

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: VERONA ROAD PROJECT FORGES HEIGHTENED SENSE OF COMMUNITY

WisDOT's Verona Road Reconstruction Stage 1 is an exemplary cost conscious, successfully planned and executed project that was forged through its local partnerships with the community and will provide long lasting economic benefits for the State of Wisconsin.

Community pride in the project was evident from the early stages, through construction, and beyond. Sense of community was embraced with the inclusion of three context sensitive design areas that WisDOT, local

stakeholders, locally selected artists, residents and children collaborated on, including a light box, a mosaic retaining wall, and four mosaic walls. More than 1,000 hours of community volunteer work was provided in developing and



Left and center - Mosaic tile panels created by local community members placed within boxouts of the project walls. Right - a community light box located at the entrance to the Allied Drive neighborhood.

producing the mosaics, including volunteers from Strand Associates. The projects have not been vandalized since implementation in 2015 – a testament to the sense of inclusiveness this project has generated among the community.

WisDOT and the Strand Associates design team spent a considerable amount of time interacting with the affected community through extensive public involvement. As shown to the



Community-made mosaics.

right, more than 150 meetings were held with local community groups, property and business owners, emergency services and transit services. The design team met with the local labor unions and community groups, such as the YWCA, at least quarterly to inform them of the specific workforce opportunities so they could train their local members. This led to several local community members working on the construction of the project.

150+ meetings were held within the community throughout the project:

1. Stakeholder =27
2. Individual Community Groups =15
3. Metro Transit =5
4. Individual Property Owners =100+
5. Local Businesses =1
6. Emergency Services =3

The project also nearly quadrupled the number of plantings in the corridor with the addition of more than 500 trees and shrubs of 20 native varieties.

– By Joe Bunker, P.M., Strand Associates, Inc.®