

Summary of Scoping Activities

The Gateway Corridor HIA project team used stakeholder input to design the scope of the project. Engagement included broad representation from the communities along the corridor, the community, technical, and policy advisory committees, Washington and Ramsey County health leadership groups, and other key stakeholders. This community input was critical to ensuring a project that is responsive to those most impacted by the prospective land use decisions.

Stakeholder input activities included the development of a worksheet that was completed by 114 respondents on their pick for the top five elements that they think of when considering the health of their community. This worksheet was distributed via e-newsletter, existing contacts with stakeholders, and at in-person meetings. Additionally, a stakeholder engagement workshop was organized with support from our technical assistants at Oregon Public Health Institute. Targeted recruitment resulted in broad representation of stakeholders from throughout the corridor, including public schools, law enforcement, health providers, environmental advocates, and more. Nearly 40 participants received a brief overview of health impact assessments and an in-depth work session to help prioritize the top indicators that would advance to the Assessment Phase.

The HIA Management Team (transportation and public health staff from Ramsey and Washington Counties) selected health elements based on stakeholder priorities, available data for analysis, and equity.

Elements for Health Consideration

Based on the public input and selection criteria, groupings of health indicators were formed. These groupings are being referred to as Elements for Health. Assessment for the project will focus on the following four elements to inform the next round of comprehensive plans for each city along the corridor. In no particular order, the planning elements selected for the project's Assessment Phase are:

- Connectivity
- Housing
- Jobs
- Safety

Vision statements were developed to capture the essence of each element. The vision statements are intended to reflect the corridor as a whole, and not individual station areas.

Assessment of each element will focus on defining likely health impacts of current local plans and policies, as well as identifying evidence-based best practices for changes to plans and policies to enhance overall health of individuals and communities. To the extent possible, assessment of each element will consider equity impacts, that is, the possibility that different groups of people might be adversely impacted by either current plans or the recommended strategies to protect or promote health.

Connectivity

Vision Statement: Planning decisions will foster a healthy environment by providing convenient and reliable access to basic needs and services for all modes of transportation (cars, public transit, bikes, and walking). Connections will be well-maintained and offer opportunities for an active lifestyle.

Assessment: Evaluate and map existing transportation networks and compare their proximity to basic needs and services. Determine any gaps in the systems. Overlay with demographic data to determine whether low income communities or communities of color are relatively underserved by existing plans and networks.

Housing

Vision Statement: Planning decisions will support a healthy environment by providing a range of housing options for all ages, lifestyles, and income levels.

Assessment: Evaluate and map the existing housing stock and their attributes (e.g., type, market value, vacancy rate, rental vs. owner, and density). Determine whether current zoning, policies, and housing stock provides sufficient housing opportunities for low income households.

Job

Vision Statement: Planning decisions will support a healthy environment by fostering a range of employment opportunities within a 30 minute transit trip (all modes) or located within a ½ mile of a station.

Assessment: Evaluate and map the existing jobs and businesses, and their attributes (e.g., type, density, and educational attainment). Identify what transportation options are missing to foster connections to jobs (sidewalks, transit, etc.).

Safety

Vision Statement: Planning decisions will support a safe environment for all community members by implementing design elements and best practices for safety for users of all modes of transportation and crime prevention.

Assessment: Evaluate applied/implemented safety (both to the transportation system and how other infrastructure can impact the feeling of personal safety) principles throughout the study area. Overlay with demographic data to determine whether low income communities or communities of color are relatively underserved by existing plans.