



For Immediate Release

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City targets March dates for start of Old Woodward Reconstruction work in downtown Birmingham

*Project will transform downtown core with enhancements to underground
infrastructure and above ground streetscape*

BIRMINGHAM, MI, March 13, 2018 – The reconstruction of Old Woodward Ave. in downtown Birmingham is projected to start on **March 21** with the assembly of a safety barrier to be followed by the projected closure of Old Woodward between Oakland and Brown on **March 26**, signifying the start of the project.

City Engineer Paul O’Meara said the pre-construction activities, such as the assembly of the safety barrier and the lining of sewers in the project area, are being done before the start of construction in order to help complete the project as fast possible. “By taking these steps prior to the projected road closure on March 26, we are anticipating there will be less digging needed which will help us stay on our timeline and complete the project as fast as possible,” said O’Meara.

The reconstruction of Old Woodward will transform the city’s downtown core with improvements to its aging underground infrastructure and significant enhancements to the above ground streetscape.

The underground improvements include installation of a new water main, replacing the still functioning system that dates back to 1889. In addition, new sewer lines will be installed, replacing those identified as being near the end of their service life. Other underground infrastructure improvements include installation of a city owned electrical system that will allow for greater lighting options downtown as well as provide for charging stations for mobile devices.

The above ground improvements include an enhanced streetscape with wider sidewalks and handicap accessible curbs along with mid-block crosswalks, adding to the walkability of the downtown core. “We believe the necessary improvements to the underground infrastructure and above ground streetscape will create a new, up-to-date shopping and business environment that our residents, merchants and stakeholders will enjoy for years to come,” said **Joe Valentine, Birmingham City Manager**.

The four- month, \$7 million project will impact the city’s merchants. To that end, the city has held monthly meetings with its merchants to inform them on the latest developments and timeline for the project. The city, through its Birmingham Shopping District (BSD) promotional

arm, will enact its Pave the Way marketing initiative, to keep downtown accessible for shoppers during construction.

“Our Pave the Way initiative includes free valet parking stations at strategic locations around the city as well as enhanced lighting, signage, activities and incentives—such as our Birmingham Bonus Bucks program—to help the public stay engaged during the construction,” said **Ingrid Tighe**, Executive Director of the BSD. “Downtown will be open for business and we encourage the public to support our merchants.”

Residents and business owners are encouraged to sign up to receive real-time updates on the Old Woodward Reconstruction Project through the city’s email and text notification system. Information on how to sign up for the enotify alerts can be found on the city’s website at www.bhamgov.org/enotify. In addition, regular updates on the project can be found at www.bhamgov.org/downtowninfrastructure or on the city’s homepage as well as its social media pages such as Facebook and Twitter.

If the public has specific concerns or questions, they are encouraged to contact the city’s Engineering Department at (248) 530-1840 or send an email to pomeara@bhamgov.org.

City of Birmingham – A Walkable Community. Visit the city’s web site at www.bhamgov.org.

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