



## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEMO

| DEPARTMENT     | PRESENTED BY                      | DATE            |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Administration | Christy Doon - City Administrator | January 6, 2025 |

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Downtown Construction and Closure Discussion

### **BACKGROUND**

The Downtown Streetscape Improvement Project approved by Council at the December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will have a significant construction impact in the downtown corridor during 2025, which has impacts on how a pedestrian mall may look and function this upcoming summer. This project had an original scope of work to address ADA ramps and intersection upgrades, replace aging water services, and perform asphalt repaving where surfaces have reached the end of their useful life. Design considerations incorporated in other public amenities such as additional bike parking, fixed planter beds, and tree plantings.

Prior feedback from Council included the desire for removable bollards which were also incorporated into the design. These bollards are traffic-rated devices that will improve staff's ability to close or open sections of F Street to vehicular traffic. The option included other amenities such as several shade sails at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and F intersection. Staff is looking for Council's feedback and consideration of the shade sail concept at this time.

These improvements will take several months to complete, and the contract documents require the contractor to prioritize work along F Street from April through mid-June, 2025. While this work is underway, it should be feasible to accommodate an F Street pedestrian mall from Sackett to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The adjacent side street work such as reconstruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and G intersection as well as repaving 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street between F and E is planned for later in the summer and into the fall of 2025.

The work on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street will be challenging to negotiate with an F Street closure as access to Natural Grocers parking lot and on-street parking will be at a premium. It is anticipated that cars would need to be able to turn onto F Street either north or south during this time. Although accommodation is being looked at to improve the half block closure from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, this closure should ideally not occur while the construction is underway. Additional information will be sent out to adjacent property owners in the near future based on contractor feedback related to their schedules and methods for completing the work. This work will take space and access needs for the contractor to get in and out and perform the work.

Staff have also been working on plans beyond 2025. The F Street working group met during the fall to discuss the summer activity and make recommendations for moving forward. The group strongly felt that a master plan for downtown should be completed prior to any recommended closures. Staff engaged Civic Brand, a local engagement and planning firm, to assist in the conversations with the F Street working group and to bring forward ideas for City Council to consider. Civic Brand, staff and the F Street working group met in November. Ryan Short, with Civic Brand presented to the group, received feedback and modified some suggestions based on the "on-the-ground" functionality of various options.



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### **REQUESTED DIRECTION FROM COUNCIL**

Staff are requesting direction on the following points:

1. Should staff continue looking into the option of installing shade sails and provide decorative patio lighting at certain locations along F Street (currently proposed at 2<sup>nd</sup> and F concurrent to construction activities)?
2. Given the accessibility issues for businesses and construction traffic, the half block between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or the full block between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> will remain open to vehicular traffic during 2025.
3. Regarding activation of parking spots during the closure, should staff create a process for adjacent businesses to reserve the spots and then allow other businesses to have access?
4. Which components of the long-term downtown vision would Council like staff to continue researching? This would also include allocating funds to downtown in 2026.