



TOOLKIT

Downtown Sparta 2009
Revitalization and Beautification Project



This product was sponsored by the Sparta Downtown Development Authority and the Village of Sparta.

The DDA is an authority dedicated to improving the economic viability, beauty, and infrastructure of the DDA District.

The Board of Directors is committed to planning and implementing strategies, projects and events aimed at enhancing our business community.

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Dear Merchant,

As many of you know, this is an exciting time to own a business in Downtown Sparta as we will soon begin investments on your doorstep with sidewalk construction, road re-surfacing, and sewer replacements! Although Construction may not be fun for a business owner, the Sparta DDA is committed to providing as much information to our businesses. For those of you who weren't able to make it to our Fall Open House, this Tool Kit is for you and your customers so you will better know what to expect.

The first part of the Tool Kit is meant for practical information: timing, parking, and construction methods. Use this part to inform yourselves and your co-workers about what to expect during construction.

The second part of the packet is meant to help you communicate with your customers: fliers are available to distribute to your customers or to post on your door. This will enable you to let your customers know you are thinking of their inconveniences as well. Feel free to copy and distribute FactSheets regarding the project. Make sure your customers know you will be here and open during construction.

Questions, comments, and concerns can be made to:

Elizabeth Gorski
DDA Director
Village of Sparta
156 E. Division
Sparta, MI 49345
P. (616) 887-8251

C. (616) 218-0488
Miles Ring
Department of Public Works
Village of Sparta
156 E. Division
Sparta, MI 49345

C. (616) 262-7901
Tim Hoffert
Engineer
Moor & Bruggink, Inc.
P. (616) 363-9801

Emergency Number

Village of Sparta Police Department
P. (616) 887-7331

The Sparta DDA is working hard to keep Sparta a great place to do business and continue to make it "What a Neighborhood Should be." Join in on the activities and programs throughout the year. Information can be found at www.spartami.org.



Before and during the project, you may have questions about parts of the enhancements or construction items involved in this project. The answers to many of those questions are listed below. If you have a question that is not listed below, please contact the Sparta DDA.

Frequently Asked Questions FACTSHEET...

1. What is included in the Sparta Streetscape project?

Answer: The project consists of four major parts: Sewer replacement, Pedestrian Safety Enhancements, Beautification, and Road Repaving. These four projects by different governmental entities could have become four separate construction projects. Instead, these projects are combined into one project, which helps reduce overlapping expenses, reduce road closures, and correlate construction schedules.

-Sewer Replacement is 300 feet of the original sewer line from the 1910 era. The sewer line replaced will be from State Street to the Sparta United Methodist Church on Division Avenue.

-Pedestrian Safety Enhancements include stamped cross walks with bumpouts to reduce the pedestrian street crossing length. The bumpouts are wide enough to assist in pedestrian safely crossing the street and give vehicles a visual reminder that they are in a pedestrian area to slow traffic speeds through downtown. All ramps from sidewalks to crosswalks will be handicap accessible meeting the ADA standards as mandated by MDOT.

-Beautification is to further the efforts of the Sparta DDA to keep the downtown a place people like to be, which can include walking or driving. Replacing some existing faded brick with dark accent bricks will enliven the street with color. Adding irrigated flower pots to light posts will bring more vibrant color downtown, and additional flower beds will signal to vehicles to drive slower to watch for pedestrians, look at downtown businesses, and be a part of the downtown atmosphere. Each beautification enhancement is part of the Michigan Department of Transportation Enhancement Standards.

-Road Repaving will be part of the project as Division is under the Kent County Road Commission jurisdiction. By working with Kent County Road Commission, we were able to coordinate schedules and funds to reduce impact on the community for construction (compared to having Division repaved during a separate construction project).



