

2025 HIGHWAY SYSTEM HARMS, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION PRIORITY STUDY

The Metropolitan Council has initiated a new study to understand the full impacts of highway projects and to create a more just and equitable transportation future. While the construction of our metropolitan highway system significantly influenced economic growth, regional mobility, and community development, highways have had major impacts on nearby communities that may have lead to unintended and lasting harms, particularly for communities of color and low-income residents.

This study aims to listen to those impacted by highway construction and operation and in that learning find ways to create a more just and equitable transportation future.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

- The metropolitan highway system connects important destinations, activates growth and investment, and provides regional benefits.
- Our highways also have major impacts that may lead to unforeseen and lasting harms to adjacent communities.
- This study will engage people directly impacted, to ensure their perspectives and lived experiences shape recommended solutions for future planning and investments.

GOALS OF THE STUDY

- Explore the historical impacts of regional highways.
- Connect with people impacted by highways, including displacement, environmental and health consequences, economic disinvestment, and disconnected neighborhoods.
- Determine opportunities to improve planning and development processes going forward, including ways to better mitigate harms, focusing on infrastructure, policy changes, and investment strategies.
- Advance broader understanding and support for change.



- **We value our highways.**
- **We know our highways can be better.**
- **We're seeking new insights from people in the region.**
- **We support solutions that expand community benefits.**

AREAS OF IMPACT FOR THE STUDY

- **Transportation and traffic safety**
- **Housing and economy**
- **Connectivity and access**
- **Placemaking and sense of place**
- **Accessibility for all**
- **Health, air, noise, and light**
- **Environment and climate**
- **Trust and accountability**

Through this people- and solutions-focused process, we hope to achieve more community benefits and fewer burdens, strategic and coordinated investments, and common ground across differences.

TIMELINE

The study will run through 2027, following three phases:

- I. Phase 1: Kickoff – project kickoff, research and engagement plan development, participant recruitment
- II. Phase 2: Research and Investigation – research harms categories and pilot corridors, initial round of public engagement
- III. Phase 3: Framework Development – identification of key findings and development of implementation concepts
- IV. Phase 4: Plan Development and Review – report development and review processes



Contact

Bethany Brandt-Sargent, Planning Analyst
bethany.brandt-sargent@metc.state.mn.us

Amy Vennewitz, Metropolitan Transportation
Planning Director
amy.vennewitz@metc.state.mn.us