

# Rethinking I-94 Phase 2 Community Leaders Meeting (Meeting 5)

Date: 03/23/2021 (10:00 am – 11:30 am)

Location: Zoom Meeting

Participants: See end of document for list

## Meeting Summary

### 1. Welcome

- Dan Pfeiffer (WSB) welcomed the group and provided an overview of the agenda.

### 2. Study status update and look ahead

- PAC will be meeting on April 9th to discuss "What is Rethinking I-94."
- Gloria Jeff (WSB) provided an update on the Livability initiative.
  - Two workshops have been held so far.
  - Meeting 1 covered process. Participants gave feedback that there were too many agency staff - number of staff attending will be reduced.
  - Meeting 2 was the first subject matter workshop on economic vitality. A summary will be provided soon.
  - Goals, purpose and need, evaluation criteria, and logical termini are living documents and can be updated as more information is gathered, conditions change, etc. The goals, purpose and need, evaluation criteria, and logical termini will be finalized in the Scoping Decision Document.
- Dan Pfeiffer (WSB) provided an update on public engagement.
  - Project staff will be available to attend community meetings starting in April and May.
  - Comment form is available on the project website right now.
  - Newsletter communication will go out once draft previously share with PAC and Community Leaders are posted on website.
  - Anticipate initial comment period of 30-45 days for the drafts previously shared with PAC and Community Leaders.
  - Question about when initial comment period will start. Will start once materials are posted and mass mailing goes out to announce.
  - Will "freeze" comments at various points to give the project team an opportunity to respond/address, but will continue to gather comments.
- Dan Pfeiffer (WSB) shared an updated graphic showing the interaction between the transportation improvements pathway and Livability framework pathway.
- Dan Pfeiffer (WSB) provided an overview of high-level comments heard from community leaders so far.
- Example story shared to explain NEPA/MEPA process. Is this a useful way to explain the process?
  - Someone moves to Minnesota from Texas, needs to buy winter boots for their first winter in Minnesota.
  - Purpose: Allow you to travel safely in the snow. Need: Waterproof, needs to fit, etc.

- How to evaluate what to buy: fit, fashion, size, material, insulation, traction, waterproof, etc. Use these criteria to narrow range of alternatives to find preferred.
- Comment shared about the length and complexity of the process. It seems to advantage MnDOT versus the public.
- Comment regarding Environmental Quality Board proposal to add climate to list of impacts addressed in environmental process. Would this project incorporate?
  - Requirement would depend on how rules play out and whether they are retroactive.
- Comment about how taking care of your yard might be a better example than purchasing boots. How you take care of your yard impacts your neighbors - more applicable to this process.

### 3. Evaluation criteria overview

- Jack Corkle (WSB) provided a detailed overview of the Scoping and Tier 1 EIS evaluation criteria.
  - At the Scoping stage, evaluation criteria will be high-level and will be used to eliminate alternatives with fatal flaws and identify alternatives to move forward for additional study in the Tier 1 EIS.
  - At the Tier 1 EIS stage, more detailed information will be available to provide a better evaluation of alternatives. The Tier 1 EIS and Tier 2 evaluation criteria will incorporate Livability Framework items related to: sense of place, economics, connectivity, health and the environment, and equity. They will also include additional measures to evaluate issues previous addressed at a high level in Scoping.
  - Question asked about weighting of the criteria.
    1. Weighting has not been established.
  - Question about weighting between primary and secondary evaluation criteria.
    1. More and better information will be available in Tier 1 EIS to address secondary needs such as biking and walking.
    2. Some improvements are being discussed that would be incorporated into any project, but not evaluated separately, such as standards for different types of crossings.

### 4. Small group discussion

- Group 1
  - What criteria are most important to you?
    1. Concern that work already completed with MnDOT regarding connections in Seward will just have to be redone.
    2. Purpose and need is flawed, makes it hard to talk about evaluation criteria. Hard to see two paths - Livability framework should be part of the core process.
    3. Does not address telecommuting, movement of offices such as Target out of downtown.
    4. Measures should not focus on throughput and speed, but accessibility.
    5. Terminology and criteria seems like it is from the 1950s.
    6. Fuel efficiency should be addressed.
    7. Comment that cities and communities have communicated these same concerns already.
    8. If SOV use reduction is a community goal, how to include this in the process as a goal and/or measurement?
    9. Should make VMT reduction a goal. This is an ideal corridor due to housing density and other factors to implement bikeways, improve north-south transit connections to Green Line and future B Line.
    10. Need to discuss with Community Leaders group how MnDOT sustainability documents and goals will affect the project.
    11. The community has already requested changes - it is frustrating to just be asked to submit comments again.

