The Ouray County Cone Zone Survival Guide



A guide to helping your business plan for and survive road construction

This publication is brought to you by:









Ridgway and Ouray County Community,

We are optimistic that this guide and information will be a good start to our communication and outreach efforts as we move into a significant road construction project for our Town. We hope that you find the information contained in this "Survival Guide" to be useful and informative for your business endeavors in Ridgway and Ouray County.

Town Council and staff look forward to working with you before, during and after the construction period to plan appropriately and effectively for our unique community needs and desires. Our goal is to share and receive information as clearly and frequently as needed and to respond as quickly as possible to our community's needs.

Your feedback and input will be critical to our collective successes and collaborative solutions. You are invited to participate in community meetings and events planned during the project.

We encourage the entire community to support and patronize our local businesses even more than usual so they thrive before, during and after this downtown investment project.

In gratitude for your support and participation,

John Clark, Mayor

Jen Coates, Town Manager

What is "Ramp Up Ridgway!"?

In October 2013, Governor Hickenlooper and Colorado Department of Transportation announced the contribution of \$10.5M through the Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships (RAMP) for the purpose of improving the Highway 62 corridor through town and the downtown Historic Business District north of Highway 62. Ridgway pledged a \$2.0M match that was secured through the sale of municipal bonds and an affirmative vote of the Ridgway community in 2014 for a property tax increase.

The project includes hard-surfacing streets, pedestrian sidewalk, storm drainage, decorative lighting and furnishings (benches, artwork, trash/recycle receptacles, low-level lighting elements, landscaping). Highway 62 will have a center turn lane from Laura Street to the Uncompandere River Bridge. This improvement project is being led by a partnership team consisting of members from the Town of Ridgway, CDoT, DHM Design, and David Evans and Associates.

What Parts of Town Will This Project Affect?

Ridgway's Historic Business District north of Highway 62 and the Highway 62 corridor through the Town from Amelia Street to Highway 550.

What is the Timeline?

2014/2015:

Project design commenced in 2014 with 3 public meetings for local input and design is planned to be completed in the summer of 2015. Utility relocations, clearances and outreach are happening in 2015.

2016:

Construction is planned to begin mid-March 2016 and continue through the end of 2016. It is possible that construction will continue into 2017.

Ridgway Community Support for this Project:

In 2005, the Ridgway community passed a 0.6% sales tax increase with an eye on downtown improvements. In 2006, the Town developed a plan that would enhance the downtown streetscape and pedestrian experience while preserving the local character, creating outdoor spaces, and improving circulation and parking. For the next 10 years the Town worked on that downtown plan and numerous partnerships with CDoT to be able to realize some of these improvements. The Town's 2011 Land Use Plan identifies downtown investment as a priority for the community. In April 2014, the community approved a ballot question allowing the sale of municipal bonds and increasing property taxes. The question passed with 76% voting in favor.

2016 Downtown Investment Key Elements (that are not known today):

- Final design and construction elements
- Final project cost with budget priorities for the final project scope
- Traffic detour routes, opportunities and full impacts
- Construction time frame (can we finish in 2016?)
- Construction phasing and timing for each area

Funding and Budget

\$10.5M = CDOT RAMP Program

\$2.0M = Town of Ridgway: \$100,000 sales tax contribution, \$500,000 State of Colorado DoLA Grant, \$1.4M bond issue for 15 year term payable each year with capital improvements sales tax funding and property taxes)

12.5M = Total Cash

The Town is also providing significant "in-kind" support with staff hours and other resources.

What Else is Happening?

- Signage and Wayfinding: Final Plan, Design and Installation
- Improvements to public buildings and facilities
- Creative and Unique Public Furnishings (citizen identified)
- State of Colorado Creative District and Main Street® Program for community and economic development, including business resources and support
- Economic Development Planning, Partnerships and Initiatives with the Ridgway Chamber of Commerce, Region 10, Ridgway Area Trails, and other Community Organizations
- Construction Planning and Mitigation, including:
 - Community Meeting on March 18th in Ridgway Town Hall at 5:30 PM focused on project outreach plan and tools, and resources for businesses during construction
 - Project Website and Project Email
 - DCI Downtown Institute Training and Resources August 21st 2015 in Ridgway
 - Public meetings and coordination with community organizations planning for 2015 and beyond

TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS

Attention business owners—if your business is located in a road construction project area, you will likely be financially impacted. According to recent surveys, 68% of the business respondents indicated that their revenues declined during a road construction project.

