

F.M.
423

Main Street

CONSTRUCTION AHEAD

The Main Street/FM 423
Construction Guide
Winter 2011

THE
COLONY
Economic Development Corporation



Provided by

The Colony Economic Development Corporation
and City of The Colony as a Service to Our Business Community



To Our Main Street Business Partners:

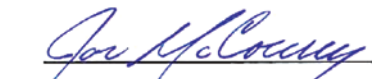
While the long-term benefits of an improved Main Street are significant, we understand that the construction period will present short-term challenges. Please know that the City will strive to keep you informed and minimize inconveniences.


One step in this process is to provide you with this construction guide produced by the Economic Development Corporation. The guide offers tips, resources and contacts to help your business prosper before, during and after the road improvements.

Additionally, we have hired a construction communication facilitator who is available to assist with any issues that you may encounter. He will also provide timely updates on the City’s website, which can be found at: www.thecolonytx.gov.

With your involvement and understanding, we will weather the upcoming construction phase and soon welcome the expanded business opportunities the Main Street improvements will bring.

Sincerely,


 Joe McCourry
 Mayor, The City of The Colony


 Tom Tvardzik
 President, The Colony
 Economic Development Corporation

RETAIL & BUSINESS



The Colony: A Growing Retail & Business Destination

The Colony has experienced explosive growth in the last decade.

Our population increased from 26,530 citizens in 2000 to over 44,700 in 2010. Projections call for more than 51,000 by 2014. The current Primary Retail Trade Area population of over 110,000 is projected to increase by more than 18% during the next five years.

Traffic counts now exceed 100,000 vehicles daily at State Highway 121 and Main Street; over 41,000 at Main Street and S. Colony Boulevard; and over 41,000 at Main and N. Colony Boulevard.

This is great news for a City that has aggressively planned for growth and the economic development opportunities it brings.

Main Street/FM 423 Widening Project

The Main Street/FM 423 Widening Project is an important component in regional efforts to ensure an infrastructure that will safely and conveniently accommodate the expected increase in residents, visitors and customers.

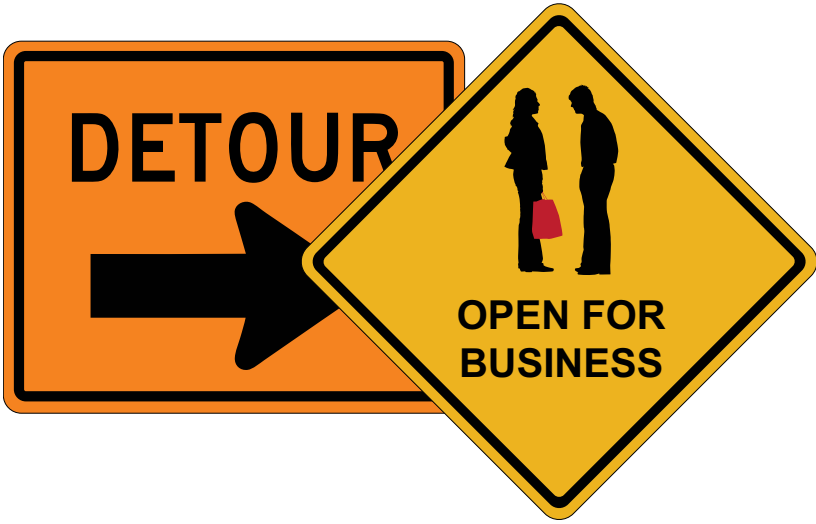
The project encompasses over 10 miles of construction in three cities and will cost over \$100 million.

The road work in The Colony will involve widening approximately four miles of Main Street from Stewart Creek Road to State Highway 121.

The estimated cost is more than \$53 million. Work is expected to begin October 2011 and conclude in the spring of 2014.

INFORMATION CONTACT:

The City of The Colony
Brant Shallenburger
Construction Communication Facilitator
Phone: 972-624-3108 | Cell: 972-832-6214
bshallenburger@thecolonytx.gov
6800 Main Street, The Colony, Texas 75056



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS PROSPER...

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

- Get Informed – Watch for information about project meetings and attend.
- Get Involved – Contribute ideas and make your concerns known at these meetings or by calling or writing to the City. (See the contact list in this guide on page 2.) The earlier your concerns are voiced, the better prepared the project team can be to respond. Disruption from construction can be mitigated if there is communication and proper coordination between business owners, city officials and contractors.
- Be Prepared – When you are informed ahead of time, you are able to prepare to prosper during and after road construction.

