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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSISSIPPI DRIVE PROJECT SECOND PHASE SET TO BEGIN

Mississippi Drive reconstruction moving west as Phase One work continues

MUSCATINE, Iowa – You may have to walk a little but businesses on Mississippi Drive remain open and ready to serve customers during regular business hours even while crews work on reconstructing the road in front of them. Business owners along the route of the Mississippi Drive Reconstruction Project were informed of the plan for the second phase during a meeting Thursday morning at the Contrary Brewing Company.

“We are doing everything we can to work with you (business owners) during this time,” Jim Edgmond, city engineer, said.

The second phase of the reconstruction will begin with installation of sanitary, septic, water, and underground utility lines from Pine Street to Broadway. The underground work has already started at the Pine Street intersection and will proceed west toward Broadway as weather permits.

When work reaches Linn Street the hard close of Mississippi Drive will be put in place at the intersection with Broadway. The hard close will remain in effect until the paving contractor has completed work to the Broadway Street intersection.

“Once we start taking up the pavement and installing the sanitary and sewer lines west we will have to close Mississippi Drive to all non-construction traffic,” Bill Haag, project manager for the City of Muscatine, said.

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There will also be no access to parking in front of the businesses on Mississippi Drive west of Linn Street including the Contrary Brewing Company, the Clam Shell, Nutrition Outlet, and Escape Organic Salon. Already affected by the reconstruction project is Smith Sales & Service and Schmarje Tool which are located between Linn and Pine streets.

The City and the contractor have pledged to assist the affected businesses whenever possible and to work with them for deliveries. Signage has been installed to inform customers on how to reach these businesses and more signage will be added as needed.

Most of these businesses have been dealing with the construction since work began in May and have developed a good working relationship with the contractor and City staff.

Parking is available on Linn Street with access off of Pine Street through the #1 Alley and additional parking opportunities may be announced in the near future. There is a hard close for Pine Street just east of the #1 Alley at the present time.

KE Flatworks, the contractor for the Mississippi Drive Reconstruction Project, said that a temporary access lane will be kept open at all times so that the businesses west of Linn Street will be able to receive deliveries. Contingencies have also been made for businesses east of Linn Street to receive deliveries. There will be no room for parking, however.

While plans are coming together and are ready to be implemented for the second phase, the first phase of the project is moving steadily forward. Paving of the section from Iowa to Pine is well underway with crews from KE Flatworks finishing up all borders and paver concrete in the median, finishing earthwork, sub drain tile, and rock grade, and completing the electrical conduit underground from Chestnut to Pine.

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Once that is complete, grading and paving of Mississippi Drive from Chestnut to Pine will begin.

KMA Trucking & Excavating has begun storm sewer work at the Pine Street intersection, placing a water main across Linn Street to tie in with the water main from Pine Street, and installing sewer laterals from Pine to Linn streets.

Project managers from the City along with representatives of KE Flatworks met with the construction team building the Merrill Hotel & Convention Center earlier this week to develop a time line to complete paving in front of the new hotel along with Chestnut Street.

“It was a very productive meeting,” Haag said.

Paving will continue to follow the underground work west on Mississippi Drive. If all goes well, Mississippi Drive from Iowa to Broadway will be reopened towards the end of November 2017. The third phase of the reconstruction project (Sycamore to Mulberry) may begin over the winter with work by the underground contractor and paving in Spring 2018.

The Mississippi Drive Reconstruction Project is an ongoing process that fully involves not only the contractor and City staff but also the affected businesses along Mississippi Drive and those on the streets branching north off of Mississippi Drive. The meetings with business owners have produced good questions, discussions, and even some refinements to the plan for Mississippi Drive itself. The meetings will continue throughout the remainder of the project.

Since development of the project began several years ago, the flow of information to and from affected businesses has had and will continue to have a high priority for the City of Muscatine and the chosen contractor. Another goal was to keep the public well informed of the progress of the project and that the businesses are open with access available to customers.

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