

# Main Street project could start this fall

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A \$3.4 million project to rebuild Main Street through downtown Rapid City could begin as early as this fall, says city Public Works Director Mike Strub.

Strub told the Rapid City Common Council Monday night that engineers had met with the owners and managers of downtown businesses to make sure the project was done with the least disruption possible.

Dave Kallemeyn, vice president of Lund Galyardt Inc. of Rapid City, briefly described the six-phase reconstruction for the council.

Kallemeyn said the project probably would be completed by November 1992.

The reconstruction will run from just west of West Boulevard to the east side of East Boulevard.

The current roadway, which is about 40 years old, will be torn out and replaced with a 9-inch concrete road with new curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

Pedestrian nodes, similar to those on downtown corners at Sixth Street and Seventh Street, will be constructed at every intersection. (Planters, bollards and lights for the new nodes are not included in the project.)

Some intersections will get new lights and all the old waterlines will

be replaced.

Strub said he didn't think any businesses would be lost. But James Taylor, who owns Everybody's Bookstore and several other downtown businesses, disagreed.

Taylor said the city could lessen the impact of the project by offering free parking in city lots, beginning immediately.

He said downtown lots generated about \$45,000 a year, which he called "a pittance" compared to the benefits of making the lots free.

Taylor also said the city should install better signs to direct people to lots and make parking tickets more expensive for repeat offenders.

Taylor said downtown Rapid City was becoming a regional center for arts, entertainment, bookstores, restaurants, legal offices and other types of businesses. The problem, he said, was, "We can't park."

About \$2.7 million of the \$3.4 million project — the cost of the roadway itself — will come from the state. In return, the city has agreed to take Main Street off the state highway system.

The rest of the cost of the project — mainly, the water lines — will be paid for by the city.

Once the Main Street reconstruction is complete, the city will begin an almost identical project to reconstruct St. Joseph Street through downtown.