MetroCommon 2050 Scenario Planning Process Document

How Can We Succeed in an Uncertain Future?

One of the major elements of MetroCommon 2050 is **scenario planning**. In scenario planning, we explore a handful of possible futures, and assess the impact and effectiveness of various policy actions on them. In this way we can gauge if our policy recommendations are robust enough to withstand surprises the future may hold.

To carry out our scenario planning, we start with **driving forces**. Driving forces are key unknowns that we have little or no control over, but that could lead to drastically different futures for our region. Using those driving forces, we build **scenarios.** Each scenario is made up of a different combination of driving forces. We explore each scenario, creating a narrative that is illustrative of what that possible future could hold. Finally, we'll use those potential futures — those scenarios — to model the effect of various policies.

In scenario planning, there is no assertion that the driving forces and scenarios we highlight are the only ones possible. After all, there are an infinite number of imaginable and unimaginable variables, and we can only examine four. There's no pretense, either, that we can highlight anything in its full complexity, or that we have foretold the only way the selected driving forces could unfold.

The value in this exercise is not in its predictive power. It is in building plausible hypothetical situations against which we can stress test various policies and other actions.

Scenario Planning in MetroCommon 2050

Scenarios will be the highlight of Phase III of our MetroCommon planning process. There are three key ways we will use scenario planning in this phase:

- Communicate to the public in an artistic and interactive way in order to promote thinking about future uncertainty
- Forecast futures to compare performance metrics that relate back to our goals
- Model policies and interventions across different scenarios in order to 'stress test' our ideas. We will see which policies and interventions will work well across multiple scenarios, examine which interventions only work well under certain conditions, and see which policies and interventions may have unintended consequences in different futures.

Developing Driving Forces and Scenarios

The driving forces and scenarios presented to the EAC on November 21st have gone through a nine-month process involving an external advisory committee, an internal advisory committee, and full staff input. The advisory committees explored a variety of driving forces, but ultimately helped highlight three which were largely independent, were *likely to happen,* and would have *high impact* on the region. In addition, these advisory groups helped think through what the impacts of these forces might be, what areas of life they would influence, and how they should be combined into scenarios. The next page lists the members of both the external and internal scenario advisory committees. Please refer to the flow chart at the end of this document for more details on the timeline of this process.

Advisory Committee Members

External Advisory Committee Members
Co-Chairs in italics

Name	Organization
Alan Clayton Matthews	Northeastern University
Alice Brown	Boston Harbor Now
Amber Christoffersen	Mystic River Watershed Association
Benjamin Miller	Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Callie Clark	*Massachusetts Housing Partnership*
Dan Dolan	New England Power Generators Association
Dan McCue	Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University
Dan Nicolai	32BJ SEIU, New England District 615
Daniel Engelberg	MIT
David Luberoff	Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University
Emily Sidla	Barr Foundation
Greg Bunn	Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
Hallah Elbeleidy	Lincoln Institute for Land Policy
Alexandra Markiewicz	MassDOT
Mark Melnik	University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute
Mary Burke	Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
Matthew Blackbourn	Harvard Business School
Meredith Crouse	Public Consulting Group
Nicole Rodriguez	Community Labor United
Rena Kottcamp	Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance
Richard Parr	MassINC Polling Group
Sarah Jimenez	Community Labor United
Steve Koczela	MassINC Polling Group
Timothy Cronin	*Climate Action Business Association*
Tom Hopper	Massachusetts Housing Partnership

Internal Advisory Committee Members

Name	Department	Other MetroCommon Role
Alison Felix	Transportation
Betsy Cowan	Economic Development	Action Area Lead
Dan Koff	Arts and Culture	Integrated Communications team member
Jeanette Pantoja	Public Health
Jessie Partridge Guerrero	Data Services	Research Agenda Lead
Lizzi Weyant	Government Affairs	Core Team
Megan Aki	Clean Energy	Action Area Lead
Sarah Philbrick	Data Services	Scenario Planning Lead
Tim Reardon	Data Services	Core Team

Scenario Creation Process Timeline

Key
ExAd- Scenario External Advisory Committee
InAd- Internal Advisory Committee
All Staff- All MAPC staff were given the opportunity to
provide comments on scenario planning documents
MAPC Leadership- Executive and Deputy Director

Check-ins with other MAPC staff not included in timeline

Check-in with MAPC Leadership
Jun 25

Check-in with MAPC Leadership
Jul 2

InAd Meeting
Jul 10

Present to EAC
Jul 23

Check-in with MAPC Leadership
Nov 13

ExAd Meeting
Mar 1

ExAd Meeting
May 7

InAd Meeting
Jun 24

Check-in with MAPC Leadership
Aug 1

ExAd Meeting
Sep 13

Present to EAC
Nov 21

2019

Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | **2019**

Apr 2
ExAd Meeting

Jun 5
ExAd Meeting

Jul 2
ExAd Meeting

Aug 15
InAd Meeting

Today

Feb 1 - Mar 1
ExAd Creation

Nov 4 - Nov 21
All Staff

Mar 1 - Sep 13
External Advisory Group

Jun 20 - Aug 15
Internal Advisory Group

Aug 15 - Nov 18
Messaging of Scenario Ideas

Mar 1 - Jul 10
Driving Forces Creation/ Prioritzation

Jul 10 - Nov 4
Sceanrio Creation

Sarah Philbrick | November 2019