

January 11, 2019



2019 Project Award Nomination

Westlake Boulevard Sidewalk Improvements City of Thousand Oaks





Westlake Boulevard Sidewalks

Project Overview

Westlake Boulevard (State Route 23) is a busy and active thoroughfare of the City. It is part of the City's "scenic highway system" and a popular bicycle and pedestrian route (designated Class II bike lanes in the City's Bicycle Facilities Master Plan). This corridor did not have continuous sidewalks, which required pedestrians to walk in the bike lanes or shoulder. At the U.S. 101 interchange, pedestrians and bicyclists had to navigate through the northbound and southbound on-ramps. Over the past four years there were multiple bicycle-vehicle collisions in this area. The City received Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grant funding to improve pedestrian and bike safety on Westlake Boulevard from Triunfo Canyon Road to the northbound US 101 ramps (approximately 1.1 miles).

This \$1.45 M project addressed these important pedestrian and bicycle safety issues by providing:

- new continuous sidewalks
- enhanced green bicycle markings including bicycle box and bicycle loop detectors
- curb ramp construction and rehabilitation
- high visibility crosswalk marking
- rectangular rapid flashing beacons at all four US 101 on-ramps

The sidewalks provide pedestrians a safer travel way. High visibility crosswalks improve safety by enhancing the pedestrian route, and curb ramps were reconstructed to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The enhanced bicycle markings will allow motorists and cyclists to travel in their respective lanes, thus avoiding confusion and lowering risk of collision at intersections and the US 101/Westlake Boulevard interchange. Rectangular rapid flashing beacons were installed at the US 101 southbound and northbound on-ramps to provide advanced warning for vehicles that a pedestrian is entering an uncontrolled crossing.

Since the project is located in a scenic corridor with a lot of public interest, special care was taken to manage and address the existing mature trees and landscape along the route. The project included meandering



Residents enjoy a stroll on the new, safe sidewalks

sidewalks, retaining curbs, slough walls and retaining walls to minimize impact to trees. Public outreach and community meetings were held which resulted in enhanced landscaping, a parallel decomposed granite path and vista sitting areas.

Project Team



Project Owner
City of Thousand Oaks



Design Engineer
MNS Engineers, Inc.



Contractor
Toro Enterprises



Environmental Consulting
Padre Associates, Inc.

LANDMARK DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Landscape Architecture
Landmark Design



Before



After

Construction Management Techniques



Construction of sidewalks

Construction of the Westlake Boulevard project was substantially complete on-time in October 2018. Time was of the essence for completing construction due to time constraints associated with the federal grant.

Westlake Boulevard is State Route 23 south of US 101; therefore, the project was constructed via a Caltrans encroachment permit. The construction team coordinated diligently with Caltrans field staff to keep the project schedule on track. In addition, the project required coordination with three projects: Caltrans sidewalk rehabilitation project which preceded this project, Caltrans pavement rehabilitation which will follow this project, and the City's annual pavement rehabilitation project, which ran concurrently. As part of the close coordination and cooperation, the Caltrans pavement overlay project will install the Green Bike Lane striping on Westlake Boulevard.

