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NEWS RELEASE

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Boundary Street intersection expected to open by Monday at Robert Smalls Parkway

The new Boundary Street intersection with Robert Smalls Parkway likely will open Sunday night, about 10 days sooner than expected. Motorists will encounter a new traffic flow, new signage and turn lanes.

A new traffic signal on Boundary Street at Polk Street, where Walgreens sits across from Ameris Bank at the side entrance to Beaufort Plaza, also will begin working next week. Flashing lights on the new traffic signal began signaling the change this week.

“The hot and dry weather in July helped our contractors do their grading and paving sooner than originally scheduled, and the traffic signals have been ready to go,” Beaufort City Manager Bill Prokop said. “Opening these new intersections will help our Boundary Street businesses that have been so patient with our intersection work over the past few months.”

If weather allows continued work on the intersection this weekend, crews anticipate switching to the new crossroads Sunday night. Beaufort police will be on-site to help with the change. The connection of Boundary Street/US 21 Business and Robert Smalls Parkway/SC 170 is a major artery for northern Beaufort County traffic.

Traffic has been detoured around the Robert Smalls Parkway intersection twice this summer to allow crews to dig up and replace underground storm water drain pipes and water lines. Completing and opening the new intersection is a major benchmark for the 1.2-mile, \$32 million Boundary Street project.

Motorists are asked to drive with extra care through the new intersections. Turn lanes are clearly marked, but any time a new traffic signal comes into play, people need to be alert, Beaufort Police Chief Matt Clancy said.

Grading and paving the new Boundary Street and Robert Smalls Parkway intersection began last week, with nighttime closures of single lanes. Since mid-winter, construction crews and local utilities have built an underground “duct bank” to carry powerlines and communications cables currently strung overhead. They’ve also built new curbing, stormwater drains and sidewalks along the southern side of Boundary Street.

In coming weeks, construction crews will shift traffic over to the southern side of Boundary Street so they can build the duct bank along the northern side of the street. Eventually, the overhead lines will be removed and all those services will be carried below ground.

“It’s going to make a huge difference in the appearance of Boundary Street,” Prokop said. “There’s a safety element as well, plus it’s a lot less likely that power lines will go down in storms.”

Last month, new traffic signal masts were installed near Chik-Fil-A and McDonald’s for the realigned intersection.

The new intersection features a more traditional perpendicular alignment of the roads with left-turn lanes and signals. Like all the new traffic signals being erected on Boundary Street, the new intersection’s signals will be part of a “smart” system designed to help traffic flow smoothly in all conditions.

When completed, Boundary Street will remain a four-lane roadway but will feature improved intersections with traffic signals; left-turn lanes; and landscaped middle median; and sidewalks and pathways for pedestrians. The project is scheduled for completion in 2018.

For more information, visit www.boundarystreetupdate.com.

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