

Rethinking I-94 Phase 2 Community Leaders Meeting (Meeting 15)

Date: 4/21/2023 (1-2 p.m.)

Location: Zoom Meeting

Participants: See List Below

Meeting Summary

1. Welcome

- Melissa Barnes (MnDOT) welcomed the group, introduced the presenters, and gave an overview of the meeting content and logistics.

2. Update on Project Activities

- Melissa Barnes described the project updates that have happened since the last Community Leaders meeting:
 - The revised purpose and need, statement of goals, and evaluation criteria were presented to the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC).
 - MnDOT published the updated purpose and need summary to the project website.
 - MnDOT performed technical analysis of highway and transit ideas and identified ideas to carry forward into alternative development. While not covered in the meeting, the technical analyses were used to understand how the different ideas performed and to help identify what ideas might be best paired together. For example, one would not combine bus shoulders and a managed lane with bus rapid transit service together. Rather, one would consider pairing a reduced freeway (fewer lanes) with a bus shoulder or bus rapid transit service.
 - MnDOT has started to develop alternatives by combining the highway and transit ideas that were tested.
- Melissa Barnes (MnDOT) outlined what the next steps in the process will be:
 - MnDOT will continue to develop/refine alternatives in spring/summer of 2023. The alternatives will be refined to better understand what they could look like and include.
 - MnDOT anticipates sharing alternatives with the public in the summer of 2023.
 - Alternatives will be high level concept drawings of what 94 could look like. Detailed access designs/changes such as interchanges (freeway) traffic signals (at grade roadways) will be examined more closely during the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

- Melissa Barnes reviewed the project schedule and explained that alternatives are being formed to be included in the Scoping Document/Scoping Decision Document. Alternatives will be narrowed down during the Scoping phase and a set of alternatives will be identified for further consideration in Tier 1 EIS. The Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document will have an official comment period when the draft is finished.
- Melissa Barnes explained that potential changes to access locations, interchanges, and pedestrian crossings will be addressed in more detail in the Tier 1 EIS.

3. Community Leaders Role and Guidance

- Ryan Earp (WSB) shared information on the Community Leader Role and Guidance document that was created to give members additional clarity on their role as a Community Leader. He emphasized that Community Leaders are an invaluable resource to the project by bringing community voices to the table, identifying opportunities for information sharing, and two-way communication. Ryan asked Community Leaders to share ideas being discussed in the community.
 - Community Leaders Purpose:
 - Community Leaders help to identify opportunities for information sharing and two-way communication related to the Rethinking I-94 project.
 - As a liaison to the community on behalf of the project, Community Leaders serve as an information resource and connection point between lead agencies and the community-at-large.
 - As such, Community Leaders also serve the project as a resource in sharing their community insights and experiences as it relates to I-94.
 - Although not discussed at the meeting – part of the intent of this group is to foster interaction with the communities along the corridor and to build relationships to enhance trust between residents, business leaders, property owners, education institutions, etc. and MnDOT
- Ryan Earp asked Community Leaders to complete the membership profile form—a new requirement, including for past participants.
 - The form will help update contact information for Community Leaders and will ensure a diverse set of voices in the community are heard.
 - The form will help to uncover gaps that may exist among members in the Community Leaders group.
 - Membership in the Community Leaders group is subject to review and approval by MnDOT.
 - Limit two individuals from the same community organization or business.
- Ryan Earp explained the goal to expand and recruit for the Community Leaders group.
 - Want to re-engage Community Leaders of the past

- Effort to diversify and expand representation
- Identify who might be missing
- Follow-up conversations and one-on-ones with Community Leaders

4. Community Events

- Alyssa Kruzel (MnDOT) discussed methods MnDOT will use to be present in the community and build relationships.
 - A core tactic is to participate in community events in Minneapolis and St. Paul and to gather feedback on alternatives.
 - The target audience includes neighborhoods and those who live, work, and play in the project area; those traditionally not involved in the engagement process; those outside of the project area, but who are still in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
 - MnDOT understands the corridor serves St. Paul, Minneapolis, the entire Metro, and the state.