12. What are the discussions happening internally with project staff about integrating this information? Everything that community is proposing can be funded by federal government.
  13. Community members are at a disadvantage compared to bureaucrats in a complex process such as this one.
  14. There is a lack of systemic thinking in how we can address things like climate goals. Green Line is successful at its intended purpose in serving the community, not intended to serve trips between downtowns. BRT is needed on I-94 to improve access to downtowns from suburbs. Would enhance the usefulness of Gold Line and Orange Line through connections when they are completed.
  15. North-south connectivity is a big problem for all modes.
- Group 2
    - Which criteria are most important to you? Given the opportunity, which would you weight higher?
      1. Comment on boots story: Need better example that shows effect of project on neighbors. Intent of example was not to concentrate on homeowners.
      2. Assumption seems to be that freeways were great when built and served the needed purpose back then; however, now some think that freeways should be reconsidered.
      3. Comment that there were too many measures (criteria). The large number of criteria create a situation where the project could lose track of what is trying to be achieved.
      4. Criteria should be looking at moving people and not so much hours traveled. Simplify to just moving people in the corridor.
      5. Group was asked about thoughts regarding how vehicle movement impacts the economy.
        - a. Comment shared that the movement of freight (goods) should also be considered as well as movement of people.
      6. Comment that access criteria is an important measure but uncertainty around what that encompassed (cars only or other modes).
        - a. Access includes access for all modes (walk, car, etc.).
      7. Concern about status of letter that was shared and if they will be getting a response?
      8. Opposition to the use of mobility.
      9. Recommendation to have a different definition of safety. More differentiation on the total crashes since 80% of crashes are property damages only and change evaluation criteria on safety to concentrate on fatalities.
      10. Support of alternative methods of transportation. A new evaluation criterion should be reduction in VMTs.
      11. Comment that MnDOT was moving forward with reducing VMT as a goal.
      12. Concurrence with reduction in VMT.
      13. Introduce the idea of 15-minute city and that it should be a criteria or any criteria that fits with the goals of the 15-minute city.
      14. Equity and access should be more primary consideration and moving consideration of the secondary needs to the Tier 1.
  - Group 3
    - How could I-94 better reflect the needs of your community?
      1. Concerns were raised on how the categories in the evaluation criteria would be weighted and how they were going to be addressed.
      2. There were questions raised in terms of the "direction" of these categories. For example, an increase in number of travelers on I-94 may be good for the

corridor but that means an increase in vehicles (specifically concerned about the increase in single occupancy vehicles) which would have other negative impacts to the environment.

3. If the project team is concerned about the health of the people, why is "filling" the highway not an option?
4. There is a need to prioritize the health and well-being of the people and the community .
5. The corridor creates induced demand. Providing more "capacity" for vehicles means that there will be more traffic and people will be encouraged to drive more, for the same reason people would take more transit if there were more transit options.
6. There should be more emphasis on movement of people and not vehicles, this project focuses on the movement of vehicles.
7. The purpose and need focuses on people who are passing through the corridor but not across the corridor which connects the people and community.
8. Comment that if we are talking about the health of the corridor or vehicle miles traveled, how do we know what is "good"? There isn't clarity in terms of who the change impacts (negatively or positively). For example, is an increase in vehicle miles traveled good for the travelers or the community?
9. The consequences of each alternative need to be transparent.
10. The group noted that it would like to see more prediction of the before and after which would help anticipate changes and impacts.
11. Comment shared regarding a potential alternative/model: looking at a highway project that does not create induced demand - how to make highway less attractive for single occupancy vehicles.
12. Climate change/outcome is an issue. This project will still be going on in 2040 and therefore, the project should address climate change with more intent. The NEPA process is already looking at potential adoption rules that would address climate change.
13. What is "Rethinking I-94"? It needs to be better addressed in terms of what "rethinking" really means because at the moment it looks like MnDOT is "business as usual." There hasn't been much of a difference between what MnDOT did and what they are doing. The needs of the community and the Livability Framework has to be embedded into the purpose and need to show that MnDOT has changed and they are actually concerned about the needs of the people.
14. General comment about the absence of crash data along the frontage roads along TH 280. It was understood that these roads were probably excluded because they were not within the buffer zone but these frontage roads are not pedestrian and bicyclist friendly. These should also be included as the crashes are most likely due to the TH 280 interchange.

