

City to test turns on square today

January 4, 2017

Weather permitting, part of the square will be blocked off today.

The city will be conducting tests at the Crockett and Bridge intersection to ensure that large vehicles will be able to navigate turns once the streets have been narrowed due to wider sidewalks.

That intersection is on the northeast side of the square, opposite Pearl Street.

The widening of sidewalks is part of the Downtown Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvement Project, which will get underway this month.

The Public Works Department will be working with emergency services crews to conduct the testing.

Several dozen traffic cones will be used to create a mock-up of the proposed design.

Practice turns will be performed by drivers in a fire department ladder truck, a dump truck and other city vehicles.

The intersection will be blocked off this morning, and testing will be done in the afternoon, according to city officials.

Aerial photos and video will be taken of the testing by Sight Glass Flights, LLC. Various officials will also be on site.

The City Council approved the testing after merchants and others expressed concerns and requested that such tests be conducted.

Engineers who have been working with the city on the project say that emergency vehicles, delivery trucks and other large vehicles should be able to navigate the turns.

They said they were able to test turning radiuses through the use of special software.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has also been involved in the design of the project.

TxDOT's Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) is providing grant funds that will cover 80 percent of the costs. The city will pay the rest, plus engineering fees.

The scope of the project involves sidewalks, lighting, streets and landscaping.

A few weeks ago, the City Council awarded the bid to the Fain Group out of Fort Worth.

The bid was for about \$2.6 million.

Anyone with questions about the project can call Public Works Director Rick Crownover at 817-573-7030.

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