

Meeting Summary

Project Name: Highway 252/I-94 Environmental Impact Statement
Meeting Subject: Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting 13
Meeting Date: 06/27/2024
Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Central Standard Time)
Meeting Location: Online meeting via Zoom

Distribution and Attendee List

Attendee	Organization	Attendee	Organization
Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins	Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)	Bhagyashree Panda	HDR
Amber Blanchard	MnDOT	Tess Heller	HDR
Ricardo Lopez	MnDOT	John McPherson	HDR
Sheila Kauppi	MnDOT	Nicole Krause	Bolton & Menk
Ben Klismith	MnDOT	Haila Maze	Bolton & Menk
Erik Rudeen	MnDOT	Richie Song	General Public
Melissa Barnes	MnDOT	Kimberly Fields	General Public
Ryan Wilson	MnDOT	Jane Voss	General Public
Lisa Elliot	MnDOT	Janet Jordan	General Public
Wendell Meyer	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Joanne Peter	General Public
Anna Varney	FHWA	Terrance Ryan	General Public
William Lohr	FHWA	Loraine Charles	General Public
Jeff Holstein	Brooklyn Park	Joe Wiatros	General Public
Shanna Woods	Brooklyn Park	Jim Huntington	General Public
Mitch Robinson	Brooklyn Park	Michael Svard	General Public
Cartrice O'Neal	Brooklyn Park	Tom Cook	General Public
Council Member (CM) XP Lee	Brooklyn Park	Mary Amsler	General Public
Mayor April Graves	Brooklyn Center	DeAnn Hallberg	General Public
CM Dan Jerzak	Brooklyn Center	Terri Kasbohm	General Public
Liz Heyman	Brooklyn Center	Mark Holman	General Public
Armando Oster	Brooklyn Center	Sandie Granse	General Public
Julieann Swanson	City of Minneapolis	Laura Fuller	General Public
Commissioner Jeff Lunde	Hennepin County	Yasmin Hirsi	General Public
Colin Cox	Hennepin County	Darryl Sannes	General Public
Carla Stueve	Hennepin County	Chereen Norstrud	General Public
CM Reva Chamblis	Metropolitan Council	Rick Gullickson	General Public
Bethany Brandt-Sargent	Metropolitan Council	Jonathan Uwaha	General Public
Victoria Dan	Metro Transit	Paula Brown	General Public
Adam Harrington	Metro Transit	Colleen O'Connor Toberman	General Public
Brandi Popenhagen	HDR	Laurie Wendt	General Public
John Griffith	HDR	Peter Wagenius	General Public
Diane Nulton	HDR	Tom Kouri	General Public
Martha Allen	HDR	Barb Suci	General Public

Agenda

Item #	Agenda item	Responsible party(ies)
1	Welcome	Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins, MnDOT
2	Housekeeping	Nicole Krause, Bolton & Menk
3	PAC Roll Call, Role of the PAC, Meeting Agenda	Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins, MnDOT
4	Recap of February PAC Meeting	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
5	Project Update: Where We Are Now	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
6	Public Engagement Update	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
7	Notice of Intent (NOI) April Webinar Summary	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
8	NOI Comment Summary	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
9	Cooperating Agencies Final Concurrence 1B and 2B	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
10	Phase 1A Evaluation Process	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT; Brandi Popenhagen, HDR
11	Open Discussion	Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins, MnDOT
12	Phase 1A Sample Maps/Graphics	Brandi Popenhagen, HDR
13	Phase 1A Engagement Process	Haila Maze, Bolton & Menk
14	Phase 1A Preliminary Over/Under Visualizations	Haila Maze, Bolton & Menk; Amber Blanchard, MnDOT
15	Conclusion	Amber Blanchard, MnDOT; Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins, MnDOT

Summary Notes

The Highway 252/I-94 project team conducted a presentation to the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), which is summarized below. For additional details regarding the agenda topics, please see the presentation PowerPoint slides posted on the project website: [Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT \(state.mn.us\)](http://Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT (state.mn.us)).

