



APWA MINNESOTA CHAPTER PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

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Submission Deadline: October 1, 2022

All nomination and supporting data are to be submitted as a PDF to Sarah at sarah.lloyd@bolton-menk.com with a maximum page size of 5 pages, including photos.

Project Nominated: Brooklyn Boulevard Corridor Project

Managing Agency: City of Brooklyn Center
Contact Person: Elizabeth Heyman
Agency Address: 6301 Shingle Creek Pkwy
Agency Phone Number: 763-585-7100
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Project Design Firm: SRF Consulting Group, Inc.
Project Construction Administration Firm: SRF Consulting Group, Inc.
Project General Contractor: C.S. McCrossan & Park Construction

Name of Person Making Nomination: Jonathan McPherson, P.E.
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Criteria for Nomination

- Project must be substantially completed by October 31, 2021 or October 31, 2022.
- Includes use of innovative construction management techniques and completion of the project on schedule.
- Maintained excellent safety performance and safety program throughout construction.
- Evidence of strong community relations during all project phases.
- Consideration given to the environment. Sustainable design techniques involved.
- Unusual accomplishments given adverse conditions.
- Provides future value to the public works profession and perception by the public.
- Additional considerations such as value engineering, innovative project financing, multi-agency coordination and participation.

Reasons for Nomination: Describe the project with the aspects and features of the project that fulfilled any of the applicable criteria listed. (Include description on a separate page.)



BROOKLYN BOULEVARD CORRIDOR PROJECT

City of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT OF THE YEAR

APWA Minnesota Chapter





PROJECT OVERVIEW

Brooklyn Boulevard (County State Aid Highway [CSAH] 152) in Brooklyn Center is a primary transportation corridor that provides access to the city from I-694 and TH 100 and serves as a connection between Minneapolis and its northern suburbs. The mix of residential and commercial areas in the corridor reflects the evolution of the community: post-World War II housing, similar housing converted to businesses, smaller locally-owned businesses, national chain businesses, and offices.

The quality and character of development along the corridor also varies significantly reflecting eras of prosperity and disinvestment. This incremental development has resulted in a corridor that needs attention:

- » Numerous driveways created safety and operational concerns for motorists
- » Lack of good sidewalks and trails and the absence of thoughtful streetscaping inhibited pedestrians and bicyclists
- » Transit facilities were not well integrated into the overall transportation framework
- » Potentially incompatible adjacent land uses reduced quality of life for current residents and dampened redevelopment opportunities

Project Goals

The two-phased 2.3-mile reconstruction and streetscaping project's high-level goals included:

- » Improved roadway safety and traffic operations
- » Reduced number of access points
- » Enhanced transit rider safety and comfort
- » Improved trail and sidewalk network

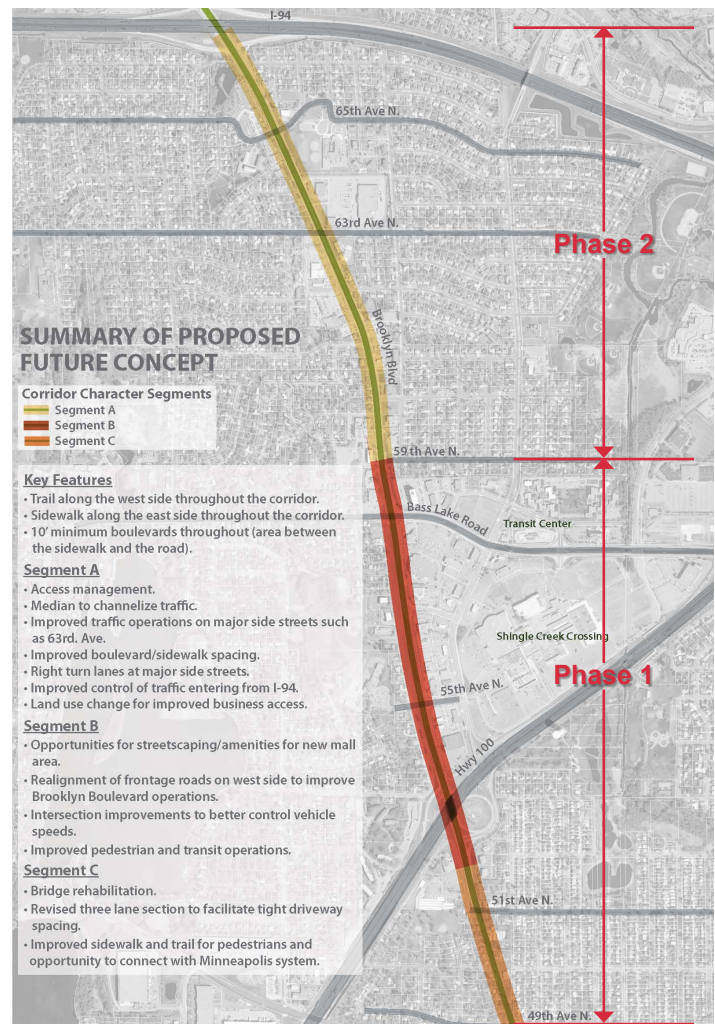
Project History

The Brooklyn Boulevard Corridor Study, which examined the area between I-94 and 49th Avenue North, was initiated in 2011 and completed in 2013. The study defined a vision for an enhanced corridor that would improve transportation for all modes and establish a cohesive streetscape design to encourage pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and attract and retain businesses.

