



## **Parks & Recreation Department**

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### **For Immediate Release**

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## **WACO SUSPENSION BRIDGE PROJECT BEGINS TODAY** ***VIRTUAL GROUNDBREAKING SET FOR 10 A.M. THURSDAY***

WACO, TEXAS (October 19, 2020) – The Waco Suspension Bridge will close for a rehabilitation project beginning this week. A virtual groundbreaking ceremony will air at 10 a.m. Thursday on the City of Waco Facebook page and Waco City Cable Channel (available on Spectrum and Grande and live stream at [www.wccc.tv](http://www.wccc.tv)) to commemorate the start of the project and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bridge.

Significant areas of Indian Spring Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park will be closed throughout the duration of the project. Portions of the Waco Riverwalk on both sides of the bridge will also be impacted, as well as traffic lanes along University Parks Drive and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. While areas surrounding the project site will be affected, the river will remain accessible for watercraft and leisure activities.

The project is slated to last 18 to 24 months. Gibson and Associates, of Balch Springs, Texas, submitted a \$12.4 million bid proposal and was selected as the contractor. The project includes widescale updates to the foundations, towers, decking and railings.

Constructed in 1870, Waco's historic Suspension Bridge is recognized as an engineering marvel of its time and a significant landmark. Notably, this bridge also represents one of the first community-driven civic improvement projects. In the 1860s, local residents contributed the initial funding.

This landmark and its surroundings have become the cultural center of Waco's public gatherings and recreation, hosting large tourism events and intimate gatherings equally well.

Project partners include funding support from the Tax Increment Financing, engineering by Patrick Sparks of Patrick Sparks Engineering, the Texas Historical Commission, the McLennan County Historical Commission and the City of Waco Historic Landmark Preservation Commission.

For project updates, please visit [waco-texas.com](http://waco-texas.com) or contact the Parks and Recreation Office at (254) 750-8080.

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