Just like a building needs a new roof now and then, infrastructure such as roads, utilities and storm water management also require investment and improvement for various reasons.

And remember, once reconstruction is complete, that corridor is likely to be construction-free for years, and your business will benefit from the project's improvements.

So don't panic; there are things you can do to mitigate the effects on your business. It will require patience; unforeseen issues that delay or lengthen projects always arise, so please recognize that state and local governments and project contractors are doing their utmost to resolve issues. It's in their best interests, too, to complete projects on time.

To help businesses plan for and survive road construction, the Region 10 Small Business Resources Center created this survival guide containing tips and suggestions for surviving the construction process.

Plan carefully so that once the project is completed, your business can continue to thrive.

GET INVOLVED EARLY

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) typically includes road construction projects within its Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which can be found at http://www.coloradodot.info/business/budget several years in advance of when construction is to occur.

As early as a year in advance of the start of construction, CDOT will start the process of reaching out to businesses within the impacted corridor. This will likely include mailings to business owners inviting them to planning meeting(s) for the project.

Your concerns, questions, and suggestions are very important at this early stage in the planning process as CDOT and the local planning team have the greatest flexibility to incorporate changes into the project early in the process.

Watch for mailings and public service announcements in your newspapers. If a project website is available, check it often. Plan to attend these meetings to learn more about the project and to provide any input that you may have.

This is the time to contact your local government official and open the lines of communication. If they are aware of your concerns and wishes early on, they can be a better advocate for your business community throughout the construction planning process.

Reach out to business people who have dealt with construction projects previously. Discuss how they prepared for the project and what actions they took during and after construction. Ask what worked well and what they'd have done differently—there's no need to reinvent the wheel.

For most projects, bids will be published and a contractor hired during the spring prior to the start of the annual construction season.

Once a contractor is hired to complete the work, the bidding agency may host another round of preconstruction meetings Remember, the earlier your concerns are voiced, the better prepared the project team will be to respond to them. with the contractor and business owners. The goal of these meetings will <u>not be to gather input, but rather to ensure everyone is aware of the upcoming construction schedule</u> and pertinent construction contacts.

Disruption from construction can be mitigated if there is proper coordination between business owners, residents, CDOT, local government officials, and contractors. Remember, the earlier your concerns are voiced, the better prepared the project team will be to respond to them. To this end, it is in your best interest as a business owner to keep abreast of current and upcoming construction projects. Communicate with your local government officials, watch the Town websites for updates, join local business organizations and attend as many meetings as you can.

BUSINESS OWNERS CAN CONTRIBUTE IDEAS AND MAKE CONCERNS KNOWN

- → Take note of all communications from the Town and/or CDOT and attend all meetings.
- → Since projects change, this will ensure you have the most current information and can organize your business accordingly.
- → There's strength in numbers. Partner with other downtown businesses. Make sure to communicate with other local leaders so you can band together and make concerns heard.
- → Develop a group plan for staying in contact with the Town, construction project leaders and customers.
- → Consider assigning one person from your business organization as liaison to the Town and the construction group. That person can attend planning meetings to funnel business concerns to the groups. That's a role Mary Carbine, executive director of Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID), played. "It's hard for small businesses to find the time; we found the liaison model very effective," she says.
- → Work closely with CDOT and Town engineering staff in the pre-bid stage, before construction contracts are written, to ensure the contracts include business friendly requirements. These might include regularly scheduled meetings before and during construction with business owners and construction staff.
- → Downtown businesses may be able to negotiate requirements that sidewalk access

to businesses be available at all times, that construction be suspended and sites cleaned during critical business days, such as during the Concert Series or other events, and that contractors post "all businesses are open" signs.

