

Rethinking I-94 Phase 2

Pedestrian and Bicycle Working Group

Monthly Meetings Recap:

Last updated February 21, 2024

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

July 2024

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided general project updates.
 - The group discussed restarting regular committee and working group meetings and the revised project schedule.
- Alternatives
 - WSB walked through the working draft alternatives analysis materials.
 - Working group members were encouraged to coordinate with their TAC and/or PPC members on any potential feedback for the project team.
- Other Project Coordination
 - The Metropolitan Council provided an update on the Midtown Greenway Extension study, which aims to extend the Greenway from Minneapolis to Allianz Field.
 - The City of Saint Paul provided an update on several City projects such as the updated Bicycle Plan, resurfacing Concordia/Rondo Ave, St. Anthony resurfacing (2025), and the reconstruction of Pelham Blvd planned for 2026.
 - MnDOT shared an update on efforts to address inconsistencies in pedestrian bridge cross section standards between the MnDOT bike manual and the LRFD Bridge Design Manual.

January 2024

- Alternatives Overview
 - WSB recapped the alternatives that were developed and presented to the community.
- Community Engagement
 - Community engagement efforts were discussed, highlighting interest in rail transit, bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, and environmental concerns. A diverse approach was used to engage stakeholders.
- Other Potential Alternatives
 - Community suggestions included lids, additional transit, at-grade options, and bike/ped enhancements. Some of these ideas will be considered as elements to enhance existing alternatives rather than independent options.
- Available Space

- WSB shared information about a high-level analysis of the amount of space that the roadway footprint for each alternative would take up. The purpose of this was to understand the physical space constraints/footprints of the mainline and potential frontage roads for the alternatives, and to identify areas where space could be available for development/redevelopment or other uses for each alternative.
- Alternatives Evaluation
 - Preliminary evaluation matrices covering project needs, impacts, goals, and additional considerations were discussed. The discussion focused on walkability/bikeability measures.
- Other Project Coordination
 - Updates on the Concordia Avenue mill & overlay project were provided by the City of St. Paul. A one-way eastbound bike lane is proposed but will be discussed with the public.
 - Hennepin County discussed the Midtown Greenway Extension study, noting challenges with railroad coordination and its potential integration with the I-94 project.

June 2023

- Draft Saint Paul Bicycle Plan Overview
 - A presentation of St. Paul's draft bicycle plan update was provided.
 - The plan is an update to the 2015 bike plan and is anticipated to be adopted by the St. Paul City Council late summer/early fall 2023.
- Project Updates: Alternatives Development and Draft Alternatives Graphics
 - The group discussed working drafts of typical section graphics for scoping level alternatives.
 - These graphics were shared and discussed within the group, it was noted that they are also being shared with committees and working groups for feedback.
- Other Project Coordination: Midtown Greenway Extension
 - Legislation passed providing funding for a Met Council study in 2023; the Council may provide grants to local units of government. More information to come.

April 2023

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided an overview of the draft alternative names.
 - Discussion about clarifying transit abbreviations and the number of stops along the corridor.
- Project Next Steps
 - Timeline and process of alternatives evaluation provided.
- Working Group Recap and Lookahead
 - WSB provided an overview of key working group activities over the last several years, their context within the overall project and environmental phases, level of design detail, and unknowns at this stage.

- Discussion of how the Ped and Bike working group has contributed to the project thus far, and future phases the group may be involved in moving forward.

March 2023

- Project Updates: Traffic Modeling Update
 - WSB provided an overview and basis of evaluation for the highway ideas that are being analyzed.
 - WSB presented a summary of the results for each highway idea and a matrix that showed the comparative evaluation based on traffic objectives.
 - Discussion of idea results, basis for specific ideas, and evaluation measures.
- Project Updates: Transit Work Update
 - WSB presented an overview of transit ideas, results by measure, and a summary of findings.
- Project Updates: Alternative Workshop Recap
 - WSB provided an overview of the alternatives workshop that happened on March 3, 2023.
 - Discussion at the workshop included removing alternatives with explanation provided, and the addition of several new alternatives.
- Questions and Discussion
 - Discussion of impacts to pedestrians and bikes from interchange modifications and mainline ideas.

