



DAKOTA COUNTY 2040 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Public Engagement Executive Summary

April 2020

OVERVIEW

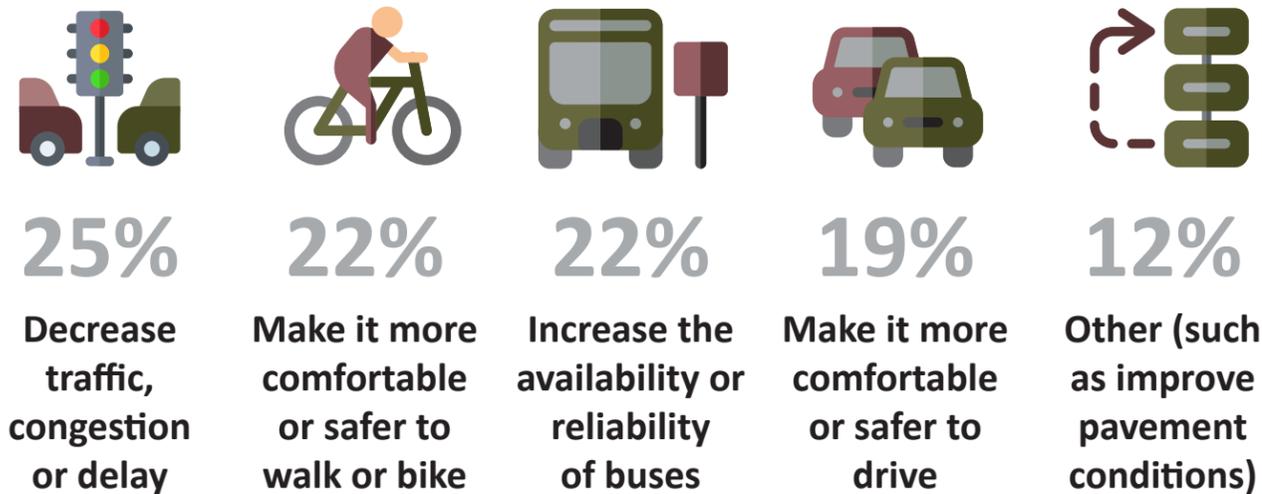
WHAT'S A TRANSPORTATION PLAN?

Dakota County is updating its transportation plan. The 2040 Transportation Plan will identify policies, programs and investment priorities for the next 20 years. The plan covers county roads and highways, adjacent sidewalks and trails, and county public transportation services. The Plan:

- + Sets the vision for the future transportation system
- + Presents county transportation policies and strategies
- + Prioritizes the transportation system needs
- + Supports land use goals and objectives
- + Identifies major transportation investment
- + Guides the county's transportation system through 2040

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Community members were asked how we can improve the transportation system in Dakota County. Here's what they prioritized:



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

To help inform the plan, community members were asked what's working well, what needs to improve and what should be prioritized in the county's transportation system.



In-person events
 Pop-up events hosted at community events or activity centers
 Listening sessions held at familiar locations that are easily accessible for underrepresented communities