- Alyssa Kruzel shared potential event ideas for the spring, summer, and fall.
 - She requested ideas from the Community Leaders for what events they recommend MnDOT attend to hear from community members. She emphasized the importance of hearing from diverse voices who live and work in the corridor area.
 - Event ideas:
 - Farmers & maker markets
 - Mobile food truck vendors/businesses
 - Art festivals
 - Neighborhood ice cream socials & summer events
 - Cultural festivals

5. Next Steps

- Melissa Barnes said the next meeting will be scheduled for summer of 2023.
 - Next steps:
 - Recruit new Community Leaders and schedule one-on-one / follow-up conversations
 - Coordinate and schedule community events and targeted outreach
 - Release alternatives – Summer 2023
 - Feedback can be shared by emailing rethinking194project.dot@state.mn.us

6. Q&A

- Melissa Barnes facilitated a Q&A session with members present. Members were asked to type questions in the Q&A or raise their hand to be called on to ask a question verbally.

- Alex Burns: Here is the 2023 Open Streets schedule: https://www.ourstreetsmpls.org/open_streets_minneapolis_announces_2023_schedule
 - Austin Hauf (WSB): (Text response) Thank you Alex.

- Mary Morse Marti: Would Community Leaders be welcome at your outreach events as volunteers to engage with the public?
 - Melissa Barnes: We will discuss as a project team and would appreciate any contacts you have.
 - We appreciate that there is Community Leader interest in participating in community events with MnDOT and sharing information about Rethinking I-94.
 - The project team discussed and are very interested in coordinating with Community Leaders who are interested in hosting MnDOT at events such as your organization's events, presentations, community conversations, etc. to discuss project alternatives with community members
 - We are also interested in partnering with you as Community Leaders to identify community events and opportunities to engage members of your neighborhoods.
 - Community Leaders will be provided a schedule of community events that the Rethinking I-94 project team will be attending. We extend an invitation to Community Leaders and their respective communities to join in attendance or simply attend as members of the community.
 - No Community Leader is responsible for acting as the primary contact for project outreach or presentations and are not responsible for serving as a spokesperson on behalf of the Rethinking I-94 project.
 - MnDOT recognizes that within any one community or organization, members share different perspectives. To ensure a diverse set of community voices, interests, and stakeholders are represented and heard from, it is critical for MnDOT to be involved in outreach and engagement activities with the community.

- Alex Burns: When will the next Policy Advisory Committee meeting be held?
 - Melissa Barnes (MnDOT): To be decided, looking at late June or July.

- Jonathan Palmer: I would include neighborhood organization's board meetings and check with community organizations about doing open houses
 - Melissa Barnes: We would like to include neighborhood board meetings and great idea to do community open houses.

- Keith Baker: For some who are interested (agencies and individual) in serving as community leaders, are there resources to help augment capacity for input and to connect with MnDOT throughout the process?
 - Ryan Earp and Alyssa Kruzel: We are looking for ideas from Community Leaders. Would like this to be a partnership opportunity and are working on creating a toolbox that Community Leaders can use to facilitate/ present information to the groups they are involved in.

- Danielle Tucker: Can you reiterate the specific project the team is looking for engagement on?

