

Rethinking I-94 Policy Advisory Committee

September 16, 2019 at 1:00pm
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard, Room 461
Saint Paul, MN

Attendees:

- Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher - MnDOT Commissioner
- Sara Severs - MnDOT Chief of Staff, Commissioner's Office
- Jacob Loesch - MnDOT Director of Strategic Communications, Commissioner's Office
- Michael Barnes - MnDOT Metro District Engineer
- Gloria Jeff - MnDOT Transp Prog Director, Rethinking I-94 Project
- April Crockett - MnDOT West Area Manager
- Nicole Peterson - MnDOT Project Manager
- Sheila Kauppi - MnDOT North Area Manager
- Mayor Melvin Carter - City of St. Paul Mayor
- Councilmember Dai Thao - City of St. Paul Ward 1
- Katie Hirsch - City of St. Paul District 64A, alternate for Rep. Koahly Her
- Noel Nix - St. Paul Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Relations and Community Engagement
- Senator D. Scott Dibble - City of Minneapolis District 61
- Representative Frank Hornstein - City of Minneapolis District 61A
- Tytiana Reid - City of Minneapolis District 60 Legal Assistant, alternate for Kari Dziedic
- Patrick Sadler - City of Minneapolis Ward 7, alternate for Goodman
- Jenifer Hager - City of Minneapolis - Director Transportation Planning & Programming
- Commissioner Toni Carter - Ramsey County District 4
- Brian Isaacson - Ramsey County Deputy Public Works
- John Doan - Hennepin County Assistant Director Transportation Planning
- Commissioner Michael Opat - Hennepin County Commissioner District 1, alternate for Marion Greene
- Commissioner Angela Conley - Hennepin County Commissioner District 4
- Chairwoman Nora Slawik - Metropolitan Council Chairwoman
- Councilmember Kris Fredson - Metropolitan Council District 14
- Nick Thompson - METC Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services
- Peter Grafstrom - METC Recording Secretary
- Wendall Meyer - FHWA Division Administrator
- Anna Varney - FHWA Area Representative

Agenda

Introductions: Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Why the Committee? Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Commissioner Anderson-Kelliher gave an overview of the expected role of the Policy Advisory Committee. While MnDOT began this committee as the Executive/Policy Advisory committee, we will now use the current practice within MnDOT and transition the committee name to be the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC).

The PAC includes elected or appointed officials who address high-level policies, solutions, and additional decision direction. Discussions will be focused on political or policy opportunities with broad governmental implications. A priority will be on exploring how to support and mobilize opportunities to better integrate transportation infrastructure with communities so that they weave together on multiple levels. This also includes exploring transportation's relationship with other civic topics and developing potential strategies to optimize opportunities and minimize unintended consequences.

The PAC will work towards re-imagining impacts of Rethinking I-94 and ways in which we can mitigate and improve these impacts and improve transportation. The PAC will work in coordination and partnership with local and regional (Hennepin County, Metropolitan Council, City of Minneapolis, City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County) governments to help implement their respective visions for areas along and adjacent to the I-94 corridor. Rethinking I-94 is expected to be a whole series of projects for the next 10-20 years. As we develop this long-term vision, we must remember the history of the I-94 corridor and learn from mistakes of the past.