## 5. Large group discussion

- What criteria are most important to you?
  - Group 1
    1. Dissatisfaction with purpose and need.
    2. VMT reduction
    3. Fuel efficiency
    4. Need weighting system for criteria.
    5. Environmental justice is not prominent enough.
  - Group 2
    1. There are too many evaluation criteria.

2. Freight is important, but focus should be on moving people, not vehicles.
  3. Why should we assume that I-94 should be rebuilt? Could be something different from highway to meet goals.
  4. Safety - Need to be specific about reducing injuries and deaths, not just safety generally.
  5. Access by all modes would be better than mobility.
  6. Reducing VMT.
  7. 15-minute city concept
  8. Equity and access should be Tier 1 priorities rather than Tier 2.
- Group 3
    1. Comment that if we care about health of folks adjacent to corridor, we would fill it in.
    2. Climate info being discussed by EQB should be included in criteria.
    3. Defeating induced demand could be a criterion.
    4. Person hours traveled is more important than vehicle hours traveled.
    5. Reducing VMT should be a goal.
    6. Not enough of the area around TH 280 interchange is being looked at. More streets are impacted.
    7. Comment on reliability measurement: If there is any rush hour, there will be variability.
    8. Need to prioritize health impacts to neighborhoods, impact of noise pollution and particulate matter. Also not just air quality, also access, food security, social risk factors, etc.
    9. Need to make tradeoffs explicit: What are the consequences of prioritizing one thing over another?
  - What should be added? What should not be included?
    - Group 1
      1. Comment that we are looking forward to 2050, but these measures don't reflect that.
      2. Impacts of telecommuting on system.
    - Group 2
      1. How far north and south are we looking at goals and impacts? Are Green Line and future B Line included?
        - a. Yes, these areas are included in study area.
  - Comments on boots story?
    - Feedback shared earlier about possibly using the yard story instead.

## 6. Next steps

- Next meeting April 27th
- Draft PDF materials will be going online soon
- Summary and slides will be online soon

## Meeting Chat Comments/Questions with Responses

Below are the virtual meeting chat comments and questions. All comments will be included in the project's comment collection, review, and response process.

1. **10:00:04**      **From Mary Morse Marti :**  
Good morning, everyone.

2. **10:01:12**      **From Dan Pfeiffer :**  
Good morning everyone, as you join. Please put your name and organization into the chat
3. **10:01:31**      **From Mary Morse Marti :**  
Mary Morse Marti, Move Minneapolis
4. **10:01:39**      **From Debbie Meister :**  
Debbie Meister, Neighborhoods First!
5. **10:01:49**      **From Alex Burns (he/him) :**  
Alex Burns, Sierra Club North Star Chapter
6. **10:01:50**      **From Bill Goff's iPhone :**  
William Goff, MnDOT
7. **10:01:52**      **From Glen Johnson :**  
Glen Johnson, Elliot Park neighborhood
8. **10:01:52**      **From Pat Thompson she/her :**  
Pat Thompson, St. Anthony Park Community Council
9. **10:01:53**      **From Hannah (she/her) :**  
Hannah Rank, MnDOT
10. **10:01:54**      **From Anna Varney :**  
Anna Varney, FHWA
11. **10:01:56**      **From Theresa Nelson :**  
Theresa Nelson, Move Minnesota
12. **10:01:57**      **From Barb Thoman (she/her) :**  
Barb Thoman, Union Park District Council
13. **10:01:59**      **From Sheldon Mains (He/Him) :**  
Sheldon Mains, Seward Redesign. redesignInc.org
14. **10:02:01**      **From Sam Taitel | they/them | SNG :**  
Sam Taitel (they/them) from Seward Neighborhood Group
15. **10:02:08**      **From Joshua Houdek :**  
Joshua Houdek, Sierra Club North Star Chapter, nearby resident.
16. **10:02:15**      **From David Frank :**  
David Frank, Prospect Park Association
17. **10:02:36**      **From Cyrus Knutson :**  
Cyrus Knutson, MNDOT
18. **10:02:39**      **From Sheila Kauppi :**  
Sheila Kauppi, MnDOT
19. **10:02:56**      **From Jack Corkle :**  
Jack Corkle, WSB
20. **10:03:08**      **From David Juliff :**  
David Juliff, ReConnect Rondo and Prospect Park resident
21. **10:03:12**      **From Dan Pfeiffer :**  
Thank you for joining us this morning. As you join. Please put your name and organization into the chat
22. **10:03:25**      **From Scott Berger :**  
Scott Berger - Union Park District Council
23. **10:05:36**      **From John R. Mazzitello :**  
**John Mazzitello - Ramsey County**
24. **10:11:15**      **From Gloria Jeff :**  
Gloria Jeff, MnDOT
25. **10:11:30**      **From Alex Burns (he/him) :**  
When will the public comment period open?
26. **10:12:14**      **From Sheila Kauppi :**  
dan, can you share how long the comments will be received?
27. **10:22:24**      **From Sheldon Mains (He/Him) :**

