



CITY OF OAK PARK

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Work Begins on Oak Park’s I-696/Coolidge Bridge Project Project symbolizes new era in City, will be completed by the end of the year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 25, 2019

OAK PARK, MI – Today, the City of Oak Park is proud to announce that work has officially begun on its project to improve and beautify the I-696 overpass bridge at Coolidge Highway, known as the I-696/Coolidge Bridge project. With a total cost of \$667,591, the project will turn the once bland and blighted bridge, marked by old and worn-down cyclone fencing, into a welcoming monument to all those who pass under it. Upon completion, the bridge will feature a grand fabricated metal design on both sides that features the leaf from Oak Park’s city seal, as well as decorative sidewalk lighting and black mesh fencing where the cyclone fencing once was.

The bidding for this project opened on November 8, 2018. After reviewing qualifying bids, the contract for construction was awarded to Z Contractors of Shelby Township, Michigan on March 18, 2019. Fabrication of the metal design began in the late summer of this year, and was completed very recently, making way for the design to be fitted onto the overpass bridge beginning this week.

“Given that the cyclone fencing needed to be replaced anyway, this was an excellent opportunity for the City to further rebrand itself using a relatively small amount of funds,” said Oak Park City Manager Erik Tungate.

The project utilized a minimal amount of dollars from the City’s General Fund, in the sum of only \$55,000. Additionally, because Oak Park’s stretch of Coolidge Highway is a city road, but I-696 is under state and federal jurisdiction, the project required approvals from both the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), as well as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

This I-696/Coolidge Bridge project comes shortly after the City wrapped up its work on Nine Mile Road for the Nine Mile Redesign project, which brought a road diet, bike lanes, parks, and other public amenities to the corridor.

“Oak Park is taking every opportunity to promote a sense of place here,” said City Manager Tungate, “With so many motorists traversing this interstate highway every day, we pounced on the opportunity to turn this otherwise drab area into a point of distinction for our community.”

During the length of the project, motorists should expect minor and intermittent lane closures on I-696, with the potential of curb closures on the overpass bridge as well. These closures ensure

the safety of the construction workers tasked with installing the fabricated metal design onto the bridge.

A rendering of the bridge design is attached to this press release. The project is expected to wrap up before the end of the year.

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About:

Situated within the southeast corner of Oakland County, the City of Oak Park has a long history of being an integral, inner-ring suburb of Detroit. With approximately 30,000 residents in 5.16 square miles, we pride ourselves on the richness of our cultural diversity and our safe, secure neighborhoods.

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