1. Welcome
2. Housekeeping
3. PAC Roll Call, Role of the PAC, Meeting Agenda
 - a. PAC members in attendance:
 - Deputy Commissioner Kim Collins, MnDOT
 - Khani Sahebjam, MnDOT Metro District Engineer; Sheila Kauppi attended as proxy
 - Wendell Meyer, FHWA
 - Commissioner Jeff Lunde, Hennepin County
 - Mayor April Graves, Brooklyn Center
 - Councilmember XP Lee, Brooklyn Park
 - Councilmember Dan Jerzak, Brooklyn Center
 - Senator Bobby Joe Champion; Alexis Varner attended as proxy
 - Senator John Hoffman
 - Councilmember Reva Chamblis, Metropolitan Council
 - Senator Susan Pha; Legislative Assistant attended as proxy

b. Role of the PAC

Kim presented on the PAC's role, which is to guide policy and funding decisions pertaining to Highway 252 and I-94, review recommendations from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), provide input on public engagement materials, provide help in identifying important community issues, provide assistance in communicating with neighboring constituents on project decision points/major milestones, encourage public participation, and provide input as requested by MnDOT.

4. Recap of the February PAC Meeting

Amber welcomed everyone to the June PAC meeting and mentioned the change in HDR Leads for this project: Brandi Popenhagen will be the Project Manager (John Griffith is retiring this month), and John McPherson will be the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Alternative Evaluation Lead.

The meeting attendees were again informed that they can use the "Q&A" (or Chat) function in the Zoom meeting for any questions or comments. All the questions and comments will be recorded and addressed in the meeting summary, if not during the meeting, which will be available on the project website within 2 weeks. The public attendees were encouraged to actively engage with the PAC members.

Amber provided a summary of topics covered at the February 2024 PAC meeting, which included:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process overview
- Project commitments
- Decision-making framework
- Property impacts
- Project schedule and phases
- Public engagement

Project objectives for the EIS are an important part of work being done by MnDOT. Amber restated these objectives to the PAC, which include:

- Achieve equitable social, environmental, and economic outcomes
- Reduce injuries and fatalities associated with crashes along Hwy 252 and I-94
- Support reliable transit service through operational improvements
- Minimize the need to acquire additional property
- Ensure solutions are consistent with local planning and compatible with the existing roadway network

Amber reminded the PAC of the project Purpose and Need Statement (Needs):

- Walkability/Bikeability: challenges with crossings and spacing
- Vehicle Safety: crashes on Highway 252 and I-94 exceed critical crash rates for similar roadway types
- Vehicle Mobility: poor level of service, congestion, and need for transit improvements

Amber reminded the PAC of the project Purpose and Need Statement (Purpose):

- The purpose of the Highway 252/I-94 Project is to improve the safe and reliable movement of people and goods across multiple modes on and across Highway 252 and I-94 between Highway 610 in Brooklyn Park and North 4th Street in Minneapolis.

To reaffirm that MnDOT continues to incorporate issues and concerns from community and agency partners in the project, Amber discussed MnDOT's commitments for the project. These commitments include:

- Using the project objectives in the EIS
- Continuing enhanced and focused engagement with environmental justice (EJ) communities throughout the EIS as part of the EJ process
- Considering Equity and Health Assessment (EHA) Report #3 priorities
- Evaluating transportation benefits and burdens on low-income and minority populations as part of the EJ analysis
- Integrating local and express bus service improvements in the EIS
- Evaluating impacts on local travel patterns and travel times in the EIS
- Evaluating the property and local travel impacts of the Highway 252 access combinations and build alternatives
- Assessing and disclosing projected traffic volumes on local roads
- Evaluating air and water quality impacts in the EIS
- Evaluating direct and indirect vegetation impacts in the EIS
- Evaluating visual impacts in the EIS
- Analyzing projected crashes on Highway 252/I-94 and local roads in the EIS

PAC Comment(s): None

5. Project Update: Where We Are Now

Amber noted that the project has completed the NOI phase as scheduled. The draft EIS phase has started (June 2024 to July 2026), followed by Final EIS/ Record of Decision (ROD) (through March 2027). Scheduled dates may change as the project advances.

PAC Comment(s): None

6. Public Engagement Update

The Public Engagement Plan has been updated and has gone through a review by FHWA, MnDOT, and Cooperating and Participating agencies. The updated version of the document has been posted to the project website ([Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us/highway-252-i-94-study)).

