Interactive Map Overview
In working with a robust team, MnDOT piloted a new model for engagement through the Rethinking I-94 project. The project team established goals to design a community-based, comprehensive, and long-term approach to address I-94 study area needs. Since 2016, MnDOT has been engaging with communities along I-94 between Minneapolis and St. Paul in an effort to plan for future transportation changes on and along the corridor. The project team spent time listening and learning directly from the community about:

- How they want to be engaged
- Past frustrations and hopes for the future of I-94 and its benefits to and impacts on the community
- Visions for the I-94 corridor and their communities
- Expectations of the people impacted in various ways in the corridor including community members, commuters, city and county partners, and organizational leaders

The team used a variety of engagement methods aimed at gathering feedback and opening a dialogue with communities along the I-94 corridor, including:

- Visioning Workshops
- Community Events
- Listening Sessions
- Individual Meetings

Community members provided valuable information and comments through these engagement opportunities.

In order to develop a comprehensive, long-term and community-based approach to address I-94 study area needs, the Rethinking I-94 team wanted to design an effective public engagement tool that would be capable of informing future MnDOT project teams. Based on what we have heard through various engagement activities, MnDOT’s vision for the I-94 corridor is to best address all transportation infrastructure and modal needs while balancing community needs and impacts. Any improvement and enhancement to the I-94 corridor will be sensitive to the health, environment, safety, accessibility, connectivity, economic vitality, legacy and equity of the adjacent I-94 corridor neighborhoods, communities and stakeholders.

The information that was gathered through the various engagement efforts focused on those that live along and in the corridor. The findings of desk research and tracking the corridor demographics have enabled the project team to develop an initial understanding of the corridor and to ensure we are connecting with the communities.
in an inclusive manner through our engagement efforts. The interactive map was created to ensure the engagement goals of including more voices, earlier in the planning process and to improve diversity and inclusion of underrepresented voices.

In addition to the engagement methods listed above, the project team identified the need to create an online, mobile crowdsourcing tool to gather additional feedback from the community as part of the data gathering process for Rethinking I-94. The project team designed the interactive map as an alternative way to engage the public in a meaningful manner in order to articulate transportation values, issues and concerns of I-94 users and those impacted by it and to better understand the vision(s) of people living within one-half mile of the freeway—“Impacted” by the freeway and people living more than one-half mile away from the freeway—“Users” of the freeway. This will help the project team to gain a better understanding of the communities along I-94 and how the freeway affects them, and to help identify what works well for “impacted” and “users”, and what could be improved along and across I-94.

The tool has helped inform the Rethinking I-94 project team of the underlying vision, values and issues from the community and I-94 “users” that will help guide future transportation project development and investment in this corridor. It has and will continue to inform the study process by articulating neighborhood-level transportation values and concerns and it has helped set the ground work for next steps of engagement that reflect the shared vision of the community.

In contrast to meetings or paper comment sheets, the interactive map allows individuals to enter their comments anonymously and on a location specific basis (see Figure 1). The tool allows for as many comments as the public wants to share at their convenience (see Figure 2). It also provides an alternate data source for existing conditions information that is not subject to the traditional transportation engineering data collection processes and perspectives.

To view the Rethinking I-94 Interactive Map in its entirety, visit: www.rethinkingi-94.com/crowdsourcemap.
Figure 1. Interactive Map

**APPROACH**

The following prompting questions are asked through the interactive map to help initiate the comments; these questions are consistent with the questions that have been asked throughout the community engagement efforts.

- How do you use I-94?
- What do you like about I-94?
- What would you like improved/modified/change about I-94?
- How does I-94 affect your community?
- What is your vision for the I-94 corridor?
The project team also designed a “Tell Us About Yourself” pop-up window (see Figure 3) as part of the interactive map to capture demographics of commenters and their connection and interaction with I-94. Capturing this information directly aligns with the project team engagement goals of:

1. Engage more voices in transportation planning
2. Focus on those impacted by the project – communities in the corridor
3. Improve diversity and inclusion of underrepresented voices
4. Engage the impacted earlier in the process
5. Engage with purpose to build resilient relationships
Additionally, the project team designed an ADA Compliant Map (see Figure 4) to ensure the opportunity to provide comments is accessible to all people. This page is an extension of the online platform for receiving comments that enables the public to provide their feedback on different topics in an alternative format.

*Figure 3. Interactive Map—Tell Us About Yourself*
The team has received 325 comments via the interactive map as of April 26, 2018. An example of a comment made using the interactive map is shown in Figure 5. The following is the list of most common themes that have emerged from the interactive map comments. These comments have been added to the community comments database and will help guide future transportation project development and investment in the I-94 corridor.
**Most Common Themes**

- Congestion Issues
- Safety Issues -- Bike, Pedestrian, Motorist
- Improved Health and Environment – Noise, Air Quality
- No “Identity/Sense of Place” in Areas
- Need for More Job Opportunities
- Better Connections Across the Freeway
- More Inclusivity in Planning Needed

*Figure 5. Interactive Map—Sample Comment*