



## Meeting-in-a-Box

### BACKGROUND

*Minneapolis 2040* is the City's process for developing a plan for the next twenty years. It is a visioning process that will direct the logical and coordinated physical and economic development of the city into the future. The City of Minneapolis is required by the Metropolitan Council to update the Comprehensive Plan every ten years to meet State law and regional planning requirements. This update will be adopted in 2018 by the City Council.

On April 1, 2016, the City Council directed the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) to update the policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan in service to the values of growth and vitality, equity and racial justice, health and resilience, livability and connectedness, economic competitiveness, and good government, and with a focus on guiding public and private investment in the built, natural, and economic environment.

### WHY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

Civic engagement is a means for all people to bring their thoughts and voices and to share their own ideas, backgrounds, experiences, and expertise to collectively achieve a shared outcome. The *Minneapolis 2040* visioning process is an opportunity to promote quality of life in the Minneapolis community for residents, workers, and visitors in a manner that everyone can benefit from. This engagement plan is the vehicle for updating and developing new policies that will help guide the creation of places and spaces for civic responsibility and determination to be enhanced. Communities throughout Minneapolis are invited to assist CPED in the creation of *Minneapolis 2040* and the final plan will reflect that participation.

### MEETING-IN-A-BOX OVERVIEW

What should Minneapolis be like in 2040? Meeting-in-a-Box is a civic engagement method designed for use by community groups, neighborhood associations, or friends to gather at a convenient time and location to share their ideas and proposals for the future of the city. Discussions and debates related to the future of Minneapolis should not be limited to those organized by City staff but instead such discussions should happen wherever and whenever it is convenient and meaningful for a group of interested people to get together and talk.

The following is the Meeting-in-a-Box kit which contains everything you need to hold your own discussion. Meeting-in-a-Box can be downloaded from the project website, activated at your own meeting, and the results of your discussion can be returned to the City as indicated below. This Meeting-in-a-Box is the first of a series that will be available for download throughout the Comprehensive Plan process.

## Thank You For Hosting Meeting-in-a-Box!

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development at [2040@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:2040@minneapolismn.gov). People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 –Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

## Process Overview

Meeting-in-a-Box is organized into three parts:

- **Prepare** – The steps that the host must take in advance of the meeting
- **Activate** – The day of steps for set-up and facilitation of the meeting
- **Return** – The Phase when the materials are collected and returned to the City

The purpose of Meeting-in-a-Box is to raise awareness of Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan process, share your thoughts and experiences that will help direct the visioning and future of Minneapolis, and identify ways to improve interaction between community members and the City. Meeting-in-a-Box will help frame your discussion at your meeting.

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### PREPARE

#### 1. RESERVE MEETING LOCATION

Identify and reserve a location for your meeting. Host a meeting at a place where everyone can access it and that it is convenient to travel to. It can be at a community center, your local library, place of worship, coffee shop, or even your living room.

The location should be able to accommodate the number of participants you expect to join the conversation.

#### 2. INVITE

Identify the participants for your meeting. For small group discussions, 8-12 people are an ideal size. This can be done through an invitation in the mail, email, phone, or social media. The *Sample Invitation* can be used as a template and printed, filled out, and mailed to participants.

#### 3. REMIND

Call and/or email the people on your invitation list 1-2 days before the scheduled meeting to remind them to attend.

## ACTIVATE

### 4. SET UP

Before the meeting, set up the space to accommodate the number of expected participants. For small groups, arrange chairs in a circle. For large meetings, arrange chairs in small breakout groups.

Sort copies of the *Participant Worksheets* and *Group Priority Worksheets* into sets for the participants. Make sure to have enough pens available. Have the *Guest List* near the entrance for individuals to sign-in. Post signs on doors to direct people to the meeting and the location of restrooms. If possible, organize someone to take photos and bring light refreshments.

#### TIPS

- If you do break into small groups, give the group a name or number to distinguish the small groups. Note this on the *Participant Worksheet* and *Group Priority Worksheets*.
- You may choose to use the worksheets included, or you may feel more comfortable using other materials, such as large flip charts or laptop computers. If you do use something other than the worksheets provided, please make sure you include information from the worksheets.
- If you choose to take pictures of flip charts, please make sure it is readable.
- For additional resources visit [www.minneapolis2040.com](http://www.minneapolis2040.com) for related plans and interactive maps

### 5. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Take a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting for introductions. Ask people to tell something about themselves other than their neighborhood so that everyone gets a better sense of who is participating and why. Do not, however, spend too much time on introductions. Review the discussion questions and answer any questions about procedure before beginning the main activities.