The NOI comment period has been completed, running from April 15 to May 15, 2024. Prior to the comment period commencing, MnDOT hosted a public webinar on April 10, 2024, which will be summarized in later slides for this presentation.

In June 2024, the project team participated in two public engagement events in Brooklyn Park: 1) Walk in the Park, and 2) Brooklyn Park Juneteeth Event.

PAC Comment(s): None

7. NOI April Webinar Summary

The NOI April webinar statistics are presented in slides 18 through 24, including the number of attendees, demographics, and several results from polling questions. The project team observed a good mix in attendee demographics, and most attendees were knowledgeable about the project. Attendees chose safety as the foremost project objective, followed by equity. Most of the attendees knew about the meeting from email communication. However, MnDOT will use multiple ways to engage with the community. Attendees' overall impressions of the webinar were generally positive. A total of 93 questions were posted in Q&A, with the project team answering 33 of these questions to date. Q&A from the webinar will be posted to the project website ([Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us/highway-252-i-94-study)) in July.

PAC Comment(s): None

8. NOI Comment Summary

The NOI comment period statistics are presented in slides 26 through 32. Statistics from the meeting included the number of comments submitted, the major categories (transportation, community, environment and health, and process) identified in reviewing the comments, and the various themes (the project team identified up to 30 themes in the comments received). The number of comments received on equity and EJ under the "NOI Category – Community" are subject to change after FHWA review. Additionally, transportation, community, and environment/health were the top 10 themes among the 30 themes identified. MnDOT and FHWA received comments for anything substantive; the project team noted that no comments prompted a change in the project purpose and need or the recommended alternatives moving forward into the Draft EIS for further review. However, comments will and have influenced the project team's outreach efforts, alternative analysis and evaluation process, and mitigation strategies as the process progresses. All comments and the subsequent summary will be incorporated into Public Comments section in the EIS document.

PAC Comment(s): None

9. Cooperating Agencies Final Concurrence 1B and 2B

FHWA received final concurrence (1B) on the project's purpose and need and the project's evaluation criteria, and final concurrence (2B) on the project's recommended elements and alternatives to be carried forward into the Draft EIS from all Cooperating Agencies (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Federal Transit Administration).

Amber highlighted the changes to the criteria based on comments received during the scoping process and the NOI comment period. Those criteria refinements include the introduction of noise evaluation and other criteria to determine whether Highway 252 should go over the local road or the local road should go over Highway 252 (i.e., Over/Under evaluation). This initial analysis (Step 4, Phase 1A) is the result of continued conversations with the community and agency partners.

Additional criteria that were modified or added include: 1) evaluation of travel time for all modes for key origins/destinations; 2) the evaluation of how each alternative changes the number and types of crashes; 3) the effects of headlights and light pollution; 4) air quality for each alternative in Step 4, Phase 2; and 5) the evaluation of tax loss based on property acquisitions.

Amber discussed changes to the process based on comments received during the scoping process and NOI comment period. Highlights include: 1) modifying the engagement plan, in particular conducting focused and targeted engagement for highly impacted properties; 2) adding a comprehensive visual impact assessment; and 3) developing mitigation strategies and opportunities.

PAC Comment(s): None

10. Phase 1A Evaluation Process

Amber presented the overall decision-making process using the funnel graphic and a series of slides (slides 34–43). Steps 1 (Purpose and Need), 2, and 3 (Scoping Phase) are completed; the project is now at Step 4 (Draft EIS Technical Evaluations). As the project is moving through the EIS process, the number of elements and alternatives will start to narrow, with the final outcome of the process identifying a preferred alternative. Engagement activities will be included in all phases. Maintenance will be assessed as part of the Preferred Alternative, after Step 4. Mitigation measures and construction will be finalized in Final EIS/ROD.

