

South Oregon Street Safety Project

May 22, 2020

South Oregon Businesses,

We are still building our database of business owners. Feel free to share this email with your business neighbors, because we want to keep you as informed as possible.

When this was bid, everything was shut down because of COVID-19. The City Council held a special meeting to award the project so that the contractor could get started while you were closed. After that had already been approved, the state announced plans to open. It just so happened that that was the day the contractor was able to get started. We have been working on this project for 3 ½ years and we feel like this will really attract more patrons downtown.

I walked Oregon Street from SW 4th St. to Idaho Avenue last Thursday handing out postcards about how to sign up for alerts and to talk with you regarding the schedule. We also pushed it out on Facebook. If you want to find out the most current information about the project use this [link](#). Also, to be added to our list serve send an email to soregonproject@ontariooregon.org.

We have ordered signs to put at each intersection telling drivers which businesses are on each block. They will be ready today or tomorrow. We have also ordered some parking arrows for downtown to direct shoppers toward available parking.

The construction didn't start out as I expected it to. The contractor took the approach of ripping off the band aid, meaning they wanted to get in and get out. We ended up having to intervene Monday and yesterday as we heard from you. We will maintain access to all of the businesses store fronts during the entire construction process. Because of the contractor's work surge, construction is currently running ahead of schedule.

We went over the schedule this morning and I think this is good news. The contractor will be pouring concrete curbs on Friday for the intersections at 4th Avenue and 3rd Avenue. Oregon will be opened up over the weekend. They will be pouring sidewalks on Monday and Tuesday. The sidewalks can be walked on the very next day. Following sidewalk repair, they will conduct minor stormwater repairs around 3rd and 4th Avenues. As soon as that is done, they will move up to the corners of 1st and 2nd Avenues.

While the construction team and the City will work diligently to maintain the schedules below, please be patient if changes occur due to challenges such as inclement weather, unanticipated subsurface conditions, and further COVID 19 restrictions, etc. Please check the website for updates.

Benefits for you and other businesses who had to close

Lastly, I want to tell you about a couple of helps for business owners that had to shut down. First, the City Council asked me to prepare a resolution waiving utility fees for businesses who had to close and for the time period you were closed.

Second, the City started a microloan program of up to \$5,000 with a 6 month grace period and then a 24-month payback at 1%. Because we had that program in place, the state allowed us to add funding from them for a matching grant. This is for businesses with less than 24 employees who did not get funding through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). So if we get approved you could get a grant equal to the loan amount. We hope to hear approvals quickly. The state wants their money spent by the end of June. So in other words, you can get the state money for free. We will provide more information.