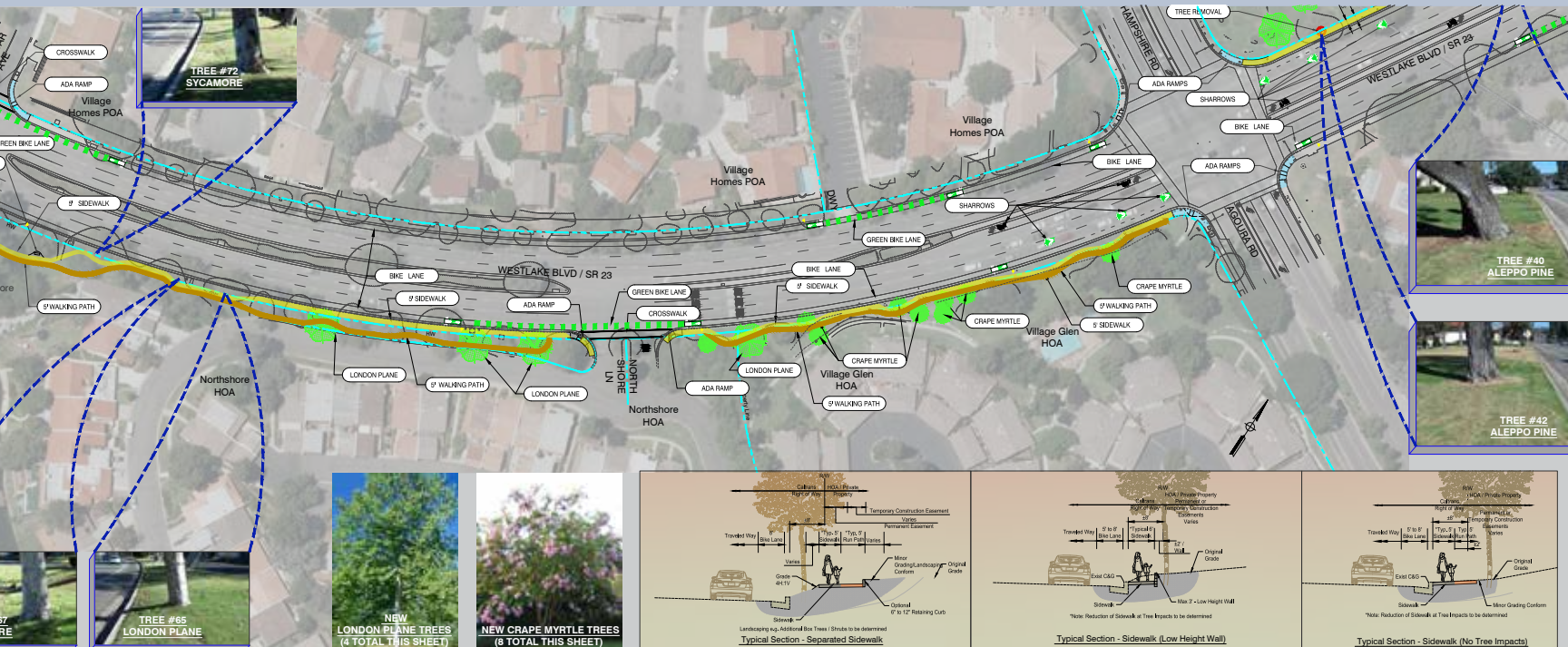
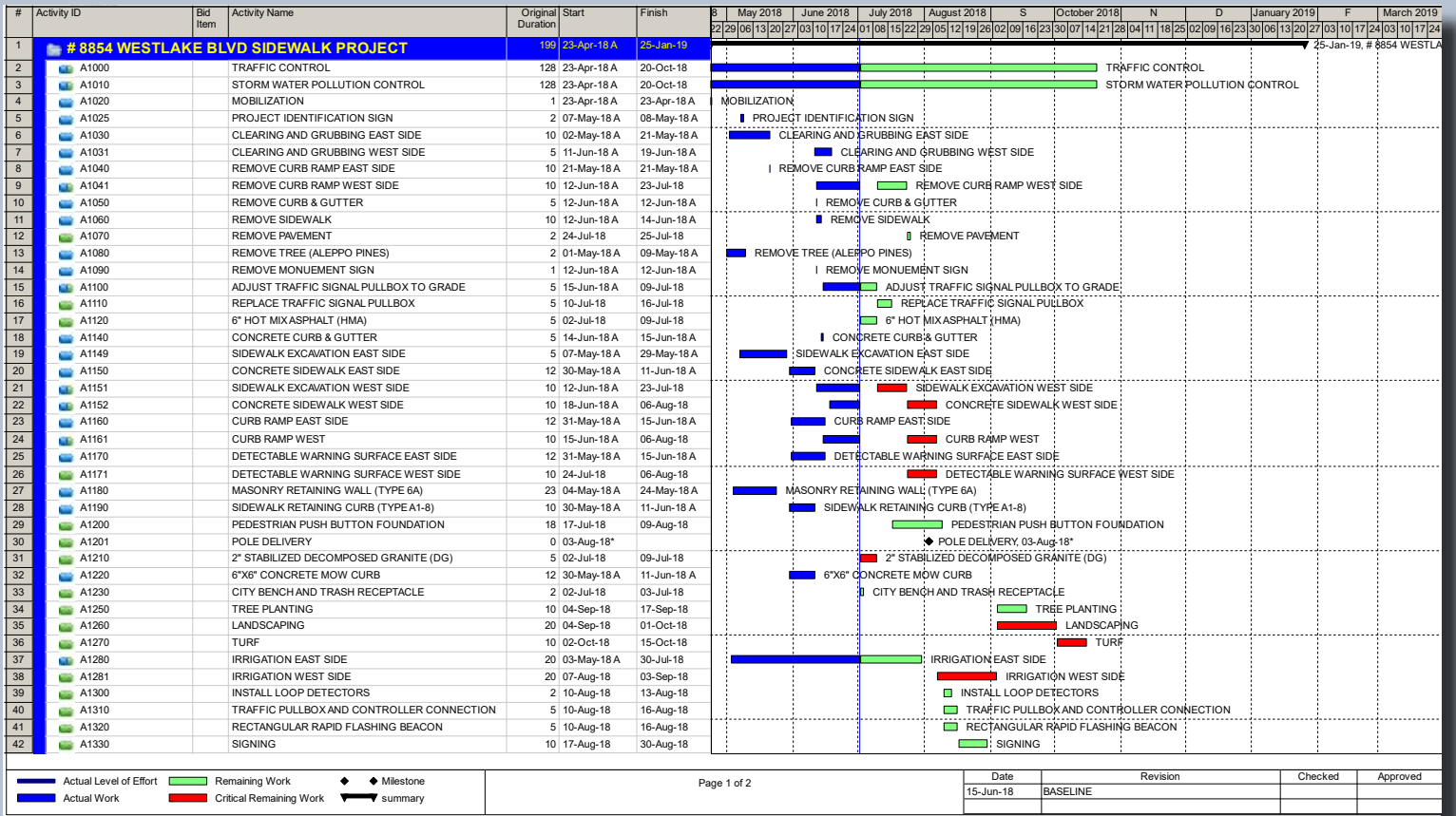
To keep the project on schedule, the following management and control techniques were used:

