

M-72 / M-33 Mio: Slope Improvements

Context

The project location was at the northwest corner of the M-72/ M-33 intersection in the community of Mio. The intersection has the only traffic signal in Oscoda County. The county is a popular destination for canoeing and fishing on the AuSable River and other outdoor recreational activities.



Purpose and Description

The purpose of the project was to create an attractive slope at the most visible location in the community. The concrete slope paving was unattractive and was redesigned to make the steep slope an asset to the community and improve the visual impact.

Public Engagement

The Alpena TSC Development staff met frequently with the owner of the property during the design of the area. The TSC also worked closely with the Downtown Development Association during design to make sure that the streetscape incorporated local history into the streetscape and that the plan fit their vision.

Challenges

The main challenges was creating an attractive slope at a reasonable cost without impacting the foundation of the Statewide Real Estate office. Working with the property owner who was skeptical of MDOT's intentions for the slope was also challenging. The property owner had a bad experience when the slope paving was completed in the 1980s.

Context Sensitive Solutions Approach

Community involvement was key in the streetscape improvements in Mio. By working with the Downtown Development Association and the Statewide Real Estate property owners, MDOT was able to arrive at a vision for the project and the transformation of the corner.



Outcome

Working with specialists from MDOT's Construction and Technology, a four-tiered landscape retaining wall was designed. The height of the individual walls removed the need for a tieback system that would have impacted the foundation of the building. This retaining wall system transformed the slope paving into an attractive feature at the intersection. As can be noted from the photographs, roadway improvements can spur owners to improve their storefronts.

Funding

The slope improvements were funded through the transportation enhancement program, MDOT matching funds, and local funding.

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