

Poles Enhance Quality of Life in Historic Florida City

Soaring over refurbished sidewalks and roadways on Clematis Street in historic downtown West Palm Beach, Ameron™ Victorian light poles with hanging plants enrich the city landscape. These poles were designed and manufactured to support the city's goals of improving quality of life by creating an easier-to-walk, healthier, and more enjoyable downtown district through a project called Clematis Streetscape.

Project overview

Contemporary tapered Victorian IX poles, 16- to 24-feet in height, are interwoven with shade trees along the Clematis streetscape project. These multifunctional poles help set an upscale aesthetic appearance in this public space. They also help unite the current landscape design and the many historic architectural styles of the buildings that have sprung up on Clematis Street since 1894.

Mounted atop the spun-cast concrete poles are two decorative, black-powder-coated bracket arms. Each holds a Victorian-inspired light fixture that casts a warm glow throughout the walking and gathering spaces in the evenings. Lush, bushel-sized planters provide shade and support the streetscape's distinctive ambiance. Many of the poles also feature Ameron Banner Saver brackets used to promote and celebrate events.

This project benefited from many partners working together. SESCO Lighting, the nation's largest and most successful lighting agent, specified and designed lighting for the Clematis Streetscape. This was spearheaded by Jerry Schmitz, LC, outside sales for the SESCO Lighting - Public Sector Team. CR Dunn, electrical contractor, installed the poles. Kimley-Horn, planning and design engineering consultants, specify Ameron poles across the United States. Smith Engineering Consultants also worked closely with Kimley-Horn. And, Burkhardt Construction, general contractor, managed the full Clematis Streetscape project.

Case study facts

Location: City of West Palm Beach, Florida, USA

Challenge

A historic retail and restaurant district needed aesthetic improvements to support the quality of life of community stakeholders. Its narrow sidewalks seemed like barriers next to fast, noisy streets. Shopkeepers and the city wanted calmer traffic, more lighting in the evening, additional green canopy and shade, and a sense of community throughout the day. There needed to be good vehicular access, and safe and more enjoyable walking, gathering spaces, dining opportunities, and shopping experiences for locals and tourists.

Solution

Victorian Series prestressed spun-cast concrete poles are an attractive addition to the Clematis Streetscape project. They help define and brighten the walkways and gathering areas within the widened sidewalks alongside narrower, slower streets.

The poles' low-maintenance requirements and integrated technology for area lighting helped the city meet their project goals. Their integrated irrigation systems for watering plants without water trucks, maintenance personnel, or frequent planter replacements add value for the city. The vintage charm of the poles enhances the community, helps beautify its district, and promotes economic development. Clematis Street is ready for its second century of growth and success.

Details

- 76 Ameron Victorian IX poles were used for the Clematis Streetscape project.
- Four taller, goosenecked poles were used for the adjacent Centennial Plaza fountain.
- Integrated irrigation systems for plants eliminates the need for water truck or crews, saving money and time.
- Integral GFCI outlet boxes provide for holiday and special event lighting.
- Ameron poles meet or surpass applicable sections of Florida adaptations of the AASHTO, ACI, ASTM, and IBC standards.

Case Study

Manufacturing process

Ameron concrete poles are comprised of prestressed spun-cast concrete. This unique process yields much more dense and flexible concrete poles compared to other casting methods. Flexibility in pole structures for a hurricane-prone region is important for controlling maintenance and replacement costs.

Creating spun-cast concrete poles leaves an inner raceway that runs the length of the poles. The Clematis project used this to run cables for its LED lamps and to supply ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet boxes for temporary lighting. An irrigation system was also integrated into the raceway to supply water for the hanging planters. This allowed the city to avoid sending water trucks and crews to water the planters.

Distinctive design

Ameron poles are also lightly blasted, which exposes the texture and beauty of natural aggregates while maintaining sharp patterns and detail definition. Aggregate and cement colors were chosen to blend with those of other items in the Clematis Streetscape project. Also, Amershield™ coating was applied to the poles to further enhance their varied colors as it sealed and protected them against weathering and graffiti.

Selected because of their turn-of-the-century design coupled with desirable functionality, Victorian poles have supported this important revitalization effort well and many are taking notice. The Clematis Streetscape project captured the People’s Choice award at the 2019 Safe Streets Summit — even before its third-phase was finished.

