



CHALLENGE

WHEN YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN HAD SPECIFIC CONCERNS ABOUT TRAFFIC ON AND OFF CAMPUS, THEY CAME TO MS TO FIND A LONG-TERM SOLUTION.

SERVICES

- Transportation Planning
- Traffic Engineering

CORRIDOR STUDY – YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

Similar to many urban campuses, Youngstown State University manages a mix of vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle travel. As the economic situation made active transportation modes more prevalent, the campus saw an increase in scooter and motorcycle use being added to the daily vehicle blend.

To improve safety and ambiance, the city of Youngstown is undertaking a comprehensive engineering study to determine enhancements for all travel modes on city streets throughout the campus of the university. YSU had already established a good reputation as

a desirable place to earn a degree and as having an attractive campus. However, there were specific concerns and desires for improvements to enhance both YSU and the city's sense of place:

- Pedestrian safety
- Parking
- Connectivity between YSU and the Central Business District

- Wayfinding
- Gateway aesthetics
- Consistent look/transition between campus and adjacent land uses

CORRIDOR STUDY

This study examined the existing and future conditions for the above areas. The conditions were analyzed to assist with identifying improvement options. HCS and SYNCHRO/SimTraffic software was used to analyze and identify operational problems, test possible solutions and develop optimized signal timings along Fifth Avenue and Wick Avenue. Evaluation of pedestrian, bicycle and other modal needs were also addressed, including vehicle speeds and safety issues.

The project team worked with the city and identified stakeholder groups to gain consensus on the problem areas, as well as an understanding of their desires for stimulating attractive streetscapes. Issues related to vehicle and pedestrian circulation, parking availability, safety and security, and historically significant structures were assessed and integrated into the frameworks adopted by the city, YSU and Wick Neighbors, Inc. Existing student housing and new student residence and athletic projects, like The Flats at Wick and the, then proposed, WATTS

athletic practice facility needed to be accounted for in assessing the traffic and pedestrian demands. High use event crossings, such as along Fifth Avenue at Lexington and Spring Streets, needed particular attention. The east-west routes of Lincoln and Rayen Avenues were also studied for ways to steady traffic speeds and improve parking.

Options were identified for improvements in the YSU study area. For example, Wick Avenue, functioning as the gateway to the educational and cultural center, was noted to benefit from upgrades to pedestrian crossings, new signing, lighting, safer sidewalks and improved landscaping. The study noted that new, user-friendly crosswalks at the intersections and at warranted mid-block locations could be designed with decorative stamping to accentuate their presence. Utility and right of way impacts had constant attention through the planning process. Community groups were active and united to improve the livability, walkability and resurgence of Youngstown.

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

One strategy was to improve connectivity for all users – whether they are walkers, bicyclists, transit patrons or motorists between the Central Business District and YSU. This project focused on similar strategies to enhance the safety and visual appeal of the entire area by first evaluating the conditions and then recommending measures that can improve pedestrian travel, bicycle facilities and signal operations, while calming traffic and providing attractive ADA compliant crosswalks. Roadway, parking, lighting, traffic signal and lane use conditions were also evaluated relative to making effective improvements at reasonable cost.