February 2023

- Project Updates
 - A joint Traffic and Transit Working Group meeting will be held on 2/21 to discuss transit modeling results.
 - Transitioning to alternatives development stage with formation of alternatives by combining roadway and transit ideas.
 - Discussion of process for review of alternatives.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB shared information on potential new connections and the analysis that has been completed to date.
 - WSB provided explanations, assumptions, and key takeaways for preliminary multimodal and nonmotorized crossing opportunities categories.
 - Discussion of potential connectivity opportunities from redevelopment.
 - Status of City of St. Paul Bicycle Plan update discussed.

January 2023

- Project Updates
 - The status of technical work and next steps were shared for traffic and transit modeling.
 - A second alternatives workshop was discussed.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Network

- WSB shared information on potential new connections and the types of information and data being considered.
- WSB presented data, themes, and observations for areas between existing crossings along the corridor. This will be used to further develop corridor context and inform conversations about future connections.
- WSB identified “zones” in between existing crossings and the group discussed current and future land uses and connections, and
- The group was asked to consider what additional information is needed to inform future discussions.

December 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB shared updates on the current status of highway transit modeling work.
 - WSB gave a recap of the first alternatives development workshop.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB suggested various types of data which should be gathered to evaluate potential new connections/crossings in the corridor.
- Next Steps
 - Refine data on new crossings

October 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided a recap of the September PAC meeting.
 - WSB provided a recap of two transit-focused public engagement activities conducted since last meeting: the virtual transit open house on 10/11/22 and the in-person open house on 10/12/22. Attendance and major themes were discussed.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB shared information on a methodology for measuring effects of modifying pedestrian crossings.
 - Discussion of methodology, possible limitations, and additional resources.
- Next Steps
 - Refine crossing analysis methodology

August 2022

- Project Updates
 - Transit study initiated to identify viable transit ideas for corridor; will combine viable roadway ideas to form alternatives for evaluation.
 - In collaboration with Transit Working Group, evaluation criteria developed with potential modes identified.
 - Currently eight ideas to be evaluated with public engagement activities planned.
 - WSB shared the eight potential ideas; three modes and five potential stations/stops for corridor, which are being tested and modeled.

- Discussion of crossings and connections for transit stops/stations in relation to bike and pedestrian routes.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - Discussion of comments received on the draft memo and major changes.
 - Key question: What is a likely range of feasible bicycle and pedestrian facilities that could be implemented at existing crossing locations in the program area?
 - WSB summarized comments from working group members on the draft memo and responses/actions taken for each comment.
 - WSB also shared City and County approaches to balancing user needs (e.g., modal hierarchy), existing crossing infrastructure along corridor, and revised bike and pedestrian facility classifications.
 - Ramsey County is working on 2050 Multimodal plan, and City of St. Paul is updating bike plan. Recommendations from updated bike plan should be reflected in I-94 process.
 - Ramsey County hosting an Active Living meeting 8/22, 2:30-4:30pm providing an update on their Multimodal Planning Process. Anyone is invited to attend.
- Next Steps
 - Review revised memo
 - Refine crossing classifications

July 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided a recap of the Cooperating and Participating Agency meeting from June 24th
 - Update on Cooperating Agency concurrence
 - FTA and EPA have concurred on revised documents
 - FRA has asked to be a Participating rather than Cooperating Agency, and no longer needs to concur.
 - PAC meeting upcoming – date TBD.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB presented an overview of the draft nonmotorized crossing framework memorandum.
 - Key question: What is the likely range of feasible bicycle and pedestrian facilities that could be implemented at crossing locations in the program area?
 - WSB presented bicycle and pedestrian facility types and acknowledged that a range of other facilities are not precluded in the future due to changes in land use, traffic patterns etc.
 - WSB presented draft bicycle and pedestrian facility classifications based on the type of crossing - Multi-Modal Bridge, Dedicated Bicycle and Pedestrian bridge, and Pedestrian and Bicycle Under Crossings