One of the key objectives of the study was to develop a project planning process that was fair and promoted stakeholder confidence and understanding. The intent was to also develop an implementation strategy to guide future improvement decisions that were acceptable to both the City and Hennepin County. The study area was ultimately separated into three segments and 13 separate projects were identified and prioritized.

In 2014 the City of Brooklyn Center applied for Regional Solicitation Funding and received \$7.4 million in federal funding to construct Phase 1 of the corridor improvements from Bass Lake Road (CSAH 10) to 49th Avenue North (segments B & C). Design of this phase occurred from 2016 to 2018 and construction took place from 2018 to 2020.

In 2016 the City of Brooklyn Center applied for Regional Solicitation Funding and received \$6.6 million in federal funding to construct Phase 2 of the corridor improvements from I-94 to Bass Lake Road (segment A). Design of this phase occurred from 2019 to 2021 and construction took place from 2021 to 2022.



Corridor segmentation identified in the corridor study influenced construction phasing.

Long-Term Project Benefits

This project has realized immediate enhancements along Brooklyn Boulevard with significant long-lasting benefits, including:

- » Trail system that extends from 49th Avenue North to I-94, including on-street bike lanes on the south portion of the corridor
- » Improved roadway safety with the addition of turn lanes and corridor access modifications
- » Enhanced transit stop locations with benches, trash receptacles and plantings, including the C-line Bus Rapid Transit stop at 51st Avenue North
- » Aesthetic improvements with street lighting, under-grounding of overhead utilities, and city monuments (four total within the corridor).







Specific safety considerations incorporated into the design include:

- » Pedestrians
 - Center island refuge at signalized intersections
 - Pedestrian refuge at 51st Avenue North
 - Removal of channelized free right turn movements to reduce vehicle speeds at intersections
- » Traffic Operations
 - Addition of turn lanes at several intersections
 - Access modifications including realignment of Lilac Drive to form a common intersection with the TH 100 off-ramp and realignment of Admiral Lane to form common intersection with 60th Avenue North

As a result of this project, long-term benefits to be realized in the future include redevelopment opportunities of properties adjacent to the revitalized corridor.

Project Partnerships

There were several project partners for completing the Brooklyn Boulevard improvements:

- 
Project lead
- 
Financial contribution and jurisdiction of county roads within and intersecting the corridor
- 
Jurisdiction of I-94 and TH 100
- 
Transit operations, BRT stop location, and aesthetic improvements
- 
Three Rivers Park District – Jurisdiction of trail crossing at 55th Avenue North
- 
South City limit boundary with Brooklyn Center
- 
Brooklyn Center Community Development

INNOVATIVE CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

A traditional construction staging approach was utilized by constructing half of the road at a time. This allowed for the corridor to remain open during construction and provided access to area residences and businesses.

Both contractors, C.S. McCrossan Construction for Phase 1 and Park Construction for Phase 2, provided critical path management (CPM) schedules to ensure the project remained on schedule. Because construction of each phase spanned two years, it was crucial to adhere to the schedule so that construction zones were ready for winter. Safe passage through and within the construction area were considered, as well as snow and ice maintenance on the roadway.

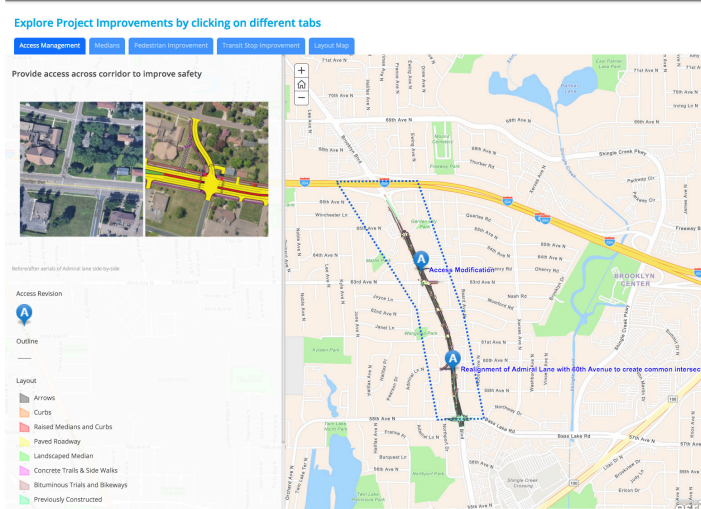
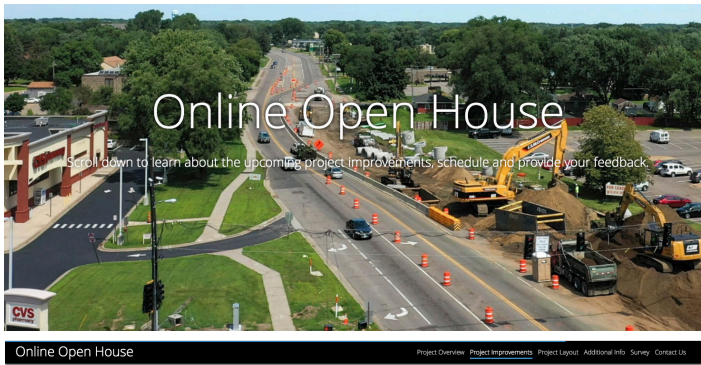
APPROACH & COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

