

# Hear Every Voice

## Case Study: Bridgeport Way Road Redesign and Reconstruction



1.5-mile highway redesign and reconstruction of the primary business corridor in a suburban community

University Place, Washington

City of University Place, Pierce County, Cascade Collaborative (consultant), People Friendly Streets by Alternate Street Design PA (consultant)

### Project Details

### Location

### Organizations

Visualization

**Context:** The City of University Place is a suburban and largely residential community located approximately 40 miles south of Seattle. As of 2009, the Census reported a population of just over 30,000. The community is largely white, with a relatively high median income. In response to significant growth in the community in the 1990s, the City pursued the redesign and reconstruction of the main roadway running through the community. The redesign was also stimulated by an increase in accidents in the corridor. Taking a context sensitive solutions approach, the City proposed a redesign of the five-lane rural highway to a four-lane divided highway. The new highway would include additional vehicle and pedestrian signals, expanded right-of-way width, and enhanced landscaping and lighting. Based on input from design and transportation consultants, the initial redesign proposal also included four roundabouts, which were highly contentious.

### Case Summary

#### Illustrative rendering of proposed roundabout



Source: City of University Place, WA

Meeting Activity

**Public Involvement:** The City and its consultants conducted a wide range of participation efforts as part of the redesign and reconstruction process. The process included the following participation activities: “design charrettes, public meetings, open houses, meetings with neighborhood groups, and one-to-one meetings” (Context Sensitive Solutions 2005). The participatory design charrettes were conducted with public participants and with high school students, with the intent of developing alternative designs for the roadway corridor. City staff visited personally with each property owner in the corridor. Communication was a key part of the participation effort, and the city communicated with residents using traditional newspaper notices and by delivering fliers to all property owners and posting them in high-traffic locations. Overhang signs were also used in the corridor to further increase awareness of the project (Context Sensitive Solutions 2005).

*Visualization:* Visualization was a key aspect of the Bridgeport Way design process. Consultants were used to provide sketches and computer generated visualizations of future conditions in the roadway. The visualization approach was particularly important considering the significant changes proposed for the roadway. Showing before and after conditions were helpful in illustrating how the corridor might look, especially with enhanced lighting and landscaping. Images from other communities were also used to show potential design options for the community. In addressing the roundabout issue, these images were valuable since there were no nearby precedents that participants could view (Schively 2007).

**Previous conditions in the corridor**



Source: City of University Place, WA

**Computer generated enhancements to show future conditions**



Source: City of University Place, WA

*Outcomes:* Ultimately, the project design was modified based on public and business input. The final design did not include the roundabouts, but rather integrated expanded intersections to allow space for u-turns to improve business access. Earlier proposed features were maintained, including high-quality landscaping and lighting, a central median, mid-block crossings for pedestrians, bicycle lanes, wide sidewalks, and bus shelters (Schively 2007).

**Image of corridor after implementation**



Source: Carissa Schively Slotterback

Context Sensitive Solutions. 2005. Bridgeport Way Reconstruction in Case Studies. Context Sensitive Solutions [online database]. Retrieved from: [http://contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/case\\_studies/bridgeport\\_way\\_reconstruction/](http://contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/case_studies/bridgeport_way_reconstruction/) (accessed July 15, 2011).

Schively, C. 2007. Enhancing transportation: The effects of public involvement in planning and design processes. Minneapolis: Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.

**References**

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