

Community Leaders Meeting

Rethinking I-94 Phase 2

December 28, 2021

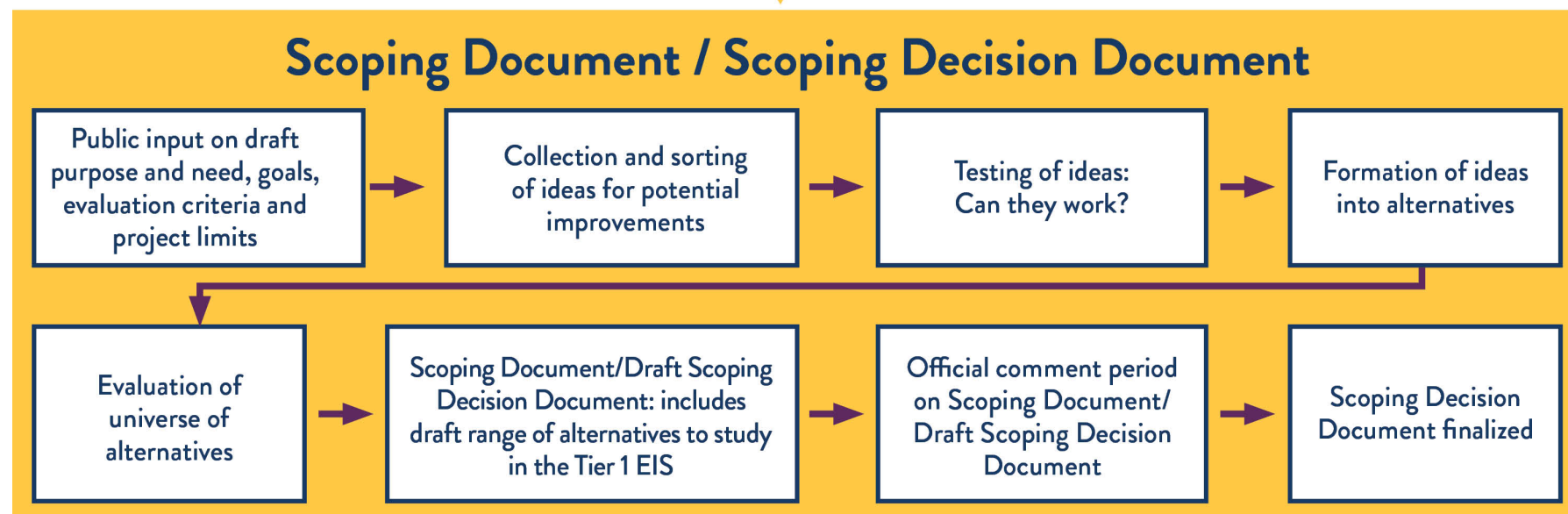
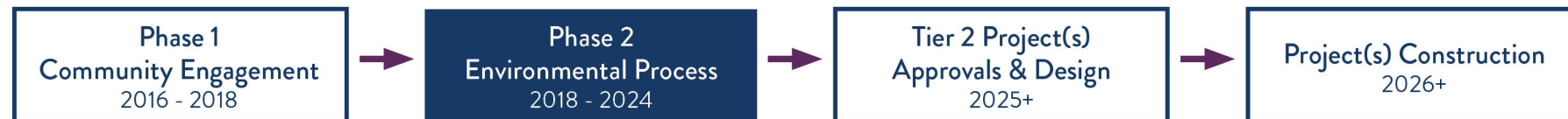
Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Updates from the Rethinking I-94 team
3. Community Leaders outreach activities
4. Recent and upcoming outreach activities
5. Next steps

Today's Objectives

- Provide updates and clarity on schedule, PAC summary – Rethinking team
- Outreach - share what is working, lessons learned, and challenges – Community Leaders
- Provide an update on I-94 outreach and community engagement efforts – Rethinking team
- Collaborate to develop 2022 meeting cadence - all

Rethinking I-94 Overall Project Schedule



Schedule

PAC summary

- Federal Legislation update – MnDOT Commissioner Anderson-Kelliher
- Bipartisan Infrastructure bill – Wendall Meyer, FHWA
- Draft Purpose and Need
- Reconnect Rondo updates – Keith Baker, Reconnect Rondo
- Public outreach and Engagement update – Brad Hamilton, I-94 team
- Schedule update – Sheila Kauppi, MnDOT Project Director

Community Leaders' Outreach Activities

- Lessons learned
- What works?
- Challenges

Community Leaders' Outreach Activities

- Is there any additional information you need from MnDOT to assist with education and information gathering efforts?

