

CONSTRUCTION GUIDE





The City's second decade is one that can be called a time of transformation. In developing the City Center Master Plan in 2011, the community called for redevelopment that included market-driven private investment to spur economic growth and provide community benefits including pedestrian-oriented retail, neighborhood housing, and bringing together a mix of activities, providing a positive influence on quality of life.

That redevelopment is underway, and while the end result will provide desired enhancements, the construction necessary will present challenges for businesses and residents alike. We hope that with the right information, proper coordination and strategic planning, your business can not only endure the process, but also prosper during this time.

The attached Guide offers practical guidance on how to approach road construction work, a necessary part of the development process. It is meant to be a source of planning, offering strategies and information so business owners can maintain customers, protect access and successfully manage their business during the construction process.

The City of Sandy Springs is dedicated to ensuring the City remains a business-friendly community. During construction projects, our Economic Development staff is committed to serve as a resource and liaison for questions or issues that may arise.

Please take a few minutes to read through this guide and keep it as a future point of reference. We welcome feedback. Comments can be sent to Andrea Hall, Economic Development Director at AHall@SandySpringsGA.gov.

Sincere Regards,



Russell K. Paul
Mayor of Sandy Springs

STAYING INFORMED

Road construction is a necessity. Pavement, sewers and utilities do not last forever, and regular maintenance is needed to keep the city's infrastructure at optimum levels. As a city grows, additional road improvements are needed to help with traffic flow, resulting in projects such as intersection changes, realignment of roads, or construction of new roads.



Construction projects can take a toll, even on the most successful businesses, as customers may make fewer visits to avoid the inconvenience. However, being proactive, having a positive outlook and planning for long-term benefits is vital to making it from groundbreaking to completion.



Planning and preparation for construction is critical to a successful project. You also need to plan for the unexpected such as rainfall that far exceeds the norm, buried utility lines not indicated in the records, etc., and adjustments to sequencing and schedules that happen as a result.



The City of Sandy Springs plans for large construction projects years in advance. These projects are discussed at City Council work sessions, meetings, and most often in public open house meetings. Project information also is posted on the City's website (sandyspringsga.gov).



The best way to prepare and minimize the effects of construction on your business is to get involved early and stay involved throughout the duration of the project. Attend public meetings and get in contact with city and business officials regarding questions and concerns you might have. Business owners' questions and suggestions are invaluable when planning for a successful construction project.



Also take advantage of what others have done before you. Plenty of other businesses have had to prepare for construction projects, and their ideas can serve as a basis for developing your own unique plan for making it through disruptions.

WAYS TO STAY INFORMED

- Sign up for the City's e-newsletter, issued at the start of each month – sandyspringsga.gov
- Visit the City's website Roadways Page for information on upcoming projects – sandyspringsga.gov/roadwork
- Introduce your business to the City's Economic Development Office
- Check the City's Calendar for upcoming meetings – sandyspringsga.org/government/public-meetings-calendar
- Read local news publications and watch local news stories

MANAGING CONSTRUCTION

As a business owner, you are always planning and improving your business model. Long term, better transit will enable more customers. Short term, road construction can drive them away. The challenge is to keep sales in place until the project ends. To be successful in mitigating the effects of construction involves proactive, not reactive activity.

It is important to look at upcoming construction work and analyze how that project could affect your business. Some considerations – Will the construction:

- Reroute foot traffic?
- Impede access for deliveries?
- Have detours and lane closures?
- Bring noise and dust inconveniences?
- Cause utility disruptions?

As a business, how will you:

- Retain current customers?
- Attract new customers?

GENERAL MANAGEMENT TIPS



TAKE NOTE OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY AND ATTEND MEETINGS

Projects change, and staying involved will help ensure that you have the most current information and are able to organize your business accordingly.



JOIN THE CHAMBER OR OTHER BUSINESS GROUPS

Joining local business organizations provides added resources to gain access to information and ideas from others that have gone through this before, or to pool your resources during the construction period. The Sandy Springs Perimeter Chamber (sandyspringsperimeterchamber.com) is a suggested group.



PARTNER WITH OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES

You're not alone. Developing a group plan can help pool resources and create ideas and programs to help your group of neighborhood businesses weather the construction "storm".



COMMUNICATE

In addition to communicating with the city, informing customers in advance of construction projects helps prevent any surprises, and customers gain additional time to plan for possible disruptions ahead of time. Also, galvanize employees to help with the idea-making process for marketing and dealing with problems which could arise.



