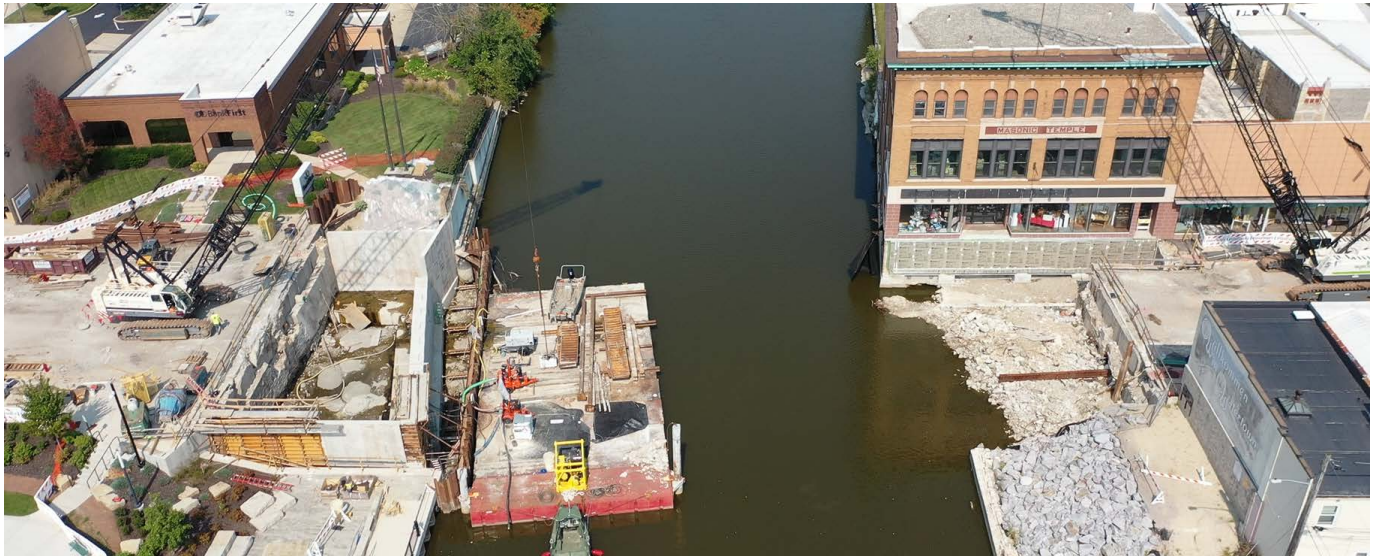




MAIN STREET

Reconstruction News



Recent aerial picture of the Main Street (Cole) Bridge, which is currently under construction.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS MEET-UP RECAP

The Watertown Main Street Program recently hosted its first quarterly Downtown Business Meet-Up meeting. This is an opportunity for downtown business and property owners to learn updates about the 2028 Main Street reconstruction.

Around a dozen local business owners and stakeholders attended the first meeting on October 2nd, which was hosted by Jody Purtell, Director of the Watertown Main Street Program. Mason Becker, Strategic Initiatives and Development Coordinator for the City, and Mayor McFarland also attended and answered questions from the group of attendees.

As one might guess, much of the discussion hinged around recent news that the Main Street (Cole) bridge project is facing a delay. At time of this writing, the revised completion date was still not clear.

Some ideas were discussed regarding how similar delays or miscommunications might be avoided during the 2028 Main Street project.

Info was discussed on how the City will be sharing further communication going forward, including through Facebook.

The next quarterly Downtown Business Meet-Up meeting will be held on January 6, 2024, 5:00 PM, at the Watertown Public Library.

IMPORTANT DATES

Next Main Street Task Force Meeting:
November 19, 2024 2:30 PM (rescheduled from normal date)

Next quarterly Downtown Business Meet-Up:
January 6, 2025, 5:00 PM, Watertown Public Library

Reconstruction of Main Street (Cole) Bridge:
Currently started, anticipated to re-open for traffic by Spring/Summer 2025

Evaluation of downtown one-way streets: Started in May 2024, finished report expected in early 2025

Further planning & work on public parking lots and other necessities: 2025-2027

Spring 2028: Full reconstruction of Main Street, from Church Street to Market Street/Sharp Corner Park expected to begin

2030: Reconstruction of E. Main Street, from Market Street/Sharp Corner Park to Irene Street.



ONE WAY TRAFFIC STREETS

There are many considerations for the 2028 reconstruction of Main Street, which is the first total reconstruction of this critical and historic roadway since the 1960's. One of those considerations is the prevalence of one-way streets within the downtown area.

raSmith, a firm selected by the City to evaluate one-ways streets in the downtown, recently made a recommendation on one way routes on Third St and Fourth St. These streets have been one-way since the 1970's.

raSmith determined that these two streets can safely return to two-way traffic patterns, given a decline in total downtown traffic since it peaked in the mid-1990's.

Recently, a joint meeting of the City's Public Works Commission and the Downtown Main Street Task Force was held. Both bodies voted to return Third & Fourth Streets to two-way traffic, which will happen in conjunction with the 2028 Main Street reconstruction project.

YOUR TASK FORCE MEMBERS

MAYOR EMILY MCFARLAND
ALDERMAN MYRON MOLDENHAUER
ALDERMAN STEVE BOARD
JODY PURTELL - WATERTOWN MAIN STREET PROGRAM
ANDREW GRINWALD - CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REP.
ANDREW BEYER - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS/CITY ENGINEER
LAURIE HOFFMANN - CITIZEN-AT-LARGE
AMBER SMITH - DOWNTOWN BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE
MICHELLE ELLIAS - WISCONSIN DOT
MICHAEL TREGO - HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DESIGN COMMISSION
RYAN WAGNER - WATERTOWN RDA CHAIR
MASON BECKER - STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



MAIN STREET BRIDGE LATEST

As you have likely heard by now, there has been an identified delay to the Main Street (Cole) Bridge project. A dispute between the contractor (Zenith Tech - ZTI) and the Wisconsin DOT caused this issue.

"The City has actively participated in weekly meetings with WisDOT and ZTI, despite the City having zero control over the project schedule," said a City statement. "At nearly every meeting, the City inquired about the timeline and was consistently reassured by WisDOT that no project delays were recognized."

"In a recent meeting with WisDOT and ZTI, ZTI relayed that questions about the project design were raised with WisDOT in May. WisDOT confirmed in the meeting that the bridge design details have been discussed with ZTI since May. During that time no schedule modifications were relayed to the City."

The City is working with many parties, including the governor's office and state legislators to expedite this process to ensure the bridge reconstruction moves as quickly as possible.

Follow the City's Facebook page for weekly updates on the project.