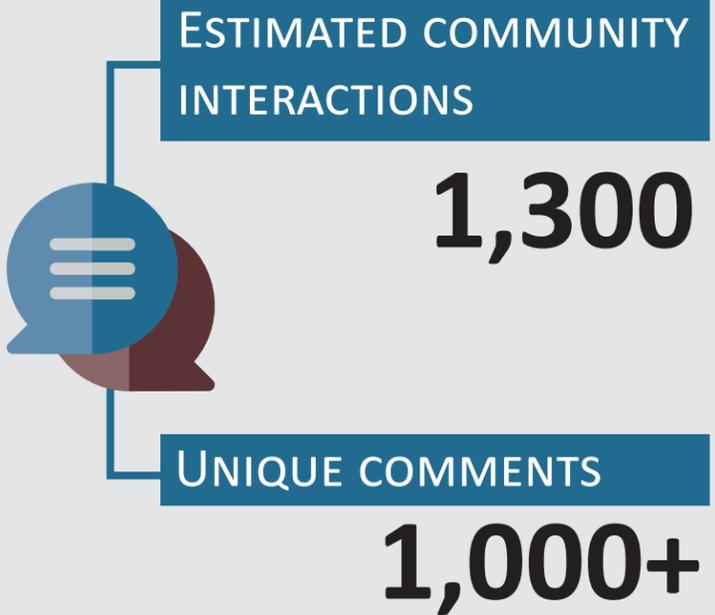


Online engagement website
 Online survey
 Interactive comment map
 Ideas board

Check out the website results here (accessible until November 2020):
zan.mysocialpinpoint.com/dakotacountytransportation



Spreading the word
 Social media
 Emails to cities and townships
 Posters at Dakota County libraries



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

In-person and online engagement activities took place between December 2019 and March 2020.



HEROES AND HELPERS HOLIDAY CELEBRATION West Saint Paul, MN

Dec. 8, 2019 Staff hosted a table at the Heroes and Helpers Holiday Celebration and talked with families, members of the West St. Paul Police Department, and emergency service providers. People said they wanted more sidewalks and bus service options in West St. Paul.



SECOND HARVEST FOOD SHELF South Saint Paul, MN

Dec. 12, 2019 Staff hosted a table at the Second Harvest Food Shelf and heard about the people's desires for more bus options and sidewalks in South St. Paul.



FAMILY SERVICES HOLIDAY FOOD SHELF Hastings, MN

Dec. 13, 2019 Staff hosted a table at Hastings Family Services during their holiday food shelf and talked to people about transportation needs. They said it is difficult to get to important destinations because there is no bus service in Hastings.



FARMINGTON COMMUNITY EXPO Farmington, MN

Jan. 25, 2020 Staff hosted a table at the Farmington Community Expo at Farmington High School. People talked about safety concerns crossing busy roads in Farmington such as CR 50 and Hwy 3.



BURNSVILLE MOSQUE Burnsville, MN

Jan. 31, 2020 Staff hosted a table at the Burnsville Mosque before and after prayer time and heard about the difficulties of getting to important destinations like school and jobs. People said they wish there was less traffic congestion on Burnsville roads.



APPLE VALLEY MID-WINTER FEST Apple Valley, MN

Feb. 1, 2020 Staff hosted a table at the Apple Valley Mid-Winter Fest at Apple Valley Community Center. People talked about issues such as speeding and traffic congestion in Apple Valley.



EAGAN SENIOR BOARD Eagan, MN

Feb. 7, 2020 Staff led a listening session with members of the Eagan Senior Board during their monthly meeting. People talked about difficulties getting around without access to a vehicle and said they wish there were more bus service options in Eagan.



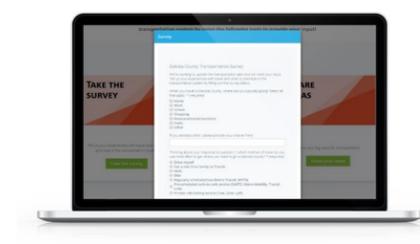
SOMALI LISTENING SESSION Dakota County, MN

Mar. 2, 2020 Staff led a listening session with people from the Dakota County Somali community. People talked about decreasing traffic congestion in the county and increasing safety for all users, especially for walkers.



AFRICAN AMERICAN LISTENING SESSION Hastings, MN

Mar. 4, 2020 Staff led a listening session with people from the Dakota County African American community and heard they would like the county to have better ways to share information on services offered in the county. People also talked about decreasing traffic congestion and increasing bus service.



SURVEY Online

Jan. 10 – Feb. 21, 2020 Staff used an online survey to learn about how people travel in Dakota County and what improvements they would like to see for the county's transportation system. People talked about increasing safety for all users and increasing options for travel in the county.