- Utility companies with conflicts were notified and relocation plans were prepared prior to the start of construction so they could start work earlier and lessen impacts to the contractor's work.
- The project schedule was monitored daily.

- Constant coordination with the contractor including weekly meetings and timely review of submittals and RFIs kept the project on track.

Temporary lane closures along Westlake Boulevard were required throughout the project. The traffic control plan was developed and approved prior to construction to minimize delays and impacts to the commuting public. This corridor is a popular route for pedestrians and bicyclists, so the construction team worked to open the sidewalks to the public as quickly as possible.

Project Schedule





Sustainable Commitment



Purple Majesty/Sage

The City of Thousand Oaks supports and actively implements sustainability through many programs to help achieve its environmental goals. The Public Works Department has a Sustainability Division called “Go Green”. They develop on-going programs for energy, water and waste reductions as well as administering the Community Enhancement Grant program. Sustainability and “green” methods are a priority in community development as well as in the way projects are managed.

Examples of the commitment to sustainability on this project include:

- Minimized impacts to existing trees
- Developed a native plant palette
- Used high efficiency irrigation facilities to replace the existing irrigation system
- Used a pervious surface treatment (decomposed granite) where feasible, reducing stormwater runoff and promoting groundwater recharge
- Diverted **65%** of construction and demolition waste materials from landfill disposal through re-use and recycling



Environmental Considerations



Native plantings

The Westlake Boulevard corridor project site has many mature trees along the roadway, including Aleppo Pines, Sycamores and Oaks. The City took special steps with this project to determine the least amount of disturbance to the environment and landscape, including:

