
Appendix G –Context Sensitive Solution Workshops and Historic Workshop

Context Sensitive Solutions Workshop Summary

I-94 Rehabilitation Project, Detroit, Michigan

March 16, 2004

INTRODUCTION

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is built around the belief that transportation projects serve the community more effectively when residents are involved in the planning and design process. CSS has been effectively employed throughout the United States for more than 10 years. In the past five years, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) began to integrate CSS type approaches into their projects on a trial basis.

MDOT has demonstrated past successes in Grand Rapids, Midland, and Kalamazoo. Providing support for MDOT's past activities, Michigan's Governor Granholm signed into legislation in 2003 the executive directive requiring Context Sensitive Design (CSD) approaches to be integrated into every major MDOT project.

The I-94 Rehabilitation Project had also demonstrated considerable success in including the community in its decision-making process. In October 2001, MDOT held an event entitled Mitigation Day that established the framework for community inclusion. Representatives from MDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the City of Detroit, and numerous civic and community groups from Detroit were invited and participated in the event.

Mitigation Day was intended to communicate both the technical and aesthetic issues related to the proposed rehabilitation of I-94. During the Mitigation Day sessions, MDOT recognized that issues needed to be clearly and simply articulated to establish a basis for feasible ideas. It was also clear that MDOT and civic groups and individuals may have different goals. Therefore, the central mission for all future community engagement sessions was to establish a common language and set of goals that all parties could understand and support.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS WORKSHOPS

As a continuation of Mitigation Day, MDOT held two Context Sensitive Solution Workshops (CSS Workshops) on February 24 and 26, 2004, in Detroit, to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide an update to residents and civic leaders on project activities;
- Define and demonstrate how CSS has worked in other communities across the nation;
- Define regional, neighborhood, and individual components of the highway corridor experience;

- Generate interest in creating partnerships for maintaining and building additional amenities associated with the rehabilitation of I-94; and,
- Begin to generate ideas/visions that could guide future design decisions.

An agenda (Attachment A) was created to accomplish the previously described objectives through a presentation and a 45-minute work session. The focus of the work session was to allow participants to generate large themes or ideas for the entire 6.7-mile corridor.

Each work group consisted of five to seven participants and a facilitator. The facilitator was a member of the consultant team and ensured that all ideas were heard and recorded. Each participant was encouraged to share ideas during the 45-minute small group session. At the conclusion of the session, each work group elected a speaker to report the overall ideas to all workshop participants. The ideas generally fell into three categories: themes, design, and partnerships. The ideas reported by each group's speaker were recorded on a written list.

After all the groups had reported, each participant was given two stickers. The stickers represented what each participant believed to be the most important comment and/or what should be further explored in future workshops. The participants placed the stickers on the ideas that were of greatest interest to them. These results were then reviewed with all workshop participants. The workshops were concluded by a MDOT representative who discussed future project activities. Results from each workshop are included (Attachment B).

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The work groups were successful, interactive sessions with many ideas being generated and shared. The placement of only two stickers by each participant stressed the importance of the need for visual clarity. As in their own work groups, participants wanted to avoid unrelated images or designs, or unnecessary distractions to motorists. The challenge is to focus on keeping the corridor vibrant and unique, but at the same time, telling Detroit's story.

The following themes gained strong support during the two workshops to be further explored:

- Detroit's Great Lakes Connection;
- The Terminus of the Underground Railroad;
- Detroit – City of Firsts, Historical Transportation; and
- Detroit – City of Modern Music.

Participants would like to see these themes further examined in future workshops. Workshop participants were especially enthusiastic about opportunities for artwork and contributions from local artists to help uniquely define the corridor. Wall patterns, colors, landscaping, statuary, and even music played on a dedicated radio station were all specific ideas that gained support in the workshops.

Each participant was given a survey to complete regarding the workshop and their future interest in the project. Eleven surveys were completed and returned. The survey asked four basic questions:

1. What are your interests in the I-94 Rehabilitation Study?
2. What aspect of the workshop was helpful?
3. What suggestions would you make to improve the workshop?
4. General comments.

Based on the completed surveys, the majority of respondents expressed interest in a number of topics including potential project impacts, transportation system improvements, or the overall appearance of the proposed improvements. The surveys indicated that most participants felt the work group sessions were helpful. Others stated the project update was helpful. Only a few suggestions were given to improve the workshops. These suggestions focused on their interest to continue with the process and to provide more visually oriented activities leading toward more design detail. There was a predominance of comments stating that the workshops were well done and a worthwhile activity.

