

## Rethinking I-94 Phase 2 Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)

Date: 07/30/21  
Time: 10:00 AM–12:15 PM  
Location: Virtual (Zoom)  
Participants: See end of document list

### Meeting Summary:

#### Welcome and Hellos

- Commissioner Anderson Kelliher thanked attendees for their time and provided an overview of the agenda.
- The Commissioner took a moment to recognize Olympic gold medalist Suni Lee.
- Gloria Jeff (MnDOT) called the roll for PAC members (see above).
- The Commissioner congratulated the ReConnect Rondo team on their efforts to move forward with their vision regarding a land bridge over I-94.
- Marvin Anderson (Reconnect Rondo) expressed appreciation for recent funding awards for the ReConnect Rondo project and thanked partners at MnDOT.
- The Commissioner introduced representatives from the Offices of Representative Betty McCollum and Senator Amy Klobuchar to provide an update on the bipartisan federal infrastructure bill.
  - Sophia Schilling (Office of Representative Betty McCollum)
    - Congratulated the ReConnect Rondo team.
    - Shared that funding for the project is included in the Invest in America Act (U.S. House) as part of an effort to prioritize projects that reconnect neighborhoods.
  - April Jones (Office of Senator Amy Klobuchar)
    - Pushing for advancement of Senate bill to allow for moving forward.
    - Surface transportation is expected to stay in bill. Not sure about individual projects.
- The Commissioner noted that the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) put forward a resolution regarding state DOT acknowledgement of past racist behaviors.
- MnDOT will act as a project sponsor for ReConnect Rondo.

#### Livability Updates

- Gloria Jeff (MnDOT) gave a brief overview of the Livability Initiative and shared key takeaways from recent workshops on “Safety” and “Health and the Environment.”
  - Livability is using the quality, location, and type of transportation facilities and services available to help achieve broader community goals.
  - Key takeaways of “Safety” workshop

- There is a need to calm traffic at ramp intersections and frontage roads along I-94.
- MnDOT may want to consider opportunities to narrow and reduce the right-of-way in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- In the high traffic and pedestrian usage areas (Snelling, Lexington, Cedar Riverside, etc.) should consider larger design and overdesign of pedestrian sidewalks and facilities.
- Integrate Context Sensitive Solutions into planning for safety integrations. One size does not fit all.
- Key takeaways of “Health and the Environment” workshop
  - Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and reducing car dependency are shaping major policy decisions regarding planning, land use and (re)development.
  - Issues of structural racism and equity play a major role with environmental impacts and public health in communities along the I-94 corridor.
  - Previous MnDOT and other transportation agency decisions have had a significant negative impact on the environment. These decisions also have significantly impacted issues of public health.
  - Continue to change and evolve MnDOT’s maintenance practices and facilities design to reduce environmental impacts.
  - Increased transit opportunities and reduced general purpose traffic usage along I-94.

## Other Urban Corridors – Doing Things Differently

- Wendall Meyer, FHWA Division Administrator, introduced Dave Scott, FHWA Deputy Division Administrator.
- Dave Scott gave a presentation on freeway projects in other urban corridors. Example strategies/approaches included freeway removal, freeway concealment, freeway mitigation, parkway creation, and ideas around future urban interstates.
- Example projects identified:
  - Freeway removal
    - Alaskan Way Viaduct - Seattle, WA
    - Embarcadero Freeway - San Francisco, CA
    - Cheonggyecheon Stream Restoration - Seoul, South Korea
    - Park East Corridor - Milwaukee, WI
  - Freeway concealment
    - Alaskan Way Viaduct - Seattle, WA
    - Central 70 Project - Denver, CO
    - The Big Dig - Boston, MA
    - High Street Cap - Columbus, OH
    - State Street - Montpelier, VT
  - Freeway enhancement/mitigation
    - US 181 Harbor Bridge - Corpus Christi, TX
    - US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project - Lake Tahoe, NV
    - Long Street Bridge Cultural Wall - Columbus, OH
  - Parkways and aesthetic treatments
    - Sheridan Boulevard - South Bronx, NY

- Merritt Parkway - CT
  - Future urban interstates
    - Northern Motorway Busway - Auckland, New Zealand
- CM Thao asked if information on the costs and level of federal involvement in the project could be obtained.
  - FHWA will gather and provide additional information where possible.
- The group discussed the potential for virtual and/or in person site visits of projects with legislative partners and community groups.
- Rep. Moran asked for additional details on past and future engagement efforts for the project.
  - Gloria Jeff and the Commissioner noted that engagement was conducted as part of Rethinking I-94 Phase 1 (two-year effort), is currently being conducted, and will continue going forward as part of the environmental process and Livability initiative.
- There was discussion in the chat and among the group about whether information could be obtained to see if the example projects reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
  - FHWA will gather and provide additional information where possible.