It seems to me that this lengthy multi-phase process is really an advantage to the MnDOT bureaucracy and a disadvantage to community members. It appears that to insure their concerns are considered in the end, community members need to engage in the whole, long process, through all the phases. MnDOT staff is paid to stay involved, the public is doing it on their own time.

- 28. 10:23:28 From Scott Berger :**  
To me this project is more like a closet full of footwear. I'd like rain boots, winter boots, running shoes, and dress shoes. Maybe some casual shoes too. Car-centric infrastructure is like owning only one pair of shoes for all uses.
- 29. 10:25:07 From Debbie Meister :**  
The community is asking for this regardless.
- 30. 10:25:27 From Pat Thompson she/her :**  
This work will extend into the 2040s
- 31. 10:26:42 From Scott Berger :**  
A more apt analogy might be "what kind of tires should I buy for my car?"
- 32. 10:27:39 From Maura Brown, she/her, The Alliance :**  
Nice point, Barb!
- 33. 10:27:59 From David Juliff :**  
Well articulated, Barb!
- 34. 10:28:02 From Theresa Nelson :**  
Great point Barb
- 35. 10:28:04 From Peter Wagenius :**  
On point, Barb. Thank you.
- 36. 10:28:32 From Gloria Jeff :**  
Especially important for those who purchase a home.
- 37. 10:29:42 From Theresa Nelson :**  
When is the public comment period for Tier 1 and Tier 2?
- 38. 10:30:57 From Theresa Nelson :**  
Thanks
- 39. 10:40:59 From David Frank :**  
Can't see Environmental Justice category
- 40. 10:42:39 From David Juliff :**  
Maybe this is coming, but is there a hierarchy among the various evaluation criteria - ie especially if there are conflicting results between two different criteria?
- 41. 10:43:15 From Sam Taitel | they/them | SNG :**  
Thank you, David, I have the same question.
- 42. 10:43:23 From Glen Johnson :**  
I'm also curious about how categories would be weighted.
- 43. 10:45:11 From Sam Taitel | they/them | SNG :**  
Additionally, I'm struggling to see the consideration of marginalized communities who are overrepresented living directly adjacent to interstates. Meeting a federal limit is still affecting those populations most because many live along the corridor.
- 44. 10:45:27 From Alex Burns (he/him) :**  
+++
- 45. 10:45:33 From Sam Taitel | they/them | SNG :**  
^in regard to environmental justice
- 46. 10:45:37 From Pat Thompson she/her :**  
no way around that here
- 47. 10:46:49 From David Frank :**  
Also has is hand up.
- 48. 10:49:06 From Mary Morse Marti :**  
Great question, Alex. Can primary and secondary needs also be combined here?
- 49. 10:52:52 From Joshua Houdek :**

Thanks for the clarification Jack between primary and secondary. This is important!

**50. 10:54:32 From Maura Brown, she/her, The Alliance :**

I have another meeting at 11 but appreciate this time.

**51. 10:54:51 From Amy :**

Should the agency members participate or just listen?

**52. 11:19:15 From Sheila Kauppi :**

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/sustainability/advisory-council.html>

**53. 11:23:04 From Alex Burns (he/him) :**

Great job Barb!

