



TLG and LMC 2016 Case Study Application
Future Ready Communities



DUE: September 4, 2015

Email to: Ryan Spillers at rspillers@transformgov.org

COVER PAGE

- 1. Case Study Title: City of Richfield Sweet Streets®
- 2. Case Study Category (Select only one, selection identified by highlighting your choice):

Planning for Your Future **Creating an Inclusive Community**

Reinventing Local Government Community Networks

Blinders

- 3. Jurisdiction Name: City of Richfield, MN

- 4. Jurisdiction Population (US Census): 35,228

- 5. Would you like the application to be considered for our Rapid Fire Session? (Rapid Fire presentations are fast-paced, entertaining, interactive presentations. Each jurisdiction will have five minutes to make their presentations using 15 PPT slides set on auto-forward primarily containing photos/graphics. Participants will be seated at round tables to facilitate an energetic idea exchange. A cash bar will be available.)

YES **NO**

- 6. Project Leader (Primary Contact for case study notification):
 Name: Chris Link
 Title: Operations Superintendent
 Department: Public Works
 Phone Number: 612-861-9174
 eMail: clink@cityofrichfield.org
 US Mail Address, including zip code: 1901 E 66th St., Richfield, MN 554
 Twitter Account: @cityofrichfield

List additional presenters contact information below:
Kristin Asher, Director of Public Works, kasher@cityofrichfield.org, 612-861-9795

1. Presentation title and description of the innovation. *100 word maximum.*

“Richfield Sweet Streets®: Better Roads, Better Richfield” is an outreach/marketing campaign used to spread the word and build support for road reconstruction projects within the City of Richfield, MN. Sweet Streets® also includes innovative financing of the projects, in lieu of using special assessments against benefitting property owners. The projects include a 5-year mill and overlay program for all residential streets, as well as major reconstruction of the main thoroughfares of the city, which includes additional pedestrian/bike design elements.

2. When and how was the program, policy or initiative originally conceived in your jurisdiction? *100 word maximum.*

The Public Works Department conceived the idea in 2012 as a way to build support for street reconstruction projects proposed over the next 5+ years. The campaign rollout began in 2013 and runs continuously as the city delivers on the road projects. The Public Works Department determined that every person who lives or works in Richfield will be impacted directly by one of the proposed road projects within 5 years and understood that relaying information to residents through innovative means was the best way to build support and successfully complete the projects.

3. How exactly is the program or policy innovative? How has your innovation changed previous processes, products or services? *100 word maximum.*

Public Works realized early on that we are not the best at marketing projects or building awareness and support for our projects. Public Works projects are highly visible within the community, and can be highly disruptive to resident’s quality of life while they are underway. Sweet Streets® was developed to package upcoming road reconstruction projects to inform residents and share information with the public.

4. Explain how the program or initiative substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations. *200 word maximum.*

Sweet Streets® stretched the Public Works Department’s skills in communication and public outreach. Richfield is a very collaborative community and the Department wanted to ensure we maximized civic engagement in the upcoming projects because they have the ability to shape the character of Richfield for decades to come. Increasing transparency in these projects was one of our goals and this campaign helped us to ensure we had a substantial public outreach process and information-sharing program.

5. What individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? Were strategic partnerships and/or community networks developed as a result of the innovation? *200 word maximum.*

The City’s Public Works staff, with approval from the City Council, is the primary initiators of Sweet Streets® campaign. The campaign engages stakeholders through our website, social media (Facebook and Twitter), a project hotline, and meetings with residents.

Partnerships with other governmental agencies (Mn/DOT and Hennepin County) related to planning and financing of projects, and with private utilities (CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy) for coordination of replacement of mains/service lines and undergrounding are an important part of the success of the projects.

6. If a private consultant was used please describe their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. *100 word maximum.*

Barsuhn - Scott Barsuhn - sbarsuhn@barsuhn.com - <http://www.barsuhn.com> - advertising

Windmill Design Incorporated - Kathy Mrozek, President/Creative Director -
kathy@windmilldesign.com - www.windmilldesign.com - website development

7. To what extent do you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please provide verification of the replication. *200 word maximum.*

The Sweet Streets® campaign can be replicated in two specific areas:

- Outreach and Marketing – The idea of public outreach for projects is not new, but we wanted to create a branded campaign. The City had a number of large road construction projects planned for the next 5+ years that, when completed, would change the character of the community by enhancing sidewalks, adding cycle tracks, and additional roundabouts, to name a few planned changes.
- Financing – Special assessments are often used to pay for road reconstruction projects, such a mill and overlaying a street, because the benefits of the improvement can be directly assessed to a property. Because of the large scope of the projects included in Sweet Streets®, Richfield choose to finance a portion of the improvements using franchise fees.

8. What were the costs? What were the savings? *100 word maximum.*

Through two years of the campaign, approximately \$42,000 has been spent on Sweet Streets®. There are no measurable savings from the campaign; however, the campaign was not intended to create financial savings, rather the intent is to increase transparency and inform residents of upcoming projects. This has helped to save staff time in answering repetitive project questions.

9. Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain? *200 word maximum.*

Sweet Streets® has been relatively successful in getting information out to the public and answering questions about the projects. There have been challenges in gaining widespread knowledge of upcoming projects, or individuals dissatisfied with construction work happening in their neighborhood, but our team has worked hard to reply to inquiries in a timely matter and address resident requests.

Separately, there have been challenges in working with other governmental agencies, which are the lead agency for some projects, to incorporate our vision for the completed project, based on the needs/wants of our residents. These challenges are being addressed through continuous review of design plans and holding regular meetings to overcome our differences.

10. What outcomes did this program or policy have? What baseline data did you collect? How did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment? *200 word maximum.*

This is the second year of an on-going campaign, so “outcomes” are premature. Some data we are tracking includes our social media and website presence (Facebook Insights and Google Analytics). So far, we see the largest impact of the campaign as projects begin construction, with increased traffic to our posts and project updates. This shows us that:

- Residents are aware of Sweet Streets® and know where to find project information
- Residents are interested in learning about the projects that have an effect on their quality of life in both the short-term (e.g. they may have to take a different route to work and be an inconvenience during construction) and long-term (e.g. when they have a brand new asphalt street in front of their house after mill and overlay).

11. Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage. *100 word maximum.*

Sun Current - Public relations campaign planned for Richfield road projects - <http://current.mnsun.com/2013/11/public-relations-campaign-planned-richfield-road-projects/>

12. Please provide web links where the innovation can be seen/tested (in the case of something that is web-based) *100 word maximum.*

www.richfieldsweetstreets.org and www.facebook.com/richfieldsweetstreets

13. Please provide any key references and their contact information who can be interviewed/called to discuss the innovation and its impact. *100 word maximum.*

Kristin Asher - kasher@cityofrichfield.com

Scott Barsuhn - sbarsuhn@barsuhn.com

14. You've been to a lot of conferences. TLG should be a unique experience for everyone. Describe how your case study presentation will be different than other conference presentations. *200 word maximum.*

- How will you make the session creative and unique?
- How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?
- Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.

We are planning to include the following into the presentation:

- Interactive, real-time surveys
- Sweet Street give-aways

This presentation will be from a street maintenance point of view.

15. Anything else you would like to add? *200 word maximum.*

This project has given our City a real answer to the following items that all Cities nationwide are dealing with:

- Aging infrastructure
- Addressing flooding concerns
- Outside agency cooperation
- New design elements
- Quality of life improvement
- Citizen engagement

By engaging citizens through traditional open houses and the implementation of Sweet Streets®, we are hoping for multiple positive projects for our City.