

## MetroCommon 2050 is Greater Boston's next long-range plan.

By the end of the plan, MetroCommon will be an action plan for local and state governments, residents and businesses. It will recommend specific strategies for making the region a better place.

But what does making the region a better place actually mean? The MetroCommon goals answer that. They are built from the hopes and dreams of thousands of Metro Boston residents imagining the future they want. The voices have been diverse: different ages, walks of life, races, and perspectives. They are bold, but achievable.

Now that we know where we want to go as a region, we can focus on how to get there. We are now researching, identifying, and discussing best practices and policies that will help us achieve our vision. Then we will test those ideas against big trends and shifts – like climate change and technology advances – that could change everything. From there, we'll be able to make actionable recommendations. Along the way, we'll be turning to the public for your ideas, priorities, and, above all, action. Let's shape the region together!



MetroCommon × 2050

## MetroCommon Provisional Goals

Your thoughts about the goals are still important! Comment on them [here](#).

### Goal A: Getting Around the Region

Traveling around Metro Boston is safe, affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

In 2050, the ways we get around are reliable, adequately-funded, and well maintained. Travel is safe, efficient, pleasant, and affordable to all households regardless of income. New transportation technologies and services operate on our roads, underground, and on the water. These new travel options help to alleviate congestion and pollution, rather than adding to it. Public transit and shared trips are often more convenient and affordable than solo trips. Auto congestion still exists, but it is predictable and avoidable. People with mobility limitations and those without a car can get around easily, and can afford to do so. Low-income residents and residents of color enjoy high quality transit to more parts of the region, improving access to opportunity. People of all ages walk or bike more frequently for short trips, because conditions make that option safe and enjoyable. The transportation system has a minimal impact on the local and global environment, with reduced pollution and runoff, and less land set aside for roadways and parking.

1. Transit infrastructure is well-maintained and funded, and its capacity is greatly expanded through the improvement of existing service and the strategic addition of new service so that daily travel is convenient, pleasant, and reliable. The transit system provides more opportunity for circumferential travel throughout the region and reverse commutes between the inner core and suburbs.
1. The transportation system is designed and operated to ensure access to opportunity for everyone, with a particular emphasis on neighborhoods historically underserved by high quality transit.
2. Local land use policies and new development support increased mobility by encouraging concentrated growth around transit and the services people need.
3. Bicycle, pedestrian, and other personal mobility infrastructure is safe, extensive, high quality, and linked to other modes, so that people frequently use active transportation as a preferred mode of travel.
4. Transportation options in the region are net zero for carbon emissions, contributing to improved air quality and reducing negative climate impacts.
5. Public and active transportation options are affordable for those least able to pay.
6. All modes of transportation, including innovative technologies, are safely integrated resulting in few transportation-related injuries and zero fatalities annually.
7. State and local governments work together with businesses and property owners and advocates to create seamless travel throughout the region, including “first mile, last mile” connections.



## Goal B: Homes for All

All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

In 2050, people who live in the region, and those who move here, can find homes that suit their needs and incomes. Residents don't fear being priced out of their neighborhoods. Families of every size can choose from a range of housing types. As their needs change, residents can find reasonably priced options where they hope to live, including in their current neighborhoods. No one is steered toward or away from any community because of their race, ethnicity, faith, disability, or other attributes. New homes are integrated into neighborhoods close to jobs, shopping, schools, food, health care, recreation, and transportation. Owners preserve older homes, which includes making them more accessible and energy efficient. New homes are built and designed to meet the needs of a range of residents, including families with children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