INTERACTIVE MAP Online

Jan. 10 – Mar. 31, 2020 Staff used an online map to learn about where people would like to see improvements on the county's transportation system. People talked about concerns and ideas on specific roads and locations and want to see safety improvements for all users.



IDEAS BOARD Online

Jan. 10 – Mar. 31, 2020 Staff used an online ideas board to learn about other ideas and suggestions for transportation improvements. People talked about having more options to get around in the future and creating land uses that allow for more sustainable development, among other ideas.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

People in Dakota County had a lot to say about the county transportation system. The following are some of the key themes.



A LOT TO LIKE

“It’s wonderful to have easy bike access to the river trail systems and to both St. Paul and Minneapolis. This is a great resource and I have used it for commuting as well as fun.”

- + **Dakota County’s walking and biking trails are well liked.** Many like walking and biking in county parks and on the trails and greenways.
- + **Roundabouts are well liked in Dakota County.** Respondents said that the existing roundabouts work well and they support the construction of more.
- + **Those who take transit in Dakota County like the service.** However, many people also suggested improvements to increase frequency or extend service to more parts of the county.



ACCESS FOR EVERYONE

“There aren’t many transit options and people sometimes struggle getting to the food shelf, especially when the weather is bad.”

- + **Create more frequent and affordable public transportation options for people with low income, people with disabilities and older adults.** People are also looking for better walking and biking accommodations for people who use mobility devices.



SAFETY ISSUES

“Speed limit enforcement on all county roads to ensure safety for everyone.”

- + **Enhance safety at Dakota County intersections.** People reported unsafe crossings for walkers, bikers and drivers near important destinations such as schools and housing.
- + **Crossing high traffic roads is unsafe.** Many people reported they are concerned about getting into a crash at roads without intersection control to aid cross traffic.
- + **Improve the transportation system now rather than being reactive.** Some people are frustrated because they don’t think existing safety issues will be addressed in a timely manner.
- + **Decrease speeding.** People reported the speed limits in some areas are too high.
- + **Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.** Many people reported their main safety concerns are the lack of pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure on roads and drivers not stopping for pedestrians at crosswalks.



PAVEMENT CONDITION

“Potholes. As always. I know it’s hard in MN. But that is my only complaint. All the roads/paths we travel are safe. Lucky to live in a good neighborhood.”

- + **Fix potholes and faded pavement markings.** Some roads showed up multiple times indicating a critical need for rehabilitation.
- + **Improve snow removal on roads, sidewalks and trails.** People reported that roads, sidewalks and trails need to be plowed more regularly.



WALKING

“ The county roads do often present intimidating barriers to walking and biking since many of them are 50 mph four lane roads which are inherently unsafe to cross at-grade. I think the county could do a better job of creating intersections with pedestrians in mind like curb bump outs, pedestrian leading lights and such. I generally refuse to cross county roads with my children due to the unsafe nature. This basically prevents me from actually using the expanding greenway network which is unfortunate. ”

- + **Create safe walking environments near schools and areas with housing and retail.** Many people said that the county should make it more comfortable to walk and bike. Sidewalks or trails were commonly suggested near schools.
- + **Improve pedestrian safety with more sidewalks and better pedestrian crossings on Dakota County roads.** Most comments about walking expressed safety concerns due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure. Many people are looking for pedestrian facilities that provide a physical buffer between walkers and vehicle traffic.



TRANSIT

“ I would love better access to public transportation in the burbs. This is not just a transportation issue, we need to be designing and developing our communities with walkability, bikeability and public transportation in the forefront of planning. ”

- + **Make new transit routes and expand existing travel options.** More than half of survey respondents said they would like to see more investments in bus service. People want to add more bus routes that connect to key destinations and want more flexible dial-a-ride and curb-to-curb services.
- + **Establish more frequent service on existing bus lines in Dakota County.** The lack of regularly scheduled bus service except during weekday rush hours makes it challenging for people to use transit.
- + **There is a mix of support and opposition to light rail in Dakota County.** People who support light rail say they would prefer the service over taking the bus, and people who are opposed to light rail said it is not worth the investment.