ATTACHMENT A

I-94 Rehabilitation Project

Context Sensitive Solutions Workshops Agenda

February 24th: 2:30 – 5:00 pm at the African American Museum, Detroit

February 26th: 6:00 – 8:30 pm at the St. Regis Hotel, Detroit

1. Introductions (00:00 – 15:00)
 - Project (user friendly purpose and need)
 - Workshop Goals (concept, theme, and partnerships)
 - Individuals (organizations, city, consultants)
Speakers: Mohammed Alghurabi (MDOT)
Paul Fontaine (SmithGroup JJR)
2. Project History and Community Context (15:00 – 25:00)
 - Past corridor analysis
 - Recommended Alternative
 - Project activities, schedule
Speaker: Barb Arens (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
3. Partnering and Community-Friendly Solutions (25:00 – 1:00)
 - Partnership opportunities
 - Recent trends
 - Examples from other cities
Speakers: Pete Frantz (Parsons Brinckerhoff, Partnerships)
Steve Ott (SmithGroup JJR, Landscape Architecture)
4. Examples and Work Session Instructions (1:00 – 1:15)
 - Photoshop Simulations (abstract, natural, historical, etc.)
 - Goals: Brainstorm ideas for stories/themes/concepts – and group evaluation
 - Ground rules
Speaker: Paul Fontaine (SmithGroup JJR)

BREAK

5. Working Groups (1:15 – 2:00)
 - Prioritize concerns
 - List prevailing ideas regarding themes, design, and partnerships
Facilitation: Lorri Sipes (SmithGroup), Steve Ott (SmithGroup JJR), Barb Arens (Parsons Brinckerhoff), and Pete Frantz (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
6. Presentations and Synthesis (2:00 – 2:20)
 - Points of agreement and shared issues
 - Emerging themes and concepts
Speaker: Elected table representative
Facilitation: Paul Fontaine (SmithGroup JJR)
7. Next Steps (2:20 – 2:30)
 - Future activities
 - Point of contact
Speaker: Mohammed Alghurabi (MDOT)

ATTACHMENT B
I-94 Rehabilitation Project
Context Sensitive Solutions Workshops
SmithGroup JJR
March 2, 2004

NOTE: The following workshop summaries are organized as follows:

1. The overall group summaries are listed first. P. Fontaine facilitated the creation of a master list based on each group's reporting on their individual effort. The number in parenthesis represents how many dots each idea received. Dots were used only on the group list and not individual group results.
2. Individual Group Results

February 24, 2004

OVERALL GROUP SUMMARY

DESIGN IDEAS

- Streetscape/overpass treatments (1)
- Skyline details
- Appropriate, distinct lighting (1)
- Natural colors (1)
- Classic theme, no clutter, simple (1)
- Gateways: place identity, cultural identity (5.5)
- Difference between service drives and canyon (2)
- Historic, Woodward
- Graffiti wall
- Artwork in retaining wall
- Remember human scale

THEMES/IDEAS

- Four seasons
- Phrases/uniqueness
- Home of firsts (1)
- Transportation
- Neighborhood differentiation
- Unified, sense of linkage (service drives)
- Nature in the city (1.5)
- Music/Motown (abstract) (2)
- Arsenal of democracy
- State of Michigan, as a whole (lakes, Canada, boating, freighters)

- Bridges, shapes/materials (2)
- Historical/places of interest, wayfinding (2.5)
- Commerce (1.5)
- Landscape, large/small scale

PARTNERSHIPS

- Adopt-A-Highway (maintenance, corporations)
- Corporations, CDC, neighborhoods, hospitals

WORKING SESSIONS

Group 1 Facilitator: S. Ott, SmithGroup JJR

DESIGN IDEAS

- Appropriate lighting – no light pollution
- Natural colors - low maintenance, then details
- Classic image, theme
- Minimal distractions
- Color for emphasis/interest
- Human scale – service drives
- Bold statement
- Gateway idea
- Place name identity – neighborhood, cultural identity (Midtown, Motown, New Center)

THEMES

- Nature in the city (state symbols, i.e., white pine, robin, apple blossom)
- Motown, music
- Children of the future
- Continuous abstract design

PARTNERSHIPS

- Neighborhood involvement
- Adopt-a-Highway – for communities, neighborhoods
- Private corporations

Group 2 Facilitator: P. Frantz (Parsons Brinckerhoff)

- Arsenal of Democracy
- Simple, sophisticated

- Sense of linkage, show local attractions
- Identification of locale
- Represent whole state connection
- Start with a core at cultural and develop themes outward
- Great lakes state
- Gateway to Canada
- Woodward, M-1
- Connectivity, gateway
- Replicate famous Michigan bridges with local bridges
- Four seasons, outdoor themes
- Sports collage
- Distinctive lighting to call attention to locales
- Dedication section of wall for graffiti (service drives)
- Historical and places of interest
- Commerce – connectivity, gateway

Group 3 Facilitator: L. Sipes (SmithGroup JJR)

