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City Hires NBM Construction to Stabilize Read Brothers Buildings

Charleston, S.C.— The city of Charleston has obtained the services of NBM Construction Company, Inc. to begin work stabilizing the Read Brothers buildings. City Council voted on Tuesday to approve the \$41,700 contract with NBM.

On Friday, August 4, upon receipt of the latest report on the structural integrity of the Read Brothers buildings from structural engineer Craig Bennett, the city of Charleston Building Inspections Division had a letter hand delivered to the buildings' owner, Thomas Read, notifying him that he had five days to adequately address the structural deficiencies and code violations outlined in the letter. Yesterday, a second letter was hand delivered, informing Mr. Read of the upcoming stabilization.

Having received no plans or permit applications to address the problems to date, the city sought proposals from contractors to begin work immediately. The work to stabilize the buildings is expected to begin shortly.

The city's legal department plans to place a lien on the properties for the cost associated with this work in order to ensure the full reimbursement of taxpayer money.

The city has been monitoring the properties, located at 593, 591 and 589 ½ King Street, since April 12, 2017, due to concerns about portions of the building's brickwork. At that time, the city retained the services of Mr. Bennett, who assessed the properties and provided an initial [report on April 17](#). In the latest [report on August 4](#), Mr. Bennett stated that portions of the Read Brothers buildings pose a "significant threat to life safety," which resulted in the city ordering the buildings closed until they were stabilized.

"Throughout our history, the city of Charleston has relied on property owners to maintain the safety of their own buildings," said city of Charleston spokesman Jack O'Toole. "Occasionally, however, when public safety is potentially at significant risk, the city has been forced to act quickly to secure a structure, as is the case here."

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