2. Who is paying for these improvements and construction?

Answer: As the project includes four major components, the project includes many funding parties. It is important for our businesses, customers, and residents to understand the funding for this project will **not increase taxes**. The funding parties for this project have been saving to pay for the project. The funds are not part of the federal stimulus package and the project is not eligible for funding as this project has already been awarded federal grant funding. Streetscape Project funding parties include:

Village of Sparta Sewer Department \$56,000
Village of Sparta Major Streets Department \$358,000
Kent County Road Commission \$180,000
Michigan Department of Transportation Grant \$376,500
Village of Sparta DDA \$ 653,000

Total Investment: 1,623,500

(Note: DDA Taxes captured from property value increases in the DDA District since 1992 can only be spent on projects that further promote and enhance businesses in the district according to the state-sponsored downtown revitalization law. Properties within the DDA District do not pay more taxes than other businesses, but are captured from taxing jurisdictions for specific projects such as streetscape enhancements.)



3. What are the project boundaries?

Answer: The project consists of enhancements on Division Avenue from State Street to Nash Creek Bridge, including repaving to the East end of the Village Limits, and on North Union from Division to the Nash Creek Bridge.



4. How will the traffic be re-routed during the construction?

Answer: “Road closed to thru traffic” signs will be placed at Old Alpine/13 Mile AND Division/ State Street for the closures

See attached maps on page 9 – 11 for reference.



5. What are the Road Closure/ Construction Dates?

(These dates are approximates. Changes in the schedule will be communicated to your business as soon as possible).

Answer: Road Closures: Please read carefully below!

To reduce the amount of small road closures throughout the next three months (during cross walk construction), the engineers and the Village have reworked some plans to reduce the impact of the road closures to your business. Although the initial change will be hard for locals to get used to, it will be consistent throughout a major portion of the project, which is important for them to access your business repeatedly over the next 3 months. We would rather have a **consistent detour** to and through downtown than to change up access routes every 3-4 days for smaller 2-3 day road closures.

April 6 – April 20 South Side of Division Construction

Traffic will be **ONE way only through downtown**. West bound traffic will stay on the north side of the street. During this time, the south side of the street will be under construction. Eastbound traffic will be rerouted (see map below).

Parallel parking will be unavailable during this time on the north and south side of Division. Customers will be routed into parking lots.

Work to be done: Main tear up and removal of bricks for irrigation, new brick work enhancements, landscaping, and bump-outs completed on South side of Division.

-Sewer Replacement Road Closure April 20 – May 15

(Sewer Replacement will only be 300 feet between State Street and Sparta United Methodist Church) Division between Union Street and State Street will be closed to all thru traffic.

Local Traffic will be allowed access as much as possible.

Traffic will be **ONE way only through downtown**. West bound traffic will stay on the north side of the street. During this time, the south side of the street will be under construction. Eastbound traffic will be rerouted (see map below). Westbound traffic will be rerouted onto N. Union Street.

-North Side Construction May 16 – June 25

Traffic will be 2 way on the south side of the street. Parallel parking will be unavailable during this time on the north and south side of Division.

Customers will be routed into parking lots. Access to the Arches parking lot will be made through Division Street/Arches OR through N. Union Street across from ChoiceOne Bank.

Work to be done: Main tear up and removal of bricks for irrigation, new brick work enhancements, landscaping, and bumpouts completed.



-The“Cleanup” June 25-30

Minor road closures for final paving and construction clean up.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND: Mother Nature can cause some delays to the schedule. Very likely, there will be some changes to the schedule. We will keep you up to date as soon as we know of any changes. Thank you

6. Why are some bricks being replaced? What will happen with the existing bricks? Why are new bricks going to make a difference?

Answer: The brickwork along side the curbs are being enhanced with accent bricks. All existing bricks will be reset along curbside after irrigation and new electrical lines are laid with the addition of accent bricks. The existing bricks are concrete pavers which have faded over time. The new bricks are actual clay bricks which were designed to compliment the existing color in the concrete pavers. The new bricks, made from different material, will hold their color better than the existing concrete pavers.

All the bricks will be replaced somewhere along Division Avenue. Bricks with inscriptions will be placed near the arches parking lot.

7. How can I let traffic know I will be open for business during closures?

Answer: Reader board signs will have proper signage stating “Road open for Businesses!” during road closures.