1. Everyone has a home; homelessness is essentially nonexistent.
2. Available housing meets the needs of residents throughout their lifetime as they form families, age, and experience unforeseen circumstances.
3. New housing is built primarily in walkable neighborhoods that have easy access to the goods, services, public transportation, and amenities needed in daily life; enough new housing units are built in all communities to help moderate prices and meet the needs of our growing economy and population.
4. New and existing housing, including deed-restricted units and naturally occurring affordable housing, are available at a range of prices that correspond to residents' income levels.
5. Households with extremely low incomes are able to find housing they can afford, with rental assistance providing support to those who qualify.
6. Communities welcome new residents and have enacted policies and programs that avert displacement resulting from rent increases, evictions, condo conversions, foreclosures, and loss of deed-restricted housing.
7. People have access to credit and counseling that allows them, if they wish, to buy suitable homes in locations they desire, including in or near the communities where they work.
8. Neighborhoods more closely reflect the racial and income diversity of the region; residents can choose their community based on preference and opportunity, without being limited by historic segregation patterns throughout the region.

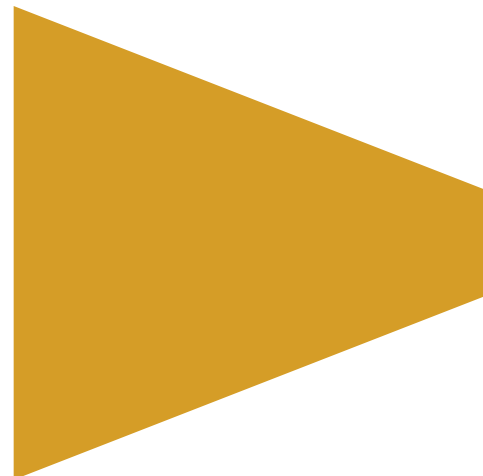


## Goal C: A Climate-Resilient Region

Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

In 2050, the Metro Boston region is prepared for the extremes of a changing climate. We are prepared for more high-heat and extreme-cold days, increased rainfall, extended periods of drought, stronger storms, and sea level rise. Homes, schools, workplaces, hazardous facilities, and infrastructure are located away from serious threats or are designed to withstand them. When major climate events interrupt critical services, the response is managed to minimize disruption. People have the resources, networks, and support to withstand climate emergencies and to recover when disaster strikes. Older adults, children, residents with lower incomes, and other vulnerable populations can safely live their lives, and fully enjoy outdoor activities. Neighborhoods are designed and improved to protect the health of residents, with ample shade, drainage, and green space. Wetlands, water bodies, forests, and plant and animal communities are restored, protected, and are able to adapt to climate change impacts.

1. Residents and workers, especially those most vulnerable to climate impacts, live and work in neighborhoods designed to minimize climate-related health effects such as asthma, heat-related illness, and other diseases.
2. All neighborhoods and municipalities have updated emergency response and communication plans in anticipation of climate-related emergencies. Communities have adequate supplies, trained professionals, and volunteers ready to respond in a coordinated and effective manner.
3. Critical systems, including energy supply and distribution, communications, water, and transportation are designed to continue functioning during, or quickly rebound after, severe storm events.
4. New homes, institutions, businesses, and hazardous facilities are built away from ecologically sensitive areas or areas vulnerable to climate impacts, or they are built in such a way as to withstand those impacts. Existing homes, institutions, businesses, and hazardous facilities in the most vulnerable locations are relocated or modified to absorb impacts.
5. Green infrastructure beautifies neighborhoods. It is included in all developments, providing multiple co-benefits, such as stormwater filtration, shade, cleaner air, carbon storage, and cooling.
6. Vulnerable populations affected by climate-related events like storms, floods, or droughts are able to avoid major financial, educational, and social disruptions, and are supported in their decisions to move out of harm's way or to make their properties more resilient.

