

# Rethinking I-94 Phase 2

## Policy and Planning Advisory Committee

### Monthly Meetings Recap:

*Last updated May 7, 2021*

*The following is a summary of topics, outcomes, and action items that were discussed at the Policy and Planning Advisory Committee meetings.*

#### September 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Update provided on upcoming activities and schedule.
- Review and Discussion of Examples of Livability Framework Actions: Presentation provided on seven (7) examples nationwide of projects that highlighted livability framework actions. The subject areas were as follows:
  - Arkansas DOT - US 30 Crossing Project
  - Arizona DOT/Maricopa County "Spine" Corridor
  - Illinois DOT, Eisenhower Expressway
  - Michigan DOT, I-375 Project
  - North Carolina DOT, Winston Salem
  - Ohio DOT, Cleveland Opportunity Corridor
  - Texas DOT, US 77 Waco Business Corridor
  - Ohio DOT, Columbus Crossroads
- Review and Livability Actions, Policies and Proposals for Partners: Discussion on the role and actions the Policy and Planning Committee can play in developing the policies and actions around the various issues of livability. Committee were asked to think about what their respective organizations currently do to address the many issues of livability. The intent is this will lead the discussion on what are the opportunities to improve and enhance policies of livability. The directive was to report back at the October Policy and Planning Committee on what their respective organizations currently do to address issues of livability to start the larger discussion..

#### August 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Update provided on the Rethinking I-94 NEPA upcoming activities and schedule. In addition, Nicole Peterson noted that she will be leaving MnDOT and will be transitioning out of the project over the coming months.
- Livability Paper Update: Update provided on the Livability Papers which noted that paper outlines are slated to be presented at the September Policy and Planning Committee meeting.
- Presentation on the Rondo Past Prosperity Study: Presentation given on the draft findings and conclusions of the Reconnect Rondo's Past Prosperity Study. The following were some of the key takeaways of the draft study:

- The study looked at the value of the homes taken because of the I-94 construction in the early 1960's, to calculate a generational wealth loss to the Rondo Community. The study concludes an approximate wealth loss of \$90 million. This is based on the loss of 400 homes (although some estimates the number of homes lost between 700 and 800).
- By 1978, the Rondo Community had lost approximately 48% of its home ownership.
- Overview provided of economic impacts to the affordability of homes in Rondo by the 1970's and the "equity" impacts of I-94 to the Rondo Community in the 1960's and 1970's.
- Overview provided of case studies of individual homes and the impacts of I-94.

#### May 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Update provided on the Rethinking I-94 NEPA activities including the April 28th PAC/TAC meeting and preparation of communications to the various community leaders along the I-94 corridor to participate in a "Community Leaders Group".
- Livability Paper Outline Discussion: Outlines for topics included Economic Vitality, Health and Environment. The following are the Highlights of this discussion:
  - Economic Vitality: Overview of major points of the draft Economic Vitality Paper. It was noted that certain members would like to see more information on specific policies and actions to be considered to improve partnership and coordination with the local governments. It was also noted that the freeway system is critical for freight but is generally a negative for livability and place-making.
  - Health and Environment: Overview of major points of the draft Health and Environment Vitality Paper. It was noted it would be nice to see research of what other states are doing in playing a stronger role in Traffic Demand Management (TDM) at the corridor and regional level, particularly when implementing MnPASS type facilities. Other items included: I-94 corridor is suffering from a lack of tree canopy, which exacerbates air quality issues.

#### April 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on ongoing activities and upcoming PAC/TAC meeting. Discussion on identifying innovative methods of continuing outreach during pandemic.
- Livability Paper Outline Discussion: The Metro District Management wants the papers to:
  - Provide a Metro District wide perspective not be limited to, the Rethinking I-94 Corridor.
  - Define the terms/concepts associated with the Livability Paper topics.
  - Provide case studies and examples of what other state DOTs are doing in addressing the topics within MnDOT's Livability Framework.
  - Provide examples of actions taken by local transportation or transportation related partners.
  - Provide a listing of actions to be taken by MnDOT Partners (some of these are included in updates of local transportation plans or comprehensive plans).
  - Provide recommendations for MnDOT policy additions or modifications for the

“livability” elements of the project development and delivery processes.

