



# Highway System Harms, Impacts, and Mitigation Priorities Study

Transportation Committee

Bethany Brandt-Sargent, Amy Vennewitz

May 12, 2025



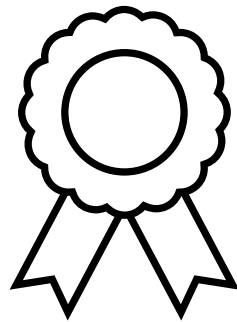
# Today's Discussion Questions

**Are there any harms categories that we seem to have missed?  
(slide 8)**

**Any feedback on the organizations we've identified? Any missed?  
Any you would recommend for their work around transportation?  
(CBO list attached)**

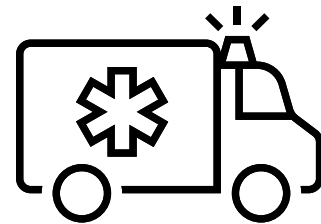
# Why This Project?

Seeking new insights for better outcomes



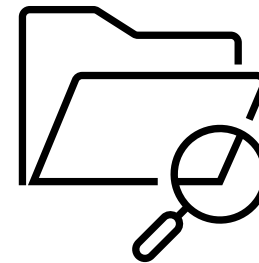
## Value Our Highways

Highways connect to important destinations, catalyze growth and investment, and provide regional benefits



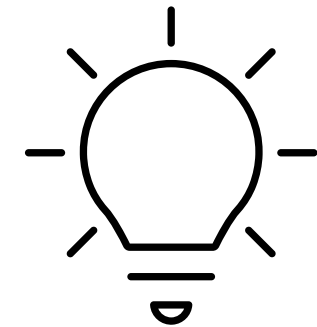
## Admit to Challenges

However, highways also have major impacts and may lead to unforeseen and lasting harms to adjacent communities



## Investigate Impacts

This study will give us new insights into the full impact of the regional highway system