With three elementary schools (New Millennium Academy, Northport Elementary School, and Garden City Elementary), the city's fire station, a park and ride facility, and several churches within the project corridor, safety during construction was key to this project's overall success. Project staff worked closely the City's fire department to maintain access and uninterrupted routes in and around the construction zone. Project staff also stayed in close communication with school and Metro Transit representatives to maintain school bus and transit service along the corridor and accommodated pedestrian traffic with temporary pedestrian routes.



Sample figures distributed to the public via City website and newsletters.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS



Screen captures from the online open house, which was utilized for Phase 2 of the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public engagement for the project was a team effort led by the City and supported by the County. With three types of land use along this corridor, commercial, industrial, and residential, the public engagement employed several communication methods to ensure they were reaching affected residents, landowners, and business owners.

During the corridor study, two open houses were held on 2012 to develop an overall corridor project vision. For Phase 1, two more open houses were held to present the proposed improvements early on in the design process and another open house prior to construction to allow for communications with the residents and contractor.

In-person meetings were planned for Phase 2 but public engagement strategies were revised due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An online open house and mailers were utilized to communicate with project stakeholders.

The City maintained direct communications with residents and business owners during construction of both phases, as well as providing weekly construction updates and periodic newsletters. Both the City and the County hosted project-specific websites during the planning, design, and construction of both phases.

RESILIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY, & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of features of this corridor project were implemented with resiliency, sustainability, and the environment in mind.

- » With a limited number of available areas for drainage, storm water management design included the installation of center island best management practices (BMPs), curb cuts, sediment control structures, and an underground storm water storage system.
- » In an effort to maintain mature trees along the corridor, the project team coordinated with Hennepin County Forestry through design and construction to preserve existing mature trees where practical. In addition, Hennepin County Forestry provided tree plantings from their nursery, which were bare root trees instead of typical balled and burlapped, to attain a higher tree survival rate.
- » This corridor was identified by the Metropolitan Council as a Tier 1 Route in its Regional Bicycle Transportation Network. The multimodal improvements addressed trail and sidewalk gaps to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.



NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A project team always encounters challenges throughout the process of a project, especially a project as comprehensive as this. Some anticipated challenges they navigated include:

- » Multi-agency approval and coordination with:
 - MnDOT approval for improvements at TH 100 and I-94
 - Metro Transit for new construction of the C Line BRT station at 51st Avenue North
 - City of Minneapolis for south segment coordination and signal replacement at 49th Avenue
 - Three Rivers Park District for regional trail crossing at 55th Avenue
- » Utility relocations (under-grounding of overhead utilities)
- » Staging and maintenance of traffic

However, the unanticipated challenges required thoughtful communication strategies, close collaboration among project partners, and careful planning:

- » Public engagement activities during COVID-19 pandemic that were addressed by moving to online open house format
- » Drainage system improvements that required construction of an underground storm water storage system at 63rd Avenue intersection to address undersized downstream system
- » A complex right of way conveyance that required a “land exchange” so that MnDOT and Hennepin County could vacate unused right of way for project purposes and site improvements, specifically for realignment of Lilac Drive near Brookdale Covenant Church
- » Access modifications, especially the realignment of Lilac Drive to form a common intersection with the TH 100 off-ramp and realignment of Admiral Lane to form common intersection with 60th Avenue North, were a point of contention for the residents and businesses but were able to work through them successfully



An underground storm water storage system was constructed to improve the overall drainage system within the limited available right of way within the corridor.

VALUE TO THE PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSION

This project provides value to the perception of the public works industry by constructing a project that accounted for balancing needs for all transportation modes along the corridor. The project improves safety for all users and made improvements for pedestrians (sidewalks with boulevard), bicyclists (on-street bike lane and trail system), transit (C-line BRT station and transit stop enhancements) and vehicular traffic (access modification and turn lane additions). The project also had several aesthetic improvements associated with the project (under-grounding of overhead utilities, colored concrete, decorative lighting, community monuments, plantings, bollards, banner poles, etc.) that revitalized the corridor.

The project partners successfully executed a plan to identify project goals and construction phasing (completed in corridor study), secure funding for improvements (federal funding application and local funding with City and County partnership), and construct improvements along the corridor that benefit multiple stakeholders.

REASON FOR NOMINATION

The strong partnership of the project leaders, the City of Brooklyn Center and Hennepin County, clearly demonstrates the value of collaboration. Together, they navigated a two-phased project, 11 years in the making, from inception to completion, capitalizing on recent and anticipated improvements adjacent to the project corridor. This project has transformed Brooklyn Boulevard into an inviting, vibrant, and fully multimodal corridor that will enhance the community for years to come.

