

Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program



Michigan Placemaking in Action...

Grand Rapids Bioretention Islands on Plainfield Avenue

Before:



After:



The Plainfield Avenue Bioretention Islands project in Grand Rapids is a great example of how public agencies and the private sector can effectively work together to build public infrastructure that accomplishes multiple objectives. This project used federal, local and private funds to finance street improvements that included the installation of seven bioretention islands and bike lanes. This collaborative project brought numerous positive impacts to the area.

Placemaking Impacts:

- **Economic and community development:** The project that envisioned by the business community and neighborhoods who were even willing to invest private funds, expecting economic returns. The business association reported the purchase of vacant storefronts along the corridor. One investor commented that his decision to purchase property along the corridor was based on the improvement this project would bring.
- **Increased exposure for local businesses:** Traffic is slowed, allowing increased exposure and awareness for local businesses.
- **Added aesthetic value of plantings:** The plantings contribute to an improved quality of life, making this corridor a more attractive place to live, work, and do business.
- **Safety improvements:** Motorist, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety is greatly improved with the addition of a left-turn lane and bike lanes.
- **Water quality improvements:** Storm water is stored and filtered within the islands, improving the quality of runoff to the Grand River and increasing groundwater recharge.
- **Air quality improvements:** Plantings and increased tree canopy in the islands treats air pollution and reduces the urban heat island effect of the roadway.

Funding:

- **Federal TE Grant:** \$146,667
- **Private Businesses and Individuals:** \$84,200
- **Foundations:** \$70,000
- **City of Grand Rapids:** \$30,000

“Vital business districts are critical components of a livable city and a strong economy. Great neighborhoods and vital business districts go hand-in-hand; one cannot succeed without the success of the other. The choices that are made in locating and designing business districts are also important factors in creating a walkable city and supporting transit.”

- City of Grand Rapids Master Plan 2002

For more information, please visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLYX6tp_6zg