## Section 106 (Historic/Archaeological Resources)

- Stephanie Atwood Hatzenbuhler (MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit) gave a brief overview of the Section 106 process as it relates to Rethinking I-94.
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out. There are four main steps:
  - Identify consulting parties (may include state or tribal historic preservation offices, local governments, federally recognized Native American tribes, and historic preservation organizations)
  - Identify historic properties
  - Assess project effects
  - Agreement on a resolution
- Section 106 public engagement will be led by MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit (CRU) and a team of consultants.
  - Engagement with consulting parties as well as community members will take place.
  - Anticipated engagement schedule: Summer 2021 – Spring 2023
- If you have information on historic properties or would like additional information on the Section 106 review process for the Rethinking I-94 Project, contact Stephanie Atwood Hatzenbuhler at: [stephanie.atwood@state.mn.us](mailto:stephanie.atwood@state.mn.us)
- Question asked by Mai Chong Xiong: will buildings/places be looked at that are not on the National Register of Historic places?
  - Stephanie: Yes, engagement process will help identify other locations.
- Question asked about whether any groups have been contacted.
  - Stephanie: Groups have been identified but not yet contacted.

## Workforce Development

- Metropolitan Council Chair Charlie Zelle introduced Aaron Koski (Metropolitan Council)

- Aaron Koski gave a presentation on the Metropolitan Council’s Workforce Development efforts.
  - Council’s union construction industry approach:
    - Inclusion efforts support industry, not project
    - Permanent industry change is moving diverse apprentices to journey person
    - Alignment of stakeholders and clear roles
    - Recognize the challenges of career pathways into construction industry
  - Recognized Challenges
    - Unique industry and culture
    - Lack of understanding of unions
    - Union construction career is a lifestyle
  - Building Strong Communities - Multi-craft apprenticeship exposure and readiness program
    - Contract bid/proposal language identifies BSC as apprentice referral pool.
    - Reimburses contractors who employ BSC apprentices working on Council contracts.
- Question from CM Thao: How are we promoting construction workers that reflect the community where projects are taking place?
  - Aaron: It is difficult, but this program is one part of the effort.
- Question from CM Thao: How is progress reported on/monitored?
  - Aaron: Monthly reports are prepared and shared with the community and at monthly meetings for construction projects.

## Next Steps

- Sheila Kauppi (MnDOT) introduced a new video and an updated interactive open house website for the project: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/I-94minneapolis-stpaul/openhouse/index.html>
- Sheila provided an update on recent engagement – 2 neighborhood meetings and a pop-up event. There is one scheduled meeting in September and the team is working on creating up to 8 events in August along the corridor.
  - PAC members were asked to share information about events happening in the community that the Rethinking I-94 team should attend, and to report back on events/meetings where Rethinking I-94 is discussed.
- Sheila gave an overview of efforts to brainstorm ideas for the corridor with various committees and working groups. Consistent ideas and themes have included:
  - Remove freeway – convert to an at-grade corridor
  - Reduce the number of lanes
  - Add managed lane and/or BRT
  - Remove some interchanges and/or ramps
  - Address frontage road connections – disconnect from interchange areas
  - Increase ped/bike connections across the corridor
  - Improve, widen, fix ped/bike connections
  - Flatten freestanding bike/ped crossings
  - Extend Midtown Greenway
  - Green the highway
  - Land bridge

- Livability workshops are progressing with current activities focused around trust and equity. Will report back to this group about additional Livability items at the next meeting.
- The Commissioner thanked the group for the discussion and noted that the next PAC meeting will be held Wednesday, October 6th from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM.
- Written comments related to the PAC meeting can be submitted until August 13, 2021 on the project website for inclusion in the meeting summary.

## Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, October 6

Time: 1:00 PM–3:00 PM

Location: Virtual

## Open Comment Time

Jack Corkle (WSB) facilitated a 15-minute open comment period. Comments shared are summarized below as accurately as possible.

