I-94 EAST-WEST
Environmental Justice
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Agenda

• Environmental Justice
• Environmental Justice Evaluation Process
• Timeline of Highway Development and Environmental Justice
• I-94 EW Project-level Evaluations
Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 (1994) Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice (EJ) in Minority and Low-Income Populations

- Directs all federal departments and agency heads to take the appropriate steps to identify and address any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of Federal programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.
Environmental Justice

Executive Order 13985 (2021)
• Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government

Executive Order 14008 (2021)
• Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad
  • Justice 40 Initiative
Environmental Justice

NEPA:

- **What is it?**
  - NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) is a federal Act that establishes PROCEDURAL regulations for decision-making on federal actions.

- NEPA & WEPA (Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act) provide a framework of decision-making for project development
  - The NEPA / WEPA process aids in making project decisions that balance engineering and transportation needs with social, economic and natural environmental factors

Source: WisDOT
Environmental Justice Principles

USDOT’s guiding EJ principles are briefly summarized as follows:

• To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority or low-income populations; and

• To ensure fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process;

• To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority or low-income populations.
Environmental Justice Evaluation Process

FHWA EJ Order 6640.23A (2012)

Advises on the process to address EJ during the NEPA review, including documentation requirements.

1. Identify Existing Minority and Low-Income Populations
2. Explain Coordination, Access to Information and Participation
3. Identify Disproportionately High and Adverse Effects
4. Evaluation of Disproportionately High and Adverse Effects

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/orders/664023a.cfm
Environmental Justice Evaluation Process

WisDOT

- Identify Minority / Low Income Populations
- Assess Adverse Impacts
- Assess Disproportionate Impacts
- Address Title VI Concerns

Timeline of Highway Development and Environmental Justice

- **State Highway System created (1917)**
- **US Highway System created (1926)**
- **Interstate Highway Act (1956)**
- **Civil Rights Act of 1964**
- **National Environmental Policy Act (1970)**
- **EO 12898 (1994)**
- **FHWA EJ Order 6640.23A (2012)**
- **FHWA EJ and NEPA Guidance (2011)**
- **USDOT Environmental Justice Order DOT 56 FR 313C (2021)**

Key Events:
- **City of Milwaukee Expressway System created (1952)**
- **SEWRPC Plan for Freeway routes (1965)**
- **I-94 EW Construction (1963)**
1960 Census Minority Population: present in the Study Area

Percent Non-white Population

- < 1%
- 1-5%
- 5-10%
- > 10%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracts</th>
<th>73</th>
<th>108</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>2,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Non-white</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2010 Census Minority Population: present in the Study Area

Percent Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracts</th>
<th>13400</th>
<th>186800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,098</td>
<td>1,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent BIPOC</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>57.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2020 update in progress
### 2010 Census Minority Population: present in the Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracts</th>
<th>13400</th>
<th>186800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>3,098</td>
<td>1,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent BIPOC</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>57.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent Black, Indigenous and People of Color Population


2020 update in progress
I-94 EW Census Data

2010 Census

Minority Population:

Present in the Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Total Population</th>
<th>Minority Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80.1 - 100.0 Percent</td>
<td>Milwaukee County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373,079 (39.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Milwaukee</td>
<td>328,474 (55.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of West Allis</td>
<td>8,015 (13.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Wauwatosa</td>
<td>4,828 (10.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of West Milwaukee</td>
<td>1,305 (30.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study Area: 57,451 (47.1%)

1 Dot = 2 Persons

2020 update in progress
I-94 EW Census Data

2010 Census Low-income: present in the Study Area

2020 update in progress
I-94 EW – Outreach outcomes

Outreach 2012-16 Final EIS:

- Over 300 stakeholder meetings held
- Five major public information meetings
- Two public hearings
- Booths at State Fair – 1,000s of visitors

Outcomes:

- Dropped double deck alternative
- Kept split diamond 68th/70th
- Designed Washington Street extension
- Kept 35th Street interchange
- Moved Stadium Interchange south – away from neighborhoods
I-94 EW Outreach outcomes

Outreach July 2020–today:

- Over 150 external stakeholder meetings and conversations have taken place
- Public involvement meeting (March 2021)
- Involved technical experts:
  - Municipalities, county, region
  - Special interest (transit, business and workforce development)

Outcomes:

- Determined a Supplemental EIS is needed
- Working to include additional transit as project mitigation
- Department partnerships with Milwaukee County; seek federal transit funding
- East leg connectivity

☑️ = neighborhood and association outreach occurred since restart
I-94 EW – Grassroots and new experts

Transit/Community:
- TTAC – lending expertise and input to WisDOT
  - Advising on how/type of funding could be helpful for transit focused mitigation
- CAC – including Community Based Organizations partnering with WisDOT
  - Focus on neighborhoods and traditionally under-represented groups

Grassroots:
- Great to have in-person back!
- Capitalized on existing events – National Night Out (four locations); Community bike/walk events; Business celebrations
I-94 EW – East leg connectivity

Menomonee Valley Partners and Near West Side Partners:

- **Specific ask**: help them safely connect neighborhoods on north side to businesses in the Valley
  - Challenges of geography
  - Existing access – not perceived as safe or welcoming
- Can I-94 East West be a catalyst for 27th Street and near west side
  - Example – Marquette Interchange and Canal Street
- Working with MVP, NWSP, SEWRPC, City to make connections
I-94 EW – informed conversations

What have we learned? Big picture to details– it all matters!

**Big picture**
- WisDOT partnering with Milwaukee County to identify and pursue federal transit funding
- On our project committees – we have families impacted by 1950s freeway construction

**Details**
- Going virtual has its place, but lack of email use in our neighborhoods
- Despite popular opinion, not everyone is into us
  - e.g. 23,000 postcards, ads in seven local paper – 200 attendees, many not from SE Wisconsin
  - People in this corridor understand mega projects (Zoo IC and Marquette IC) – they think we’ll fix it, make it better
I-94 EW Project-level Evaluations

Potentially Effected Resource Analysis Elements

- Land Use and Land Use Planning
- Highway Traffic and Operational Characteristics
- Freeway Access Change
- Safety
- Bicycle /Pedestrian
- Residential Development
- Commercial and Industrial Development
- Institutional and Public Services
- Neighborhood and Community Cohesion / Socioeconomic
- Visual
- Surface Water and Fishery
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Hazardous Materials
- Historic Properties
- Recreational Resources / Public Use Land
- Construction Impacts
- Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- Interstate Investment Effects on Transit

Source: I94 EW Final EIS 2016
update in progress!
I-94 EW Project

Next Steps

- Updating Final EIS EJ plan/analysis
- Ongoing data collection and analysis
- Share findings about 6-lane and 8-lane alternatives
- Update analysis regarding affected resources
- Update mitigation and adverse impacts to be reviewed further

- Two-way dialogue continues
  - In the community
  - Public involvement meeting (likely early December)
  - Public hearing – next summer
  - Will COVID keep impacting gatherings? TBD
Thank you!

PROJECT CONTACTS:

- Brian Bliesner, SE Freeways Chief, 414-750-3195, Brian.Bliesner@dot.wi.gov
- Bill Mohr, SE Freeways Supervisor, 262-408-3628, Bill.Mohr@dot.wi.gov
- Josh LeVeque, Project Manager, 414-750-1468, Joshua.LeVeque@dot.wi.gov
- Mike Pyritz, Communications Manager, 414-313-8003, Michael.Pyritz@dot.wi.gov