**54. 11:24:59 From Mary Morse Marti :**

^^ agree, thanks, Barb

**55. 11:28:50 From Scott Berger :**

Metric could be: average emissions (CO2/NOX) per mile traveled per person along/across the corridor

## Meeting Participants

### Community Leaders

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
	Alper	Becky	Move Minneapolis
	Armon	Alec	Hamline Midway Coalition
	Baker	Keith	ReConnect Rondo
	Barobs	John	Move Minneapolis
x	Berger	Scott	Union Park District Council
x	Burns	Alex	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
	Cashman	Kerry	Seward Neighborhood
	Check	Nick	Saint Mark Parish
x	Frank	David	Prospect Park Association
	Golemo	Alexa	MacGroveland Community Council
	Gunderman	Amy	Lexington Hamline Neighborhood
	Haight	Vanessa	Elliot Park Neighborhood
x	Houdek	Joshua	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
x	Johnson	Glen	Elliot Park Neighborhood
x	Juliff	David	Be Civil – ReConnect Rondo
	Kershaw	Sean	Wilder
	Khalif	Farhio	St. Paul NAACP
	Klebsch	Angelica	Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio
x	Levin	John	Hamline Midway Coalition Transportation Committee
	Levins Holden	Olivia	Hope Community
	Liban	Mohamed	Somali American Partnership
x	Mains	Sheldon	Seward Redesign, Inc
x	Morse Marti	Mary	Move Minneapolis
	McLaughlin	Chris	Seward Neighborhood Group
x	Meister	Debbie	Neighborhoods First!
	Mudge	Kate	Hamline Midway Coalition
	Murray	Kathryn	St. Anthony Park
	Narayanan	Ashwat	Our Streets Minneapolis
x	Nelson	Theresa	Move Minnesota
	Pleskovitch De Canedo	Amanda	Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio
	Royce	Caty	Frogtown Neighborhood Association
x	Selle	Dawn	Hallie Q Brown
	Singer	Andy	Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition
	Schwantes	Lindsay	Hamline Midway Coalition
	Scott Knox	Tiffany	Wilder
	Smaller	Martine	Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
	Tabbut	Julie	Prospect Park Association
x	Taitel	Sam	Seward Neighborhood Group
x	Thoman	Barb	Union Park District Council
	Thomas	James	Pastor – Mount Olivet Baptist Church
x	Thompson	Pat	St. Anthony Park Community Council, District 12
	Wako	Abdulrahman	Union Park District Council
	Watson	Shannon	St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce

	Weinhagen	Jonathan	Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce
	Werner	Jens	Summit-University Planning Council
	Wilson	David	Green Minneapolis

#### Guests/Unknown Affiliation

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
x	Brown	Maura	The Alliance
	Gallatin	Kevin	Sustain Saint Paul
x	Lopez	Toya	Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate
x	Wagenius	Peter	Prospect Park (also Sierra Club)

#### Technical Advisory Committee or Policy and Planning Committee Members

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
	Agosto	Kelly	Hennepin County
	Cox	Colin	Hennepin County
	Gottfried	Jason	Hennepin County
	Hager	Jenifer	City of Minneapolis
	Harper	Cyndi	Metro Transit
	Harrington	Adam	Metro Transit
	Hiniker	Cole	Metropolitan Council
x	Isaacson	Brian	Ramsey County
	Kershaw	Sean	City of St. Paul
	Mandell	Paul	Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board
x	Mazzitello	John	Ramsey County
	Musty	Peter	Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board
x	Newton	Randy	City of St. Paul
	Nix	Noel	City of St. Paul
	Schoenecker	Ted	Ramsey County
	Stark	Russ	City of St. Paul Mayor's Office
	Vanhala	Joan	Hennepin County
x	Vennewitz	Amy	Metropolitan Council

#### FHWA/MnDOT/Consultant Staff

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
x	Austin	Lisa	MnDOT
x	Barnes	Melissa	MnDOT
x	Chavez	Mike	WSB - consultant
x	Chiglo	Jon	WSB - consultant
x	Cho	Joanne	WSB - consultant
x	Colas	Josh	MnDOT
x	Corkle	Jack	WSB - consultant
x	Crockett	April	MnDOT
x	Goff	William	MnDOT
x	Gray	Kirsten	WSB - consultant
x	Hampton	Tori	MnDOT
x	Hauf	Austin	WSB - consultant
x	Jeff	Gloria	MnDOT

x	Kauppi	Sheila	MnDOT
x	Knutson	Cyrus	MnDOT
x	Pfeiffer	Dan	WSB – consultant
x	Rank	Hannah	MnDOT
x	Varney	Anna	FHWA
x	Washington	Lyssa	4rm+ula - consultant