BIKING

“ Please maintain the road shoulders for the safety of those who ride bicycles on their commute to work or simply for exercise. Only place rumble strips under or immediately outside the fog line rather than destroying the limited space for cyclists on the road shoulder. ”

- + **Improve bicyclist safety by constructing wider shoulders and more bike lanes or paths along Dakota County roads.** Many people want bicycle facilities that provide a physical buffer from vehicle traffic.
- + **Prioritize bicycle connections to the existing off-road bike trails and greenways.** People want to bike on the Dakota County trails and greenways, but don't feel safe accessing them on bike.



SUSTAINABILITY

“ Climate change is real and happening. Focus on transportation methods that are not cars. Electric cars are not good enough. We must act now and form our cities in a way that encourages biking, walking, and public transportation. ”

- + **Invest in creating viable, environmentally sustainable transportation options in Dakota County.** People said Dakota County should be studying, planning for, and promoting transportation options like electric vehicles and multimodal transportation.
- + **Increase mixed-use development and density in Dakota County to lessen the need for car ownership.** People said they would like to be located closer to jobs, shopping and entertainment so that they can walk, bike or take public transportation to get to where they need to go.



TRAFFIC CONGESTION

“ We have a terrible traffic problem and they are building close to 2,000 more homes and apartments in the next few years. ”

+ **Traffic congestion is a concern, especially as Dakota County continues to grow and develop.** A number of people expressed concerns that traffic will only get worse as Dakota County continues to grow.

+ **Decrease congestion on Dakota County roads since it is a safety issue for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.** People said that congestion results in frustrated drivers that impact other users.



FUTURE ROUTES

“ Cedar Ave is not sufficient enough, we need another major thoroughway between 35W and 494 other than Cedar to cross the river. ”

+ **Establish more driving and transit routes in Dakota County.** People want more options when driving and taking the bus.

+ **Create new and safe pedestrian and bicyclist connections.** Many recommendations for future routes were for new trails or sidewalks for pedestrians and bicyclists.



TRANSPORTATION IN 2040

“ I also would love to see higher density housing developments close by to transit hubs and other services like restaurants, grocery stores, and gyms. Young professionals like me aren't encouraged to rent in Dakota County because lack of services and connection to the rest of the metro except by driving with lots of traffic. Increased bus services and eventual light rail would bring lots of young people and development. ”

+ **Create more transportation options in the future.** When asked which methods of travel they would prefer, people said they would like to walk, bike, take light rail, and/or take more frequently scheduled buses.

+ **Anticipate travel to be less car-centric in the future.** People said the county should plan for more density and more interest in walking, biking and transit to travel to jobs, shopping and entertainment in Dakota County.

+ **Plan for innovative, emerging technology in transportation.** People suggested studying and planning for autonomous vehicles as well as bike-sharing and ride-hailing services.



OTHER IDEAS

“ An education campaign sounds like it's in order. People do not know how to use roundabouts properly. Signage and a blast on a HOW TO would be good for all of Egan/Dakota County. ”

+ **Generate accessible information about existing transportation services and projects.** People said information can be shared with their communities through community leaders, by posting information in community spaces and by attending community events.

+ **Produce more education opportunities for drivers.** People said specific topics could cover how to use roundabouts and how to watch out for pedestrians and bicyclists.

MOST MENTIONED CORRIDORS

People are concerned about safety along county roads for all users. Most comments about specific roads expressed concerns for walkers, bikers and drivers who travel along and try to cross busy roads. Walkers and bikers want more protection from vehicles, including for people who are traveling to and from bus stops. Many people want to see poor driver behavior and speeding decrease, especially near schools, residential neighborhoods, parks and other important destinations. The map below shows the corridors most frequently mentioned as a problem.

LEXINGTON AVE

People said Lexington Ave has unsafe crossings and that the speed limit is too high in residential areas.