Public Outreach and Engagement

- Surveys
- Community Conversations
- Online open house
- Letter submissions

Surveys

- School Faculty
 - Received survey responses from K-12 school faculty along the I-94 corridor
 - Issues:
 - Cars going too fast on side streets
 - Slow downs and congestion
 - Merge lanes are too short
 - Constant construction
 - Need more pedestrian bridges
 - Changes they would like to see:
 - Lower speed limit on side streets
 - Longer merge lanes
 - Land bridges
 - Better signage and signals for pedestrians and bikers on frontage roads
 - Do construction only at night

Surveys

- Saint Anthony Park
 - Received survey responses from single family homeowners, condo owners and renters in Saint Anthony Park
 - Issues
 - ‘Spaghetti junction’ of 280 interchange, Cretin and Vandalia and Snelling is unsafe due to constant back ups
 - No bike lanes on Snelling and Lexington
 - Congestion
 - Constant construction and traffic from construction
 - Noise pollution
 - Sidewalks are too narrow
 - No direct access to 35 E South
 - Not enough crossing points
 - Changes
 - Remove left hand exits
 - Covering the highway to add community spaces
 - Additional bike and ped lanes on bridges and frontage roads
 - Increase connectivity to other highways
 - Add native green space along highway

Surveys

- Freight
 - Sent surveys to freight haulers in the Twin Cities
 - Problems:
 - Traffic congestion makes delivery times unpredictable
 - Exits are sometimes congested and backed up to a standstill which is dangerous
 - Wildly varying speeds due to construction and exit congestion
 - Things that should be considered when evaluating alternatives:
 - Longer on/off ramps and merge lanes
 - Express/HOV lanes to reduce cars in other lanes
 - Bypass lanes

Community Conversations

- Conversations were advertised through our identified faith leaders, identified/targeted community leaders, Somali and Spanish Radio, Hmong TV, and a Spanish Newspaper
- Held four conversations over 2 days
- Conversations were translated into Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and Karen
- Attendees: 87 total
 - 11/16 4pm (Spanish): 33
 - 11/16 6pm (Somali): 20
 - 11/17 4pm (Hmong): 22
 - 11/17 6pm (Karen): 12

Community Conversations - Main Themes

- People would like to see livability expanded/included more concretely in project documents
 - Not separated from the NEPA process
- Climate change needs to be addressed in making transportation decisions for the future
- The future of transportation may not look like what it does today
- People need more transportation options than just driving

Community Conversations - Main Themes



- MnDOT should focus on reducing noise and air pollution so people can enjoy green spaces in Minneapolis and Saint Paul
- MnDOT should explore partnerships for potential wind and solar energy production along the corridor
- The inherent purpose of a highway is to facilitate the transportation of people and goods and emergency services inter-state and intra-state
- People would like to see improvements to walkability and bikeability over the highway in the form of more bike/pedestrian bridges

Community Conversations - Main Themes

- People would like to see a reduction in speed along the highway
- The highway as it exists today is a very important piece of business infrastructure for businesses along the corridor
- People are concerned about overflow of highway traffic onto side streets
- Caps over the highway can reduce sound

Community Conversations - Main Themes

- Caps are not good enough solutions because they do not offer alternative methods of transportation
- MnDOT should make commitments about reducing VMT
- Traffic should be reduced along the corridor, not encouraged
- Remove or modify the freeway so the corridor is not motor-only

Comments Received

- Comments Received
 - MnDOT Rethink I-94 website
 - MnDOT Rethink I-94 open house
 - Emails
 - MnDOT
 - FHWA
 - Elected officials

Comments Received

- Total commentors: 405
- Total individual topics from the comments received: (approx.) 1,941
- Of the 405 commentors, 286 commentors (70%) used 1 of 3 form letters supplied by OurStreets MPLS or Sierra Club
- The comments account for approximately 93% of individual topics

Main Themes

- The Purpose and Need prioritizes moving cars and trucks along I-94 at the expense of transportation accessibility, public health, community cohesion and the climate.
- Revise Purpose and Need to include improving air quality and reconnect neighborhoods.
- Combine “primary and secondary needs” into a new set of needs that prioritize other modes, reconnecting neighborhoods, improving air quality and reducing noise impacts, improving safety for all users, reducing VMT, and promoting economic prosperity without displacements.