- Melissa Barnes (MnDOT): Looking to increase awareness about Rethinking I-94 efforts. Later in the summer, we will be talking about the Rethinking I-94 alternatives and getting feedback to determine what is missing.
- Pat Thompson: Is the 280-interchange thinking part of Tier 2 process?
 - Melissa Barnes: It is part of the process now at a high level. We know there are issues in this area but will not be developing detailed designs until we get into the Tier 2 process. In the Tier 1 process, we will be developing multiple concepts that could be moved forward in the Tier 2 project.
- Mary Morse Marti: I'm curious how people, particularly residents, who are not engaged in "official" leadership roles could be included. For example, high school and college students, busy people, and (especially) folks who are typically marginalized. Are there opportunities to distribute alternatives information door-to-door with a response mechanism?
 - Melissa Barnes, Alyssa Krusel, and Ryan Earp: That is a priority and something we are aiming to do. They explained the purpose of community events, discussed that the door-to-door idea was a strategy to reach people who may not be at events and is something they can take under advisement to reach a larger group of people.
- Jonathan Palmer: This is a place where neighborhood organizations and community organizations are key. We are interacting with those residents, serve those residents, represent those residents, and are those residents. So, the more community and neighborhood organizations have information, the more residents are informed and engaged.
 - Melissa Barnes: We agree and know that not everyone can be a part of every meeting. Melissa explained a toolbox that will be put together that can be used by community leaders to share information. She also mentioned wanting to meet more frequently to partner with the Community Leaders and community.
- Alex Burns: I am concerned that engagement questions are still constraining the community's ability to consider non-highway alternatives. For example, the tabling photo that was shown asked attendees what the positives and negatives were of using I-94. This assumes that people use the highway, when we know that over 1 in 4 households near the highway don't own a car. A better question would be: "What are the positives/negatives of having I-94 in your community?"
 - Melissa Barnes: Thank you for the feedback on how we are asking questions. We want to make sure we are asking comprehensive questions.
- Keith Baker: In what way should we anticipate better understanding of the livability framework and its connection to the Rethinking I-94 process moving forward?
 - Melissa Barnes: The Livability Framework was brought into the goals for the project and is included as part of the criteria that will be used to evaluate alternatives.
 - Gloria Jeff: The framework has been incorporated as part of the alternatives evaluation at Scoping and Tier 1. Elements of framework are a balance. We

recognize folks need access to daily goods for economic vitality from the freight system and understand there are varying factors that bring people to the area and that helps sustain them.

- Scott Berger: I recently spoke to a neighbor who said he was unwilling to send his children to a public elementary school located along I-94. I asked for clarification, he said he did not feel safe sending his kids to a location directly on a freeway due to pollution and lack of safety measures for kids, such as those making an otherwise short walk home across the freeway trench. What, if anything, is MnDOT doing to address the concerns of young people and children who obviously are not able to directly provide feedback on their needs related to the future of this corridor?
 - Melissa Barnes: We have talked to schools in the past and perhaps we can do additional work to help incorporate this as part of this project. The Livability Framework workshops included activities at K-12 schools. We want to continue to have contact and coordination with the schools.

- Pat Thompson: Wanted to respond to the idea of semi-trucks being part of the Livability Framework. Here to represent St. Anthony Park. There is a large amount of folks who live in south St. Anthony Park and there is heavy semi traffic around St. Anthony Park. I question why semi-trucks should be part of the Livability Framework?
 - Melissa Barnes: It is a balance of land use and access to grocery stores.
 - Pat Thompson: I realize there is a balance but am reacting to semi traffic being part of the Livability Framework.
 - Melissa: Thank you, I agree that the movements of truck traffic will need to be carefully considered along with noise, safety, and emissions particularly when they are traveling through neighborhoods.

- Jonathan Palmer: This is in response to Alex Burns, the question he is posing is biased towards his own project with Our Streets Minneapolis and presumes that people want to even consider not having 94 is a viable alternative and therein promotes his project. If you TRULY want a better question, it would be: "What are the best methods of transportation between the Twin Cities and if you could change anything what would it be?"
 - Melissa Barnes: We must be careful in how we phrase our questions. We appreciate feedback and will be working with this group to make sure we clearly communicate messages.

- Mary Morse Marti: Is MnDOT able to address the specific health impacts of each of the corridor alternatives (openly, with medical data, and relative to the health impacts of today's highway) as it engages the public this spring/summer?
 - Melissa Barnes: The intent of this summer's outreach is to ask what we are missing but the information on specific health impacts (air quality, etc.) will not be available this summer.