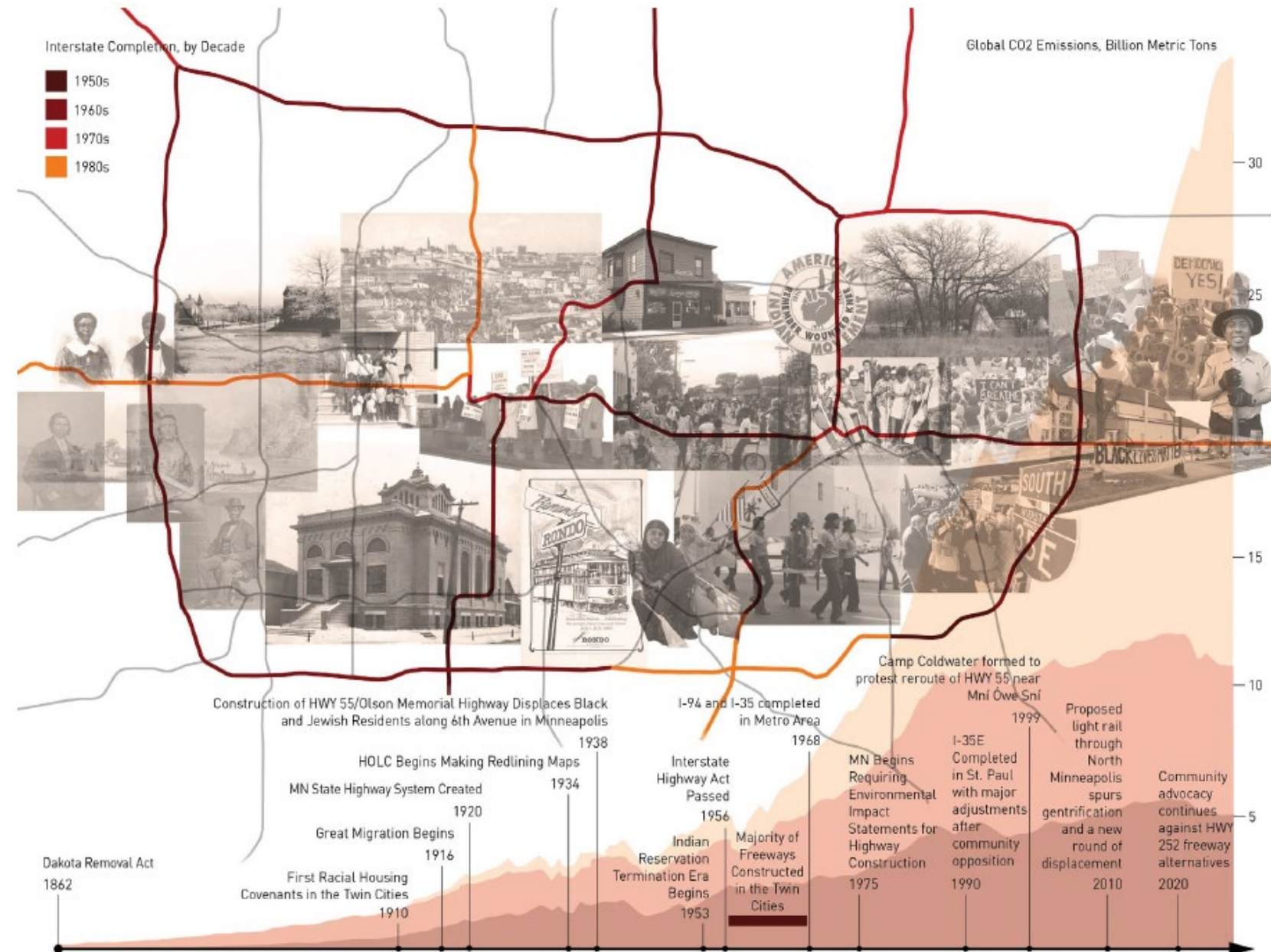
## Identify Solutions

This knowledge will promote smarter future investments with expanded community benefit



# Project Overview

- **Explore** the history of regional highway impacts
- **Connect** with people who were/are impacted
- **Determine** opportunities to do better going forward
- **Advance** understanding and support for change



# Project Goals

## Process

- Robust engagement strategy
- Representational perspectives
- Consensus building process
- Transparency and accountability
- Identifying best practices and insights
- Building support across agencies
- Visibility of findings regionally and nationally

## Outcomes

- Organized framework of understanding
- Tools and guides for mitigation
- Interactive online mapping platform
- Commitments at agency levels
- Metrics and measures of success
- Reports, articles, and presentations

# Project Objectives

- Convene multi-level advisory groups to inform and guide process
- Develop and implement an inclusive and effective engagement strategy
- Research highway harms at community and regional levels
- Provide a framework to organize quantitative and qualitative data
- Present data and findings as an interactive, public tool
- Assemble toolbox for mitigations and guidance for implementation