THEMES

- East meets west – bring entire corridor together
- Music
- Transportation – rail, river, auto
- Landscaping – large scale to balance concrete

DESIGN IDEAS

- Artwork – local artists can place art in their community
- Cultures – people, different ethnicities along corridor
- Music
- Transportation history – river, automobiles, rail
- International
- Come together as a community – individual, businesses (billboards, bridges, walls, color)
- Landscaping – larger scale, healthy image, to balance major concrete
- Texture/color – greenbelt, lighting accentuates all across seven miles
- Fit within entire theme with unique element – WSU, historic district, hospitals, schools
- Balance interesting visually vs. distracting
- Scale large enough to be immediately recognizable
- More intricate details for pedestrian
- Color inherent in materials
- Consistent design, lighting, materials, color throughout corridor
- Senses – seasonal flowering, leaves falling

PARTNERSHIPS

- Businesses – Adopt-a-bridge, implement the plan
- Corporations
- Communities
- Chamber of Commerce
- CDC's
- Service groups
- Hospitals

Group 4 Facilitator: B. Arens (Parson Brinckerhoff)

- Symbols, such as images or words, on retaining walls
Buildings, shapes – RenCen, Strohs, Vernors, Better-Made, hospitals, museums
Words – not brands, i.e., Greektown, New Center
- Message of “Firsts” – freeways, traffic signal, concrete, Motown, M-10, autos, original in sports teams
- Different street sign treatment on overpasses to beautify
- Neighborhood differentiation – symbol, names, themes
- Bridge fencing – skyline of Detroit, making entering more elaborate
- Exit renaming only for study area – treat exits as gateways, wayfinding to distinguish newly redone section of I-94
- Crossing the bridge – have an emblem on each structure, possible community collaboration with WSU and neighborhoods to identify with their own neighborhood
- Is there a single symbol to put on freeway, street signs, etc. to unify area
- Bigger players to participate such as GM, hospitals, DIA, with ideas
- History of sports teams – boxing, baseball, hockey

February 26, 2004:

OVERALL GROUP SUMMARY

THEMES

- Autos
- Music (2.5)
- Underground railroad (2.5)
- Southern connection/migration
- Multi-ethnic
- Labor/jobs
- Transportation/mobility – urban
- History of transportation (3)

- One theme with variations/adaptability
- Integrate the mainline and service drive with a theme experience (1)

DESIGN IDEAS

- Murals, local artists
- Landscape – topiary, tall trees
- Bridges – details
- Lighting – historic
- Pedestrian shelters (2)
- Interdisciplinary team (2)
- Separate pedestrians and bicyclists (2)
- Adaptable art nodes (2)
- Solar activation

PARTNERSHIPS

- Pewabic pottery
- Wayne State University
- Competitions
- DIA
- CCS
- Neighborhoods
- Art on the Move (1)
- Grants
- International involvement
- Henry Ford Hospital
- Big 3
- DMC

WORKING SESSIONS

Group 1 Facilitators: S. Ott, L. Sipes (SmithGroup JJR)

THEMES

- Automobiles
- Music – notes, records, instruments, people/artists, murals, jazz, specific genre to locations
- Underground railroad – 300 at Hart Plaza connect to Windsor
- Southern connection – migration, jobs
- Multiple ethnicities – Mexicantown, Hamtramck
- Urban heritage link – auto heritage route, M-1
- Transport/mobility – Davison first highway, walking, bus, river, car, streetcar, Detroit street railway (DSR), inter-urban
- Labor

- Civil rights

DESIGN IDEAS

- Bring in local artists – Woodward to 75, north and south of I-94
- Scale of details differs –mainline versus pedestrian bridges
- Instruments in topiary – pedestrian scale
- Piers at bridges – musical instruments, imprinted
- Bridges – details at pedestrian scale, consistent bridges, details specific to neighborhood
- Demark pedestrian space separately from vehicles (bollards)
- Lighting – historic now being designed (2nd, Cass, Woodward)
- Connect New Center and WSU
- Bus, pedestrian, service drives must be coordinated
- Pedestrian experience – how to enhance it (lighting, details, medallions, plantings, topiary, sculptures unique to neighborhoods, artists)
- Partial height walls – avoid cavern
- Plantings – hanging, draping, soften it

PARTNERSHIPS

- Pewabic Pottery
- Local artists
- Center for Creative Studies
- WSU
- Corporations, businesses
- Neighborhood associations
- DIA
- Foundations
- Motown Museum

Group 2 Facilitators: B. Arens, P. Frantz (Parsons Brinckerhoff)

PARTNERSHIPS

- WSU Departments - art and art history, engineering
- DIA
- Center for Creative Studies
- Local artists through community interaction
- Henry Ford Hospital
- Detroit Medical Center
- Art on the Move
- General Motors
- MDOT provide matching funds for grant applications