YANKEE DOODLE RD

Comments about Yankee Doodle Rd said people drive too fast, there is too much traffic congestion, and/or traffic flow needs to improve.

CO RD 42

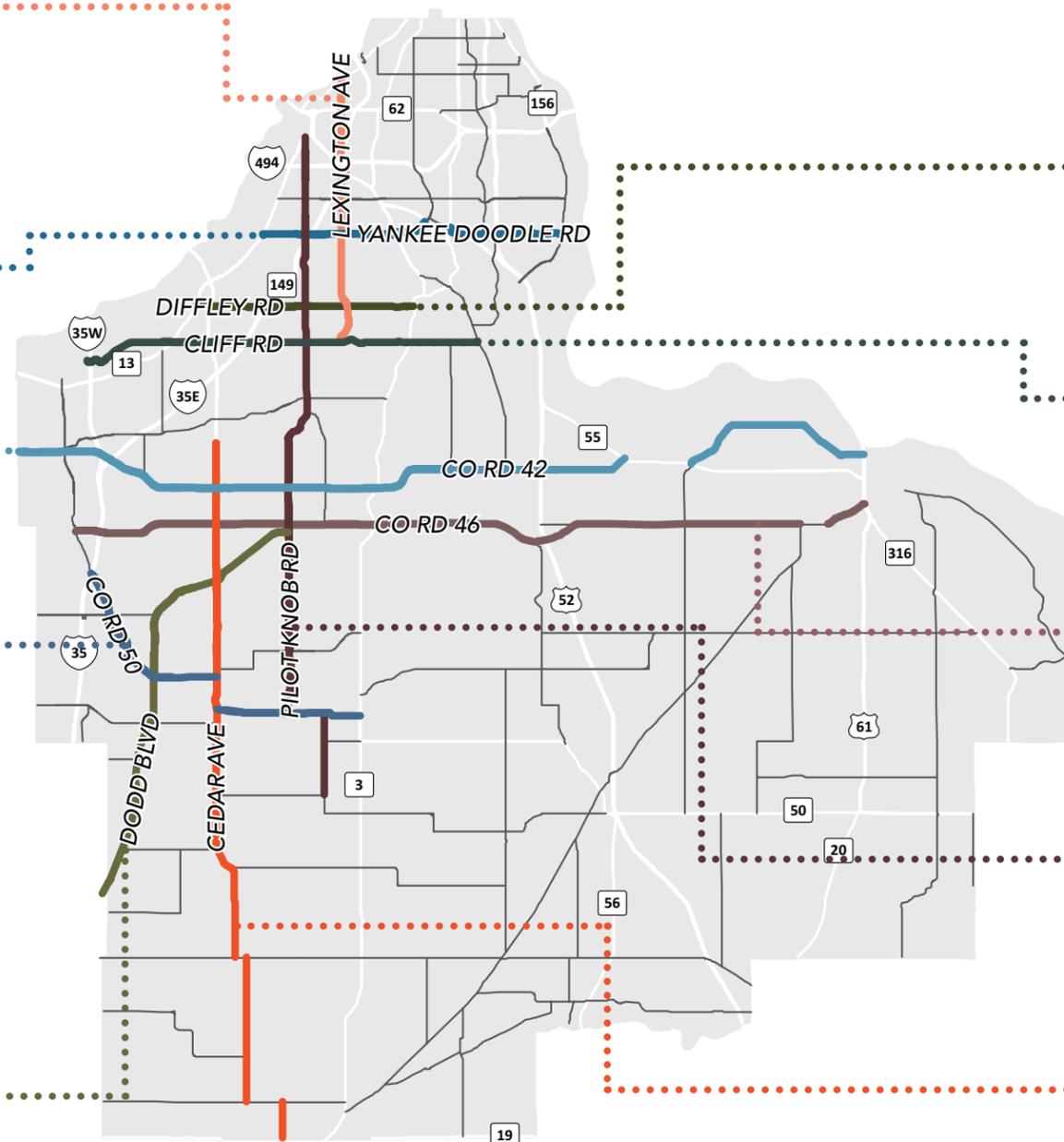
Many people reported dangerous intersections at I-35, Pilot Knob Rd, and Cedar Ave. A number of people are also concerned about traffic congestion and pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

CO RD 50

People are concerned about crossing Co Rd 50, especially at the CR 50 and Flagstaff Ave intersection. Some people suggested lowering the speed limit or adding more enforcement.

