



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

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For Immediate Release – September 11, 2020

Statement of Mayor David Narkewicz on Removal of Temporary Main Street Project Parking ban in select area Monday night

NORTHAMPTON - Today, I have directed the Department of Public Works (DPW) to remove the temporary installation known as the Northampton Shared Streets and Spaces project on Main Street between the intersections of Old South Street/State Street and King Street/Pleasant Street. Beginning at 9:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020, a temporary parking ban will go into effect in that area and DPW crews will remove barriers, planters, signage and temporary taping to restore the street to its original configuration prior to the August 20, 2020 installation.

My goal for this project was to temporarily create more public space in order to safely bring more people downtown to support Northampton businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. While I am confident that this effort was beginning to have its intended effect, some 55 downtown business owners have expressed opposition to the project and asked that it be removed.

Since supporting our vital local businesses and economic recovery was the central goal of this project, I have decided to act quickly on the mixed and negative feedback the installation has received from downtown businesses. The debate itself is bad for business, and my love for Northampton far outweighs any desire I have to defend this idea.

By the same analysis, I have decided that the city will maintain the temporary installations on lower Main Street, Masonic Street, Strong Avenue, Pearl Street, and Market Street that existed prior to the August 20, 2020, installation. We have received overwhelming testimony from businesses in these areas that our efforts to support outdoor dining and space in the public way has helped them survive the current economic environment. The city will continue to work with local businesses where possible - including on middle and upper Main Street - that want to create more safe outdoor space.

Again, in order to facilitate the removal of this installation, the city is putting a parking ban in effect on Main Street from the Old South Street/State Street intersection to the King Street/Pleasant Street intersection beginning at 9:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14, until 6:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 15. Cars on this portion of Main Street during that window will be towed at owner's expense.

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.