



CASE STUDY

An award-winning project breathes new life into one of West Palm Beach's most beloved streets.

The Clematis Streetscape Project aims to produce a quality public space that contributes to people's health, happiness, and wellbeing in busy downtown West Palm Beach.

Quality public space within reach for everyone

Clematis Street has been the hub of West Palm Beach since 1894, evolving for over a century to embrace nearly every significant architectural era in that time but, despite a new passenger rail station just steps away, the lack of shade and narrow sidewalks had been dampening the success of retail, restaurants, and commercial tenants.

With Phase 1 completed and Phase 2 underway, the Project was the People's Choice Award Winner at the 2019 Safe Streets Summit. Now, with Phase 3 due for completion in 2020, the "living room" of West Palm Beach has a future every bit as incredible as its rich history.



Photo Courtesy of Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. / C.J. Walker Photography™

Narrow sidewalks and lack of shade was dampening the success of retailers and restaurants

Which made this a high-profile project that had to deliver a space that welcomed people in and made the street more walkable and popular.

The Clematis Streetscape Project is a 3-phase approach to improving the historic Clematis Street with a desire to better connect the community by creating a more enjoyable downtown hub for locals and the 80,000 plus visitors who flock to the street every week.

Initially, Phase 1 of the project was completed using an alternative solution to support the now-iconic oaks, but after Burkhardt Construction, Inc., the contractor for the project, suggested the change the decision was made to use the Stratavault product for Phase 2 and to continue with it for Phase 3.



The Stratavault system is easier for the contractor to put in the ground and work with

Jonathan Haigh, Landscape Architect with project engineers Kimley-Horn, spoke to Citygreen about the project and the decision to change to the Stratavault product for the remainder of the project.

“ There were challenges associated with the competing product as far as its assembly goes... The Stratavault system was easier for Burkhardt Construction, Inc. (contractor for the project) to work with and install in comparison to products we used prior. ”

The simplicity of Stratavault assembly and installation lead to the contractor recommending a change.

“ We were introduced to Citygreen by the contractor, who offered suggestions to help make things more efficient and save money, so we worked together with him to help deliver a quality project to the city. ”

Stratavault has been designed to achieve major reductions in installation costs, with the units simply snapping together. Without the need for zip ties, screws, or ground spikes it can be assembled on-site in about 2 minutes per m³ (35 ft³).

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Changes had to be made to deal with stormwater effectively.

The change to Stratavault also helped with another element of the project as the iconic stretch was converted from a curbed, asphalt street to a curbless street with extensive use of pavers. This meant changes had to be made to deal with stormwater effectively.

“ Stormwater, because it's a curbless street now, we added more inlets in the street and the parking strip has permeable pavers that sit on top of portions of the Stratavault system. This helps to get water down into the roots and into the trees. ”

Stratavault was used for live oak trees which were around 25 to 30 feet tall, field cut trees. With extensive paving usage, the risk of tree failure due to insufficient soil volume, aeration, or poor drainage ordinarily present in urban projects was mitigated by the Stratavault system.



West Palm Beach was able to respond to COVID-19 related safety restrictions

The large oak trees have already proven their importance as West Palm Beach responded to COVID related restrictions by moving their dining out to the streets.

“Everyone’s happy with the project itself. I mean, the fact that there’s more pedestrian space has been great. The fact that in these days, especially with the Coronavirus affecting a lot of Florida and outdoor dining becoming more common because of that, because of this project, we were able to increase the outdoor dining space on the street by quite a bit, because we eliminated some parking spaces, added the nice tree cover, shade trees and added that curbless street to make it flexible as well. ”

“Everyone’s happy with the project.”

– Jonathan Haigh, Landscape Architect

With Stratavault giving the shade trees the best conditions to thrive, the shady, pedestrian-focused facelift has already improved customer foot traffic and patronage, making the most of the beautiful outdoor lifestyle Florida offers.

As the project nears completion in 2020, the historic Clematis Street is ready to be part of the next century of West Palm Beach history.



Photo Courtesy of Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. / C.J. Walker Photography™

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