DODD BLVD

Most comments about Dodd Blvd described either traffic congestion or safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists. Some people suggested more sidewalks, wider shoulders, and safer crossings.



DIFFLEY RD

Most comments about Diffley Rd recounted safety concerns at intersections for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers and said that traffic congestion is a big issue.

CLIFF RD

Most comments about Cliff Rd described pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues. People suggested adding sidewalks and safer crossings.

Co Rd 46

People said crossing Co Rd 46 is unsafe and recommended adding sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks.

PILOT KNOB RD

Most people reported speeding as an issue on Pilot Knob Rd and suggested lowering speed limits near residential areas. Many also stated pedestrian and bicyclist conditions are unsafe.

CEDAR AVE

People said there is growing traffic congestion on Cedar Ave and recommended improving traffic flow. There were also a number of comments about unsafe conditions on Cedar Ave for pedestrians and bicyclists.

MOST MENTIONED INTERSECTIONS

People said safer crossings are needed at intersections on county roads for all users. People want to prioritize intersection improvements to make it easier for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers to cross busy roads, especially those located near important destinations like schools. These are the intersections on county roads that people talked about most often.

PILOT KNOB RD & I-35E

A number of people reported that there have been many crashes at the intersection of Pilot Knob Rd and I-35 and that it is dangerous to cross.

DIFFLEY RD & DANIEL DR

People said the intersection at Diffley Rd and Daniel Dr needs to be safer to cross for students walking and biking to Northview Elementary School.

DIFFLEY RD & LEXINGTON AVE

People expressed concern for pedestrians and bicyclists using this intersection to get to and from the park, the shopping center, and Northview Elementary. They reported drivers run red lights and encroach on crosswalks.

CEDAR AVE & 140TH ST

People reported that it is unsafe to cross the intersection at Cedar Ave and 140th St. They said that drivers run the red light and that a "no turn on red" sign is needed.

PILOT KNOB RD & CO RD 46

Many people reported crashes at the Pilot Knob Rd and Co Rd 46 intersection. They said that the right turn lanes from northbound Pilot Knob Rd to eastbound Co Rd 46 and eastbound Co Rd 46 to southbound Pilot Knob Rd get backed up.

CO RD 50 & FLAGSTAFF AVE

Many people said the intersection at Co Rd 50 and Flagstaff Ave is dangerous, especially with traffic from Farmington High School before and after the school day.

DIFFLEY RD & BRADDOCK TRL

People reported drivers run through red lights or don't yield for pedestrians at the Diffley Rd and Braddock Trl intersection.

DIFFLEY RD & DODD BLVD

People said that drivers regularly run through stop signs and don't yield to pedestrians and bicyclists in the crosswalks at Diffley Rd and Dodd Rd. People recommended more enforcement.