Expect the Unexpected

Good planning and preparation for construction is critical to a successful project. Still, things will come up during construction that you don't expect such as unexpected rain, buried utility lines, or underground fuel tanks that aren't shown in the records.

Construction crews do their best to stay with the plan they laid out when the project started, but sometimes adjustments in schedules are necessary when the unexpected happens.

BUSINESS PLANNING: WHAT YOU CAN DO BEFORE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

As a business owner, you are always planning and improving on your business model. When you're informed ahead of time, road construction is something you can prepare for. Here are some suggestions from business owners who've been through the construction process already.

- Work with your employees to develop a game plan. Talk to your employees about the process and strategies to stay prosperous during construction. Discuss marketing efforts and allow employees to offer ideas and share any concerns they may have. Your employees will appreciate the opportunity, and the dialogue may spark new ideas that will benefit your business.
- Identify marketing, advertising and design firms in the area that might provide probono assistance.
- **Keep your staff lean.** It's an unfortunate reality, but if you expect a significant decrease in customers once construction begins, you may need to consider keeping a lean staff. If someone quits in the spring, you may decide to keep the position vacant if there is a construction project coming up that summer. Other options might include job sharing or reducing hours.
- **Reduce inventory.** When possible, reducing inventory can be a useful strategy to respond to slower periods due to construction.
- Contact lenders. Inform current lenders of the upcoming project and see if there are opportunities to restructure existing debt and lines of credit in light of potentially diminished revenues. It's important to get a line of credit during a good time when sales are up. That way you'll have it when and if there's an emergency.
- Gather customer contact information. Vince Fandel, Director of the Region 10 Small Business Development Center, advises that you work on gathering customers' contact information before construction begins so you can keep them apprised of road conditions, best routes and promotional specials during the

Inform your customers as soon as you know

Plan ahead for cash flow issues

Send newsletters or emails to customers weekly

Develop coupon books usable at area businesses

Don't relocate!

construction period. You might consider sending weekly e-mails to customers with the idea that if you keep them informed and in the loop, they won't be as likely to change their buying habits during construction.

- Inform customers in advance. Keeping your customers informed gives them the ability to maneuver construction and access your business. Examples can include putting up signs or passing out copies of alternative routes to the business before the project.
- Use Facebook, Twitter and other social media. These are excellent channels for providing updates and reminding customers you are open for business.
- **Keep your vendors in the loop.** Just like your customers, your delivery persons will need to know how to get product to your store. If you can, stock up or arrange for deliveries to be less frequently. Otherwise, give your delivery person alternative routes to the store before the project begins so they will have the ability to maneuver construction and access your business.

WHAT TO EXPECT ONCE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS AND HOW TO MITIGATE PROBLEMS

Dust and noise are both inevitable during a construction project and areas where you will not have a great deal of control. Traffic delays and blocked access routes are also difficulties that may arise during construction. Here are some ideas to deal with these issues.

- Allocate more time and money to cleaning. While there's little you can do to reduce the dust and noise of a construction site, you can focus on keeping your own business as dust-free as possible. If you only clean your windows once a week right now, you might consider increasing that during the construction period. You may also decide to allocate more time or money for general cleaning and upkeep, in order to keep construction dust to a minimum.
- friendly Create a rapport construction workers. While the on-site construction workers aren't the appropriate people to contact about concerns, it can only improve the situation if you create a friendly them. You might rapport with complimentary ice water to crews in the summer. This said, it is important to emphasize that construction workers are following instructions from their supervisors, and communicating concerns to supervisors and project leaders is the best way to get results. Know who those supervisors are and keep their contact information close at hand.
- Make sure signage is clear. Traffic delays will also be inevitable during a construction project, but signage can help a great deal. See what sort of signs are going up to direct traffic and make sure they make sense for your customers. Construction crews aren't aware of your needs and often it's just a matter of asking. Also, make sure there's signage properly directing your

Make sure signs put up by construction crews make sense for your business. If they don't, contact the project supervisor. Invite a construction crew to sit outside of your shop during the lunch break and talk to kids and families about the ongoing project. Trucks and heavy equipment are a big draw for kids.

customers to parking spaces. The issuance of temporary signage is usually the responsibility of the project manager who will be different for each project.