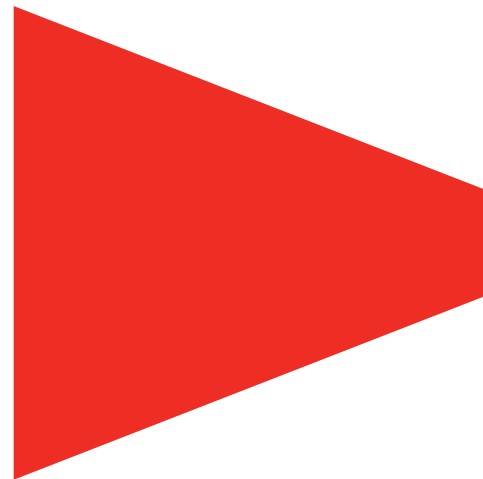


## Goal D: A Net Zero Carbon Region

The Metro Boston region is highly energy efficient and has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero.

In 2050, Metro Boston is deeply energy efficient. We power our communities, buildings, and vehicles with renewable energy. The region benefits from having made deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions before 2030, as part of the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis. Making zero-emissions choices for food, clothing, and other goods is easy, affordable, and convenient for everyone. The public health, resiliency, and other benefits of a net-zero carbon future are distributed equitably, lifting up all communities, particularly those historically bearing greater burdens.

1. Energy demand is significantly reduced and energy efficiency is maximized across the region.
2. Affordable carbon-free energy powers our modernized and smarter electricity grid, and heating and cooling are fully decarbonized.
3. Renewable energy, including centralized, district-scale, and distributed generation and storage composes the region's primary sources of energy.
4. All new construction and major renovation projects meet net zero emissions standards for heating, cooling, and electricity needs by 2030. Existing buildings meet this standard by 2050.
5. All land travel in the region is by carbon-free modes including walking, biking, electrified public transit, and electrified passenger vehicles. Air, heavy-duty freight, and marine transportation have significantly reduced carbon emissions, and are providing carbon offsets.
6. The "Green Economy" supports local workforce development, entrepreneurs, and living wage jobs that foster more widespread economic opportunity.
7. The benefits and impacts of new energy infrastructure are distributed equitably across the region, with all groups benefiting and no location or population bearing a disproportionate burden.



## Goal E: Dynamic and Representative Governments

Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

In 2050, local governments work together, often across municipal lines. Elected leadership and staff reflect the region's diversity. Everyone can participate in government and take part in decision-making. Municipalities and regional entities are structured, sized, and have the capacity to address significant land use, mobility, and sustainability challenges effectively. They have the financial resources to address both our regional and local needs and the flexibility to raise the funds they need to accomplish that goal. Governments and health, educational, social service, and commercial enterprises act as partners, systematically supporting the region's residents. The Commonwealth provides the guidance, incentives, and support needed to achieve the goals of the region and its local communities. All levels of government work together to make Metro Boston one of the healthiest, best educated, most equitable and resilient regions in the world.

1. Cities and towns receive the federal and state revenue they need to support critical services, including schools, public safety, and transportation, and to ensure equity among communities.
2. Cities and towns have greater flexibility to modernize their governance and to raise funds needed to address local issues, and they are careful stewards of these funds.
3. Historically underrepresented populations work, volunteer, vote, serve in leadership positions, and are empowered in public decision-making.
4. Complex policy issues, data, and processes are made accessible to and understandable by the public through better information design, technology, and educational programs.
5. The Commonwealth provides cities and towns meaningful incentives to collaborate with each other in planning, procurement, and delivery of local services, including regionalization and consolidation where appropriate.
6. Cities and towns form creative partnerships with health, education, and commercial entities in their communities.
7. Municipalities work together and with regional government to plan for, coordinate, and fund vital functions such as land use, transportation, housing, water, and energy.



## Goal F: A Healthy Environment

Greater Boston's air, water, land, and other natural resources are clean and protected – for us and for the rest of the ecosystem.

In 2050, our air is pure, indoors and out. Our cities and towns are healthy, with beautiful parks and natural areas accessible to all. And our cities are quieter, with less polluting and more efficient transportation technologies. Contaminated sites are cleaned up and turned to new uses. There is less waste. Unavoidable waste produces energy, fertilizes soil, or is reprocessed. We have enough fresh water from our wells, streams, and reservoirs to meet the needs of people and wildlife. Our farms and fisheries produce plentiful and healthy yields, and sustainable. Habitats, forest, wetlands, and other natural resources are protected and enhanced.