- **Skip Foster:** Will detours associated with the project cause movement of hazardous materials through neighborhoods? If a tunnel or land bridge is constructed, will freight vehicles carrying hazardous materials need to permanently detour off of I-94 similar to the Lowry Tunnel? What will happen to VMT?
  - **Response:** Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. Traffic impacts on adjacent roadways, including from freight vehicles, will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Review. No decision on what alternatives to consider has occurred and no preferred alternative has been selected at this stage.
- **Stewart Knappmiller:** Major concern from neighbors is maintaining access and the environment. Interest in a pollinator corridor, plantings, maintaining habitat. Interest in environmentally friendly maintenance practices including reduction of salt usage.
  - **Response:** Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. Potential impacts to threatened & endangered species and critical habitat will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Review.
- **Peter Wagenius:** Concealing the corridor is not an option because it still has negative air impacts. Wants to see a reduction in VMT, would like to look closer at reduction in VMT and air concerns. Related to workforce discussion, construction will only provide temporary jobs, while improving transit in the corridor would be a source of ongoing/longer-term employment.
  - **Response:** Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. An air quality and noise impacts analysis will be conducted as part of the Environmental Review. In addition, VMT is an evaluation criterion for the determination of the preferred alternative.

- **Phillip Bradley:** Retired, uses I-94 routinely. Concerned that removal of interchanges will increase congestion and cause backups at interchange ramps that remain. The result will be more time spent in vehicle for users of the corridor. Asks that current number of interchanges and travel lanes remain.
  - **Response:** Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. No decision on what alternatives to consider has occurred and no preferred alternative has been selected at this stage.

## Question & Answer

### Questions Posted During PAC Meeting Using Q&A Function

#	Asker Name	Question	Answer(s)
1	Stuart Knappmiller	Thanks for this! Will stormwater be captured and used in place with plantings. Trees along the side of the road rather barriers?	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. No decision on what alternatives to consider has occurred and no preferred alternative has been selected at this stage. Stormwater treatment will be considered in the development of any project alternative.
2	Mary Morse Marti	Mary Morse Marti, resident, Merriam Park. Good morning.	Thank you for joining us today.
3	Pat Thompson	Pat Thompson, St. Anthony Park Community Council	Thank you for joining us today.
4	David Frank	David Frank, Prospect Park Association	Thank you for joining us today.
5	David Juliff	David Juliff, ReConnect Rondo	Thank you for joining us today.
6	Skip Foster	My concern is environmental. Will the creation of landbridges or tunnels increase crash rates? More importantly, will a detour be necessary of Hazmat vehicles? If so, will that detour create more congestion and emissions.	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. Traffic impacts on adjacent roadways, including from freight vehicles, will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Review.
7	Toya Lopez	Toya López, Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate	Thank you for joining us today.
8	Shawna Gibson	Shawna Gibson - Real Estate Associate, MnDOT	Thank you for joining us today.
9	Stuart Knappmiller	Stuart Knappmiller (he/him/his) Payne Phalen Community Council, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District Citizens Advisory Council, Sierra Club LUTRs (for identification purposes only.)	Thank you for joining us today.
10	David Juliff	I would also suggest looking at the proposed changes to La Peripherique in Paris. Combination of concealment with change to a boulevard.	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort and for the suggestion.

#	Asker Name	Question	Answer(s)
11	Stuart Knappmiller	We are much safer and fit better on the 35E south “practice freeway” at 47 mph on our speedometer than we fit on the I94 500 at 57 mph. I take the I94 500 from the orange vest crew I spoke with in the middle of Maryland Ave as they described the 4 lane Maryland 500. Traffic calming on Maryland has created a safer, slower flow of vehicle traffic. The parkway concept at a minimum will help, but surface, air and noise pollution still exist. Restorative justice will not happen until those 3 issues are resolved for those who live in the climate created by our interstates.	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review.
12	Stuart Knappmiller	I just learned about the proposed H Line in a PPCC TOD meeting this week. There’s one way to get city/suburban folks off 94! I ride the 64 downtown with folks who have to go there to get west and north to their work. The Green Line doesn’t do Eastsiders much good when the amount of time needed to get downtown is counted.	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review.
13	Peter Wagenius	I would like to be adding to the list of people making comments. This is Peter Wagenius from Prospect Park	Thank you for your participation and attendance today. A list of speakers was created based on the sign-up order for the “Open Comment” period during the meeting registration process. We will add your name to the list of speakers but please note that, this does not guarantee your opportunity to speak today due to the number of speakers already on the list. Thank you for your understanding.
14	Stuart Knappmiller	Hi! I’ll try to put my comments here! I watched the Maryland Ave bridge swing into place. I was stunned to see no accommodation for bikes across 35E once the bridge was opened. The sidewalk on the south side doesn’t feel safe to walk much less bike. PPCC, before my time but not without my interest, got the bike path on the east side of 35E added, as I understand it. Look at it/bike it, compared to the projects David Scott showed us! I’m on here because of past treatment of those who live next to these two interstates. Living far	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. Walkability and bikeability is currently identified as a need for the Rethinking I-94 project in the draft Purpose and Need available for review on the project website: <a href="http://www.dot.state.mn.us/I-94minneapolis-stpaul/">http://www.dot.state.mn.us/I-94minneapolis-stpaul/</a>

