



Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall

Columbus, OH

Ohio Department of Transportation

Top: The Long Street Bridge project added a sidewalk separated from the road by planters. Photo by Ohio DOT. Bottom: The Cultural Wall depicts the neighborhood's history and key figures. Photo by The Columbus Dispatch.

The Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall is a highway cap over Interstate 71 that connects the King-Lincoln and Discovery District neighborhoods.

CONTEXT

- Completed in 2014.
- Midwest.
- Urban setting.
- \$7 million.

PLACEMAKING, HIGHWAY REDEVELOPMENT, & CAPPING

- The Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall provides a sense of place while improving mobility between neighborhoods.
- The bridge is part of the larger Columbus Crossroads project, which seeks to reconstruct the interstates and surrounding streets to reduce traffic congestion, improve pedestrian safety, and enhance community connectivity.

WHAT WAS THE PROJECT DRIVER?

The Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall was constructed to revitalize and reconnect the King-Lincoln and Discovery Districts in Columbus, OH. The districts had been physically divided by the construction of Interstate 71. The bridge replaces an older bridge that had narrow sidewalks along a chain-link fence overlooking the highway below. The new bridge's cultural wall is made up of 60 panels displaying images that reflect the people and history of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The bridge is one of 22 bridges included in the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) six-phase redevelopment project called "Columbus Crossroads." This project was undertaken to improve safety and address congestion on Interstates 70, 71, 670, and

connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and districts. The project also addressed the associated noise, air quality, and safety impacts on the adjacent communities.

One section of Interstate 71, constructed in the early 1960's, divided the neighborhoods to the east and west and separated them from downtown Columbus. In an effort to reconnect these neighborhoods, through the Columbus Crossroads project, ODOT developed plans to install highway caps and bridges over the Interstates to create a robust, multimodal transportation network and strengthen the community connections.



The Cultural Wall features neighborhood figures and their stories. Photo by Walker Evans.

HOW DID THIS CONNECT THE COMMUNITY?

The Long Street Bridge has improved pedestrian and bicycle access between the neighborhoods divided by Interstate 71. Residents can now move safely between areas where there were limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Furthermore, the bridge is built upon a highway cap platform. One side of the bridge has green space that can be utilized for future economic development opportunities.

In addition, the Long Street Bridge is also an example of community-based place-making and **Context Sensitive Solutions**. The bridge features a 240-foot Cultural Wall that celebrates

the people and history of the King-Lincoln and Discovery District neighborhoods. Two local artists and neighborhood residents were chosen by the community to design the Cultural Wall. In addition to providing a centerpiece for the community, the wall also blocks the view and noise of Interstate traffic below. The Cultural Wall is the first of its kind among ODOT's projects.



Planters separate the sidewalk from the road, improving safety for pedestrians crossing the bridge. Photo by Walker Evans.

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS?



RESTORE

The Cultural Wall provides a sense of place and point of pride for residents who can point to a landmark that represents who they are. The bridge features a

Complete Streets design with sidewalks lined with planters and bike lanes. Residents can now enjoy these expanded facilities to bike and walk directly between neighborhoods and access services and economic opportunities that were once out of reach.

For more information: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/projects/7071/enhancements/Pages/LongStreet.aspx>