

---

## WISCONSIN DOWNTOWN ACTION COUNCIL DOWNTOWN PROJECT CASE STUDY PROFILE

---

**Date:** January, 2007

**Project Name**

Onalaska Main Street Enhancements

---

**Project Location**

City of Onalaska

---

**Project Type** (check all that apply)

- Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Adaptive Reuse
  - Redevelopment
  - Signage
  - Creative Partnership
  - Financing
  - Mixed Use
  - Historic Preservation
  - Transportation
  - Open Space
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Project Completion Date/Schedule**

2000

---

**Brief Project Description**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation reconstructed Main Street in the year 2000. The project offered an opportunity to use enhancement funding for expanded streetscape design and improvements. The City used approximately \$275,000 in enhancement funds combined with a \$35,000 in private donations to enhance the reconstruction project with unique lighting, curb 'knock outs' colored pavers, benches, and lighted masonry columns. The end result transformed Onalaska's Main Street into a beautiful public place and resulted in private reinvestment in the area.

---

---

---



**Project Location**

Main Street from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to STH 35-The Great River Road

---

**Site Size**

6 blocks

---

**Land Uses**

Commercial Service, Retail, Institutional and Residential

---

**Key Words, Special Features**

Streetscape, transportation enhancements, public realm

---

---

**Project Address**

Main Street

---

**Owner**

The City of Onalaska

---

**Developer**

The City of Onalaska/ the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

---

**Architect**

N/A

---

**Landscape Architect**

Smithgroup JJR

---

**Other Key Development Members**

Private Philanthropists



---

### **General Description (Use, Density, Partners, Strategy, Details...)**

The Onalaska Main Street Project was a coordinated project between the City and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The City hired Smithgroup JJR, using enhancement funds, to prepare design and construction drawings for 6 blocks of Main Street, to be bid and constructed in conjunction with the Wisconsin DOT reconstruction of Main Street. Taking advantage of the timing and funding availability, the City was able to accomplish a realm of different design enhancements to the Main Street reconstruction project including colored pavers, curb knock-outs, specialty lighting, decorative medallions on the lights, and lighted masonry columns with engraved stone showing the City's logo. The City was fortunate to have significant public involvement by Centering Onalaska, a citizen advocacy group, whose members attended meetings and influenced the end design with natural themes. The City also sought out and found a special roadway light, manufactured by LUMEC, that met WisDOT lighting standards and qualified for 80% funding. The City also had an 1800's era drinking fountain recast by a local foundry and installed two in the Main Street area. These are now frequently visited by passersby. Lastly, the City Planning Department created a gift brochure, whereby citizens could purchase streetscape items. This effort raised \$35,000 toward the overall effort.

### **Site Description (Infill, Adjacencies, Transportation, Age, Opportunities...)**

Main Street (STH 157) is a two lane roadway with on-street parking flanked by commercial and residential uses from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the east to STH 35 on the west. It is an axis around which the original City was developed and has a soon-to-be recaptured vista on it's west end of the magnificent Mississippi River Valley, the bluffs of Minnesota clearly visible. This public investment was done in part to give private investors confidence in the City's intent to assist the area in economic development and redevelopment, setting a standard for new investment with the use of quality materials and attractive design.

### **Development Process (Explain, in detail, the development story)**

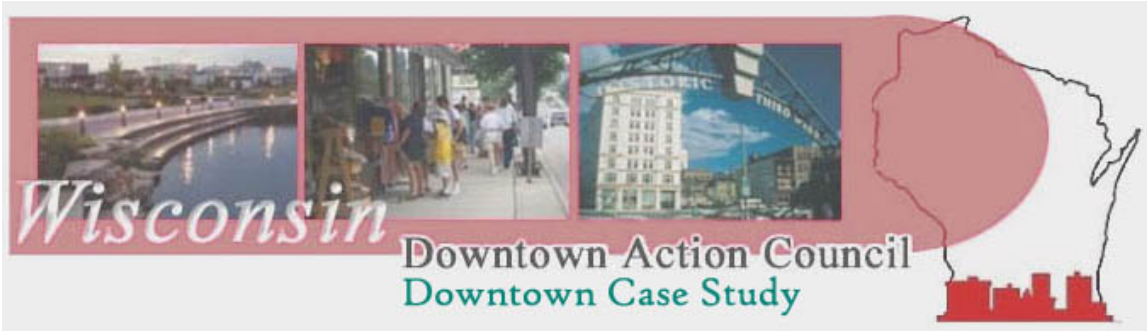
The City contacted the Wisconsin Department of Transportation early after learning of their plans to reconstruct the roadway in the WisDOT 6 Year Plan. Meeting with WisDOT officials, we strategized on an enhancement project, potential funding sources and the necessary coordination between the City and WisDOT. Public engagement was instrumental in obtaining strong community support for the project and funding.

