

Comments received by Ward 6 regarding Resolution 21-164 “Expressing the City’s Priorities for the MnDOT “Rethinking I-94” Project”:

From: Louis Offstein (**Sent:** 2/3/2021)

From: Laura Fox (**Sent:** 2/2/2021)

From: Geordie Flantz (**Sent:** 2/2/2021)

From: Luke Ries (**Sent:** 2/2/2021)

Dear Ms. Yang,

Please pass the Rethinking I-94 resolution (RES 21-164) currently up for your consideration.

This resolution is an important step forward in acknowledging the harm and injustice that I-94’s construction inflicted on Saint Paul residents, particularly on Black community members in the Rondo neighborhood. This is harm and injustice that continues to this day. And--especially now with an I-94 reconstruction coming--we need your leadership to start correcting the mistakes of the past.

To that end, please firmly reject any reconstruction of I-94 that includes expanding highway lanes. Instead, commit to prioritizing fast and frequent transit along the I-94 corridor and ensure safe connections for people walking and biking in adjacent neighborhoods. Seize this massive opportunity to combat climate pollution and air pollution, reduce racial and economic disparities, and protect residents’ health and wellbeing. Ensure the BIPOC communities along I-94 are heard throughout the planning process, and demand agency partners do the same.

For a more equitable and sustainable Saint Paul, I urge you to pass this resolution (RES 21-164). Thank you!

Sincerely,

Louis Offstein (2/3/2021)

Laura Fox (2/2/2021)

Geordie Flantz (2/2/2021)

Luke Ries (2/2/2021)

From: Heidi Schallberg

Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 12:58 PM

Subject: I-94

Please support the Rethinking I-94 resolution that says any I-94 reconstruction “must redesign the highway corridor to prioritize healthy, safe, affordable, accessible, and equitable mobility.” To implement our city’s comprehensive plan and our climate action plan, widening I-94 should not be considered as an option. We need to be as aggressive as we can on the climate crisis, which intersects with equity as well.

Thanks,

Heidi Schallberg
Highland resident who drives, walks, rides transit, and bikes

From: Mike Allen
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:00 PM
Subject: Rethinking I-94

CM Yang,

It's crucial for our future that you support RES 21-164 and push your colleagues on the council to do the same! 94 is a scar on the City of Saint Paul, to even consider expanding a single lane would be offensive. In the face of climate change, it would be unconscionable to provide more lanes for private motor vehicles. We don't need pollution coursing through our city, we need less. The convenience of suburban through-travelers has never been worth the health or property of the people that live along the freeway, and it's time for us to say "No more!"

The only acceptable changes to 94 are those that begin to pay back the harm of gutting Rondo, and which take bold steps for towards addressing the climate for the next generation! Take from private cars and put transit first - for the communities along the corridor, for transit justice, and for climate justice.

Mike Allen

Ward 6

From: Stuart Knappmiller
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 12:03 PM
Subject: Rethinking I-94

Hi again,

A year ago, I attended a meeting at our Rondo Library. I am used to attending meetings on the Eastside/Rice Street neighborhoods where I am usually in the "majority" if not in a 100% Euro meeting. With NIMBY neighbors who are often not happy with the research done by people like my friend Rueben Collins. I was really pleased to find myself as an outlier in this meeting about the Dale Street Bridge project. I had nothing to add to this community meeting.

As a Sierra Club life member/Northstar Chapter volunteer, I've been aware of the construction on the eastern segment of 94 in St Paul. I'll copy language here from the S.C. Please reach out to me if there is anything I can do to help you work to make 94 a better space for those most directly impacted by it. I don't mean me, when I'm driving to the Cretin Exit! If you have information to share, please do so as well.

"Neighborhoods along I-94 are home to nearly 750,000 people, several colleges and universities, libraries, art galleries, theaters, parks and museums. These are the neighborhoods where we raise our families, where we commune with friends, these are the places where we make our livelihood and it is important for our voices to be heard.

The cities of Minneapolis & St. Paul both adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plans, policy frameworks meant to expand transit accessibility, reduce emissions, and improve health through better air quality.

Plans like this are not enough, we know that too often BIPOC community members and transit riders are left out of formative conversations that concern their wellbeing and health. We know that the history of highway development in the Twin Cities also serves as a timeline of displacement and environmental racism in our communities.

The construction of I-94 in the 1960's destroyed businesses, homes, places of worship, and other community hubs. Construction divided neighborhoods and deeper solidified geographical inequality ravaging black & brown communities.

Rethinking I-94 evolved out of a reconciliation process that took place in 2015 between the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and members of the Rondo community in St. Paul. The conversation was meant to hold space for how past transportation policies had adversely affected the neighborhood and led to the displacement of families and businesses along the project route.

The road base, many bridges, and various other structures are nearing the end of their useful life and will need to be replaced. This is something that is guaranteed and will be moving forward, what is yet to be seen is in what way community voices can shape the vision of the project.

MnDOT is now drafting critical Environmental Review documents. They set the parameters of what gets studied and what gets built. Cities and neighborhoods must be very involved in crafting these documents.

Solutions should be community centered; they should address the history of harm perpetuated by projects like this, and work diligently to include the voice of BIPOC people lining with the implications of highway expansion. We know that is not enough for these communities to be solicited into a framework that is already built out, there must be an opportunity for residents to have agency in building out that vision for the future."

We live near the SW corner of Lake Phalen, 2 blocks north of Maryland Ave. We hear the tires on 94 and 35E. I wonder if trees would be a better sound barrier along our "freeways?" Or do they actually keep the noise and pollution inside the roadway? Heh. I'm ignorant of the answer to that. Whether and how the barriers mitigate the sound and air pollution to those who are closest to these roads, but can't capture those impacts.

Thanks for listening,

Stuart