Main Themes

- Reconstruct freeway to a multi-modal urban boulevard that increases access to clean transportation options like walking, biking and transit and reduces emissions.
- Reduce emissions – climate/air quality.
- Address infrequent crossing that are unsafe for people walking, rolling and biking.
- Instead of assuming more driving and more traffic, MnDOT should add measures of VMT reduction.

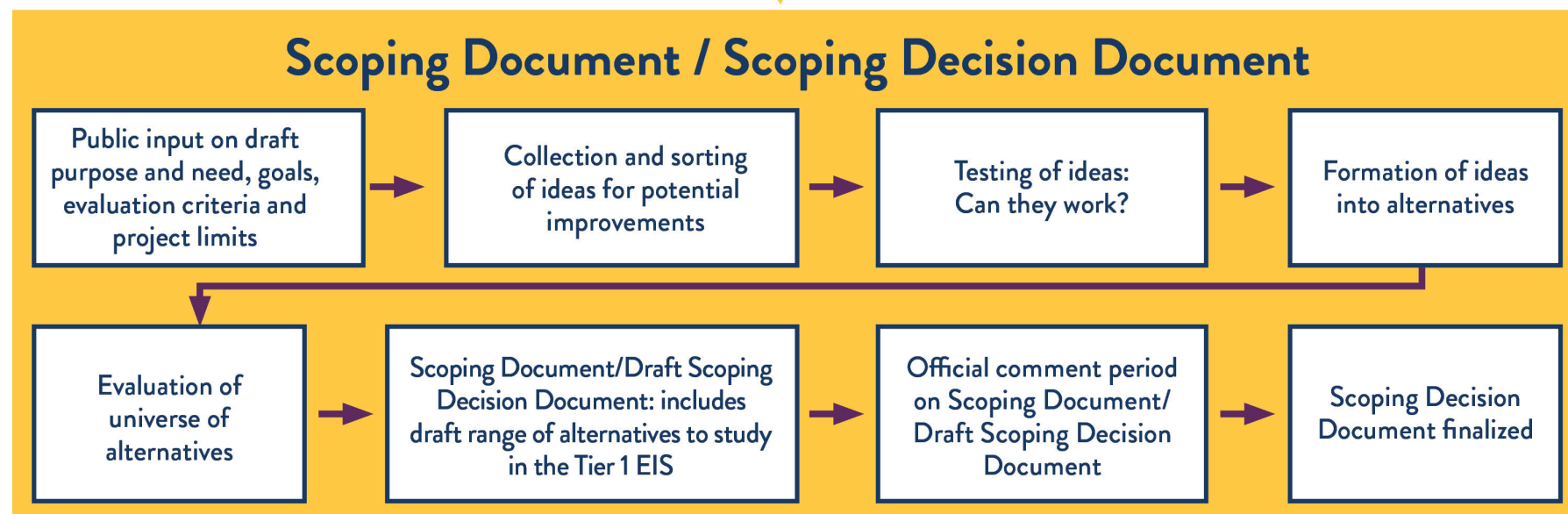
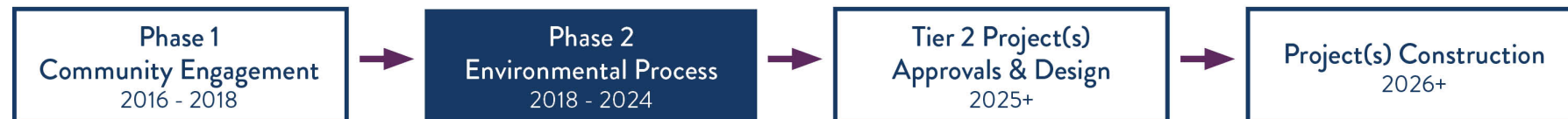
Main themes cont.

- Inadequate for important concerns like equity, sense of place, public health and the environment to be relegated to a separate path within the separate "Livability Framework" process for which MnDOT is neither responsible nor accountable.
- MnDOT and project decision makers should prioritize the health of people and the climate.

Multi- Organization Letter

- Acknowledged receipt and developing response

Rethinking I-94 Overall Project Schedule



Schedule

2022 meetings

- Community Leaders meeting cadence for 2022

Next Meeting

TBD