



Lilac Way Legacy Project Award

Recalling the History of a Bygone Era

The Lilac Way Legacy Project is the 4th in a series of AASHTO Legacy Projects selected in cities that host the AASHTO conference to commemorate transportation's influence on local and state development. Lilac Way was chosen for its place-sensitive design, strong historic and cultural preservation effort and extensive citizen involvement. The partnerships that developed with communities, citizens and local organizations resulted in unique solutions, strengthened working relationships and paved the way to more pleasing, mutually acceptable facilities that will leave a lasting legacy.

Legacy of Lilac Way

The original 12.5 mile Lilac Way segment of Mn/DOT's Highway 100 reconstruction project was a beautifully landscaped parkway west of Minneapolis, Minnesota, constructed through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to stimulate the economy during our nation's worst depression.

- ◆ Lilac Way was constructed between 1934 and 1941 as the first segment of a 66-mile, four-lane beltline highway around the Twin Cities
- ◆ It included state-of-the-art cloverleaf interchanges that set the stage for future freeways
- ◆ Wayside parks were added with handcrafted limestone picnic tables, ovens and ponds
- ◆ Lilac Way's unique beautification plan included hundreds of lilacs, trees and shrubs

A Context Sensitive Design

In 2000, Mn/DOT began reconstructing the Lilac Way segment of Highway 100 into a six-lane divided freeway to accommodate growing travel demand.

- ◆ Care was taken to safely integrate highway improvements with the surrounding environment
- ◆ Individuals and communities were involved in design and landscaping decisions
- ◆ When the project is completed in summer of 2004, the result will be a safer, more efficient roadway with design features that preserve the historic attributes of the route

Preserving Living History

Individuals and community groups worked with Mn/DOT and other agencies before and during construction to preserve the spirit, resources and memories of Lilac Way.

- ◆ Some wayside parks in Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park will be revitalized after reconstruction
- ◆ Hundreds of the original lilacs will be replanted or moved to new locations along Highway 100
- ◆ A documentary film was aired locally that includes historic photos and interviews with locals

Lilac Way Legacy Project Partners

Minnesota Department of Transportation; State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO);
Minnesota State Historical Society; Federal Highway Administration;
Twin Cities Public Television;

Local communities, residents and motorists who value the legacy of Lilac Way