- WSB also highlighted other features or amenities that help advance the sense of place and experience for pedestrians, such as lighting, public art, historic or cultural interpretive elements, wayfinding, benches, or trees and landscaping.
- Next Steps
 - Refine crossing classifications
 - Working group members to provide comments on the draft nonmotorized crossing framework memorandum by Thursday 7/28.

June 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB discussed updates to the Purpose and Need and Evaluation Criteria
 - Joint TAC-PPC meeting recap
 - Upcoming Cooperating and Participating Agencies meeting - June 24th, 2022
 - Transit work
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB introduced next steps for the nonmotorized crossing framework analysis.
 - Key question for existing crossings: What is the likely range of bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
 - Bicycle facilities could include: Shared use paths, sidepaths, separated bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, standard bike lanes
 - Pedestrian facilities could include: sidewalks, shared use paths
 - WSB introduced a framework for determining applicable facilities based on the crossing type. Want to inform the level of design, but still provide flexibility in future design decisions at the Tier 2 phase.
 - Will also identify additional facility types that may not be appropriate based on current conditions (traffic volumes, speeds, development etc.) but could become viable in the future.
 - Staff also recognize that enhancing sense of place in the nonmotorized environment is also important, including elements such as decorative lighting, public art, historic/cultural elements, wayfinding, etc.
- Next steps: Refine crossing classifications

April 2022

- Project Updates
 - Project website updates
 - Transit study initiated to explore transit ideas that will integrate with overall corridor alternatives. Will be conducted by The Goodman Corporation (TGC).
- Update provided on Draft Purpose and Need and Evaluation Criteria
 - WSB introduced a preliminary draft of the revised purpose and need
 - WSB introduced a draft of the Statement of Goals
 - Improves consistency with the pillars of the Livability Framework. Matches terminology, items are bulleted to aid in readability
 - Overview of document updates in progress

- Goal is to have a revised purpose and need and goals document in April
 - WSB shared proposed changes to the evaluation criteria
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB shared key changes to the draft crossings memo
 - WSB shared responses to major comments on the previous draft (see slides).
 - WSB shared updated results of the analysis, incorporating the changes discussed
- Next Steps
 - Revise purpose and need and evaluation criteria
 - There will likely be no May meeting due to timing of Minnesota Transportation Conference and need for project team coordination on next steps.

February 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided an overview of the February 9 PAC meeting.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework: WSB shared responses received to several questions posed during the last working group meeting.
 - For standalone pedestrian crossings, is there a way to account for perception of comfort/safety? Visibility before and behind the user can be a concern.
 - Interest in discussing this further, no specific proposals
 - How to integrate traffic volumes? Do we want to highlight high traffic volume roads?
 - Not as independent factors, maybe as part of proactive risk factors analysis
 - Should access to other destination types be evaluated? (shopping, healthcare, gov't services, etc.)
 - Yes, discuss options and data availability
 - WSB gave an overview of data on additional destination types that can be incorporated into the access to destinations portion of the factors analysis. Group discussion had on the topics and feedback shared.
 - County service centers
 - Libraries
 - Met Council Job and Activity Centers
 - Grocery and convenience stores
 - Healthcare and social assistance
 - Pharmacies
 - The group was asked to provide additional comments and questions on the memo and discussion topics by March 3rd.
- Next Steps
 - Refine prioritization framework based upon additional input and feedback.

January 2022

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided a high-level project update.
 - Discussed announcement on changes to draft purpose and need.
 - Public comments overview provided as of 01/13/2022.

- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB provided an overview of a new draft memo discussing the nonmotorized crossing framework. The purpose of the memo is to document background information, development of draft factors, proposed methodology, and draft results for the analysis.
 - WSB outlined several comments that have been received and asked for input on how to address them in the draft memo.
 - WSB proposed several discussion questions for the draft memo and received comments and feedback from the group.
 - The group was asked to provide additional comments and questions on the draft memo by February 3rd.
- Next Steps
 - Provide comments on draft memo by February 3rd
 - Refine prioritization framework based upon additional input and feedback.

November 2021

- Project Updates
 - WSB provided an update on Rethinking I-94 public engagement activities.
- Nonmotorized Crossing Framework
 - WSB provided overview of comments on proposed approach
 - WSB presented an example approach for using the draft factors to prioritize pedestrian crossings
 - For this example, ADA compliance removed as a factor since there are deficiencies across the corridor that will need to be addressed at a minimum.
 - Several factors used as a high-level screening: nonmotorized safety issue locations, multimodal crossings with a sidewalk on only one side, and ped bridges missing a ramp connection. Crossings with these issues were assigned to Group 1.
 - The remaining crossings were assigned to Group 2. Following the high-level screening, a scoring system was applied to a selected group of factors and using to assign a score to the Group 2 crossings.
 - Based on percentile scores, the Group 2 crossings were assigned to four groups, Priority 1-4, with Priority 1 crossings scoring the highest.
 - WSB shared a map of the Group 1 and Group 2 results
 - The group discussed the example approach and results.
 - Next steps are to refine prioritization framework based upon additional input and feedback.

October 2021

- Project Updates
 - Bill Goff (MnDOT) provided an update on activities related to the Livability framework since the last working group meeting.

- Rather than a workshop format, MnDOT conducted outreach on the Trust pillar through one-on-one conversations with stakeholders and community members/leaders. Questions asked during the sessions related to the participants' interactions and collaboration with MnDOT and other government agencies, and how the state can better build trust and engage the communities.
- Workshop on Connectivity pillar conducted in September, featured presentation on unique urban roadway projects that address connectivity. MnDOT soliciting input on connectivity during the month of October via online survey.
- Next steps: Develop Livability papers to provide background, current practices and recommendations for MnDOT Metro District, cities, counties and Met Council, with a projected rollout of draft papers this fall.
- WSB provided an update on community engagement activities conducted and comments received since the last working group meeting. Upcoming pop-up events and Community Conversation Open Houses (live virtual webinar conversations between community members and project team).
- City of St. Paul Bicycle Plan update
 - Jimmy Shoemaker (City of St. Paul Dept of Public Works) gave a presentation on the City of Saint Paul's ongoing bicycle plan update. Primary purpose is to update network to include more separation between biking and driving and align with state and national guidance and best practices.
- Bicycle and pedestrian counts
 - WSB shared information on updated bike/ped count locations and schedule. Collection underway, all sites anticipated September-October 2021
- Nonmotorized crossing framework
 - WSB provided an overview of comments received on the draft factors and changes made in response. Several items are under discussion with MnDOT and FHWA.

September 2021

- No meeting.

August 2021

- Project updates
 - WSB provided updates on community engagement activities.
- Alternatives approach
 - WSB provided a recap of ideas discussed during the brainstorming session at the last meeting.
- Nonmotorized crossing framework
 - Discussion and feedback on draft crossing factors. WSB provided a brief background on the transition from Rethinking I-94 Phase 1 bike-ped work into the current effort, including the proposed improvement types.

- The group discussed the results of the draft evaluation based on the proposed list of factors for all nonmotorized crossings in the program area. City of Minneapolis provided additional background on the All Ages and Abilities network planning effort.

