

City of Madison Street Use Committee – Dane County Farmers’ Market Construction 2019

Pre-proposal Discussion

The Dane County Farmers’ Market was recently made aware that the Wisconsin State Capitol will be undergoing storm sewer and water main re/construction during the spring/summer of 2019. The planned construction will have an immense impact on the Dane County Farmers’ Market, including not only our farmers whose livelihood is connected to the Market, but also the many brick-and-mortar businesses and City of Madison street vendors who also benefit from the 20,000-plus visitors who attend the Market each Saturday. Because this construction will impact so many, we hope that the City will work with the DCFM to find identify a strategy which will minimize the impact to the Market and other businesses.

In the beginning of October, I met with Sue Barica and two State employees (Darrin Smith and Jason Rittel) to learn about the construction. I have not received any updates since this time, so Sue may be able to better share information about the project; however, the project was described to me as follows:

- The State-side parking lane along West Mifflin and North Carroll Streets will be under construction to replace failing storm sewer.
- The exact timeline, staging, and duration of the project is highly dependent upon the contractor who has not yet been selected.
- It is anticipated that the parking lane will be fenced off with 6ft chain-link fencing and closed for some or all of the duration of the project.
- The State will not close the road to vehicular access during the project.
- The project will occur between March 2019 and August 2019.
- There will also be several areas of sidewalk that will be fenced off and closed, displacing DCFM vendors.
- Pedestrian and ADA access is expected throughout the duration of the project.

As it has been described, the project eliminates both parking and access for a quarter of the DCFM vendors. In addition, it will completely displace approximately 5 vendors including Stella’s Bakery which is a large draw both for the Market and the entire downtown area.

This proposed construction necessitates that the DCFM think outside the box to ensure the economic viability of both the Market and our members. As such, we have started to brainstorm various scenarios to enable our members to retain access to their stands. These options are meant to be a starting point for conversation with the Street Use Committee and are in no way exhaustive. Please note, Madison Metro buses are already moved off the Square for the duration of Market, so none of these options will impact Metro.

Option One: Allow the DCFM vendors to park in the drive lane closest to the Capitol

- Close W. Mifflin and N. Carroll to vehicular traffic (Wisconsin Ave to West Washington) from 5am to 2:30pm each Saturday for the duration of the project.
- Post No Parking on the far side of the Capitol Square.
- Fire lane and access for City craft vendors and food carts would be maintained in the second drive lane/far parking lane.
- For this to be successful, the State/contractor will need to agree to put at least two temporary access points mid-way in each block for farmers to access the sidewalk.
- The Market would be responsible for closing the streets; however, craft vendors and food carts would need to move the barricades to gain access to their areas.

Option Two: Allow DCFM vendors to park in the far parking lane on the City-side of the Square.

- For the safety of DCFM vendors walking across the street with all their equipment and products, close W. Mifflin and N. Carroll to vehicular traffic (Wisconsin Ave to West Washington) from 5am to 7:30am and from 1:00-2:30pm each Saturday for the duration of the project. Re-open the street for public vehicular traffic from 7:30am to 1pm.
- Post No Parking on the far side of the Capitol Square and allow DCFM vendors to park in allocated parking spots, as well as bus stops and yellow curb areas.
- Fire lane and access for City craft vendors and food carts would be maintained within the normal two driving lanes.
- For this to be successful, the State/contractor will need to agree to put at least two temporary access points mid-way in the block for farmers to access the sidewalk.
- The Market would be responsible for closing the streets; however, craft vendors and food carts may need to move the barricades to gain access to their areas, depending on their load-in times.

Option Three: Allow the DCFM vendors to vend in the street, alongside their vehicles, for the two impacted blocks, as we did during the reconstruction of the Square in 2008.

- Close W. Mifflin and N. Carroll to vehicular traffic (Wisconsin Ave to West Washington) from 5am to 2:30pm each Saturday for the duration of the project.
- Post No Parking on the far side of the Capitol Square.
- Fire lane and access for City craft vendors and food carts would be maintained in the second drive lane/far parking lane; however, this would also be the customer area.
- This option does NOT require access points; however, in order to maintain the flow of traffic, we would close the sidewalk of the State Capitol from Wisconsin to W. Wash (or whatever the impacted area is) to divert the pedestrian traffic to the street.
- The Market would be responsible for closing the streets; however, craft vendors and food carts would need to move the barricades to gain access to their areas. Due to the presence of pedestrians in the area, this option may also require additional volunteer assistance to guide the vehicles thru the impacted area.