

## State Street Construction Meeting – 2023 Season Kick-Off

1.17.2023 3:30pm on Zoom

City of Ann Arbor and Ann Arbor DDA

### Attendance:

Members of the Public: 11

State Street District: 2

City & DDA Staff: 3; Amber Miller (DDA), Brian Slizewski (Engineering), Nick Hutchinson (Engineering)

Consultants: 2; Felipe Uribe (Wade Trim), Oliver Kiley (SmithGroup)

General Contractor: 1; Brendan Fons (Fonson Co.)

DTE: 2; Basel Djazmati (DTE), Kyce Soerries (Corby Energy)

Please note that the following is a summary of questions and responses, not a direct transcript of the meeting. Please see the [meeting video](#) and [presentation slides](#) for more details.

**1. Question:** What is the age of the existing watermain?

**Response:** The watermain is over 100 years old and in deteriorating condition. It is City practice to replace watermains of that age prior to significant surface improvements.

**2. Comment:** Recommend installing irrigation and filling/planting within tree pits prior to Art Fair. Otherwise, it leaves a large hole to cover.

**3. Comment:** There are too many tree pits, the tree pits are too deep and collect trash, the pavers are uneven, and the grout came out when I sprayed the sidewalk in front of my business.

**Response:** Initially the design included many more tree pits, and the design team reduced the number in the final design plan based on feedback from businesses. As you remember, with a curbless street design we must have some curbed planters at the intersections and crosswalks to protect those areas. The planters are deeper than typical because they are part of the overall stormwater management system. As the landscaping fills in, the plants should help to keep the trash out. Lastly, the pavers have an uneven surface so that they can act as a tactile indication for those with vision disabilities that they are approaching the vehicle lanes. The City/DDA team will investigate the grout concern.

*Note: The DDA maintains the landscaping for three years after planting.*

**4. Question:** Can you clarify DTE gas main work area and timing?

**Response:** DTE work is planned to start in early February focused in the roadway, between Liberty and Washington Streets. The intersections will remain open for most of the gas main work.

5. **Question/Comment:** Last year the shared expectation was that the streets would be reopened by Labor Day. Are you feeling more confident this year? We didn't find out that the schedule was going to be pushed back until only a few weeks before the delay. Be honest with businesses so that they can plan and schedule staff.

**Response:** Based on feedback from businesses at the end of the last construction season, we (City/DDA) reviewed what was accomplished last year vs. what is being proposed this year. We do believe that what the contractor is proposing is feasible for this season, but unexpected things can always arise. The City/DDA will work to address the communication request, including weekly email updates with references to the contractor's schedule and weekly on-site progress meetings with the contractor. The contractor is responsible for the schedule and reinforced in the meeting their intent to work as diligently and efficiently as possible to meet the schedule and complete the project by the end of August.

*Note: If the City/DDA staff team feels that the contractor will miss the milestone date in the construction contract, they will reconvene with businesses to discuss options for how to proceed (see [presentation slides](#) 11, 17, and 18 for reference).*

6. **Question:** Can you clarify what work will be done prior to Art Fair? The 200 block of State Street (Liberty to Washington) gets a lot of Art Fair activity and this will be their first year with a curbsless street so we want to prepare the vendors. Also, last year it worked well to maintain the street closure to transition from the temporary surface restoration (Contractor's work area) to the Art Fair closure. Can we do the same thing this year?

**Response:** From Contractor -The plan is to have the concrete surface and pavers complete prior to Art Fair. We want to have a seamless transition from construction to Art Fair and plan to transition the construction detour into the Art Fair detour without a gap, repeating what worked well last year.

7. **Comment:** There is a design flaw with the traffic signal timing. For example, when turning left onto State Street from William Street – if one pedestrian walks against the light it causes a flood of pedestrians and holds up cars with only 2-3 cars getting through the intersection. This needs to be looked at and signage should be installed telling pedestrians to cross with the signal.

**Response:** We are monitoring this with City Transportation staff. We are getting feedback from all users and modes. When we first reopened the street, we heard concerns from pedestrians about having to wait too long to cross. The signal timing was adjusted as a result. Now we are hearing concerns about vehicle wait time and we continue to monitor as patterns adjust.