- Jack Corkle (WSB): Agreed with Melissa that the focus of this summer is to get input on alternatives. Alternatives will be evaluated based on federal practices for air and noise.
- Keith Baker: When considering the tentative schedule and an aim for 2027 construction, has the project been placed in the Transportation Investment Plan (TIP) or State Transportation Investment Plan (STIP)?
 - Melissa Barnes (MnDOT): There is not an overall project for the corridor that is currently funded. There are smaller maintenance projects that are moving forward on or around the corridor to maintain safety due to the condition of the infrastructure. There may be multiple projects that will make up the Rethinking I-94 “Program of Projects.” Different alternatives will have different costs and we need to understand the extent before securing funding.
- Glen Johnson: If possible, having this group be able to give feedback on the materials or the survey questions could be helpful. It is challenging to communicate this type of information in a relatable way, so if there are visuals, maps, mockups the feedback can be more meaningful. Examples like what the range of alternatives could look (or especially sound) like or air pollution maps w/impacts.
 - Melissa Barnes: Appreciate the feedback and agree that making materials as visual as possible will be useful.
- Mary Morse Marti: Are we able to learn who is attending the meeting today? That would be terrific.
 - Ryan Earp: Meeting minutes are being taken and they will be distributed. We will also be distributing a follow up survey.
- Hugo Bruggeman: I like you to elaborate on the question on access to schools. Can you also include MIDDLE and HIGH school students? Access to safely travel their surroundings with peers is key to the wellbeing and development of our youth. These groups should be included in your reach out. Their input should also address climate disruption and how this impacts their transportation needs for low-carbon modes of travel.
 - Melissa Barnes: Thank you, engagement with K-12 students was part of the Livability Framework outreach. We must be engaged with all the youth, especially those who live, work, or travel along the corridor.
- Melissa Barnes: Gave another opportunity for folks to ask questions to conclude the Q&A.
 - Provided another opportunity for Danielle Tucker to ask her question (was unable to be asked verbally due to technical difficulties).
 - Thanked everyone who joined and told attendees to feel free to reach out.
 - Staff is available at the project email (rethinkingi94project.dot@state.mn.us) to answer questions directly.
 - Project website: talk.dot.state.mn.us/rethinking-i94.
 - The project team is happy to have conversations as other questions, comments, or ideas come up.

- Danielle Tucker: Thank you - I guess I'm still not hearing what the direct asks is for the community to input on - are you looking for brainstorm from the community? If so, then I do agree as people may need to know what some possibilities are and why the brainstorming now?
 - Response: The project team is asking Community Leaders for help in identifying how best to reach members of the community to solicit feedback on the alternatives that will be released this summer. This could include community gatherings, events, festivals, etc.

Next Meeting

Date: Summer 2023, TBD

Time: TBD

Location: Zoom Meeting

Community Leaders Meeting Participants – April 21, 2023

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
	Swenson	Carol	District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
x	Fure	Jon	Capitol River Council
	Werner	Jens	Summit University Planning Council
	Schwantes	Lindsay	Hamline Midway Coalition
	O'Brian	Sarah	Hamline Midway Coalition
	Alex	Armon	Hamline Midway Coalition
			Citizens for a Loring Park Community
	Rock Hantge	Christie	Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
			Elliot Park Neighborhood
	Buehler	Nichole	Harrison Park Neighborhood
			Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association
x	Crary	David	North Loop Neighborhood Association
	Smaller	Martine	Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
	Davitch	Liza	Prospect Park Association
x	Frank	David	Prospect Park Association
			Stevens Square Community Organization
			African Economic Development Solutions
			Asian American Chamber of Commerce
			Asian Economic Development Association
			Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
			Chicano Latino Affairs Council, State of Minnesota
	Dunning	Paris	East Side Area Business Association
	Kulas	Chad	Midway Chamber of Commerce
			Neighborhood Development Alliance
	Duerr	Amanda	St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
	Finzell	Greg	Rondo Community Land Trust
			African Development Center
			Building Owners and Managers Association
			East Town Minneapolis