The Over/Under evaluation process at proposed interchange locations was presented and is the first phase of Step 4 of the alternatives evaluation. The evaluation is being done at each potential interchange location to determine the impact of having Highway 252 go over the local road or having the local road go over Highway 252. In either case, the elevation of a road will be raised over the existing ground. The project team will evaluate property impacts; noise impacts; and other social, environmental, and economic impacts. The project team requested PAC members to concentrate on the differences in impact at all the locations, and express their opinion on Over versus Under. Roadway design is subject to change or can be refined, so the impacts presented are

not final but are an assessment of high-risk impact. Similarly, noise mitigation (e.g., noise walls) is not currently evaluated, but will be included in the future evaluation. Phase 1A decisions will be completed through September 2024 (subject to change).

Evaluation criteria for each potential interchange location (Brookdale Drive and 85th, 73rd, 70th, and 66th Avenues) presented in a tabular form showing the comparison of impacts associated with Highway 252 going Over versus Under the crossroad. See slides 42 through 48 for specific details. Amber noted that each interchange was evaluated independently. The access combination evaluation will be completed in Phase 1B, which will determine if an interchange is carried forward, except for an interchange at 85th Avenue, which is in all of the access combinations. The risk of an impact was shown at each potential interchange. It is important to consider the following when reviewing potential impacts:

- Residential and non-residential property impacts within and outside EJ areas were measured based on area of potential impact and whether a high risk of relocation exists. Relocations were identified if the potential interchange footprint (affected area) severed a driveway that could not be feasibly replaced or if a building was directly impacted.
- Noise impacts were identified by counting receptors that were greater than a 66-A-weighted-decibel (dBA) noise threshold, or a substantial increase in noise (greater than 5 dBA increase) only for the properties affected by the Over/Under affected area. Noise walls have the potential to decrease the noise impacts but are not currently evaluated. This will occur in Phase 2.
- The entire area is within the low-potential zone of the Rusty Patch Bumble Bee; therefore, impacts were measured by calculating the potential interchange affected area.

This first phase of Step 4 is only to determine whether a potential interchange of Highway 252 should be carried over or under the crossroad.

PAC Comment(s): None

11. Open Discussion

This portion of the presentation provided an opportunity for PAC members to ask questions.

- c. **CM XP Lee:** *Question:* I am wondering if property impacts will be identified and when? *Reply (Amber):* Yes, property impacts have been identified. It is important to note that there is a risk of potential property impacts associated with each potential interchange. The decision as to what access combination to move forward will further define the property impacts. *Question (CM XP Lee):* When is the decision being made on the Over/Under? *Reply (Amber):* The Over/Under decision will be announced at the September PAC meeting. There will be many meetings with TAC and agency partners to examine the impacts and evaluate the comments by staff, elected officials, and the public. *Statement (XP Lee):* Engagement will be very important. *Comment (Amber):* That is precisely the intent of the July right-of-way meetings with potentially impacted property owners and the August Community Conversations that are being planned.

[ADDITIONAL CONTEXT: In addition to the planned larger events, the project team will be hosting a number of smaller community events, attending planned community events, and appearing at pop-up locations to have further conversations with the community.]

- d. **CM XP Lee:** Question: Please answer the question in the chat about winter weather and whether you are taking into consideration snow and ice on freeway bridges. Reply (Amber): Maintenance of bridges is always a consideration with respect to the design. The type and size of the bridges are yet to be determined, but snow and ice on bridges is not an evaluation criterion for determining whether Highway 252 should be on bridge or not. It is expected that there will be no substantial maintenance issues, including ice and snow, but maintenance procedures can be revisited if issues arise.
- e. **CM XP Lee:** Question: Are the options for four lanes or six lanes being considered in this analysis? Reply (Brandi): Our analysis is considering the potential impacts of the largest potential footprint of the future roadway. The centerline spacing is identical for the four-lane, six-lane general purpose, and six-lane with managed lane options, and generally maintains the current spacing today. The evaluation of the Over/Under footprint is conservative since due to the number of alternative elements the project team is still considering along the corridor. With each decision point, the project team will narrow those elements and refine the design in an attempt to further reduce impacts.
- f. **Deputy Commission Collins:** Statement/Question: Amber, I think it is important to remind PAC members of the decision-making process. Can you please take a little time to walk them through this? Comment (Amber): An example map will be shared later in the presentation that helps visualize how and where the impacts occur with respect to each potential interchange. This level of detail will be shared at the proposed right-of-way meetings being held in July. There will be five separate meetings, one focused on each potential interchange location. The purpose of these smaller meetings is to engage those residents that are potentially impacted by this decision prior to going out to the larger public. Larger Community Conversations will happen in August in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park. It is also important to note that not every interchange will be carried forward after the next phase, Phase 1B, of decision making.
- g. **CM Dan Jerzak:** Statement (paraphrased): CM Jerzak stated that he is the single voice for their council. While he does not speak for everyone on the council, there was a 5-0 vote not supporting what is moving forward. He expressed that there is a lot of information being shared about the impacts, with no noticeable benefits to the City of Brooklyn Center. Brooklyn Center is a minority community, and CM Jerzak has received hundreds of constituent comments on this project, all of which have been negative. He appealed to Wendell Meyer (FHWA) to have them make additional considerations on equity and fairness that is not currently being considered in this process. CM Jerzak also mentioned that the engagement for the project is not being taken seriously. He believes that people are asking for something different and are not being heard or represented in actions by MnDOT. Also, he believes the project will have negative economic impacts because it will decrease the city's tax base. CM Jerzak indicated that the city's share of the project cost exceeds what they have the ability to pay without having any benefits, only the burden. He stated that engagement is being spoon fed to residents. He expressed that it