### **Planning and Design (Partners, Challenges, Tools Used, Innovation...)**

The City engaged Smithgroup JJR after a lengthy qualification based selection process. Smithgroup furthered the public engagement process, delivering a unique design and amenities for the streetscape project. Local businesses and citizens participated in influencing the design and features to be included.

---

---



**Approvals and Permitting (Agencies, Challenges, Costs, What was learned...)**

The City maintained excellent communication and coordination with WisDOT officials throughout the design process to insure a smooth implementation process.

---

---

**Financing (Partners, Level of Participation, Equity, Grants, Loans, Revenue...)**

\$275,000 in State enhancement funding plus \$35,000 in local donations largely funded the project. The City did budget an additional \$50,000 to cover the local share of the enhancement work.

---

---

**Marketing and Management (Keys to success, Promotion, Target audiences...)**

The facilitation of public involvement and support for a long range vision was critical to the project's success. The City's consultant Smithgroup JJR, a well-qualified planning firm, was also important to the projects success.

---

---

---

---

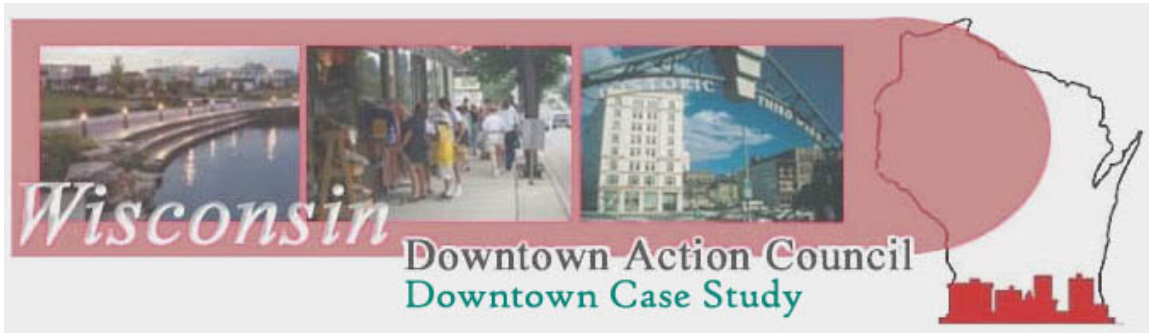
---

---

**Experience Gained (Key Issues, Difficulties, Challenges overcome, Solutions..)**

The City had to investigate lighting styles and manufacturers that met WisDOT's performance standards in order for the lighting to qualify for State funding. We were successful in finding a fixture by LUMEC that met these standards, resulting in a higher level of State funding for the lighting, creating more opportunity for local funding to be used elsewhere in the design.

---



## General Project Data

<b>Land Use Data</b>				
Site Area: 6 Blocks				
Percentage Complete: 100%				
Gross Density:N/A				
Number of Off Street Parking Spaces: N/A				
<b>Land Use Plan</b>				
Use: Commercial/ Residential		Acres	Percentage of Site	
Buildings:				
Streets/ Surface Parking:				
Landscaping/Open:				
Total:				
<b>Residential Information</b>				
Unit Type	Number of Units	Area/ Square Feet	Percentage Leased	Initial Rental /Sales Price
<b>Commercial Information</b>				
Classification/Type		Number of Stores/Spaces	Total Gross Land Area	
<b>Development Cost Information</b>				
Site Acquisition Cost: N/A				
Site Improvement Costs:				
Public Infrastructure: None				
Demolition: None				
Relocation: None				
Environmental: None				
Paving:				
Structures:				
Total Construction Costs: \$350,000				
Soft Costs:				
Architecture and Engineering: 10%+/-				
Marketing:				
Taxes/ Insurance:				
Construction Interest and Fees:				
Other:				
<b>Development Schedule</b>				
Planning: 8 months				
Site Purchase: N/A				
Demolition: N/A				
Construction: 4 months				
Sales/ Leasing/ Occupancy:				
Project Completion: 2000				