Gaining thorough  
understanding of  
issues and  
contributing factors



Organizing  
approach based  
on shared goals  
and agreements



Mapping  
immediate and  
longer-term steps  
to better solutions



# Organizing Concepts

## Infrastructure Complexity



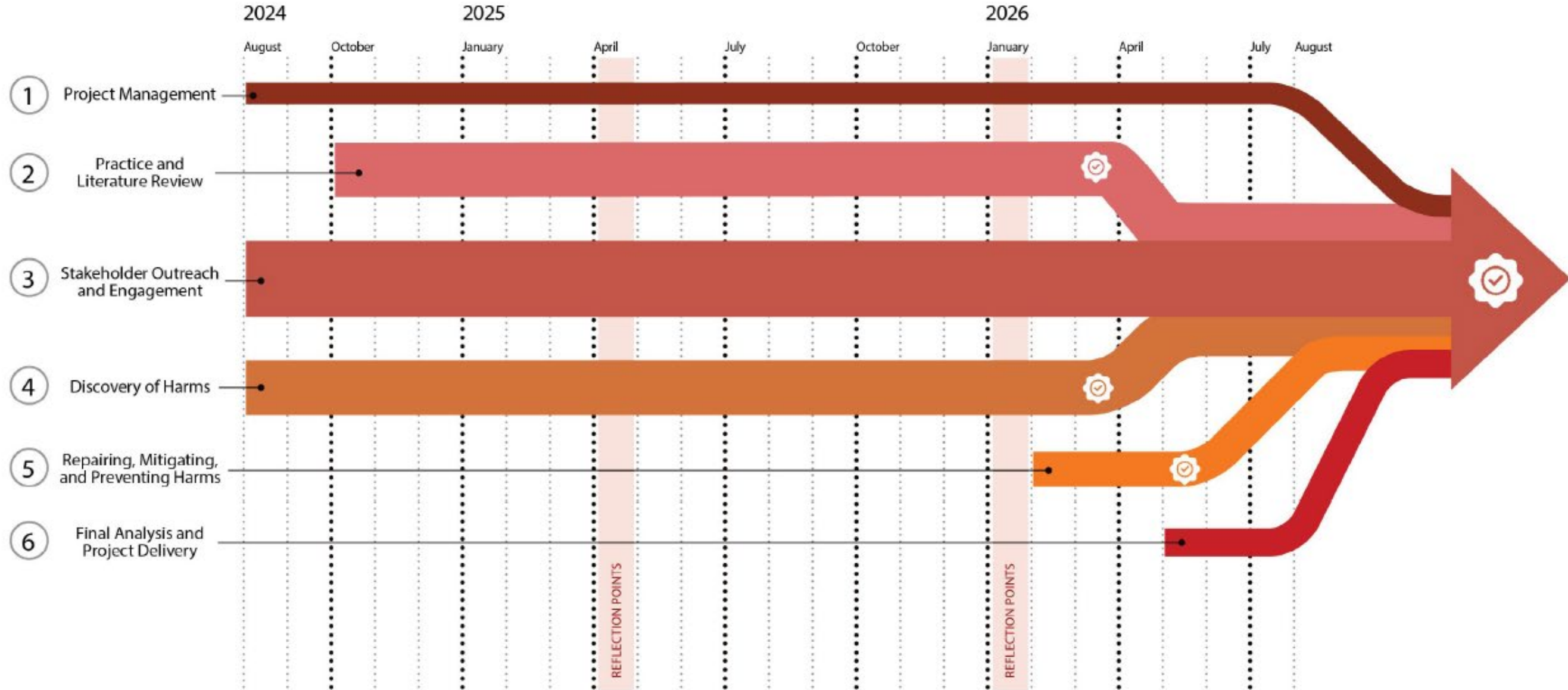
## Public Health Framework



## Trauma-Informed Approaches



# Project Schedule





# Study Approach

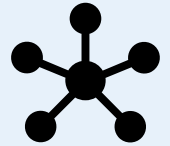
1. Literature Review
2. Impacts Category Identification
3. Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of Each Harms Category
4. Mitigation Toolbox
5. Pilot Corridors to Test Toolbox



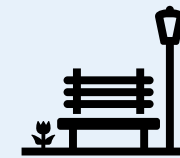
Transportation  
& Traffic Safety



Housing &  
Economy



Connectivity &  
Access



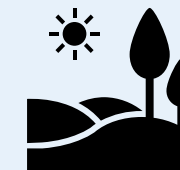
Placemaking &  
Sense of Place



Accessibility  
for All



Health, Air,  
Noise, & Light



Environment  
& Climate



Trust &  
Accountability



Others  
TBD

# Engagement Approach

1. Internal
  - a. Project Management Team
  - b. Met Council's Committees, Presentations, and Conversations
2. Technical and Research
  - a. Technical Advisory Committee
  - b. Highway Harms Policy Group
  - c. Research and Equity Panel
3. External
  - a. Community Based Organization Outreach
  - b. Focus Group Discussions
  - c. Community Listening Sessions
  - d. Online Engagement Strategy
  - e. Inclusive Communication Methods



# Advisory Groups

## Advising and informing process to build buy-in and consensus

### Technical Advisory Committee

- City, county, and state representatives
- Insights on impacts in different eras, contexts, and geographies
- Advise on applicability to agencies/communities
- ~10 meetings throughout project stages

### Highway Harms Policy Group

- Nonprofit/CBO representatives
- Insights on impacts on general public and targeted communities
- Participants will be compensated
- ~10 meetings throughout project stages

### Committee Presentations

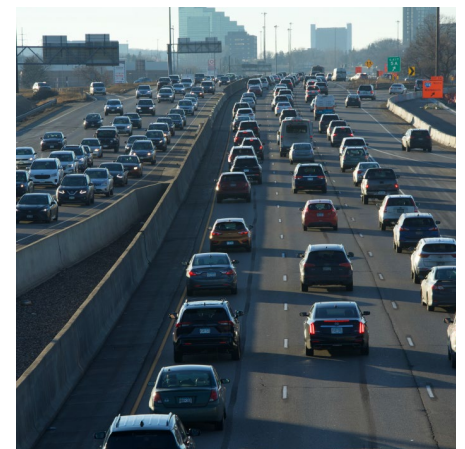
- Metropolitan Council
- Equity Advisory Committee
- Transportation Advisory Committee
- Technical Advisory Committee
- Executive Leadership Team



# Highway Harms Policy Group

## What we're looking for:

- 8-10 community-based organizations with emphasis on highway-adjacent community development or transportation experience
  - Representation from across the region
  - Bring lived experience
  - Can make a 2-year commitment
  - 8-12 meetings; significant preparation work
  - Chair and/or co-chair will have additional duties
- Any feedback on the organizations we've identified?
  - Any missed?
  - Any you would recommend for their work around transportation?