originally felt like the project was a mini-Rondo; however, with all the impacts happening in Brooklyn Center that were shown today with no benefits, it is a Rondo 2.0.

- h. **Mayor Graves:** Statement (paraphrased): Mayor Graves indicated that she agrees with CM Jerzak. She expressed that she is extremely frustrated with the process of evaluating the Over/Under and not having it in the full context of the alternatives being considered. She believes the Project is not beneficial to Brooklyn Center, and is only harmful to residents. She indicated that there is a big disconnect from what Brooklyn Center and its residents have continually pointed out about additional criteria to consider and goals MnDOT is committed to, and that the community is not being heard. Mayor Graves stated that the presentation indicated that community input has shaped some of the criteria and asked what the project team is specifically doing with that input. She stated that the city has requested that the project team include criteria on property value impact and the loss of value if those properties stay. She indicated that freeways are barriers to biking and walking. She believes the residents are discouraged that their voices are not being heard, and that it feels like the decisions are already made and residents have no power to influence the project.
- i. **Deputy Commissioner Collins:** Question: Amber, can you discuss how some of the evaluation criteria are being reshaped based on comments that have been received? Reply (Amber): For the tax value example, the Over/Under decision does not have this as part of the criteria; however, the next phase (Phase 1B), in which the access locations are being considered, will identify the tax /assessed value. Comment (Mayor Graves): Why isn't it being considered in the Over/Under? Reply (Amber): In the Over/Under phase, there is an identification of the risk of impact if the access location moves forward with an interchange. When the process moves into the access location decision phase, the risk becomes an actual impact, and it is then more appropriate to evaluate the tax loss with this phase. Reply (Brandi): An example of why it is not considered here is, that with the Over/Under decision, the acquisition of property and the loss of tax base of a small residential property would be considerably less than a commercial property. There are other considerations concerning EJ that would start to come into effect.
- j. **Mayor Graves:** Question: How did outreach impact the criteria? Reply (Amber): The recommendations coming out of scoping provided elements on Highway 252 and I-94, and combined into up to 10 alternatives. The project team is still working toward decisions on Highway 252, such as Over/Under, where access will be, and whether to have four or six lanes. Each of these are individual elements, not full alternatives. Outreach is informing these decisions, such as new criteria for evaluating noise and the Over/Under decision.
- k. **Mayor Graves:** Question: After the EIS process is complete, what happens if no alternative meets the benefits versus the impacts? What if no alternative meets the safety needs that the city has identified? Reply (Amber): The purpose and need provided direction on what the alternatives need to address in order to move forward in the process. The needs drive how the alternatives get developed, and safety is a primary need. Alternatives being advanced address safety (walking/biking and vehicle) better than the No Build alternative. The impacts or burdens are evaluated against the safety benefits. If a No Build decision is carried forward, then the project team will start over. Question (Mayor Graves): Will we see the results? Reply (Amber):

Yes, the decision is public. *Question (Mayor Graves):* Is there a weighting of the criteria? *Reply (Amber):* There is currently no weighting of the criteria. The project team's work with the TAC and PAC as well as outreach with the community will influence the prioritizing of criteria and what is most important.

