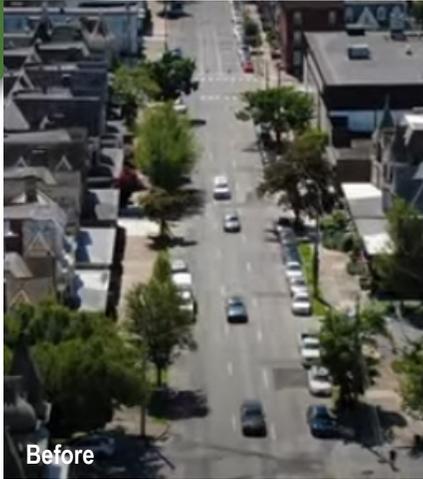


Second Street - Transformation

Harrisburg, PA



In 1950 Harrisburg, PA reached a peak population of 90,000 and in 1956 Second Street was converted to one way traffic in an effort to improve traffic. The conversion created a three-lane northbound roadway, which cut off residential areas from Riverfront Park along the Susquehanna River. By late 1956 residents began complaining about the “Second Street Speedway” and by 1970 Harrisburg’s population declined to 68,061. In 1977 Paul Doutrich, Jr. campaigned for Mayor and pledged to convert Second Street to back to two-way. He was elected and issued an executive order to convert Second Street to two-way. In response PennDOT threatens to withhold federal transportation dollars. By 1980 Harrisburg’s population drops to 53,264. In 2013 both the independent mayoral candidate and the democratic candidate advocate the conversion Second Street to two-way. Democratic candidate Eric Papenfuss is elected, and **WM** is selected by the City to lead the preliminary engineering and final design efforts to complete the conversion of Second Street.

The team led by **WM** completed the network traffic studies required by PennDOT to justify the conversion, held various public meetings and design workshops attended by hundreds of city residents. Speed studies conducted by **WM** showed that 93 percent of drivers were exceeding the posted speed limit of 25 MPH, with 85% exceeding 38 MPH. **WM** developed plans that converted Second Street from one-way to two-way operations and implemented the public consensus on various design elements to maintain on street parking, calm traffic and improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along this 2-mile stretch of Second Street in Uptown and Midtown Harrisburg. Final design included signal modifications converting three signalized intersections to compact urban mini-roundabouts that eliminated the need for right-of-way acquisition. The design incorporated a host of traffic calming measures including curb extensions, roundabouts, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, speed cushions, pedestrian refuge islands, signing and pavement markings. Working within a fixed construction budget, the design team proposed a mix of quick-build (low cost) and permanent improvements that minimized or avoided utility, drainage, ROW, and environmental/cultural resource impacts.

Construction of the project was completed under the leadership of current Mayor Wanda Williams and on October 13, 2022, after six decades of a “Speedway,” Second Street opened to two-way traffic. The new traffic patterns have been well received by the community, as it has lowered speeds, made crossings more pedestrian friendly, as well as reconnected the neighborhood to Riverfront Park.

This project was part of **Harrisburg’s Vision Zero** project, an initiative to help put an end to all traffic and pedestrian fatalities by 2030. Congratulations to the residents of Harrisburg on getting back your residential street and transforming your neighborhoods into the bikeable, walkable and livable city you deserve!

