Challenges & Opportunities at the Local Level

Getting our Priorities Right: Monroe Street Reconstruction Public Engagement Case Study

Zia Brucaya, AICP, Senior Planner

Urban Assets
Today’s Presentation

1. Project Context
2. Public Engagement Goals & Process
3. Lessons Learned
Project Context
Monroe Street
Monroe Street
Existing Bike Routes
Active Living Index

Source: Capital Region Sustainable Communities, www.capitalregionscrpg.org/
Monroe’s curb-to-curb width ranges from 42-46 feet, with an average daily traffic volume of 14,000-23,000 cars.

If this was a new street in an undeveloped area:

**Street Typologies**

**Sustainable Madison Transportation Master Plan**

**Arterial - Raised Bike Lanes with Parking**
If this was a new street in an undeveloped area:
Public Engagement Process

May 2016 – August 2017
• Reconstruct Monroe Street as a “Green” Street

• Emphasizes sustainability principles related to complete streets, placemaking, walkability, green infrastructure and multi-modality
Timeline and Strategy

• 12-15 months
• Goals:
  – Successfully advance the project.
    • Two-stage approval process.
  – Engage the community in a meaningful way.
    • Identify shared priorities and respond to community needs and goals.
Tools

- Engagement Resource Team
- Community survey
- 2 business focus groups
- 2 green infrastructure focus groups
- Meetings & workshops
  - Kickoff
  - Ped, Bike, Transit World Café
  - Green Infrastructure World Café
  - Cross Section Workshop
  - Cross Section Open House
  - Wingra Park Entrance Workshop
  - Preliminary Design Workshop
  - Final Open House
Kickoff Meeting
“Headlines” Exercise

“Monroe Street a Model for Madison”

“Smooth Ride on Monroe”

“Madison’s Cooperative Spirit Realized on Monroe Street”

“A Greener, Safer Monroe Street Emerges”

“Businesses Thrive on Revitalized Monroe”


“Copenhagen Looks To Monroe Street For New Model Of Multi-Modal Transit And Placemaking”
Community Survey

- **2,779** responses
- 63% aged 31-60
- 47% live in a neighborhood other than Vilas or Dudgeon-Monroe
- 33% live within three blocks of Monroe Street
Community Survey Results

What qualities would you most like to see improved or invested in?

1. 54%: Walkability
2. 46%: “Green street” with more plant life and sustainable design
3. 43%: Bikeability
4. 42%: Comfortable commuting route
5. 40%: Vibrancy of the commercial districts
Community Survey Results

What is most important to achieve as a result of the Monroe Street reconstruction?

1. 70%: Better pedestrian-friendliness and safety
2. 65%: A reconstructed street, free of cracks and potholes
3. 51%: Better bike-friendliness and safety
4. 46%: A “greener” approach to stormwater management
5. 42%: Slower vehicular traffic
Takeaways - Priorities

#1: Improve walkability and pedestrian safety, especially at intersections.

- Destination street
- Multimodal enhancements
- Reduced speeds
- Good Metro access
- Improved parking
- Enhanced streetscape (peds, natural environment)
- Improved bike parking & connections
- Comfortable commuting route
- Sustainability demonstration opportunities.
Cross Section Workshop
Final Steps

• Cross section approved January 2017

• Additional meetings re: businesses and green infrastructure

• Preliminary design workshop July 2017
Design Results
Focus on Flexibility

• Unknown future transportation needs and vehicle technology changes
• Ongoing densification of Monroe Street corridor
• Trends toward alternatives to driving
• Potential bus rapid transit
• Future modifications can be made by simply changing paint & signage
Community Survey Results

What strategies would encourage you to access destinations on Monroe Street via walking?

1. More visible crosswalks
2. Slower automobile traffic
3. Less automobile traffic

1,268 responses
Pedestrian Improvements
Bus Stops, Parking, Bikes

Southwest Path x mi
Library x mi
Camp Randall Stadium x mi
Monroe St Business Dist. x mi
Edgewood Campus x mi
Bicycle Wayfinding

Considered widened sidewalk but not feasible at this time
Green Infrastructure

• On-street
  – Rock infiltration trench
  – Expanded tree grates
  – Catchbasins to collect sediment

• Off-street
  – Underground screen structure in Wingra Park
  – Side street rain gardens
Placemaking: Crazylegs Plaza
Lessons Learned
Keys to Success

1. Establish a good process & start early
2. Involve an interdisciplinary staff team
3. Organize an engagement resource team
4. Do a community survey to broaden participation
5. Use a variety of engagement tools:
   - We retain 90% of what we see, hear, and do.
   - Reinforce concepts.
   - Seeing is not always believing, but it helps.
Thank you!