#	Asker Name	Question	Answer(s)
		beyond a 1/4 mile from our interstates, they impact my health, our neighbor's health, and our environment's health. I'm trusting MnDot is evolving!	
15	Stuart Knappmiller	Joanne, I'd be happy to give my time to Peter. I've commented here.	Stuart, thank you for your comment and offering your time to Peter. We checked our speaker list just now and I believe we should have time for you and Peter today.
16	Pat Thompson	Is there any recognition that the power structure of construction may actually be racist?	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review. I encourage you to review the information available online regarding MnDOT's efforts to address issues related to equity through the Livability framework: <a href="https://www.dot.state.mn.us/livability/index.html">https://www.dot.state.mn.us/livability/index.html</a>
17	Stuart Knappmiller	Yes, to David Scott's presentation! I want to be off the VMT of our freeways, but that requires timely public transit and safe bikeways. I'm off Maryland Ave. to allow those who weren't able to reroute their VMT!	Thank you for your comments on the Rethinking I-94 effort. Your comments will be recorded and will be considered as part of the Environmental Review.

## PAC Members

Present	Name	Organization
x	Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher	MnDOT
	Senator Bobby Joe Champion	Senate District 59
	Senator Kari Dziedic	Senate District 60
	Senator D. Scott Dibble	Senate District 61
	Senator Omar Fateh	Senate District 62
	Senator Erin Murphy	Senate District 64
	Senator Sandra Pappas	Senate District 65
	Representative Kaohly Her	House District 64A
x	Representative Rena Moran	House District 65A
	Representative Carlos Mariani	House District 65B
	Representative Esther Agbaje	House District 59B
	Representative Mohamud Noor	House District 60B
	Representative Frank Hornstein	House District 61A
	Representative Hodan Hassan	House District 62A
x	Wendall Meyer	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
x	Charlie Zelle	Metropolitan Council Chair
	Council Member Kris Fredson	Metropolitan Council District 14
	Commissioner Kevin Anderson	Hennepin County District 7
	Commissioner Angela Conley	Hennepin County District 4
	Commissioner Toni Carter	Ramsey County Board Chair
x	Commissioner Rafael Ortega	Ramsey County District 5
	Mayor Melvin Carter	St. Paul
x	Council Member Dai Thao	St. Paul Ward 1
	Council Member Mitra Jalali	St. Paul Ward 4
	Mayor Jacob Frey (alternate Abdi Salah)	Minneapolis
	Council Member Jamal Osman	Minneapolis Ward 6
x	Council Member Lisa Goodman (alternate Patrick Sadler)	Minneapolis Ward 7

## Agency Staff and Public Attendees

Present	Name	Organization
x	Anna Varney	FHWA
x	David Scott	FHWA
x	Sheila Kauppi	MnDOT – Rethinking I-94 Project
x	Josh Colas	MnDOT – Rethinking I-94 Project Manager
x	Gloria Jeff	MnDOT – Livability Initiative
x	Nancy Daubenberger	MnDOT
x	William Goff	MnDOT
	Chris Krueger	MnDOT
x	Torri Hampton	MnDOT
	Hannah Rank	MnDOT
x	Melissa Barnes	MnDOT