Explain what the comprehensive plan is by walking participants through the attached *Presentation*. These slides will help spark ideas and conversations for the upcoming exercises.

### 6. FACILITATE

Lead a small group discussion. Do your best to keep everyone on topic and make sure time is allocated for group members to answer all discussion questions on the *Participant Worksheet*. You are also a participant and can share opinions as an equal member of the group, but make sure everyone has a chance and feels comfortable to express his or her opinion. Try to make the meeting relaxed and enjoyable for all participants.

#### TIPS

- Keep in mind that sometimes, when good ideas come up, they need a little room to breathe.
- Facilitation is an art; do your best with it and don't worry if everything doesn't go exactly as you intended.
- Pre-plan and allocate the estimated time you expect to spend on each key question.

## 7. EXERCISES

Answering the discussion questions should occupy the majority of the meeting time. Give participants a couple of minutes to think about each question and list answers on their *Participant Worksheet* before beginning to go around the group for answers. If your group prefers a more free-flowing discussion, make sure everyone has a chance to speak and one or two people do not dominate the conversation.

One person should take notes of the roundtable discussion. After everyone has had a chance to express their perspective on the question, ask the group to prioritize the responses. The note-taker should read back the responses, and have participants vote on each item to determine the top three priority items.

The top three priorities will be recorded on the *Group Priority Worksheet*. Continue having the discussion and explain why the three highest priorities were selected. If a consensus cannot be reached, record the discussion on the *Group Priority Worksheet*. Repeat this process for any other questions.

Leave time at the end of the meeting for participants to fill out the *Engagement Survey*. Respect people's busy schedules by starting and ending on time.

### TIPS

- Give participants a couple of minutes to think about each question and list answers on their *Participant Worksheet* before beginning to go around the group for answers.
- If your group prefers a more free-flowing discussion, make sure everyone has a chance to speak and one or two people do not dominate the conversation.
- Allocate enough time for a discussion of group priorities by keeping people on topic.

## 8. WRAP-UP

If you have divided participants into small groups, reconvene the larger group. Summarize the discussions and the identified consensus priorities. If there are no additional questions or comments, ask participants to fill out the *Engagement Survey*. Be sure to turn in all materials when returning your Meeting-in-a-Box.

Distribute the *Project Contact Card*, which are attached on the final page, to participants so they can find more information about the visioning and planning process, and look for upcoming activities and ways to be involved.

Fill out the Host Feedback Form after the completion of the meeting. **Be sure to thank everyone for participating!**

## RETURN

### 9. CREATE A MEETING ID CODE

Create a code to your meeting following the instructions below. Fill this code into the appropriate spaces in the upper right hand corner of the *Group Priority Worksheets*, *Participant Worksheets*, *Guest List*, and *Host Feedback Form*. The *Engagement Surveys* will not require a Meeting ID Code to be filled out.

How to Create a Meeting ID Code

CP1 - \_ \_ - \_ - - - -

First three spaces: CP1  
 Next three spaces: Your initials  
 Last four spaces: Month and day of your event (e.g. "1114" for November 14<sup>th</sup>)

**EXAMPLE**  
 Name: John Apple Sample  
 Date of Event: November 14<sup>th</sup>

CP1 - JAS - 1114

### 10. PACKAGE AND SEND

Sort the materials as follows:

- Group Priority Worksheet
- Participant Worksheet
- Engagement Survey
- Guest List
- Host Feedback Form

Package all materials together and return Meeting-in-a-Box using one of the methods below.

- **Method 1:** Scan & Email materials to:  
[2040@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:2040@minneapolismn.gov)  
 Subject line: "Meeting-in-a-Box"
- **Method 2 :** Mail to:  
 Attention: Minneapolis2040  
 105 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South #200  
 Minneapolis, MN 55401
- **Method 3:** Drop-off at:  
 City of Minneapolis CPED  
 105 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South #200  
 Minneapolis, MN 55401

If none of the return methods above will work for you, please email [2040@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:2040@minneapolismn.gov) with the subject line: "Meeting-in-a-Box Pick-Up" to arrange for alternative return methods.



## Thank You For Hosting Meeting-in-a-Box!

The City of Minneapolis is grateful for your time, thoughts, ideas, and participation in Meeting-in-a-Box. Your participation is part of a collaborative effort in helping shaping a better, brighter future for everyone who lives, works, and plays in Minneapolis!

For more information or to engage in the Comprehensive Plan process

Visit [www.minneapolis2040.com](http://www.minneapolis2040.com)

Email [2040@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:2040@minneapolismn.gov)

Call 3-1-1 Minneapolis Assistance Line