



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

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## **Duke Street improvements in downtown Beaufort will include paving, drainage and landscaping**

The second phase of improvements to downtown Beaufort's Duke Street will begin next week as part of the city's continuing efforts to improve and beautify the historic Northwest Quadrant.

The work includes the removal of existing road pavement, sidewalks, utilities and drainage, then constructing a new paved road with sidewalks, drainage, landscaping, tree planting, underground utilities, brick-paver parking and new streetlights.

During the work, there may be some disruptions to vehicle and pedestrian traffic along Duke Street, said project manager Lamar Taylor of Beaufort's public works department. The Duke Street streetscape improvements will start at Harrington Street, proceeding east toward Charles Street.

Starting next week, there should be minimal disruptions to include:

- Crews will begin creating a construction material and equipment storage yard between Church and Newcastle Street
- Workers will use special saws to begin cutting up the existing pavement
- Traffic control signage will be installed to warn pedestrians of construction activity
- Surveys will start for storm drainage improvements
- Sidewalks will be torn up and removed between Harrington and Church streets.

"Step by step, we are making some major investments and improvements to key areas such as the Northwest Quadrant," said Jon Verity, chairman of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission. "Our goal is to improve the quality of life for those residents, but also to make the city as a whole more appealing for both residents and businesses."

This is the second phase of streetscape improvements along Duke Street in the Northwest Quadrant, which in 2010 was named one of the nation's 51 "Best Old House Neighborhoods" by *This Old House* magazine.

The area, once a thriving black middle-class neighborhood just blocks off the Beaufort River, fell into disrepair in the 1970s. It became one of Beaufort's blighted and neglected areas until renovations started in earnest in the mid-1990s. Starting in 2009, City leaders joined hands with involved area homeowners to remove huge amounts of accumulated debris as well as help them remove overgrowth and clean up the blight.

Since then, there's been a fairly steady improvement to sections of the Northwest Quadrant, notably along Bladen Street and Duke Street. From 1995 to present, the City of Beaufort has invested more than \$5 million to improve the Northwest Quadrant.

"This is Phase Two of the Duke Street improvements, and we'll certainly do our best to keep the disruptions and delays to a minimum," Beaufort City Manager Scott Dadson said. "The Northwest Quadrant is such an important neighborhood and it's exciting to see the residents really come together with us and our partners to make these improvements happen."

Earlier this week, Dadson and Bill Harvey, the city's attorney, signed off on an executed contract between the city and JoCo Construction, LLC, a Beaufort-based company.

The project contract calls for completion of work within 150 days. Area residents with questions or concerns should contact Lamar Taylor at [LTaylor@cityofbeaufort.org](mailto:LTaylor@cityofbeaufort.org) or 525-7054.

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