12. Phase 1A Sample Maps/Graphics

The project team selected a representative interchange (73rd Avenue) to give the PAC a preview of the maps and graphics that will be used during the upcoming right-of-way meetings with individual property owners during July. The project team encouraged PAC members to share their opinions regarding how this information can be shared with the community. The maps being used included:

- EJ and Property Impacts, and Community Facilities
- Noise
- Environmental Impacts

Note: See slides 50 through 55 for specific details.

PAC Comment(s): None

13. Phase 1A Engagement Process

Haila assured the PAC members that all public comments are taken seriously and not ignored. Upcoming public engagement includes five (one for each potential interchange on Highway 252) separate meetings with property owners that might potentially be impacted as result of the Over/Under decision. The intent is to provide property owners a chance to learn about the project's potential Over/Under impacts on them prior to broader public engagement during August. The project team has scheduled these meetings, and will notify property owners via mailings and door hanger distribution after the PAC meeting. These meetings will be held during July, with each meeting being held for a specific interchange location, and will include MnDOT right-of-way staff to answer questions.

A second set of meetings will be held in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park during August. The project team will invite the entire community to share this same information and will get feedback in a larger forum.

Later in fall 2024, the project team will host community visioning workshops for the crossings of I-94 in north Minneapolis. Community feedback from the above engagement activities will be discussed at the PAC meeting scheduled to be held on September 2024.

PAC Comment(s): None

14. Phase 1A Preliminary Over/Under Visualizations

The project team presented representative visualizations at 73rd Avenue to the PAC, giving them a preview of what will be used at the upcoming meetings with the individual property owners as well as larger community meetings. Haila cautioned that these visualizations are not intended to demonstrate a detailed final design alternative, but rather to show the placement and scale of a roadway overpass/underpass relative to existing conditions. See the presentation for visuals (slides 60–66).

PAC Comment(s): None

15. Conclusion

Amber provided an overview of the upcoming schedule, recapping the meetings, engagement events, and project milestones anticipated over the next few months. Kim thanked the PAC members for their attendance and input. The PAC members are encouraged to contact Kim and/or Amber with any questions or comments as well as discussion regarding the project.

As the meeting time ended before questions/comments posed in the Q&A during the meeting could be answered, MnDOT has compiled the Q&A questions/comments and responses, including them as Attachment 1 to this meeting summary.

Adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Action Items

Item #	Action item	Responsible party(ies)	Due date
1	Set date for next PAC Meeting	MnDOT	08/2024
2	Respond to Q&A from June 2024 PAC Meeting	MnDOT	07/2024
3	Review Over/Under criteria to address tax base concerns	MnDOT	07/2024
4	Add NOI webinar Q&A to the website	MnDOT	07/2024

Attachments/Supplemental Information

- Attachment 1: Questions and Comments from the PAC and Public
- Supplemental Information: Presentation at <https://dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy252study/meetings.html>

Attachment 1: Questions and Comments from the PAC and Public

Comments/questions provided in this attachment are verbatim from the chat/Q&A.

Comments to Panelists

From XP Lee to All Panelists 11:41 AM

Comment/Question: We must find creative ways to build hwy infrastructure with absolutely minimal impact on properties. This cannot be a big box process.

Seems like we need a real estate perspective with knowledge of land value estimations, that could give insight on possible future market impact.

How about MNDOT and Met Council commit to restorative funds for cities to rebuild after the hwy project?

Response: Thank you for your comments. MnDOT will take them into consideration.

From Dan Jerzak to all panelists 11:43 AM

Comment/Question: If we are ever going to get to "yes" to build something that is both safer and less harmful - it is going to be imperative that we all "roll up our sleeves" and not only listen to all the concerns and sides- but to take them serious in solving this complex problem that has such a profound impact on our communities. How do we do that is the question.

Response: Thank you for your comment. The project team does want to find solutions that are less harmful, and input from the community helps us to understand this better.

