

## **Workshop #4 Summary**

### **Transportation and Mobility**

#### **Strategies and Solutions**

Participants emphasized that the Twin Cities' transportation system is highly car-dependent, creating equity and environmental concerns. Vulnerable populations, including zero-car households, face challenges accessing jobs and services, while suburban areas struggle with transit connectivity. Participants highlighted successes such as high-quality bike infrastructure, light rail, BRT lines, and innovative microtransit programs (e.g., MVTA in Rosemont).

Suggested approaches include improving transit frequency and reliability, connecting housing with transit corridors, expanding last-mile connections, and promoting Mobility as a Service options. Holistic regional planning for freight and employment accessibility was also emphasized. Participants underscored the importance of coordinating with major employers, colleges, and community organizations to ensure practical access to jobs and essential services.

#### **Key Partners and Organizations**

Participants identified the Metropolitan Council, partner cities and counties, Move Minnesota, and business coalitions (e.g., Minnesota Business Coalition for Racial Equity, Twin Cities DEI Roundtable) as leaders in mobility solutions. Employers, educational institutions, and local advocacy organizations were recognized as key collaborators.

#### **Evaluating Progress**

Metrics suggested include travel time reliability, ridership changes, accessibility indices, and hyper-local analysis of walksheds. Formative evaluation with periodic check-ins was recommended to assess equity impacts and adjust strategies in real time.

#### **Key Takeaways**

Success in transportation relies on integrating multiple modes, prioritizing equity, engaging key partners, and continuously evaluating both infrastructure and service effectiveness. Innovative approaches such as microtransit and last-mile connectivity can address gaps in less dense areas.

### **New Climate Economy**

#### **Strategies and Solutions**

Participants noted that Minnesota's goal of 100% carbon-free energy by 2040 faces challenges including insufficient EV infrastructure, long distances to charging stations, and competing energy demands from legacy and growing industries. Effective strategies

include supporting startups in clean technologies, leveraging federal and state funding programs (e.g., MN Forward Fund), and implementing workforce development initiatives to upskill and reskill employees for green economy jobs.

Other approaches discussed included co-op business models, strategic partnerships between universities and industry, and incentives that prioritize smaller businesses and entrepreneurs, particularly those owned by people of color. Participants highlighted the importance of communicating opportunities across the ecosystem to ensure broad participation.

### **Key Partners and Organizations**

Universities (e.g., U of M), Greater MSP, foundations (e.g., McKnight), CDFIs, tribal initiatives, and existing industry leaders were identified as critical partners. Collaboration between public agencies, businesses, and non-profits is essential to align resources and share opportunities.

### **Evaluating Progress**

While specific metrics were not defined, participants suggested tracking workforce readiness, business participation, and project implementation. Formative assessments can help adjust policies and incentives to ensure equitable engagement.

### **Key Takeaways**

Advancing the new climate economy requires ecosystem-level coordination, proactive workforce planning, and targeted support for both large and small businesses. Minnesota's comparative advantage in feedstocks and technology investment presents an opportunity to grow clean economy sectors, but permitting and policy challenges must be managed.

### **Affordability**

#### **Strategies and Solutions**

Participants described the region as increasingly unaffordable, particularly for low- to moderate-income households. Rising housing costs, property taxes, and everyday expenses (e.g., childcare, energy, groceries) exacerbate financial pressures. Strategies suggested include enabling higher-density housing through zoning reforms, linking housing development to transit access, promoting hybrid work models, and investing in energy-efficient building technologies.

Public incentives, such as housing trust funds, land trusts, and covenants, were recommended to preserve long-term affordability. Modular and innovative construction approaches were also highlighted as ways to reduce development costs. Participants stressed the importance of aligning affordability strategies with transportation access, workforce stability, and economic development goals.

**Key Partners and Organizations**

Key partners include local governments, Habitat for Humanity, GroundBreak Coalition, Greater MSP, Rondo Community Land Trust, and small developers. Collaboration with businesses and light industrial sectors was noted as critical for supporting affordable housing and workforce stability.

**Evaluating Progress**

Suggested metrics include median home values, median household incomes, and discretionary income. These measures can help assess the effectiveness of housing policies and track improvements in affordability across the region.

**Key Takeaways**

Addressing affordability requires multi-pronged strategies that integrate housing, transportation, and economic development. Partnerships across public, private, and non-profit sectors, combined with innovative policies and investment mechanisms, are critical to improving access to housing and reducing financial burdens for residents.