenge we must face.
- Community engagement: provide a safe space to share ideas. Be conscious of how a meeting is formatted to allow more time for dialogue from professionals and from a community level to create the space to drill down on the issues.
- When re-thinking infrastructure take the following into consideration: Defining and measuring environmental sustainability, health, well-being and livability. Use both policy and technology to address renewing infrastructure.
- Be innovative in structuring partnerships; be smart about what we think is right for funding sources.
- Use technology to move information rather than moving people to that information
- Water is vital; jobs depend on water and we need clean water for health; water resilience is important.
- Our economy is shifting and we need to position for success; reduced consumption is a trend among some of our population, who are more interested in consuming a service than owning a product.
- Address social/community resilience for vulnerable populations, such as elders and people w/low-incomes and health issues
- County commits to carbon reduction (for example 80 percent by 2050) and takes a leadership role in resiliency; helps steer development in a resilient/sustainable way; assists cities.
- When re-thinking infrastructure consider: Defining and measuring environmental sustainability, health, well-being and livability. Use both policies that promote environmental sustainability and new technology to address renewing infrastructure. All these help keep cities sustainable.
- Use green infrastructure and district systems to reduce infrastructure costs and create green jobs; retrofit public buildings to cut energy use and costs; promote standards for private buildings.
- Partner with major corporations to meet environmental goals;
- Make connections to jobs, health care, education et cetera not only with the transportation system, but with technology and other systems and services.
- Prioritize prime farm land to maintain food systems as the county develops.
- We need to be nimble, have expectation that we will be constantly adapting
- Remove barriers for people who cannot pay fines – preventing people from contributing
- Efficiency of operations and productivity — if we are adding 1.5% to employee population, is it sustainable? Can we afford increase infrastructure?
- Sustainable communities mean eliminating disparities — In danger of creating a two-tiered society between race and class. Worry most about income gap, disparities.
- How can we address the continuing/intensifying wealth inequity? This is destabilizing. It makes our job harder.
- There needs to be a critical mass of people who understand that tackling disparities in their best interest. How can we shift the narrative from a zero sum.