July 2021

- Project updates
 - Bill Goff (MnDOT) provided an update on the Livability workshops, including key takeaways from recent workshops on the topics of “Equity” and “Health and the Environment.” Workshops are monthly - the next topic is “Trust.”
- Alternatives approach
 - WSB provided a recap of ideas discussed during the brainstorming session at the last meeting, with ideas sorted into various themes.
 - WSB provided a brief reminder of the draft purpose and need and the idea categories for brainstorming (mainline, access/interchange, project elements).
 - The group brainstormed and discussed additional ideas.
- Nonmotorized crossing framework
 - WSB presented a proposed framework for addressing the walkability and bikeability need in the corridor through crossing improvements. Idea is to create a system for thinking through type of investment that may be needed for each crossing.
 - Rethinking I-94 Phase 1 proposed six potential crossing improvement types (none, minimum standard, low-cost additions, enhanced facility, unique treatments, new) and potential factors to evaluate each crossing.
 - Proposal is to create a matrix with each crossing and a set of criteria to determine what type of improvement is needed. Criteria examples include bike/ped analyses from purpose and need, existing/planned facilities, designations from other agencies, demographics of areas served, etc.
 - Proposed criteria for walking and biking were presented (some apply to both modes) along with example crossing evaluations in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.
 - The group was asked to provide feedback on the draft materials by August 5th.

June 17, 2021

- Crossing location maps and summary
 - WSB provided an update on changes to the nonmotorized crossing maps and matrix based on comments received and updates from recent planning documents.
 - The group was asked to provide any other changes needed by June 19th.
- Alternatives approach
 - WSB provided a high-level overview of the alternatives approach for Rethinking I-94:
 - Step 1: Brainstorming ideas
 - Step 2: Category assignments

- Step 3: Organize ideas into alternatives
- Step 4: Refine alternatives to be studied
- Step 5: Evaluate alternatives
- WSB provided a review of the draft purpose and need for the project.
- Reminder of Tiered EIS process for Rethinking I-94 - Will be getting into specific design details in Tier 2 projects.
 - Tier 1: Broad issues, changes to mainline and access, high level impacts of alternatives, identify program of projects.
 - Tier 2: More detailed design and analysis of impacts for projects within the overall program of projects.
- WSB introduced the idea generation/brainstorming activity and outlined several possible categories for ideas: mainline, access/interchange, and project elements.
- A series of discussion questions were posed to prompt ideas.
- Attendees participated in a virtual whiteboard activity to brainstorm potential ideas for how to address the issues identified in the corridor.
- It was noted that there will be opportunities at future meetings to continue brainstorming additional ideas, review ideas generated to date, and discuss idea categories.

June 3, 2021

- Project Updates
 - WSB gave an overview of key environmental process milestones since the last working group meeting.
 - MnDOT provided an overview of the Livability initiative at MnDOT, background on the Livability workshops, and provided a summary of the outcomes from the first three Livability workshops.
 - WSB provided an update on public engagement efforts and shared an updated schedule.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Existing Conditions memo and mapping
 - WSB provided an overview of key work completed to date and documented in the Pedestrian and Bicycle existing conditions memo. An updated version of the memo was provided to working group members prior to the meeting.
 - The bikeshed analysis, which had not been presented previously, was discussed in greater detail.
- Crossing location maps and summary
 - WSB presented new maps and a matrix of nonmotorized crossing locations in the corridor (provided prior to meeting).
 - Working group members were asked to review the maps and identify any needed changes to existing or planned facilities, or other information that would be useful to support future discussions of possible alternatives.
- Meeting Schedule
 - The group discussed meeting dates/times going forward.

- Proposal to meet again in June, set monthly meeting date for third Wednesday or Thursday of the month based on results of Doodle poll.

