

MONON BOULEVARD

Carmel, Indiana

Carmel, Indiana, reintroduced walkable urbanism to a largely car-dependent region with a renovated Main Street and a new Civic Center that both attract considerable pedestrian activity. Unfortunately, these two areas were separated by a half mile of empty and light-industrial parcels. With the goal of creating a unified city center, Mayor Brainard commissioned the firm to create a plan for these one-hundred acres.

The greatest challenge surrounded the disposition of the Monon Trail, a regional recreational axis that bisects the site. Rather than placing it at the backs of buildings as suggested by previous plans, this proposal surrounded it with a grand avenue, where it is now celebrated as the heart of its neighborhood.

This controversial proposal was commissioned after three previous proposals failed to win the support of City leadership. Upon completion, this design was enthusiastically embraced and quickly lined by new businesses and housing. The downtown of Carmel, once “bipolar,” is now continuous.

CLIENT
Carmel Redevelopment
Commission,
City of Carmel
Department of
Engineering

COLLABORATORS
Gehl
REA

TIMELINE
2010-2013

CATEGORY
Suburban Retrofit,
Streets & Networks

BUDGET
\$23 million

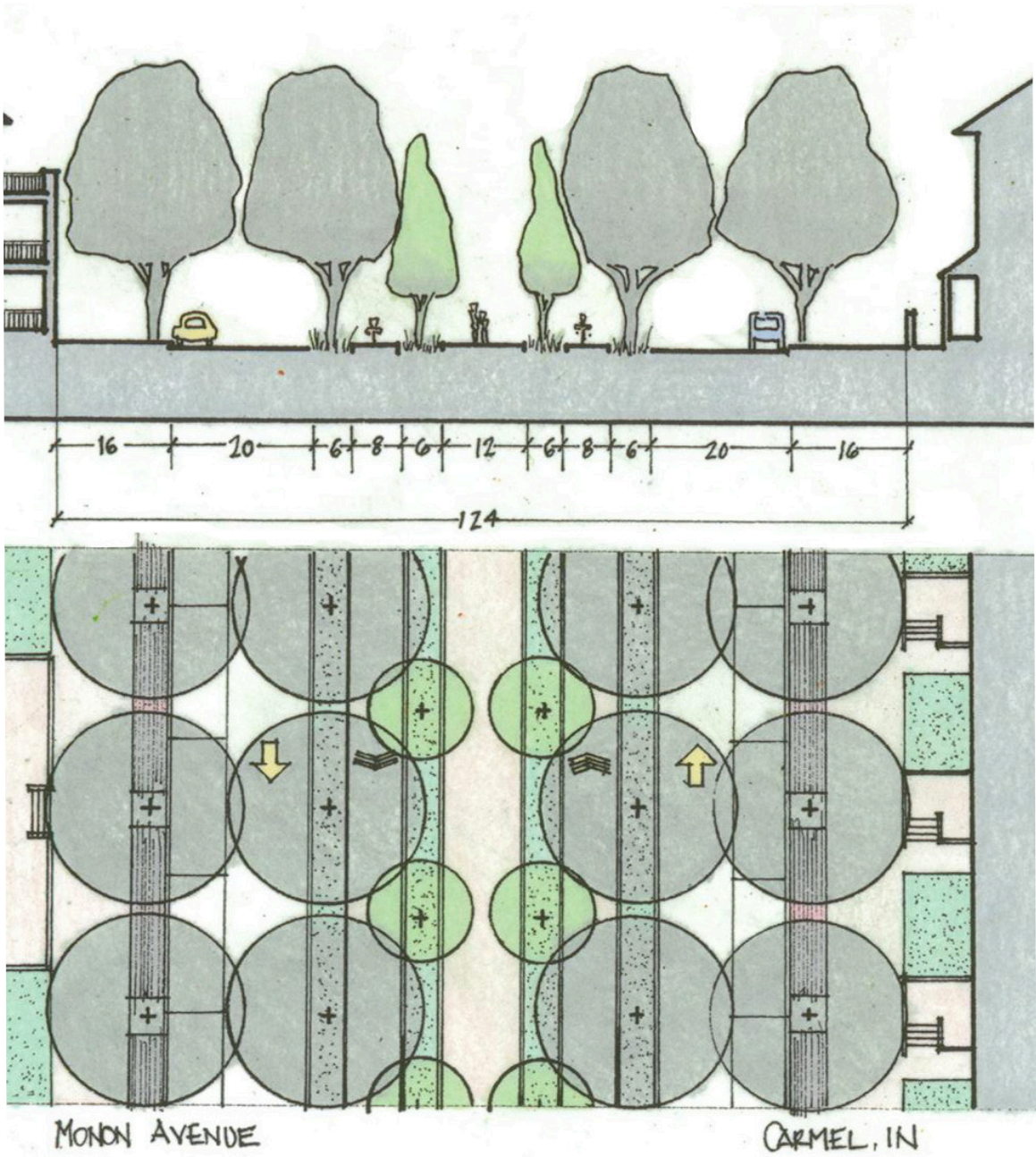
SCALE
0.5 mile corridor

STATUS
Completed

AWARDS
2019 Charter Award
Winner, Congress for
the New Urbanism

REFERENCE
Jim Brainard,
Former Mayor,
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A controversial proposal to surround a recreational trail with a multimodal avenue quickly wins converts and unites a downtown.



The plan for midtown established a continuously walkable corridor by wrapping the Monon Trail with a new urban avenue.



Slow-speed driving, recreation, and landscape combine to create a popular new heart for a suburban city.