1. Water is clean and sustainably managed. Waterways exceed Clean Water Act standards and meet the appropriate needs of residents, industry, forests, farms, and wildlife.
2. A robust network of protected open space, waterways, farms, parks, and greenways provide wildlife habitat, ecological benefits, recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty.
3. Farms, fisheries, community gardens, and natural landscapes are prevalent, and able to adapt and thrive in the face of the changing climate. They offer residents access to fresh, affordable, healthy, and local food.
4. Populations who experienced historic environmental injustices enjoy air, energy, and water as clean as any other residents enjoy.
5. The region produces very little solid waste. What it does create is reused, composted, recycled, or turned into energy within the region.
6. Few contaminated sites exist. Former contaminated sites have been redeveloped to create jobs or homes, or restored to support green infrastructure and habitat, and to mitigate climate impacts.
7. The use and exposure to toxic chemicals have been greatly reduced in manufacturing, products, and throughout the environment.

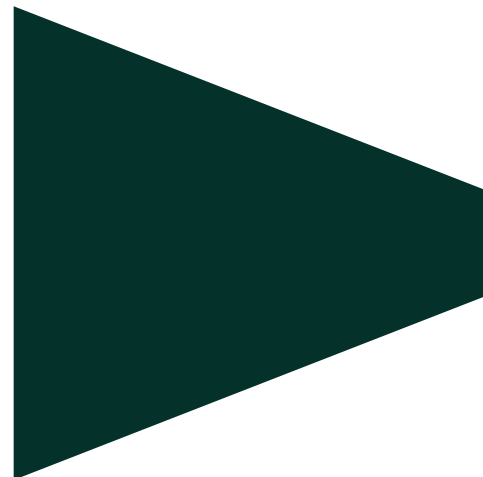


## Goal G: Economic Security

Everyone has the financial resources to meet their needs and to live fulfilling lives.

In 2050, residents of Metro Boston can provide for themselves and their families throughout their lives. Workers earn wages that support healthy lifestyles, access to opportunities, and allow for education, emergency savings, and retirement. Those in need receive services and supports from both public and private sources. Populations that have historically lacked or been denied wealth are now as likely as others to build wealth and pass it on. Employers provide job stability with “family first” policies. Young children have safe, affordable, and nurturing environments in their early years. Students thrive in high quality schools that prepare them for fulfilling work and life. Adults who want to expand their skills can find convenient and affordable higher education and training programs.

1. Residents have enough wealth – or access to public or personal safety nets – to allow them to withstand economic disruptions, provide for post-secondary schooling, and retirement.
2. The educational system is desegregated. Educational funding and resources are equitably distributed across the region.
3. Employers, community-based organizations, the K-12 and higher educational systems, and government agencies collaboratively manage a successful workforce development pipeline that results in fulfilling employment.
4. Employers in the region – combined with appropriate public support and in partnership with labor unions – provide their employees with living wages, affordable health care, reasonable vacation, sick and parental leave time, healthy working conditions, and stable retirement options.
5. Populations that have historically faced unemployment or underemployment – in particular residents of color, low-income residents, women, those formerly incarcerated, older workers, and people with disabilities, find gainful employment earning living wages. There is equal pay for equal work.
6. Government programs no longer have strict cut-offs (cliffs), allowing recipients to increase their incomes and economic mobility without losing all assistance.
7. New economic models, such as cooperatively-owned businesses and Employee Stock Ownership Programs, provide wealth creation and business ownership opportunities, particularly for individuals with barriers to traditional employment and individuals interested in investing in the local economy.



## Goal H: Economic Prosperity

Greater Boston's economy benefits all in the region.