TIPS:

- Keep your staff lean. If you expect a decrease in customers once construction begins, consider leaving positions that become vacant before the project open rather than rehiring immediately. Other options include job sharing or reduced hours if necessary.
- Reduce your inventory to prepare for slower sales.
- Secure a line of credit while business is good. This gives you access to finances when and if there's an emergency.
- Build a database of customer e-mails and home addresses so that you can keep them informed on road conditions, best routes and promotional specials during the construction period.
- Get employees involved. Discuss marketing and customer service strategies for staying prosperous during construction. Employees will have fresh ideas and appreciate the opportunity to participate.

DURING CONSTRUCTION

- Communicate – This will be critical during the entire construction project. As a business owner, you must communicate with the construction project managers, your employees, other businesses, and most importantly, your customers.

TIPS:

- Keep the project manager's contact information close at hand.
- Allocate more time or money to cleaning in order to keep construction dust to a minimum.
- Create a friendly rapport with construction workers. Offer them discounts or deliver meals to them.
- Make it convenient for customers to buy from you by delivering products/ meals to their home or office.
- Keep a script next to your phone to ensure that you and your employees are consistent and clear in the information that you give to customers about the construction and access to your business.
- Continue to stay informed by attending all meetings relating to the construction project. Be sure to open and read all correspondence from the city.
- Extend business hours to make it easier for customers to get to your business after the construction crews are finished working each day.
- Be flexible to accommodate customer demands and other perceived needs as they arise.
- Consider off-site parking for your employees. This will help avoid more congestion in reduced parking areas. Depending upon the number of people you employ, you may even consider offering a carpool or shuttle from an agreed-upon location.
- Make the construction work for you. If you need to remodel your store, restaurant or office, consider doing so during the road construction project. Use this slower period to get things done that you don't normally have time to address.
- Keep a positive attitude about the construction project with customers. Talk about the benefits of an improved Main Street. You want customers to feel good about shopping and doing business along Main Street...now and in the future.

MARKETING IDEAS

- Be creative in your marketing and promotions to come up with ways to make the construction period a fun and compelling time to visit your business:

Example:

One business owner affected by road improvements had a construction worker sit outside of his shop during the lunch break to talk to kids and families about the ongoing project. The trucks were a big draw for kids.

Example:

Another store owner established her own "Where's Waldo," inviting customers to search store windows each week for a hidden character. People then submitted the location into an orange barrel and their names were used for a prize drawing every week.

Example:

You can create an ad campaign around the construction project. A fabric store had employees take pictures in front of the large, orange construction barrels holding swaths of the store's fabric. Postcards were then sent to customers saying "We at the Fabric Gallery know that a fabriholic won't let a little road construction stand in the way." The store also set up an 800 number customers could call to get construction updates and directions to the store.

Example:

Put a "construction center" on your website for construction updates, directions and special offers.

Example:

Hold special events and open houses to entice customers to visit your business during the construction project.

Example:

Offer construction discounts and other specials on your products, services or menu.

Example:

Pool advertising resources with other businesses in the construction zone to let the public know that you are still open for business.

SIGNAGE TIPS:

- Make signage and access to your business easy to follow.
- Monitor signs placed by construction crews and the city to make sure they make sense for your business. If they don't, contact the construction supervisor.
- The type of signs used will include: Driveway Signs to help tell motorists where to turn into your area of business; Alternate Business Access Signs that are placed in advance of intersections to inform motorists where to turn; and Directional Signs that are used to direct the motorists using a side street to your business.

NOTE: more information about signage used during the Main Street Road Construction project will be provided at the informational meetings or can be obtained by contacting the City.

- Consider using a back entrance to your business, restaurant or store for better customer access during the construction project. Use signs to direct customers to this entrance.
- Be sure to also advertise the back entrance in all communications with customers.

AFTER CONSTRUCTION

It is time to celebrate and build your market share:

- Promote the completion of the project in your print and online advertising.
- Send e-mails and postcards to your customer database announcing the completion of the project.
- Join with area businesses to host a "construction completion" event with freebies and special offers.
- Take advantage of your Chamber membership by hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony. Invite the media, or send your own press release and photograph to your media contacts.



BUSINESS PLANNING AND MARKETING RESOURCES

Small Business Administration | www.sba.gov
SBA D/FW District Office
4300 Amon Carter Blvd. Suite 114
Fort Worth, Texas 76155
(817) 684-5500 Phone

SCORE
Counselors to America's Small Businesses | www.score.org
A SCORE Counselor is available in the SBA D/FW District Office (listed above)
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
Make an online reservation: www.scorefortworth.org
Or call (817) 871-6002.

North Texas Small Business Development Center | www.ntsdbc.org
Serving the Collin County Area | Hosted by Collin County Community College
The Courtyard Center for Professional & Economic Development
4800 Preston Park Blvd., Suite A126/ Box 15
Plano, Texas 75093
(972) 985-3770

Bill J. Priest Institute | www.elcentrocollege.edu/bjp
El Centro College
1402 Corinth Street
Dallas, Texas 75215
(214) 860-5900

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