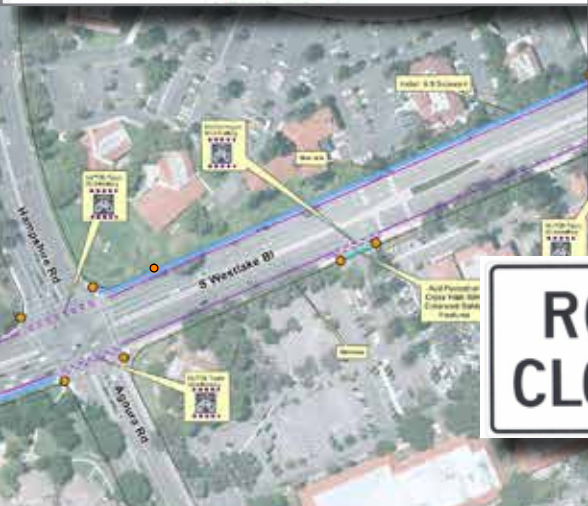
- An arborist investigation evaluated the project to minimize impacts on trees and recommend locations where replacement trees could be planted.
- A tree survey was conducted which identified Oak trees protected under the City's Oak Tree Preservation and Protection guidelines and Sycamore trees protected under the Landmark Tree Ordinance along the proposed sidewalk/walking path alignments. The sidewalk/walking path alignments were designed in a meandering fashion to avoid the protected trees. The City conducted extensive public outreach to the adjoining property owners, and secured permanent and temporary easements to install and maintain the sidewalk outside of Caltrans right-of-way. Due to the shallow nature (mostly less than 12 inches) and limited width (six feet) of required excavation for the sidewalk, encroachment into the root zones of protected trees was minimal. The project removed six landscaping trees (Aleppo pines), which are not protected.

- A public information and outreach program were developed to address these issues.

After receiving public input, these key items were addressed to enhance and improve the project corridor:

- Enhanced landscaping
- Meandering sidewalks which helped minimize the removal of trees
- Decomposed granite path
- Vista area benches
- Designated bike box





Community Relations



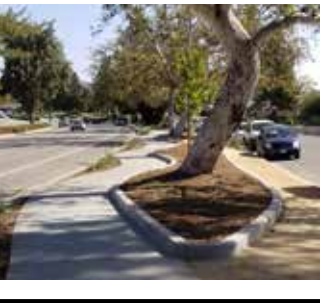
Sidewalk Stroll Celebration

The City provided many opportunities for community involvement and input on this important project on one of its main and busiest corridors. Area residents provided input on the design concept alternatives via public outreach meeting. Multiple community meetings were held to provide opportunities for input as well as discuss design and construction impacts.

Prior to and during construction, the City kept the community well informed about the project and any potential delays using multiple methods of communication. Changeable message signs, project identification boards, the project website, and social media were used to keep the community well informed about temporary lane closures and project progress.



Unusual Accomplishments



The meandering sidewalks required permanent easements from four Homeowners Associations (HOAs). As opposed to single property owners, City staff needed to coordinate with each of the HOA boards to gain consensus. With attorney involvement and HOAs apprehension of a City easement within their property, the project was in jeopardy of reverting back to a straight sidewalk which would mean losing many mature trees and affect the ability to provide enhanced aesthetic elements. Early stakeholder identification and collaboration between City staff, the HOAs, and attorneys resulted in permanent easements from the HOAs.

In addition, excavating, grading, and installing the improvements next to mature tree roots posed a challenge. A full time arborist observed the work and provided direction to the construction crew while working around trees, trimming, and cutting roots.



Additional Considerations



Tree-lined Westlake Boulevard

Westlake Boulevard is designated as part of the City's "scenic highway system" in the Scenic Highways Element of the Thousand Oaks General Plan (1974). This policy ensures that new development occurring along designated scenic highways be visually compatible with scenic highway standards. Steps were taken on this project to ensure that it is aesthetically pleasing and visually compatible with surrounding residential development. Examples include:

- Right-of-way landscaping was preserved to the extent feasible, and the six trees removed were replaced at a greater than 4:1 ratio. 29 trees were planted.
- The removal of mature trees was minimized.
- Permanent easements were obtained to construct meandering sidewalks with enhanced landscaping.

- Retaining curbs, slough walls and retaining walls were constructed to minimize impacts to trees and root systems.
- Parallel decomposed granite path was constructed where feasible

Project Photos



Project Photos



Project Photos