DESIGN IDEAS

- Create designs that change with sun angle to change appearance over course of day
- Provisions for pedestrians and bikes
- Integrate themes along mainline and on service drives
- Art nodes – rotating displays for public art
- Open competition to design elements
- International/ethnic areas involvement in theme development
- More use of tall trees
- Make structures to provide shelter to pedestrians – particularly in cold weather

THEMES

- Basic theme with variations in individual details – main theme, landscaping, retaining wall
- Provision to change components over time to make new over time
- Interdisciplinary team to work on ideas native to Detroit – biologists, anthropologists, historians, artists
- Create a theme to change by area

Meeting Summary – Historic Resources, Section 106 Workshop

Project Name: I-94 Rehabilitation Study

Date: December 11, 2003, 5:00 – 7:30 pm

Location: Wayne State University

The following is a summary of the Section 106 Workshop conducted on December 11, 2003 from 5 – 7:30 pm at Wayne State University. The purpose of this workshop was to generate mitigation strategies for three identified historical resources, which will be adversely affected by the rehabilitation of I-94. All of the properties are individually listed or part of a district that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Paul Fontaine, SmithGroup JJR (SG JJR) began the meeting by introducing himself and then sharing his favorite Detroit moment and Detroit resource and allowed others to do the same.

History of the I-94 Study

Barb Arens, Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) provided a summary of the project and impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative. Alternatives from the DEIS registered approximately 600 direct impacts to various resources. However, these impacts were reduced to approximately 50 in subsequent alternatives through the use of avoidance techniques and public and agency input.

Section 106 Process, Resources and Impacts

Lorri Sipes, SmithGroup (SG), briefly outlined the four steps in the Section 106 process. Properties that may be affected must first be identified and their historical significance evaluated (NRHP listed or eligible). Each resource then undergoes a complete assessment of potential adverse effects. The third step involves consultation with the public, and local, state, and federal entities to resolve the identified adverse effects. Issuance of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is the final step in the Section 106 process. The MOA outlines the agreed upon efforts to mitigate for the identified adverse effects. Ms. Sipes identified the three affected properties and gave a brief history for each. The historic sites are: 5287 Hecla (single-family home in the Woodbrige Historic District), M-10 (Lodge Freeway)/ I-94 interchange, and the United Sound Systems Recording Studio (northeast quadrant of Second Street and I-94). Rehabilitation of I-94 requires the removal of the two historical buildings. The M-10/I-94 interchange will remain but would undergo reconstruction.

Brainstorming

Mr. Fontaine began this portion of the workshop by laying out four ground rules for the brainstorming session:

- there are no bad ideas;
- ideas will not be evaluated;
- only one person speaking at a time; and
- if someone suggests a great idea but the idea doesn't relate to mitigation, the idea will be placed into the "parking lot" for later consideration.

The attached table includes all of the ideas generated and organized by historic resource including the "parking lot."

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Siersma

Attachment

Mitigation Ideas – Section 106 Workshop, December 11, 2003

I-94 Rehabilitation Project

Hecla House
One of a few remaining wood worker's cottage in area
Move building to another site
New housing in Woodbridge District based on this housing type, use vacant lots – make I-94 work for residential development, trees, sidewalks, respect existing connections
M-10/I-94 Interchange
Permanent model of interchange at WSU
Plexiglass information station
Documentary
Use architectural elements that evoke era of original construction
Wider bridges with landscaping/lighting
Naming opportunities
United Sound Systems Recording Studio (USS)
Music is the story, not the building so make recording of all the music recorded there
Incorporate memory of USS into Mosaic Youth theater group at New Center
Play USS recordings on dedicated radio station
Play USS music at former site
AM station – jamming device
Move building to new site
Unearth/showcase musical legacy of Detroit
List story of USS on the following Web sites: Electronic Music Festival, UCCA & New Center

“Parking Lot”/Corridor Ideas
Survey – info/where are the music sites around Detroit
Map that shows Detroit historical attractions (Motown) – e.g. Savannah, GA and <i>Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil</i>
Advertise ANH – Motorcities Web site
Concerns: 3 lanes of service drive (too wide?)
Concrete wall treatments, e.g. people mover stations, tile installations, murals, reflect culture of Detroit, albums of USS, art opportunities
Community involvement in process – create partnerships/collaborations – develop ownership
Design competition – healing
Artifact in physical environment
What’s the first color you think of when I say I-94? Green/blue, brick red
Make this segment of I-94 timeless/classic but capture history – ensure can be maintained
What’s the first word that comes to your mind? – gritty (good), cars, university, trees, noise (2), history, Motown, movement (2), silver, forward
Name the reconstructed segment of I-94