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
			Franklin Area Business Association
			Latino Chamber of Commerce
			Latino Economic Development Center
	Weinhagen	Johnathan	Minneapolis Area Chamber of Commerce
X	Shardlow	Ben	Minneapolis Downtown Council
			Minneapolis Warehouse District
x	Hestness	Andy	Seward Redesign: Redesign Inc
			West Bank Business Association
	Jensen	Cheryl	West Broadway Business and Area Coalition
	Rockwell	Sam	Move Minnesota
x	Nelson	Theresa	Move Minnesota
	Wilson	David	Green Minneapolis
	Vue	Tria	Neighborhood Development Center
			Rondo Avenue, Inc.
	Meister	Debbie	Neighborhoods First!
x	Khalif	Farhio	NAACP
	Hickman	Robin	Soul Touch Productions
	Zabel	Laura	Springboard for the Arts
			Eastside Neighborhood Services
X	Jonie	Williams	Urban League Twin Cities
	Moore	Ned	CURA
	Samuels	Sondra	Northside Achievement Zone
			African American Leadership Forum
			African Career & Education Resources
			The Alliance
	Lee	Ruby	Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio
			Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota
x	Schroerer	William	East Metro Strong
	Kamia	Heather	Hmong American Partnership
			MEDA
			Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
			Greater MSP
	Narayanan	Ashwat	Our Streets Minneapolis
x	Burns	Alex	Our Streets Minneapolis
	Singer	Andy	Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition
			Minnesota Trucking Association
			Urban Land Institute Minnesota
	Liban	Mohamed	Somali American Partership
			Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
			Masjid An-Nur
	Gill	Rev. Dr. Charles	Pilgrim Baptist Church
	Bell	Rev. Dr. Ron	Camphor Memorial United Methodist
	Thomas	Pastor Hames	Mt Olivet Baptist
	Gifford	Father Joseph	St Peter Claver Church
x	Baker	Keith	ReConnect Rondo
x	Juliff	David	Be Civil - Reconnect Rondo
	Barobs	John	Move Minneapolis
	Hedlund	Karl	Move Minneapolis
	Windyk	Catherine	Move Minneapolis
	Check	Nick	Saint Mark Parish
X	Golemo	Alexa	Mac Groveland Community Council
x	Bruggeman	Hugo	MGCC - Transportation Committee
x	Ludtke	Spencer	MGCC - Transportation Committee
	Brown	Andy	Wilder Foundation
	Clapp-Smith	Merritt	Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board
	Wagenius	Peter	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
x	Palmer	Jonathan	Hallie Q. Brown
	Thoman	Barbra	Union Park District Council
x	Thompson	Pat	Saint Anthony Park Community Council
	Yang	Ge	Hmong American Partnership (HAP)
	ElAmin	Arlene	Al-Maa'uun

Present	Last Name	First Name	Organization
x	Morse Marti	Mary	Neighborhoods First
x	Johnson	Glen	
x	Tucker	Danielle	NRRC
x	Berger	Scott	
x	Indred	Alexander	

FHWA/MnDOT/Consultant Staff Participants – April 21, 2023

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Varney	Anna	FHWA
Kauppi	Sheila	MnDOT
Kruzel	Alyssa	MnDOT
Jeff	Gloria	MnDOT
Lopez	Ricardo	MnDOT
Barnes	Melissa	MnDOT
McCartney	Molly	MnDOT
Krueger	Christine	MnDOT
Goff	Bill	MnDOT
Raduenz	Renee	MnDOT
Earp	Ryan	WSB
Kazmierczak	Chevelle	WSB
Corkle	Jack	WSB
McElroy	Karli	WSB
Hauf	Austin	WSB
Oyaas	Sean	Rapp Strategies
Tracy	Kaylee	Rapp Strategies