

M-32 Alpena: Future Widening

Context

The project location is M-32 from Lake Winyah Road east to just east of Bagley Street in the city of Alpena in Alpena County.

Purpose and Description

The project will involve widening M-32 in the commercial area west of the Alpena city limits. The reconstruction of M-32 at this location is a high profile project. This portion of M-32 has the highest daily traffic volumes in the area.



Public Engagement

It was important to engage the public early. A stakeholder meeting was conducted in the fall of 2004 introducing the project and gathering public comment on the project area. Development staff have been in contact with affected business owners listening to their needs and presenting possible solutions. The development staff is planning a second stakeholder meeting to gather further public comment on preliminary design.

Challenges

There are many components to this project creating many challenges. Business access disruption must be kept to a minimum. A harsh landscape exists due to large utility pole locations within the project limits. Non-motorized access is not available throughout the project limits even though there exists a need for such facilities.

Context Sensitive Solutions Approach

The development staff has notified business or property owners of potential inconveniences due to construction. The design team met early with representatives from Alpena Township and developed a partnership to seek funding sources to beautify and place non-motorized facilities along the project limits. The Alpena TSC and Alpena Township hosted a stakeholder meeting in the fall of 2004 and received public comment and input that directed the design team to include beautification and non-motorized elements along the corridor.

Outcome

The public's need for non-motorized facilities was determined early in the design process, allowing the project to include these needed features. The solution to softening the large utility lines along the corridor is to plant of large numbers of trees, including flowering types, and the installation of decorative lighting to bring the driver's eye away from the utility lines.

Funding

The construction of non-motorized facilities, including a 10-foot hot mix asphalt path and 5-foot sidewalk, is funded as part of the existing road construction. Beautification elements are to be funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program, MDOT, and Alpena Township.

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