Other topics of discussion with regards to Livability Papers included:

- Ensure facilitation of development opportunities
- Inclusion of air quality concerns
- Address Thrive 2040 Health and Equitable Communities goals

#### March 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given Livability Papers and on upcoming activities that included changing to virtual meetings.
- Draft Purpose and Need Discussion: Overview of purpose and need and its elements.
- Draft Evaluation Criteria Discussion: Presentation given highlighting the elements of the draft Evaluation Criteria for the Scoping Decision Document analysis and for the Tier 1 EIS analysis. The evaluation criteria are organized by:
  - Mainline alternatives
  - Access/interchanges alternatives

#### February 2020

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status and when draft purpose and need statement will be available to committee. Discussion on the terms “travel time” vs. “mobility” and “connectivity” vs. “reliability”.
- Parallel Path Timeline and Process Discussion: Discussion and presentation on the parallel path method for the livability framework. MnDOT will prepare parallel path papers to address Livability themes following these guidelines:
  - All actions must be consistent with the findings, recommendations and scheduling of the Rethinking I-94 Phase 2 environmental tasks, activities and engagement outcomes.
  - Recommendations, if any, will be advisory to MnDOT and Federal Highway Administration – Minnesota Division.
  - Phase 2 document review and approval processes will be followed, to the extent possible.
  - All papers will recognize that this effort, proposed recommendations, and proposed outcomes are reflective of the MnDOT’s partner and facilitator roles. The proposed actions will respect the currently established scope, schedule and budget for Rethinking I-94.

The consensus of the Committee is to have the papers outline approaches and actions to specific opportunities to help guide future projects along the I-94 corridor. This will entail reaffirming and helping to implement such existing resources as “station area plans”, existing MnDOT Design Standards, and other area plans and resources

#### November 2019

- NEPA Deliverables Discussion: Topics of discussion included: definition of “transportation issues”, limits of logical termini, air quality concerns, can purpose and need change.
- Draft Purpose Discussion: Discussion on request for addition of the “community fabric”

and “land use connectivity” themes to the purpose statement and some discussion on including frontage road and aesthetics improvements.

- Draft Purpose Discussion: Discussion on including improving air quality as a goal and if “enhance safety and mobility” statement is repetitive as both a purpose and a goal.
- Logical Termini Discussion: Discussion on the term logical termini and its implication for improvements beyond those locations.

#### October 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status and update on public engagement.
- Role of Working Groups Discussion: Discussion on what specific deliverables will come out of working groups. Discussion on which group would best advocate for multi-modal.
- Logical Termini Discussion: Discussion on logical termini limits, inclusion of downtowns, will major improvements not be considered beyond boundary, what is the scale of the improvements beyond the boundary, and can Termini move.

#### September 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status and timeframe. Discussion on the role of the PAC.
- Executive Committee/TAC meeting Discussion: Discussion on “logical termini” for the project, especially consideration of extending project limits into North Minneapolis.
- White Paper Sense of Place Discussion: Discussion on content and intent of the Sense of Place. Committee received a list of similar types of “sense of place” initiatives that state and regional transportation agencies have undertaken throughout the United States.

#### August 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on evaluation and criteria phase and revising the Committee structure.
- White Paper Executive Summary Discussion: Discussion on content and intent of the executive summary. Topics included: displacements, gentrification, community, engaging citizens, constraints, modal choices, empower the community, effectiveness of white paper approach.
- White Paper Sense of Place Discussion: Discussion on content and intent of the Sense of Place. Discussion on a need to focus on output of this effort: Quality of life and standard of living.

#### July 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status and upcoming outreach efforts as part of the purpose and need process.
- White Paper Executive Summary Discussion: Discussion on content and intent of the executive summary.
- White Paper Sense of Place Discussion: Discussion on content and intent of the Sense of Place.

#### June 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status.

- Transit Issue Discussion: Presentation given on the current condition of transit along the corridor. Discussion on the current impacts to ridership and transit usage.
- Stakeholder Coordination Discussion: Discussion on how MnDOT can better engage with unique stakeholder groups like hospitals and educational institutions.

April 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status.
- Parallel Path and White Paper topics Discussion: Topics of discussion included: displacement, integration of Green Line, transit, future demographics, development, walkability, connectivity, and funding.

