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# NEWS *Release*

For Immediate Release:  
Wednesday, April 01, 2009

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River District Association & City met with business and property owners from Main Street Mall area.

ROCKFORD, IL -- River District Association facilitated a meeting between City of Rockford Public Works Department staff and business and property owners from the two block Main Street pedestrian mall area on Tuesday, March 31, 2009. The meeting started at 2:00 p.m. and lasted until 3:30 p.m. inside a meeting room at Stewart Square, 308 W. State St.

The purpose of the gathering was to bring stakeholders up to date on plans to remove the two blocks of mall and convert that portion of Main Street (100 North and 100 South) into two way traffic. Patrick Zuroske, City of Rockford, reviewed information with the group about what the street and sidewalk will look like, functionality of the street and intersections, streetscape amenities, timeline of the street construction project, and impact of the construction on the businesses.

Zuroske took questions from the audience of about 40 people and asked for input on how to minimize the impact to their daily business operations. They discussed ideas for signs – what they should say and where to place them - to let the public know businesses will still be open during the several months it will take to complete this two block portion of the Downtown Streetscape Plan.

They also brainstormed other ways to let the public know about businesses being open during this time. During the whole construction project access to business entrances will be available

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either by sidewalk or boardwalk. Sidewalks will remain open during most of the construction and when they start rebuilding the sidewalks toward the end of the project the street portion will be open to pedestrian and construction traffic before it is open to public vehicular traffic.

One business owner Doc Slafkosky (J. R. Kortman Center for Design, 107 N. Main St.) commented to the group that, “We’ve been telling customers that it will be the same as it is now throughout the construction, where you have to park your car and walk to our store.” Because cars are not currently able to drive on the pedestrian mall people have to park their cars in a nearby surface parking lot or on the street nearby and walk a short distance.

River District Association will be helping the City of Rockford communicate with stakeholders and the public during the entire Downtown Streetscape project which will be done over a period of five years. Removing the pedestrian mall and converting it to two-way traffic is the first phase that will be started this Spring and finished this year in late Summer or early Fall.

The public is invited to visit the City of Rockford website, [rockfordil.gov](http://rockfordil.gov), on a regular basis to read about updates for the ongoing project. Currently you will see drawings of the streetscape plan. There is a “Downtown Streetscape” icon in the right column of the home page that you can click on to see drawings and other information. For more information contact Patrick Zuroske at 815-262-9214, or [Patrick.Zuroske@rockfordil.gov](mailto:Patrick.Zuroske@rockfordil.gov).

The mission of River District Association is to promote a growing, thriving, prosperous business and residential community in Rockford's downtown neighborhood, River District.

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