Also, during the construction season, the Sparta TODAY newspaper will have a ‘Construction Sales’ section for businesses downtown affected by construction to put sale items in the ad sponsored by the DDA. (See attached flier on page 9)

8. Why would we want to lose downtown parking places for bumpouts?

Answer: Through the project, downtown on-street parking was a major priority. Even with the bumpouts and reconfiguring the current spaces, we are losing only four downtown parking spots. Many current on-street parking spots are not equal lengths. The parking spots will be standardized lengths per Kent County Road Commission and the Village of Sparta Ordinance. New parking spots will be marked on side roads including Washington, Elm, and Maple which are currently not marked. In addition, there are many public parking spots in the Arches parking lot, South Union Parking Lot, Village Hall Parking Lot, and North Union



Parking Lot for convenient customer access during construction and throughout the year.

8. How can I help make it easier for my customers to park near to my business?

Answer: Be creative! Suggest that your employees park farthest from business entrances. By having the employees park farther away toward the back of parking lots, parking spots open up for customers. Any convenience you can give your customer will result in better quality customer service.

Ideas to help reduce employee parking in Customer spots:

- Give “Employee Parking Awards” or “Notable Employee” awards for the employees that choose the best out-of-the-way parking place each week.
- Find a side street that has on-street parking and write a memo to your employees to park there instead of valuable customer parking spaces.
- Enjoy the Late Spring and Early Summer by taking a walk.

Note: Be sure to have your employees park away from OTHER businesses entrances, too!



Approximate Dates: April 6 - April 20

Begin Westbound Traffic Only

2 Way Traffic

Eastbound Downtown Traffic Route



There will be times when access will change due to cross walk construction on side streets. We will inform you as soon as we know when those changes will occur.



Approximate Dates: April 20 - Mid May

Begin Westbound Traffic Only

2-way Traffic

Eastbound Downtown Traffic Route

Road Closed



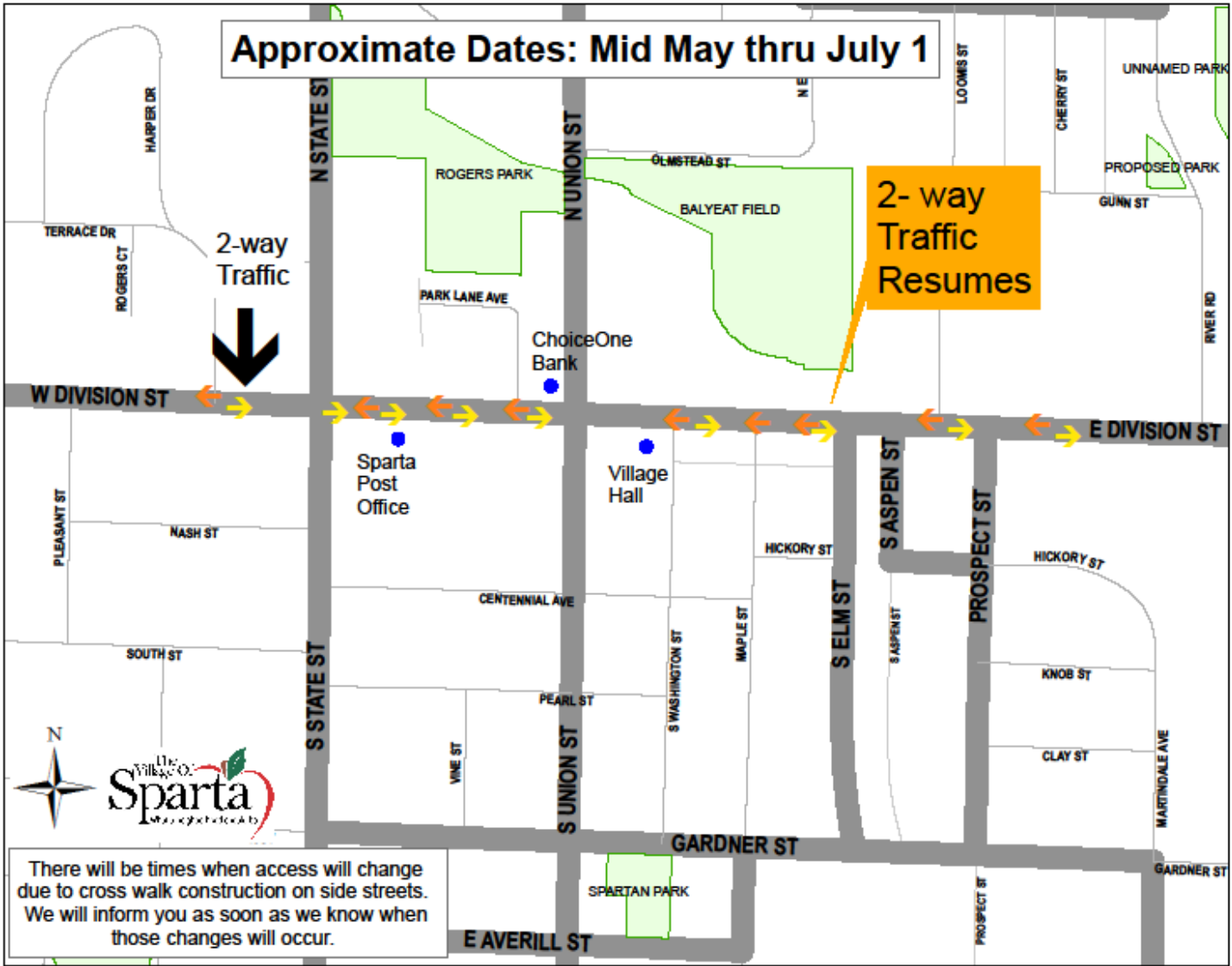
There will be times when access will change due to cross walk construction on side streets. We will inform you as soon as we know when those changes will occur.