<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
x	Cyrus Knutson	MnDOT
x	Jake Loesch	MnDOT
x	April Crockett	MnDOT
x	Michael Barnes	MnDOT
x	Jay Hietpas	MnDOT
x	Jon Solberg	MnDOT
	Kim Collins	MnDOT
	Natalie Ries	MnDOT
	Nicholas Olson	MnDOT
x	Erik Rudeen	MnDOT
	Renee Raduenz	MnDOT
	Lisa Austin	MnDOT
	Nissa Tupper	MnDOT
x	Stephanie Atwood	MnDOT
x	Maggie Jones	MnDOT
x	Mary Schmidt	MnDOT
x	Sergius Phillips	MnDOT
x	Sara Severs	MnDOT
x	Grant Cooper	MnDOT
x	David Elvin	MnDOT
x	Shawna Gibson	MnDOT
x	Brian Isaacson	Ramsey County
x	Jason Gottfried	Hennepin County
	Amy Van Shepen	Hennepin County, Staff - Commissioner Anderson
x	Kristy Janigo	Hennepin County, Staff - Commissioner Anderson
x	Binta Kanteh	Hennepin County, Staff - Commissioner Conley
x	Nick Thompson	Metropolitan Council
	Amy Vennewitz	Metropolitan Council
	Michelle Fure	Metropolitan Council
	Peter Grafstrom	Metropolitan Council
	John Chlebeck	Metropolitan Council
x	Jeannine Clancy	Metropolitan Council
x	Jon Tao	Metropolitan Council
x	Aaron Koski	Metropolitan Council
x	Ashanti Payne	Metropolitan Council
x	Tim Wedin	Metropolitan Council
x	Adam Harrington	Metro Transit
x	Russ Stark	City of St. Paul
x	Sean Kershaw	City of St. Paul
	Randy Newton	City of St. Paul
x	Matt Privratsky	City of St. Paul
x	Mai Chong Xiong	City of St. Paul
x	Anna Potter	City of St. Paul
x	Jenifer Hager	City of Minneapolis
x	Sean Broom	City of Minneapolis - Policy Aide, Council Member Osman
	Adrienne Bockheim	City of Minneapolis

<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
x	Jon Chiglo	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Jack Corkle	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Mike Chavez	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Joanne Cho	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Austin Hauf	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Mikaela Ziegler	WSB – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Marcell Walker	Bolton & Menk – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
	Chris Chromy	Bolton & Menk – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
x	Scott McBride	Bolton & Menk – Rethinking I-94 Consultant
	Mike Hughes	Rethinking I-94 Consultant
	Bill Harper	Office of Representative Betty McCollum
x	Sophia Schilling	Office of Representative Betty McCollum
x	April Jones	Office of Senator Amy Klobuchar
x	Rachel Carlson	Senate District 65 - Legislative Assistant to Senator Pappas
x	David Juliff	Be Civil – ReConnect Rondo Consultant
	Sheldon Mains	Seward Redesign Inc
	Keith Baker	ReConnect Rondo
x	Marvin Anderson	ReConnect Rondo
x	Debbie Meister	Neighborhoods First!
x	Peter Wagenius	Prospect Park Neighborhood
x	Mary Morse Marti	
x	Theresa Nelson	Move Minnesota
x	Joshua Houdek	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
	Alex Burns	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
	Barb Thoman	Move Minnesota
x	Pat Thompson	St. Anthony Park Community Council
	Kelly McCormack	
	Laurie Siever	
	Theo Schultz	
	Kevin Anderson	Michael Baker International
	Kathleen Davis	
	Eric Weiss	The Trust for Public Land
	Bridget Mathie	
x	David Frank	Prospect Park Association
	Mindy Brevia	
	Steve McCauley	
	Dan Bielenberg	
	James W. Fallon	
	Scott Engel	
	T L Godwin	
	Michael Nygard	
	Maura Brown	The Alliance
x	Toya Lopez	Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate
	Paul Madsen	
	Carmen O'Halloran	
	Truth Ogun Maze	

<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
	John Flipse	
	Catherine Spaeth	
	Jean Garbarini	
	Nick Engstrom	Michels Corp.
	Patricia Torres Ray	Senator, MN District 63
	Jackson Hurst	
	Speed Rogers	
	Abby Angerman	
	Andrew Hager	
	Yvonne Leick	
	Peter Eisch	VirginPulse
x	Deb Alper	
x	Stuart Knappmiller	
x	Philip Bradley	
x	Carolyn Ross	
x	Laura Precourt	MN Chamber of Commerce
x	Scott Berger	Union Park District Council
x	Jan Frankman	
x	Jim Erkel	
x	Skip Foster	Freedom Companies
x	Craig Johnson	Minnehaha Repertory Orchestra