From Amber Blanchard to all panelists 11:50 AM

Comment: Thank you both CM Lee and CM Jerzak for your comments! The project team and I will digest your suggestions and will reach out if we have any follow-up questions. I do so appreciate your comments!

From XP Lee to all panelists 11:55 AM

Comment: I'd like to see how noise walls would impact the noise level maps, thanks.

Response: Noise walls have not been evaluated to date since the effectiveness of a wall requires information that is currently not known, such as how much traffic would use the corridor. This will not be understood until the project team evaluates where access should go and the number of lanes on Highway 252. The effectiveness of noise walls will be evaluated when the project team evaluates the mainline alternatives during Phase 2. Additionally, since noise walls are eventually put to a vote by affected property owners, it could be misleading to suggest the walls would be available for mitigation, when the outcome of that vote is not yet known.

Comments in Q&A

Tom Kouri 10:24 AM

Question: To what extent is MnDOT's commitment for the project to benefit the community, and specifically, what will be the expected benefits and harms to Brooklyn Center?

Response: The Phase 1A analysis only compares the impacts associated with the Over/Under decision of Highway 252 at the potential interchange crossroads. The project team believes there will be improved safety and local circulation benefits for all modes in crossing Highway 252. MnDOT is committed to identifying benefits and burdens. This analysis will occur when evaluating access locations (early 2025) and mainline alternatives (summer 2025).

Tom Kouri 10:37 AM

Comment/Question: The theme of inadequacy of the Purpose and Need Statement is missing. It seems like comments regarding the Purpose and Need were classified in other Theme categories. Please clarify why this was not a specific theme?category.

Response: The theme of Purpose and Need and other decisions that have been made during scoping are captured under the Decision-Making category.

Anonymous Attendee 10:41 AM

Question: Will this presentation recording be made available afterwards?

Response: This presentation was not recorded; however, the slides and meeting summary will be published on the project website (Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT (state.mn.us)).

Michael Svard 10:42 AM

Question: Can you share an example of a substantive comment¹ that influenced your process or decisioning?

Response: As mentioned during the presentation, the project team added several criteria (e.g., noise impacts criteria) to the analysis and scheduled additional meetings with potentially affected property owners.

¹ A comment is considered substantive if it raises specific issues or concerns regarding the proposed project or the process and includes a reason for the issue. Substantive comments explain why the issue raised is important to the consideration of environmental, economic and social impacts and alternatives.

Michael Svard 10:52 AM

Comment/Question: 252 has more traffic volume vs cross streets. in winter bridges get slippery. if 252 is above there is an increased risk of winter freezing roads related accidents. Is this being considered in evaluating the Over/Under assessment? for this reason I favor 252 going under.

Response: Winter weather is not being considered in the Over/Under analysis. MnDOT's routine maintenance program addresses snow and ice on bridges and can employ additional measures (e.g. automatic deicing) if problem locations are identified. Bridges will be optimized to reduce span lengths and keep as much of the grade on earth as possible.

Anonymous Attendee 10:58 AM

Comment/Question: At the area of 85th there are only 1 lane access from 610 from the north and south to 252. This would be a potential bottleneck for traffic, is this being addressed?

Response: the project team will review traffic operations on Highway 252, including the 85th Avenue area, during Phase 1B: Access Combinations and Phase 2: Mainline Alternatives.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:11 AM

Question: When you provide how many houses are affected in over vs under, does that count cover east and west side of 252?

Response: Yes, the count includes east and west of Highway 252.

Sandie Granse 11:17 AM

Question: Are you considering a combination of under/over interchanges?

Response: Yes, the project team is making an Over/Under decision at each potential interchange location, and a combination of Over/Under interchanges along the Highway 252 corridor could move forward in the alternatives analysis.

Colleen O'Connor Toberman 11:18 AM

Comment/Question: The Mississippi bluff and shore impact zones are not the only resources protected by the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area rules. Will the other resources, like Public River Corridor Views or significant vegetative stands, be assessed in the next phase?

Response: Yes, during Phase 2, the project team will evaluate key viewpoints and vegetation impacts.

Anonymous Attendee 11:18 AM

Question: When can we see the over under impacts on a map?