Approximate Dates: Mid May thru July 1

2-way Traffic Resumes

2-way Traffic



There will be times when access will change due to cross walk construction on side streets. We will inform you as soon as we know when those changes will occur.



DDA Promotions Scheduled Events

Ground Breaking Ceremony

Tuesday, April 7 10:00 am

In front of Village Hall in Downtown Sparta. All businesses, residents and guests are invited to the Ground Breaking Ceremony to celebrate the investment in our downtown & our community.

DDA Website

The DDA website www.spartami.org, under the Supporting Local Businesses tab, will have up-to-date construction information, as well as upcoming event information for downtown events. Look under www.Spartachamber.com for the same up-to-date construction and event information!

Sparta TODAY Cooperative Newspaper Advertising

DDA Director Elizabeth Gorski will coordinate an advertising spot located in the Sparta TODAY newspaper to list specials or sales for Downtown Businesses. Please send your special information over to the Village DDA Office by April 1 & by May 1 to be included in the next publications.

Village Waterbill Newsletter

The Village of Sparta will include the construction timeline and information about local businesses in the April Waterbill Newsletter.

Detour to Downtown Sparta: Construction Sales Party

Construction may not be fun as a business owner, but plan to participate in an event to bring visitors downtown to win prizes, shop in local businesses, and have fun during a construction celebration. Be on the lookout for more information about getting your business to become a destination during the Construction Sales Party!

Official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Wednesday, July 15, 2009 6 pm North Union Street

Join the Sparta DDA as we celebrate the grand opening of the new streetscape in Downtown Sparta!





For More Information:
Sparta Downtown
Development Authority
616.887.8251

It's Time to Advertise!

As a cooperative effort between the Chamber of Commerce and the DDA, we're turning the "lemons" of road construction into the "lemonade" of great downtown business with every promotional tool we can!

Available for two prints only:

FREE Sparta Today Newspaper text ads.



The ad's are simple, but promise to be very effective during the construction time.

The basic format needs to be the business name, promotion, and number OR website.

Deadline for text ad submission:

- The first of April for May's Newspaper
- The first of May for June's Newspaper

E-mail text ad to ddadirector@spartami.org





For More Information:
 Sparta Downtown
 Development Authority
 616.887.8251



AFTER



BEFORE

To Our Valued Customers:
 Please pardon our dust for
 the next few weeks as we
 doll up Downtown Sparta!



We're looking forward to a new
 look in July 2009!

We will be open as usual and we will be glad to serve you during construction. Division Avenue from State Street to the East Village limits will be resurfaced. Downtown Sparta will have many new enhancements!

Thank You for shopping with us!