The region has a thriving and varied business ecosystem from locally-owned stores to global companies, expanding wealth-creation opportunities for families and individuals throughout the region. Medical, education, and high tech sectors continue to play an important role in our economy. New jobs are located near transit, other infrastructure, and existing services. State and local governments and customers support small and mid-sized businesses, including those that are owned by women, people of color, and immigrants. The region remains a destination for students, entrepreneurs, artists, and innovators from all parts of the world.

1. Policies and programs support the development, expansion, and relocation of small and mid-sized businesses, with a focus on entrepreneurs who are women, immigrants, and people of color.
2. The region has a strong supply of workers through education and workforce development programs that keep up with changing labor demands.
3. Cities and towns work together and with the Commonwealth to attract and retain businesses that provide good jobs and strengthen our region. Incentives are used sparingly and wisely through specific agreements that ensure job creation, infrastructure investment, and municipal fiscal health.
4. Vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial sites are revitalized, and they provide new jobs close to population centers and transit.
5. The region has a job-housing balance so that workers can find homes affordable to them with shorter commutes through strategic development of housing near job centers and commercial districts.
6. Entrepreneurs and new businesses thrive across the region, with significant contributions from small businesses owners and women, minority and immigrant entrepreneurs.



## Goal I: Healthy and Safe Neighborhoods

We are safe, healthy, and connected to one another.

In 2050, residents breathe clean air, drink clean water, and eat healthy foods. Across race, ethnicity, immigration status, age, income, and ability, people live longer, healthier lives because they live in neighborhoods that are welcoming and safe, and in homes that are stable and affordable. Residents travel through the region conveniently and safely, and they enjoy nearby parks and open space. Neighborhood design promotes social connections and healthy choices. Strong schools, jobs, social services help residents lead engaged and healthy lives. Violence, pollution, racism, and other risk factors are rare and actively deterred. Affordable and high-quality medical and behavioral health care, with an emphasis on prevention, is available to all.

1. Exposure to pollution has been minimized: no one lives in a place where air, water, or soil pollution could diminish life expectancy or quality.
2. Through enhanced public health initiatives and investments, the region has reduced the rates of chronic diseases, mental health and substance use disorders, as well as the risks of communicable diseases.
3. People in the region live, work, attend school, worship, and travel without the risk of violence, discrimination, or crime.
4. People in the region have affordable health care, including stigma-free mental health, women's health, and addiction treatment and support networks.
5. Healthy food is readily accessible and affordable to all people in the region.
6. Residents have the resources to detoxify, weatherize, and maintain their homes.
7. State and local governments have the resources to maintain their parks, public squares, sidewalks, and open space.
8. The Commonwealth has replaced most incarceration with effective efforts at prevention, rehabilitation, and restorative justice; incarceration rates no longer vary by race.



## Goal J: Thriving Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Greater Boston is full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.

In 2050, residents and visitors of all backgrounds enjoy a wide variety of historical, cultural, recreational, and artistic experiences. Public art, cultural institutions, and social activities reflect our region's diversity. Residents of all ages, abilities, and incomes have opportunities for creative expression and art education. Public and private funding makes art more accessible to a broader audience. Public programming and urban design encourages opportunities for social and cultural experiences and walkability, building social connections and cohesion. New development complements and enhances existing city and town centers. Historic buildings and cultural landscapes that are important for understanding our region's people and cultures are protected or adapted to contemporary needs.

1. People of all ages and backgrounds are able to participate in arts, cultural, and social activities, building community and social cohesion.
2. Public art and programming contribute to our understanding of our region's people, places, and history.
3. Affordable spaces exist for artists to live and work in communities throughout the region, including live/work, maker spaces, light – industrial fabrication facilities, and innovation incubators.
4. Historic buildings, properties, and landscapes are adapted to meet contemporary challenges, including climate, housing, accessibility, and recreational needs.
5. Historic preservation efforts document and preserve the full range of cultural heritage in our region.
6. Urban design, public art, and new development contribute to a human-centered, safe, and delightful public realm.

