

Rethinking I-94 Phase 2

Transit Working Group

Meetings Recap:

Last updated February 27, 2023

The following is a summary of topics, outcomes, and action items that were discussed at the Transit Working Group meetings.

February 2023

Joint Traffic and Transit Working Group Meeting

- Transit Ideas and Evaluation
 - The Goodman Corporation (TGC) gave a presentation with an overview of the project, schedule, review of transit ideas, and evaluation criteria for the ideas.
 - The group discussed transit station location, walkability, and results of the modeling. In the next stage of the project, the highway and transit ideas will be combined.
- Highway Ideas and Evaluation
 - Alliance Transportation Group (ATG) presented information about the traffic impacts of each highway idea and how each were evaluated.
 - WSB presented ideas evaluation results from the technical memorandum that was sent to the group.
 - Discussion from the group involved technical questions and conversation on how the information would be communicated to the public.

July 2022

- Transit Ideas
 - TGC worked with the Project Management Team (PMT), and the TWG to develop several transit ideas for detailed evaluation. TGC has been working with WSB's highway team to integrate the transit ideas with the highway ideas. Comments on the transit ideas were gathered from the TWG and PMT. There were six transit ideas and a no-build idea presented.
- Idea Evaluation Update
 - TGC presented the list of evaluation criteria.
 - TGC has completed the calibration of the STOPS and Accessibility Model.
 - TGC is running the no-build idea and will be running the build ideas throughout July into early August.
- Public Engagement
 - TGC presented the next steps which includes potential Transit Community Engagement. The evaluation criteria and results are anticipated to be presented to the public in October.

- Details about the potential August public engagement will be sent to the TWG once the information is consolidated.

June 2022

- Introduction
 - MnDOT provided a brief introduction of the project background, noting the transit feasibility study will be integrated into the Scoping Document/Scoping Decision Document, with a set of alternatives being further evaluated during the Tier 1 EIS document. This project will identify range of ideas that can be combined with highway and pedestrian/bicycle ideas to form alternatives to address project needs.
- Project Overview and Schedule
 - TGC presented the project scope and schedule along with how the I-94 Transit Study integrates into the overall Rethinking I-94 scoping process. WSB provided an update on the overall Rethinking I-94 schedule.
- Evaluation Criteria
 - TGC presented the evaluation criteria for the transit ideas. The evaluation criteria have six categories – Performance, Accessibility via Transit, Proximity to Transit Stations/Stops within the Project Corridor, Connectivity to Transit Stations/Stops within the Project Corridor, Environmental, Complexity and Cost.
- Building Blocks to Idea Formation
 - TGC presented the building blocks to the development of the Transit Ideas. Information presented include a review of previous public engagement, review of existing documentation, an environmental justice analysis, a Transit Equity Demand Index (TEDI) analysis, a look at public and subsidized housing in the project area, existing bus route connections, existing pedestrian/bicycle connections, and a look at the corridor travel patterns. This analysis resulted in four groupings of potential station locations.
- Transit Definitions for Ideas
 - TGC presented the definitions for the Transit Ideas. This included definitions for:
 - Running Way
 - Frequency
 - Transit Mode
 - Station Types
- Preliminary Transit Ideas
 - TGC presented the Preliminary Transit Ideas. TGC presented a summary table of the Transit Ideas that included the running way, mode, station type, number of stops, and frequency.
- Next Steps
 - MnDOT reviewed the next steps in the study which include:
 - Refining/finalizing the Transit Ideas and coming back to the TWG in July to present the final list

- Transit Open House with an afternoon and evening meeting in August
- TGC will begin the evaluation of the Transit Ideas
- Comments/Questions
 - The group discussed public engagement on the transit ideas and the evaluation of a wide range of options.
 - WSB indicated the regional plan includes a managed lane without BRT service. The project needs to include an idea consistent with the regional plan because of the NEPA process.
 - Agencies to circulate presentation with their staff and provide comments on the Transit Ideas back to TGC.

November 2019

- Transit Technical Memorandum Discussion: Overview provided of existing services and usage. Discussion included contributing factors to ridership decrease included the following factors:
 - Consistently low gas prices
 - Increased telecommuting
 - Increased rideshare opportunities such as Uber and Lyft
 - Increased carpooling incentives
 - Expanded transit system
 - Home and/or work suburbanization
 - Major roadway construction projects
- Discussion included travel time and reliability issues and the corridors role in regional planning.
- Traffic Working Group Discussion: Overview of bus specific traffic simulations and stats.

September 2019

- Potential Questions Discussion: Ridership, speed and travel time data was presented; bus locator tool presented with data available for current project; Sample data presented the following:
 - The PM peak being much slower than the other peaks throughout the day with an average speed of 34 miles per hour in the eastbound direction and 31 miles per hour in the westbound direction.
 - A decrease in bus ridership between 2015 and 2018, which is apparently part of an overall nationwide decrease in transit use.

Possible reasons of Route 94 bus ridership decline discussed include:

- Low gas prices
- Increase in telecommuting
- Rideshare Services such as Uber and Lyft
- Construction projects in both downtowns
- The new Green Line
- Transit ridership is increasing on most BRT and LRT routes
- Traffic approach/consideration Discussion: Details on modeling existing/no-build

conditions centered on use of micro-simulation model; 2040 future conditions forecast model year; and use of Metropolitan Council Regional Model.

- Next Steps Discussion: Upcoming items; Scoping decision; defining the alternatives; choosing the range of those alternatives to ultimately model; inclusion of bus-only shoulders, converting a general-purpose lane to a MnPASS lane, adding a MnPASS lane to the existing corridor with no general-purpose lane reduction, and adding a stop at Allianz Field.

August 2019

- Purpose of Committee Discussion: The discussion centered on how understanding existing transit conditions and needs within the I-94 corridor will help inform the purpose and need document; determine how the committee can assist in identifying potential evaluation criteria and measures for transit alternatives; and how the committee can assist in identifying the range of transit alternatives.
- Schedule Discussion: Set expectation for Scoping document approval in December 2020/January 2021.
- Logical Termini Discussion: Overview of preliminary logical termini at the West – I-35W and Hwy 55, and east – Marion/Kellogg
- Metro Transit Overview Discussion: An overview provided of the current transit conditions Metro Transit's interest in the following for the corridor:
 - Bus only 12 ft. shoulders from Hwy 280 to downtown Minneapolis
 - Managed lane with direct connections intown downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul
 - MnPass downtown connections (from Rethinking Phase 1)
 - Desire for an on-line station and Snelling Ave (connect with A-Line) – not documented in any published studies
 - The metropolitan area can support that Green Line and an on-line station on I-94 at Snelling Ave. – not documented in any published studies
 - Would like a Mobility Hub at Snelling Ave. – not documented in any published studies
- Data Request and Concerns Discussion: Information provided on existing services and the working group was encouraged to submit data requests at next meeting.