

# City construction projects for sewer, sidewalk in progress

BY MARIA KAESS  
for the Index

As construction season gears up, Kirksville residents are seeing evidence of the city's latest engineering projects.

On the Square, the new sidewalk project is underway. Newly piled bricks and freshly laid concrete provide visible confirmation of the work being done.

Kirk Ranson, city engineering technician II, said he thinks owners on the Square think the disruption caused by the construction is worth the improvements it will generate.

"I think the general consensus is that, yeah, it's a little bit of a mess, but it's only for a day or two in front of your business, and then you've got a new sidewalk," Ranson said.

Ranson said construction for the sidewalk project runs along Franklin Street from Washington Street to Normal Street. The scope of the project includes installing new lighting, widening the sidewalks and adding built-in Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramps, Ranson said.

"A lot of people have been very happy with how [the sidewalks] have turned out and with how quickly the

progress has proceeded," Ranson said. "We haven't had any real complications with the project."

Junior Lynette Henderson said she noticed the changes being made on the Square.

"I think it's quite messy," Henderson said. "I'm not sure how to cross the street anymore."

Despite the mess, Henderson said the project is a good thing.

"It's a good idea if [the Square] is going to be more accessible to handicapped people and people in general," Henderson said.

Ranson said the sidewalk project could take a month to two months to reach completion.

"It has a 90-day contract," Ranson said. "I'd estimate that within a month it will be finished, weather permitting."

The sidewalk project is one of several construction projects in progress within Kirksville's city limits. Another project in progress right now is the Route P sewer project, Ranson said.

The Route P sewer project was started several years ago when the city annexed properties to the east. As the city boundaries moved outward to include the annexed properties, it became evident that the annexed properties would



Workers lay cement as part of the sidewalk project on Franklin Street. The sidewalk project includes new lights, wider sidewalks and ramps compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Mayank Dhungana/Index

need to be connected to the city's existing sewer lines and provided with sewer lines of their own, Ranson said.

"Also, it's in anticipation of further development," Ranson said. "As the city grows, those lands may be developed or turned into subdivisions."

After several years of planning, the construction phase of the Route P sewer project began this past winter. Despite unavoidable inconveniences, residents

of the area have been very supportive of the project, Ranson said.

"We've really had excellent communication with the customers," Ranson said. "They've been very receptive. They understand that that's what it takes to put a pipe 12 or 15 feet into the ground."

The \$500,000 project also includes adding two new pump stations in addition to placing pipes into the ground,

Ranson said.

Although the sidewalk and sewer projects are two of Kirksville's most prominent construction projects to date, City Engineer John Buckwalter said he has several projects planned for the near future. These projects will include Jefferson Street renovations, concrete and asphalt construction on several city streets and work on Baltimore Street sidewalks.

# DNA lab will create jobs and help solve crime

BY JESSICA RAPP  
News Editor

Truman students and faculty soon might have the facilities to take a stab at crime.

Kirksville is set to be the location of a DNA lab, which would create opportunities for internships and jobs in the community, said Phil Tate, director of job creation for Kirksville Regional Economic Development, Inc. The forensic laboratory would perform DNA testing for criminal identification and take on contracts from all over the nation, he said.

The company, whose name remains undisclosed for the moment, also has a smaller location in Southern California. The site for the company still is being decided, Tate said. He said the lab would require about 164 employees during a five-year period, in-

cluding scientists with degrees in chemistry and biology.

Tate said the company will try to hire as many people from the Kirksville community as it can, as well as keep University graduates in Kirksville as employees of the lab.

"I know that Truman State is working on the possibility of adding a forensic minor to their biology and chemistry programs," Tate said. "There is also collaboration in progress where, hopefully, we can have an intern program between the company and Truman State."

The city of Kirksville will

meet with the state May 20 for further discussion, even though neither the University, the city nor the company has finalized any plans. Tate said he hopes to make an official announcement about the company shortly after this.

Brent Buckner, professor of biology, said faculty from the chemistry, biology and justice system departments have mapped out a forensics minor that currently is going through review before finalization.

A forensics minor will teach students what they need to know to perform DNA testing for crime

settings. DNA testing is required to go in a database in some states for all criminals, and it already has served as legal proof for either exonerating or convicting criminals, said Marty Jayne, associate professor of justice systems and director of Northeast Area Criminalistics Laboratory.

Jayne said a private lab would help public laboratories, such as the Missouri Highway Patrol Lab, to take care of the overflow of need for criminal identification.

"What these guys do most of is take small, biological samples like hair follicles, sperm, skin or one of these things, and they do DNA tests on them," Buckner said. "... And to do those types of tests, you use the same kind of technology that was used to sequence the human genomes and sequence genes in the first place."

Students in the forensics minor

and other students and faculty at the University potentially would get hands-on experience with a capillary gel electrophoresis apparatus, the type of equipment used for sequencing and testing DNA, Buckner said. Currently, members of the faculty conducting research that requires this technology send samples to other institutions to maintain cost efficiency, he said.

"They might have anywhere between five or 10 of these apparatuses," Buckner said. "And then they would have a well-trained individual using that, and that's where we get a picture of what's going on and why they think Kirksville is a great place to be."

He said he hopes the University would purchase one from the company to put on campus. Buckner said that as a maize geneticist, the easily accessible technology would be extremely useful for lab

research.

"For high school students who interview, it's always nice to be walking by a \$100,000 piece of equipment and say, 'Look how impressive this is, we got this technology right here on campus,'" he said. "And it does help you recruit, and having this minor would help us recruit."

Buckner said he looks forward to the potential influence of the DNA lab's interaction with the University, although University officials and faculty members still are working out plans.

"As a community, I think Truman needs to embrace these types of unusual interactions," Buckner said. "... That's becoming more and more common in academia that you have these types of collaborations, and I think that's a step in hopefully an entirely positive direction."

"As a community, I think Truman needs to embrace these types of unusual interactions."

Brent Buckner  
Professor of Biology



She used to walk a mile a day.  
All that's changed since her hip replacement.  
Now she's up to three.

Broken bones, bad hips, slipped disks, severe sprains or joint injuries can affect your life at any time. But that doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you love. The care you need is close by from the Orthopaedic Team of Northeast Regional Medical Center.

Our orthopaedic specialists are skilled in diagnosing your problems quickly and providing a proper course of treatment, from surgery (including full knee or hip replacement) to physical rehabilitation from our specialized therapists.

Get back to life. Get back in the game. With help from...

John D. Bailey, D.O.

1701 N. Elson St. • Kirksville, MO 63501  
660-665-0950

Glenn Browning, D.O.

1108 E. Patterson St. • Kirksville, MO 63501  
660-627-1229

The  
Orthopaedic  
Team of

Active Members of the Medical Staff at

 Northeast  
Regional Medical Center