Why Rethinking I-94? Michael Barnes/Gloria Jeff

- **Summary of Phase 1 (Gloria Jeff)** – People centered - went out into communities and asked “what do you need MnDOT to do?” Rethinking I-94 has 3 main purposes: Develop a community-based approach focused on reconnecting neighborhoods, revitalizing communities and ensuring residents have a meaningful voice in transportation-related decisions that affect their lives; Make it easier to travel to, along and across the I-94 corridor and establish a sense of place for the communities that live, work and play there; Enhance safety and mobility for people walking, biking, driving and using transit.
- **Status of Phase 2 activities (Michael Barnes)** – Evolution of engagement of projects. MnDOT is not into the design and development of individual projects at this point. The committee will be involved in the development of these upcoming projects. At present, we are entering the formal environmental phase (NEPA) process, at an EIS level. It is expected that the Committee will receive and review documents that are currently in development. The following issues will be forthcoming in upcoming months: Purpose and Need; Logical Termini; Evaluation Criteria; Technical Documentation; and an Existing Conditions Report. MnDOT and Federal Highway Administration will be co-leads, focus of analysis are the MnDOT assets (bridges, drainage, pavement, safety, etc.) and participate in ongoing meetings pertaining to technical and subject matter with various other subcommittees.
- **Parallel Path (Gloria Jeff)** - Focus are human scale issues that relate to the I-94 corridor and areas adjacent to the corridor. The 5 “parallel path” themes were identified during Phase 1 and they are as follows: Connectivity, Economics, Equity, Public Health and Environment and Sense of Place. Working in with local governments and stakeholders, MnDOT will play a partnership and facilitator role. The expected outcomes will be a series of “White Papers” to guide future projects along and adjacent to the I-94 corridor.

Discussion of Vision/Goals/Committee Member Expectations: Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher

- Continue engagement throughout all phases
- Community engagement, establish priorities document
- Will traffic work, especially Lowry Tunnel
- Use of technology to provide picture/visualization of new facility

- All options to provide transit advantage
- Look at the question of the feasibility of managed lanes, HOV and ways to reestablish the transit advantage
- Need to raise funds to address vision with right equity
- Budget to maintain infrastructure over 50-year timeframe
- Understanding who/what is planning to maintain after construction
- Achieve shared understanding of “managed lane” vs. “general lane” concepts
- Workforce
- Use of public private partnership for Right of Way
- How will transportation system respond to growth?
- “Do no harm” guiding principle – address the harm that has already been done with land bridges and connecting neighborhoods
- Facilitate community development along the road
- Maintain aesthetic quality
- Focus on people count, not vehicle count
- Deep dive on Community input
- Maintain transparency
- Safety for all modes
- Attention to ramps for safety
- Case study for future – center of study should be equity
- Use I-94 as an asset to recruit big corporations
- Financial – build a budget to be able to maintain corridor for the next 20-50 years
- Asset to community
- Connection to I-35E
- Optics of vibrancy, connecting past, present and future
- Climate impacts (transit, air pollution)
- Equity: inclusion of land bridge concept and partnership opportunities
- Quality of life considerations
- Use of emerging technologies, innovation in project delivery and visualizations
- Preserving mobility
- Measurement of outcomes
- Build for people – I-94 is not a just a corridor but a space that embraces community building
- Using design to determine how to get it to work more efficiently
- Add to community connections of the neighborhoods, health, wellbeing, aesthetics
- Impacts of Parallel path on environmental documentation, impact of White Papers
- Focus on human scale interaction with environmental engineering
- There is a growing population from the 2010 to 2020 census, focus not on “Building stuff for stuff” but focus should be “Building stuff for people”
- There have been 5 land bridge requests for consideration: Augsburg Riverside, Rondo, Capitol Interchange, Basilica Area, and Minneapolis Farmers Market. There will be a need for partnerships for funding.

Future Topics Discussion: Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher, All

- Deep dive on what was discovered out of Phase 1 research – possibly a report out from a community member
- Public/Private partnerships for use of I-94 right-of-way
- Technical/Parallel path
- There is not a lot of expansion room on the I-94 corridor; we need to use technology and better design to achieve a multi-modal vision for the I-94 corridor.

Next Steps/Summary/Action Items: Michael Barnes

Quarterly meetings for the Executive/Policy Advisory Committee will be held. Plan to meet again before the end of the year at a Community site – in the process for date and location

Adjournment: Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Commissioner Kelliher thanked everyone for their time and commitment. She requested this committee meet again before the end of 2019.

Next Meeting

Date: Friday, December 13, 2019

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Location: Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N Kent St., St. Paul, MN 55102

Agenda items: To follow