

# Hwy 252/I-94 Equity & Health Assessment (EHA) Equity and Health Neighborhood Advisors -- Meeting #5

Tuesday, March 1, 2022 | 5:00pm to 7:00pm

North Regional Library - 1315 Lowry Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55411 Zoom

Meeting ID: 947 3417 9290 | Passcode: 729525

## Attendees

### **EHNA members:**

1. John Wexler, Brooklyn Park
2. Tara McCarthy, Brooklyn Center
3. Nahid Khan, Brooklyn Center
4. Jim Wynne, Brooklyn Center
5. Akia Vang, Minneapolis
6. Michael Svard, Brooklyn Park

### **Staff and consultants:**

1. Allison Bell, Bellwether Consulting
2. Mike Bell, Bellwether Consulting
3. C Terrence Anderson, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
4. Dale Gade, SRF Consulting
5. Nissa Tupper, MnDOT
6. Aaron Tag, MnDOT
7. Don Demers, SRF Consulting
8. Marie Cote, SRF Consulting
9. Brian McLafferty, SRF Consulting

## Notes

### 1. Introductions

### 2. C. Terrence Anderson presented the meeting goals

- (Feel) We want the meeting to feel responsive and optimistic.
- (Know) We want to provide honest updates and allow for honest dialogue.
- (Do) We want to re-engage EHNA members.

#### Discussion:

- Frustration with feeling a lack of honest updates and dialogue about the development of project alternatives in the Hwy 252/I-94 SDD and the role of the EHA and EHNA in the SDD process. These members indicated they did not feel optimistic about the potential for the EHA to have an impact on Hwy 252/I-94 outcomes.
- Representative examples of EHNA member comments include:
  - What are we providing into to? Where is this going? I need answers to this question to continue participation.
  - This process does not feel genuine. MnDOT seems to have ruled out non-freeway options.
  - Why the parallel process? I don't trust the EHA will catch up with the SDD.

### 3. C Terrence presented a recap of what was discussed at EHNA meeting #4

- MnDOT needs to slow down, simplify communication, and bring EHNA members along.
- EHNA members question whether MnDOT is willing to act on EHA findings.
- It feels like a decision has already been made and community needs are an afterthought in this process.

#### Discussion:

- Why was there such a rush to do the EIS? We could have paused and had an open-ended conversation.
- Appreciate the recognition that MnDOT needs to simplify communication.

4. Nissa Tupper presented a diagram showing how MnDOT will assess and consider equity and health related to Hwy 252/I-94 (slide 8)

Discussion:

- What information do you want from us? We want your perspectives on how transportation impacts health and disparities in corridor communities, your equity and health priorities for use in assessing 252/I-94 project alternatives, and your input on these priorities are addressed in the Hwy 252/I-94 SDD.
- Still have concerns about how MnDOT will act, but understand the EHA process.
- Are we as EHNA members coming up with the topics or helping you figure out which questions to ask community? Yes and yes. As EHNA members we are asking you to help design and participate in the assessment.

5. Nissa Tupper presented a table describing what the EHA will do and what the EHA will not do (slide 9).

Discussion:

- EHNA discussion of what the EHA will do/not do led into a discussion of what success looks like.
- C Terrence Anderson suggested that if EHNA members are willing to trust the process, he will work with them to define success for the EHA and the EHNA.
- What “topics” are being considered for use in the equity and health assessment? The EHA project team is developing an engagement survey based on information in the EHA Baseline Conditions Report and feedback from the EHA Working Group and EHNA homework assignments. Discussion suggestions included:
  - **Safety:** drive/crashes/walk/bike/bus/increase traffic on local roads/ease of access to road for residents
  - **Health:** smog/noise pollution = increased stress/property values/walking trails/eminent domain/accidents-injuries & death/ river quality & access/EMS access/construction impacts of downtime & limited access -road closures
  - **Environmental health:** water runoff/light pollution (with more streetlights potentially at above grade if overpasses are added/noise/tire residue bird migration patterns/air quality - asthma/COPD

## 6. C Terrence Anderson facilitated a discussion of how to move forward.

### Discussion:

- Members pointed again to the seeming inefficiency of running parallel processes and only identifying community priorities after work to develop alternatives has already begun.
- Staff affirmed this observation and stressed the importance of seeing the current process through to completion, even amid uncertainty, so that the resolution of these tensions might in time benefit this and future projects, and therefore the community at large.
- EHNA membership requested a clearer definition of their role in the current process, so that they can have a better idea of what they can be doing to have a positive impact.
- Formally defining neighborhood priorities – safety, air quality, and so on – for eventual use in evaluating the proposed alternatives, and
- Expanding EHNA membership and participation, especially for North Minneapolis residents.

## 7. Action Items

- C Terrence will lead an effort to recruit and engage new EHNA members
- Project team members will be in touch with next steps