Response: The project team shared maps at 73rd Avenue during the meeting (see the presentation on the project website [Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT (state.mn.us)]). The project team will present full sets of maps for each potential interchange location at community meetings and publish them on the project website (Highway 252/I-94 Study – MnDOT (state.mn.us)).

Anonymous Attendee 11:21 AM

Question: will properties get advanced notice of when they will be contacted?

Response: Yes, the project team is mailing postcards and providing door hangers to potentially affected property owners during the beginning of July.

Michael Svard 11:23 AM

Comment/Question: so was a 6 lane or 4 lane 252 used in calculating the impervious surface comparisons? the lane width could impact the numbers represented compared to the cross streets.

Response: The project team calculated impervious surface based on the alternative that creates the greatest area of new pavement. For Highway 252, this was the six-lane alternative.

Anonymous Attendee 11:29 AM

Comment: Right on Dan!

Response: Comment noted.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:30 AM

Comment: @dan Jerzak - I can understand what you are saying and I am part of losing my house, but I do not feel the same as you. I think not being heard and not doing what you want may be different and that is hard to accept.

Response: Comment noted.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:30 AM

Comment: I also disagree with April. I appreciate hearing in advance. Not sure why I am not logged in where I could speak.

Response: Comment noted.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:31 AM

Comment: Property and tax value is very important and it is being reduced already.

Response: Property tax value of potential acquisition property will be added to the 1A analysis in determining the Over/Under decision.

Michael Svard 11:34 AM

Comment: My point about slippery bridges, and if 252 was above where more traffic travels on was not to ask if road clearing occurs, but if the higher risk of spinouts/accidents will be considered in evaluating over/under assessment process.

Response: The risk of crashes will not be considered in evaluating the Over/Under decision. MnDOT does not track data comparing roadways going over or under local roadways in terms of risk of crashes due to weather.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:35 AM

Comment: Thank you @amber. I have brought this up in a past meeting so I appreciate hearing the tax value info.

Response: Comment noted.

DeAnn Hallberg 11:43 AM

Comment/Question: Are they considering what the impact would be if they started over. That would impact me because my house will never sell based on having to disclose the project. Do not start over.

Response: Impacts are not based on what would happen if the project team starts over; they are based on alternatives that came out of the Scoping Decision Document. The EIS analysis will build upon the scoping decision document and will be compared to the No Build Alternative (i.e., not building any improvements within the corridor). Thank you for your comment.

Michael Svard 11:44 AM

Comment: It should be noted that noise walls can NOT be added to 252 if it is going over. So no mitigation can occur there if 252 goes over. Noise impacts will continue in perpetuity for the community, so please weigh that in your factors.

Response: The analysis of the Over/Under decision does not include noise walls. It is possible to construct noise walls along the elevated highway or local road. It remains to be seen if noise walls can mitigate potential noise impacts. That analysis will be conducted in Phase 2.

Anonymous Attendee 11:46 AM

Question: How is noise impacts represented in the maps?

Response: Noise impacts are presented on the maps to identify any property anticipated to experience a greater than 66 dBA noise level, or a 5 dBA or greater change in noise levels

Anonymous Attendee 11:48 AM

Question: Doesn't property impact change for 4 vs 6, even in the 73 example used?

Response: The evaluation used mainline geometry that would cover all alternatives carried forward from the Scoping Decision Document. The intent is to cover the impact extent of either alternative at this time; however, the difference between mainline alternatives will be evaluated during future Phase 2 analysis.

Michael Svard 11:53 AM

Comment/Question: Noise travels further if it's from higher up. Is this area of impact accounted for in the noise map assessment when 252 is over?

Response: Yes, the project team considered roadway elevations in the noise analysis.

Michael Svard 11:56 AM

Comment/Question: Your map example on impervious surface shows the width of 252 impact changes in the 252 under scenario. Is that due to shoulders or is it using a 6 lane example vs a 4 lane example in the over assessment? Help me understand the differences. Thanks.

Response: The differences are based on Over/Under analysis (i.e., the elevation differences of taking the highway over cross streets versus the cross street being over the highway). For example, when the crossroad is over the highway, the grade along the cross street has a different footprint (and hence impervious surface) than when the highway is over the cross street. This is a similar situation with the highway ramps when Highway 252 is over compared to when it is under.