IDAHO FALLS

PRESS RELEASE

Office of the Mayor
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1st Street waterline improvements resume next spring while plans to revitalize Northgate Mile and 1st Street corridors continue

Idaho Falls, ID – After giving business owners a one-year break from construction, Idaho Falls Public Works will resume the 1st Street waterline project in the spring of 2021, while working in tandem with Community Development Services as they make headway on future plans to revitalize the Northgate Mile and 1st Street corridors.

The waterline project is a continuation of the 2019 project from the 1st Street/Lomax Street junction eastward to the Idaho Canal. The 2021 project will extend westward from the 1st Street/Lomax Street junction to Northgate Mile. The project entails replacing the waterline, reconstructing the roadway to eliminate excessive crowning and extend its useful life, making storm drain improvements, replacing the island at the junction, and upgrading street lighting. The anticipated duration of the final phase of the waterline project is four to five months from the start date.

The waterline project precedes recent community planning efforts by Community Development Services for that area. In September 2020, the City, in partnership with community stakeholders and a planning consultant team, completed the Northgate/1St Street Area-wide Planning Study.

The Public Works and Community Development Services Departments have coordinated the two projects to make sure the construction efforts do not hinder or restrict future implementation of plan priorities. The waterline project will be foundational for future improvements identified by the planning study for the area.

The study is part of an Environmental Protection Agency Community-wide Assessment Grant, which provides funding and technical assistance to communities to address brownfield (unused developed land) and advance redevelopment activities to return these properties to productive use.

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The City engaged community stakeholders who helped define and shape the plan's vision of celebrating Idaho Falls' history, physical character, and increasing collection of small, pioneering businesses. The vision also directs the City and the community to enhance the focus area with infrastructure and amenity investments, traditions and annual events, public destinations, and housing options for the current and future populations.

Seven community priorities for the Northgate/1st Street were identified, to include:

1. Improve traffic and circulation;
2. improve property appearance and code enforcement activities;
3. create public amenities and promote beautification;
4. improve walkability and public safety;
5. address parking demand;
6. create a distinct community identity and include links to history; and
7. incentivize private development projects.

The process also includes an Urban Design Plan and strategies to help guide the vision, working in concurrence with the City's Connecting Our Community plan, to include mixed use designs, landscaping, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, signage and other strategically placed amenities.

Next steps for implementing this long-term plan include continuing to work with community stakeholders and incorporating individual projects into the City's Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinance and capital improvement program. These steps will ensure future planning initiatives and public investments carry forward these ideas. The City is also working on identifying various strategies to fund the projects, including exploring the feasibility of establishing one or multiple urban renewal districts for the area.

Media Note: For more information or to schedule an interview with city staff, contact Public Information Officers Bud Cranor or Kerry Hammon.

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