February 2020

- Updates Discussion: The Project Team provided an overview of various resources that were explored to help assist in identifying and describing pedestrian and bicycle needs. These resources included past studies/analyses, pedestrian and bicycle facilities design guides, online maps, and Walk Score.
- St. Paul Presentation: A presentation on Saint Anthony Avenue and Concordia Avenue 2021 Safety Improvements Project was shared with the group. The City of Saint Paul received complaints that high vehicle speeds and lack of pavement markings contribute to the discomfort experienced by non-motorized users crossing the streets.
- GIS Maps and Analysis Demonstration: The Project Team shared an analysis tool that was developed using ArcGIS to assist in identifying ped/bike needs. Additional ways in which the tool could be implemented was discussed by the group. For example, the tool has potential to be combined with other data (demographic data, existing/future land use and developments along the I-94 corridor) and analyses. The group was enthusiastic about the tool and its potential.
- Future Tasks: As of February 12, 2020, group meetings will be suspended until further notice. Pedestrian and bicycle counts will most likely occur in the fall of 2020 and the Project Team will continue to explore ways that would help understand crossing needs across I-94 better. The Project Team expects to conduct a Visual Impact Assessment and/or a Visual Quality Manual with a Crossing Design Guide once a Tier 1 preferred alternative is selected in 2021/2022.

November 2019

- Overview of City of St. Paul and its Neighborhood and Small Area Plans Discussion: The Project Team compiled and shared a list of pedestrian and bicycle related policies that would be applicable to the I-94 corridor. These policies were retrieved from St. Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Grand Round Design and Implementation Plan, and other neighborhood or small area plans. The group acknowledged that crossing recommendations should be community driven and realistic. The group also identified the following themes within the list of pedestrian and bicycle related policies: improving connections, widened sidewalks, crash barriers between traffic and sidewalk, pedestrian-level lighting, decorative railing, beautification/aesthetics, street-tree planting, and artists' contributions.
- SPACE (Suitability of Pedestrian And Cycling Environment) Score: The Project Team introduced the SPACE tool and how SPACE score has been used by MnDOT to help estimate ped/bike demands in the past.
 - SPACE tool is versatile because it can be customized to incorporate any demographic characteristics into the high-level analysis as long as they are quantifiable. The group identified that the SPACE tool could be used to generate scores for bridges, identify underserved populations, and combine with other

analysis tools and datasets.

- Potential Future Topic Discussion: The group brainstormed the following list of potential future topics:
 - Overview of Minneapolis Transportation Action Plan
 - Presentation of Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) Comprehensive Plan Update
 - Case study for Pelham Bridge and other studies
 - MnDOT's cost participation policy
 - Funding programs and resources
 - MnDOT Highway Sponsorship Program
 - Understanding Cities of the First Class Agreement
 - Updates to MnDOT Metro District Pedestrian Plan

October 2019

- Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Overview Discussion: The Project Team shared the Bicycle and Pedestrian Existing Conditions and Network Connectivity Memorandum with the group.
 - Based on the key takeaways from the memo, the group discussed how data on existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities can help identify ped/bike needs and perform origin-destination analysis.
- Potential Future Topics Discussion: Case study of Pelham Bridge and MnDOT's cost participation policy were potential future topics the group listed.

September 2019

- Rethinking I-94 Background and Update Discussion: This was the first Ped/Bike Working Group Meeting. The group was given an overview of Rethinking I-94, the project schedule, the project structure, and an update on Phase 2 environmental documents in progress. MnDOT also shared the five parallel path white paper topics with the group: sense of place, connectivity, economics, equity, and health & environment.
- Identifying Working Group Purpose and Objectives Discussion: The purpose and objectives of the group was discussed: develop a shared vision that will inform future projects; help identify and define what may be included in the NEPA process; and propose potential implementation pathways such as funding options and partnerships for goals outside of the NEPA process.
- Phase 1 Review Discussion: The group reviewed Phase 1 Appendix T13 "Parallel Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Opportunities" as a starting point to brainstorm Phase 2 ped/bike opportunities. Both Minneapolis and St. Paul have policies that prioritize enhancing connectivity across the freeway. The group noted that major intersections along I-94 act as barriers to creating safe east-west protected ped/bike facilities.