MARKETING MATTERS

Talk with your employees, fellow business owners, friends and more about strategies to stay prosperous during construction. Keeping your customers informed and engaged can range from signage promoting the detour route, to special coupons to keep them coming in on a regular schedule. Don't forget to gather customer contact information before construction begins. In addition to promotional specials you can push out, you can also use this database to let customers know of road conditions and project changes. If you keep them informed and in the loop, they may not be as likely to change buying habits during construction.



SOCIAL MEDIA HELPS

Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets are excellent channels for providing updates and reminding customers that you are open for business.

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Reduce Inventory – if lower sales are projected, save cash.
- Current loans or Lines of Credit – Talk with existing lenders or, prepare for an emergency by establishing lines of credit when sales are up.
- Maintain a Lean Staff – Hold off on hiring vacant positions, reduce hours or shift job responsibilities.
- Review and Update your Business Plan – Is there an opportunity to improve your current business model?
- Develop Networks – Join local business organizations to gain additional insight and ideas. Create open lines of communication with nearby businesses, the construction companies, and City leaders. Consider selecting a “block captain” who can be a designated point of contact for construction concerns for the nearby group of business. A streamlined communication process can reduce confusion between all parties involved.
- Communicate – Good communication will be essential to gathering information and strategies as well as sharing vital information with your customers.
- Create a specific, project-based group with other affected businesses for communication, resources and collaboration.
- Start informing customers in advance of construction projects. It is never too early! This helps prevent any surprises, and customers are able to plan ahead for disruptions.
- Galvanize employees to help with the idea-making process for marketing and dealing with problems that may arise.

DURING CONSTRUCTION

Making a few simple changes to your traditional business operations can help lessen the effects of construction on you and your customers. The following are a few best practices to consider:

- Develop a relationship with the construction crews. These workers are likely to be outside your location for several months and could potentially be new customers. Think about creating incentives for them to patronize your establishment by having special deals for them.
- Get contact information for project supervisors. Communications is vital to stop something from becoming a serious problem.
- If you are a restaurant, offer delivery services to customers, either on your own or through a professional delivery company.
- Since there is construction outside, why not do a little renovation of our own inside? Take advantage of the disruptions to do some remodeling or updating of your own business, so that it is ready to welcome back more customers after completion.
- Try introducing new projects or experimental concepts to bring in customers who otherwise might try to avoid the construction.
- Make sure signage is clear. Work with the City government and contractors to establish effective signage. Check to verify that any and all signage installed prior to construction stays clear and accurate. Many businesses include “Open for Business” signs as well as “Business Access Here” signs specifically for parking, driveways, alternate access points and simple directions.
- Provide directions and access information for your employees, including options for alternative parking. Consider offering a carpool or shuttle from an agreed-upon location.
- Don’t forget contractors are suppliers. Talk with them before the project to arrange alternatives if needed while construction is underway.
- Take care of customers. Consider keeping a script next to your phone, so that you and your employees have quick and easy directions to provide to customers. Make sure all your employees know what to say and how to say it. For customers unable to navigate the construction area, consider delivering products to your customers. Consider hosting “construction hours” either extending hours or opening early to help accommodate customer demand and other perceived needs.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

Cooperative marketing plans provide an opportunity for businesses to come together and pool resources for a marketing campaign.

- Encourage the media to cover by creating publicity opportunities for the businesses.
- Create a series of business-generating promotional events.
- Email to customers with construction updates (and best times to shop).
- Update social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Foursquare etc) to include special events and promotions to draw customers in.
- Use e-commerce capabilities, so customers can make purchases online.
- Get Creative with contests, promotions and special offers. Make it fun. Also be sure the Chamber of Commerce and Hospitality and Tourism agencies know of those campaigns. Many times, they can utilize their resources/ communication channels to help spread the word.
- Pool resources with neighbors for advertising campaigns.

ADDITIONAL NO-COST MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

The City publishes a monthly e-newsletter which goes out to thousands of opt-in subscribers. Submit press releases, special events and promotions to be included. You can email those submissions to mshavin@sandyspringsga.gov. Also check with the Chamber and Hospitality and Tourism agencies, who may also be able to help spread the word using their marketing channels.

STAY POSITIVE

Encourage and generate a positive, healthy environment to support your staff and ensure retention of valued employees.

POST CONSTRUCTION

You made it. Don't forget to acknowledge the hard work and support of all parties. Thank project contractors, your government partners, your staff and customers.

With the ride now a smoother one, it's time to focus on recapturing market share and winning back customers. Consider promotions and advertising to let customers know the roadways are reopened. Celebrate the completion. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and City hosting a ribbon-cutting ceremony, inviting the news media to the ceremony.

UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

It is important to understand the role of local government during the construction process. City staff and officials must uphold all ordinances and codes. However, they are also responsible for serving the residents and business owners of Sandy Springs. Working with a collaborative mindset and approach will help limit the frustration during the construction period.

Any City staff member or department can be reached by calling the City's Call Center which is staffed 24/7, 365 days at 770.730.5600.

The Sandy Springs Works mobile app is also available, with one-touch access for residents to pull in information about upcoming road closures, as well as the ability to report an issue via the app.

As a best practice, items of an urgent nature should be called into the Call Center at 770.730.5600. Emergencies should be reported by calling 9-1-1.

CITY DEPARTMENTS



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Oversees development review, building inspections, permitting, code enforcement, and zoning enforcement



PUBLIC WORKS

Oversees transportation planning and traffic engineering, including the planning and design of improvements to include traffic signal and control devices. Public Works staff works with contractors to determine street and parking closures, coordinating temporary electronic traffic signs.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

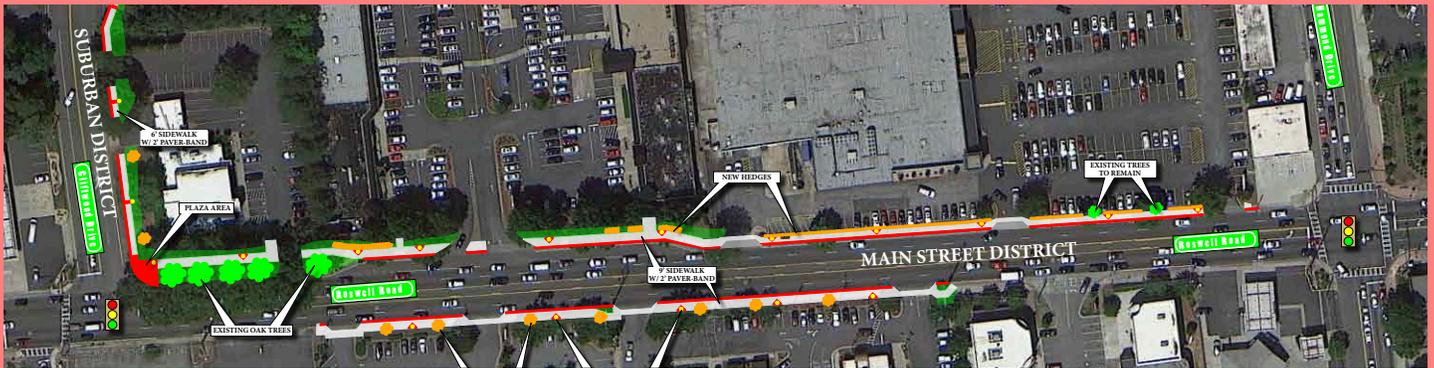
Works to attract new business to cities as well as retain and help strengthen the presence of current businesses within a city. Please visit City's Small Business Tool Kit under the Economic Development page of the website for links to more resources available to you at sandyspringsga.org/business/economic-development/small-business-tool-kit



COMMUNICATIONS

Handles the flow of information from the city, via a variety of channels including advertising, public relations, web and social media.

ROSWELL ROAD / CARPENTER DRIVE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This safety and efficiency project realigns the intersection of Carpenter Drive and Cliftwood Drive at Roswell Road. A four-way traffic signal replaces the split-phased signal sequencing currently in place. The project also adds left-turn lanes on Carpenter Drive, sidewalk and pedestrian lighting.

ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

Summer 2016 (utility relocation) through Spring 2017 (estimated 8 months)

TRAFFIC IMPACTS

During the active, construction phase, a closure at the northern intersection of Carpenter Drive at Roswell Road is expected during the weekends with the road to remain open for weekday travel. The closure is required to allow crews to install a large retaining wall in the northern side of Carpenter Drive and to complete roadway reconstruction.

PROJECT UPDATES

The City maintains a project for its road work programs. To view the project page for this improvement project, please visit spr.gs/carpenter

PROJECT MANAGER

Andrew Thompson
Athompson@sandyspringsgs.gov
770.730.5600

NOTES



REFERENCES & CONTACTS

City of Sandy Springs

7840 Roswell Road, Building 500

770.730.5600

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Communications Department

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Sandy Springs / Perimeter Chamber of Commerce

6 Concourse Parkway, #3300

678.443.2990

Tom Mahaffey, Executive Director

TMahaffey@sandysprings.org

Sandy Springs Hospitality and Tourism

5920 Roswell Road, A-118

866-511-7742

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