CLIFF RD & DODD BLVD

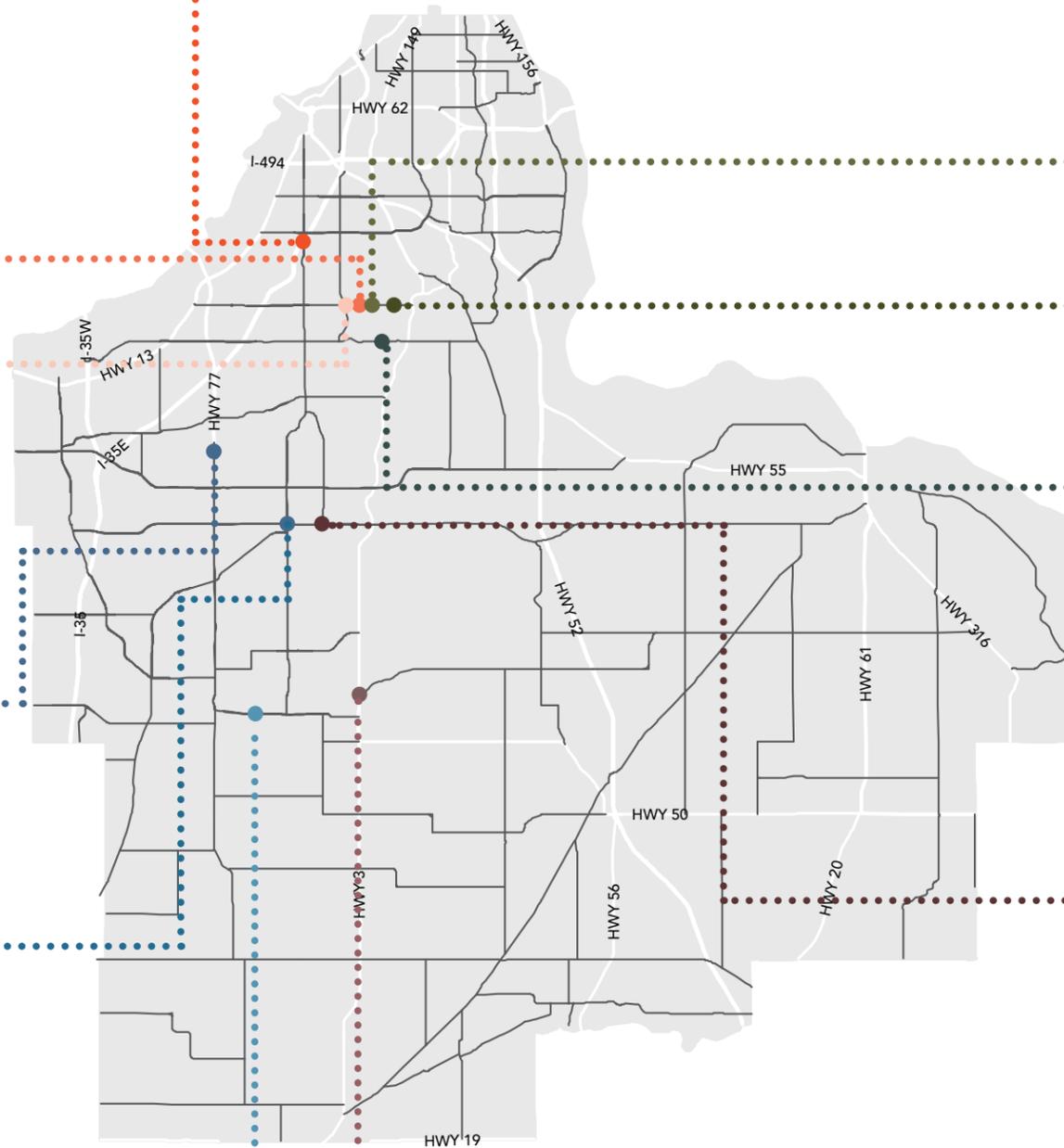
Many people reported the intersection at Cliff Rd and Dodd Rd is unsafe due to poor sightlines for drivers.

CO RD 46 & DIAMOND PATH

Many people reported it is difficult to make a left turn or cross Co Rd 46 at Diamond Path due to the speed of traffic on Co Rd 46. Some people recommended increased traffic control.

CO RD 66 & HWY 3

A number of people reported that the intersection at Co Rd 66 and Hwy 3 is unsafe to cross due to the amount of traffic on Hwy 3.



For more information, visit:
www.dakotacounty.us
and search 2040 transportation plan

Prepared for:



Prepared by:

