Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Fall Conference

November 13, 2025

State Long-Range Planning Team & MN StoryCollective

Long-Range Planning Team Mission

Improve the quality of life of Minnesotans by coordinating work across state agencies on critical long-term issues that need more attention, while ensuring taxpayer dollars are well-spent

Long-Range Planning Team

Select Issues

Inclusive and sound process for identifying critical issues for Minnesota's future

Coordinate Planning

Align and coordinate planning process with experts

Be a platform for action

Support implementation and tracking of recommendations

Grow Capacity

Build a pipeline of new planning and policy leaders

Long-Range Planning: Potential Topics

- Aligning Substance Use Disorder Metrics Across State Agencies
- Multisector Healthy Aging Plan and Implementation
- AI and Economic Transformation
- Economic Competitiveness

- Water Quality & Quantity
- Rural Prosperity
- Planning & Implementation Assistance for Small Communities
- Food Security

VISION

MNSC's goal is to create a strong feedback loop with community and to provide a regular, flexible source of qualitative data based on diverse community stories so that State programs, policies, and practices better meet the needs of all families.

WHAT IS MN STORYCOLLECTIVE?

A qualitative data collection initiative from the State of Minnesota

A way to bring lived experience into policymaking and program design

Built around a cycle of story collection, analysis, action and adaptation

A method of community engagement focused on long-term relationships and connections

Our Methodology

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Let's get started!

Welcome & Grounding

Tonight, we will:

- Read stories, and think about shared experiences
- Explore patterns in stories and other responses shared with MNSC
- Discuss how communities and the State can work toward rural prosperity

Throughout this time, please:

- **Take care of your needs** – step away for a pause, get water, or use the restroom at any time!
- **Ask questions at any time** – there are many people here to support!
- **Share ideas, brainstorm, and expand your network!**

Activity #1: Discuss Stories

At your table …

- **Choose your table captain**

This person will be responsible for tracking time, helping move the discussion forward and sharing out at the end. Staff are happy to play this role if they are at your table.

- **Decide if you'd like to read a story (or all of them) out loud.**

Giving voice to the stories can help pull out insights but you may be ready to go straight to reflection and discussion. (time estimate: 5 minutes, if needed)

- **Take a few minutes and reflect on what you've heard in the stories and the questions in your storypack**.

Share out your answers in the post-its or write directly on the chart paper (time estimate: 5 minutes)

- **Read the post-its out loud and discuss with your group**.

Feel free to add more post-its as you have additional ideas and insights! (time estimate: 5 - 10 minutes)

Reflection questions

- **What stands out to you from the stories you read?**

- **What aspects of the stories felt most relevant to your community's experiences?**

Discuss with your table! Record your thoughts and answers on post-it notes. Cluster or arrange the post-its on chart paper. Write directly on chart paper if you prefer!

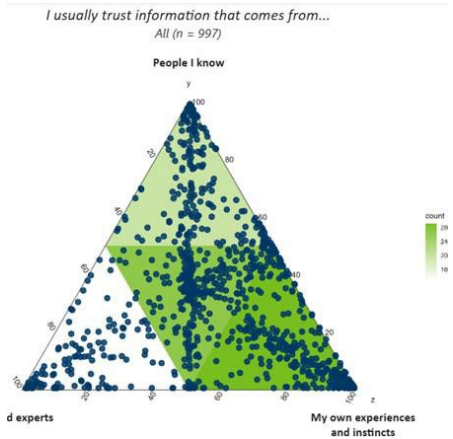
Activity #2: Look at additional data

When I think about what's available in my community, we need …

All responses

When I think about what's available in my community, we need …

People who live in rural areas …



I usually trust information that comes from …

All responses

I usually trust information that comes from …

People who live in rural areas …

Reflection questions

- **What stood out to you about the responses? What did you notice?**

Discuss with your table! Record your thoughts and answers on post-it notes. Cluster or arrange the post-its on chart paper. Write directly on chart paper if you prefer!

Activity #3 Reflection & Action

Considering the data you have analyzed so far, talk with your table about the following questions:

- **If you had the flexibility and resources you needed, what would rural prosperity look like in Minnesota?**
- **What themes or insights from today's discussion feel most important for the State of MN to know in shaping Minnesota's long-range approach to rural prosperity and economic opportunity?**

Discuss with your table! Record your thoughts and answers on post-it notes. Cluster or arrange the post-its on chart paper. Write directly on chart paper if you prefer!

Activity #4 Share back!

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Share your story!

www.ourtomorro.ws/MNStoryCollective

Thank you!