March 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Overview given on environmental status and timeframe. It was noted that based on the process, it would be five or six years before having a project to move forward.
- Ramsey County Update: PowerPoint presented on the Ramsey County’s recently adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan update.
- Parallel Path and White Paper topics Discussion: Topics of discussion included: transit, overall connectivity, existing barriers (physical and health), frontage roads, technology, bike and pedestrian access, diversification, and economic investment.

February 2019

- Phase 2 Update: Update and progress given on Phase 2 including status of environmental phase, outreach and community engagement efforts; development of range of alternatives.
- City of Saint Paul Update: St. Paul stated they do not want footprint to be expanded and want range of alternatives to include wide range of alternative from replacing a general purpose lane with a managed or transit-friendly lane, to overall lane reduction in order to repurpose some of the footprint of the corridor and better reconnect the community.
- City of Minneapolis Update: PowerPoint given focusing on the City’s recently adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan update. Initiatives related to the I-94 corridor include the Upper Harbor Terminal- Royalston/Farmers Market and the Cedar/Riverside Precinct- 3rd and 4th Viaducts. The following policy issues were presented as being considered in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan:
  - Rental housing and affordable housing
  - Increased density allowances along transit lines
  - Better connectivity along and across I-94
  - I-94 road “diet” and a better use of excess right-of-way
  - Lids and enhanced connectivity
  - Freeway remediation
  - Utilizing space under flyovers
- Met Council Update: Update provided on the local government Comprehensive Plan process and highlights of the Regional Policy Plan.
- Policy Priorities for Policy and Planning Committee Update: Committee requested the

development of a series of “white papers” for Committee consideration and feedback. These papers would center on Connectivity, Economic Impacts, Health and Environmental Impacts, and Sense of Place. Committee noted the importance of highlighting freight and cargo delivery in support of manufacturing.

- LIDS Update: Update given on the Reconnect Rondo initiative, the Land Bridge Feasibility Study, the CAAPB idea for better connectivity between the Capitol Mall and downtown St. Paul, and the redevelopment of the Sears site in St. Paul.

December 2018

- Phase 2 Update: Update and progress given on Phase 2 and discussion on the priority of the scoping document.
- City of St. Paul Policy Land Use and Planning Update: Overview given of major planning and land use initiatives within the City of St. Paul contained within the City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan expected to be approved in June 2019. Significant discussion on the need for noise walls.
- Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) Land Use and Planning Update: Update given on the CAAPB’s Comprehensive Plan update, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2019. Highlights of the plan included the following:
  - Improving and enhancing existing bridge connections to Downtown St. Paul
  - Consideration of a lid over I-94
  - Intersection studies for the district
  - Opportunity site developments adjacent to Downtown St. Paul
  - Bridge and infrastructure maintenance

It was noted that transit and multi-modal enhancements, and the development of mobility hubs, remain a priority for the CAAPB District, and all opportunities for enhanced transit facilities should be explored. Specifically noted was a desire to facilitate enhanced transit opportunities along Rice St.

- Other Topics of Discussion: Other items the committee discussed for consideration included:
  - Noise Walls
  - Comprehensive plan updates
  - Future fleet vehicles
  - Aesthetics

November 2018

- Rethinking I-94 Project Background Discussion: PowerPoint presentation given to committee on the overall project and a summary of Phase 1.
- Role and expectations of Policy and Planning Committee Discussion: Overview given of Phase 2 and the role the Policy and Planning Committee will play in the process. Discussion centered on expectations, timeline, and commitments of the committee. The purpose and charter of the committee were shared:
  - Purpose
    - Review and develop planning analysis related to non-infrastructure related matters.

- The work will build upon the “Guiding Principles and Vision” document from Phase 1.
- Charter
  - Build upon Guiding Principles and Vision document
  - Identify barriers or limitations
  - Enhance planning and land use opportunities
  - Collaborate with partnering governmental agencies to address community needs
  - Enhance, broker relationships and identify opportunities
- Other Topics of Discussion: Committee members discussed the need to incorporate the following items in the process:
  - Local partners and planning staff
  - Inclusion of multi-modal elements
  - Freight
  - Issues of “cultural significance”
  - Incorporation of previous planning initiatives (i.e. Green Line)