

Lighted crosswalks, parking among planned projects in Brighton

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus - Howell, Mich.

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Date: Aug 23, 2012

Start Page: n/a

Section: Local News

Text Word Count: 365

Document Text

The Brighton Downtown Development Authority will shine a light on one of downtown Brighton's busier intersections.

The authority approved a contract for Fonson Inc. to install three lighted crosswalks at Main and West streets, add parking spaces on North Street and make streetscape improvements on West Street. The sidewalk along North Street will be improved, too.

The authority will pay for the work with a \$384,000 state grant.

The work is scheduled to start Sept. 10, which is after the Smokin' Jazz and Barbecue Blues Festival, and it should be completed by the end of November.

Matt Modrack, DDA director, said Main Street would be open to one-way traffic for a limited period. Other than that, he said, Main Street will have two-way traffic during the project.

Mark Binkley, DDA board member and downtown business owner, said it makes sense to install lighted crosswalks at the intersection, which has seen an increase in pedestrians. The authority has installed lighted crosswalks to improve safety for pedestrians.

"This has become a very busy pedestrian crossing," he said.

He said there are now three restaurants at the corner, including The Pound! Bar & Grill, which opened this year; and the Downtown Main Martini Bar & Grille, which opened a few years ago. In addition, the Yum Yum Tree restaurant has opened during the early morning hours to accommodate some of the bar patrons.

At the push of a button, the crosswalks' flashing lights are activated to alert motorists along the road that pedestrians are crossing. Lighted crosswalks are installed on Main Street in front of the Mill Pond and at Hyne Street.

"It's nice having activity at this end of the block," Binkley said.

A few years ago, numerous storefronts were vacant along a nearby stretch of Main Street, but all the buildings are now occupied.

While the work will disrupt traffic, Binkley said, "It needs to be done."

Although the authority received the grant two years ago, Modrack said the authority intentionally postponed the project because other construction projects were occurring, and it wanted to limit disruption to the downtown area.

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