# Research and Equity Panel

## National expertise and thought leadership



**Tamika L. Butler, Esq.**

*tamika l. butler consulting; PhD Student, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies*

**Role:** National thought leader on built environment, equity, anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, organizational behavior, and change management

**Experience:** LADOT's Changing Lanes Study; Beyond Engagement: Equity Principles to Guide State Department of Transportation and Community Collaboration



**Brian Muthyala, MD, MPH**

*Physician at Hennepin Healthcare; Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota Medical School, with interests in health equity, medical education*

**Role:** Internal medicine physician and hospitalist that maintains clinical interests in hospital medicine, trauma informed care, health equity

**Experience:** Human Tolls: Public Histories and Community Responses to Twin Cities' Freeways



**Frank Douma, JD**

*University of Minnesota Humphrey (CTS); MnDOT Experience*

**Role:** Researcher on policy and legal issues related to transportation technologies, including telework, tolling, and other transportation finance tools, safety, and self-driving vehicles; experience working with MnDOT

**Experience:** Transportation Policy and Economic Competitiveness; Transportation Equity Training for MnDOT; In-Depth Examination of Urban Corridor Development



**Jamila Porter, DrPH, MPH**

*de Beaumont Foundation*

**Role:** Leader on social determinants of equity, transportation justice, multi-sector collaboration, policy evaluation, community power-building, and public health

**Experience:** Complete streets state laws & provisions: An analysis of legislative content and the state policy landscape, 1972–2018; Law Accommodating Nonmotorized Road Users and Pedestrian Fatalities in Florida, 1975–2013; Structural Racism and Pedestrian Safety: Measuring the Association Between Historical Redlining and Contemporary Pedestrian Fatalities Across the United States, 2010–2019



**Greg Donofrio, PhD**

*Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Faculty, School of Architecture, College of Design, University of Minnesota; Affiliate Faculty Humphrey School of Public Affairs*

**Role:** Teaching and research examine how communities find significance in, make use of, and preserve the historic built environment; specialties include community engagement and history of US urban planning and housing development

**Experience:** Co-director of A Public History of 35W research project studying the qualitative and quantitative impacts of freeway construction on black communities in South Minneapolis; co-editor and co-author of Human Tolls: Public Histories and Community Responses to Twin Cities Freeways, a book under contract with University of Minnesota Press; Owning Up: Racism and Housing in Minneapolis



**Olatunji Oboi Reed**

*CEO of Equiticity, Chicago-based*

**Role:** National leader in understanding and addressing racial barriers and inequities; as lead of Equiticity, has done extensive work around transportation equity and measuring/prioritizing equity

**Experience:** Mobility Justice in Chicago; Racially Equitable Traffic Safety



**Ernest Lloyd, DPA**

*University of Minnesota Adjunct Faculty; A Public History of 35W*

**Role:** Retired from a nearly 40-year career with MnDOT where he was Director and Assistant to the Commissioner for Civil Rights. He is also author of a pioneering dissertation, "How Routing an Interstate Highway Through South Minneapolis Disrupted an African American Neighborhood," Hamlin University, 2013. Born in North Carolina to a sharecropper, Dr. Lloyd's life was shaped by the Civil Rights movement. He marched for civil and social justice rights with some of the great Civil Rights leaders, including Russell Means, Rev. Dr. Ralph Abernathy and the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

**Experience:** Co-curator and community advisor for A Public History of 35W research project studying the qualitative and quantitative impacts of freeway construction on black communities in South Minneapolis; co-editor and co-author of Human Tolls: Public Histories and Community Responses to Twin Cities Freeways, a book under contract with University of Minnesota Press

# Discussion Questions

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# Next Steps



- Finalize engagement plan
- Finalize research plan
- Finalize TAC/HHPG membership
- Initial committee presentations
- Schedule TAC/HHPG kickoffs
- Initiate literature review and research



# Thank you

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