- **Driveway Signs** help to tell motorists where to turn since construction can make it difficult for motorists to find the driveway.
- Alternate Business Access Signs are installed by the contractor. These signs state "Alternate Business Access" and have an arrow on them. They are placed in advance of intersections to inform motorists where to turn.
- **Directional Signs** are used to direct the motorist using a side street or alley toward your business. The business provides and installs these signs.
- → If you wish to place any temporary signs—highly recommended to provide easier access for your customers during construction—you must contact your sign permit administrator to find out if you need a temporary permit.
- Consider using a back entrance for better customer access. Make sure there are signs directing your customers to the right entrance, and, if you have a back door, consider using it. A lot of stores who have suffered through long construction projects, credit their survival to having a back entrance to their store. The business owner made sure to advertise this rear entrance and parking in every radio spot and newspaper ad the company purchased.

TIPS FOR SURVIVAL ONCE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Communication 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.

- Keep the project manager's contact information close at hand.
- Provide directions and access information for your employees. Don't let them make the area more congested. Depending on the number of people you employ, you might consider offering a carpool from an agreed upon location.
- Join local business organizations or consider forming one. Strength is found in numbers. Make sure to communicate with other local leaders so you can band together and make concerns heard.
- Provide signs to guide customers to your business. Once again, go out and make sure signs put up by construction crews make sense for your business. If they don't, contact the project supervisor.
- **Deliver products to your customers.** To reach customers unable or unwilling to navigate the construction area, institute a catering business to bring your products to your customers.
- **Keep on Message.** Consider keeping a script next to your phone, so that you and your employees have quick and easy directions to provide to customers.
- **Stay informed!** Attend all public meetings relating to the construction project. Be sure to open all Town correspondences.
- Extend business hours. Consider being open later in the evening after construction crews are finished for the day. Be flexible to

Invite the contractors into your businesses – considering staying open later or opening earlier if construction crews will be around – after all, they have to eat too!

Create a map of open and closed routes for businesses to keep by their registers so they could guide visitors.

It is a proactive way to counter the perception that you can't find your way around downtown.

accommodate customer demands and other perceived needs.

- Make the construction work for you. If you were considering a remodel for your business, why not do it during the construction period. Use this slower period to get things done that you haven't had time to address.
- Consider pooling advertising resources with other businesses in the construction zone to let the public know you are still open for business.
- **Be positive.** Encourage and generate a positive, healthy environment to support your staff and ensure retention of valued employees.
- Be creative with your Promotions. Businesses have come up with lots of creative ways to make the construction period fun for customers.
- ~ Establish your own version of "Where's Waldo," inviting customers to search store windows each week for a hidden character. People then submit the location into an orange barrel and these names were used for a drawing every week.
- ~ Some businesses have used prize drawings to attract customers. Do something above and beyond what you would usually do in your business to attract customers.
- Promote your business to construction workers and supervisors too. They are new employed people in Town and can be great customers.

YOU MADE IT! POST-CONSTRUCTION— NOW WHAT?

Once construction is over, it's time to focus on recapturing market share and winning back customers.

- **Consider promotion and advertising** to let customers know the roadways are free. Promote the new image and convenience of the completed roadway.
- **Celebrate the project's completion.** Take advantage of your Chamber membership by holding a ribbon cutting ceremony and invite the news media to the ceremony. Or consider pooling resources with local businesses for a grand celebration and/or shared advertisement.
- Host a Grand Reopening Event. Sponsor a grand reopening for all businesses impacted by the project. Invite members of the media, elected officials, businesses and the general public. A ribbon-cutting was a great opportunity to celebrate the completed road construction project with the businesses and their customers.
- **Support other businesses** that undergo a similar process. Give them your patronage and provide helpful feedback based on your experiences

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS RESOURCES

Local and Regional Business Resources:

Region 10 Small Development Resources Center Vince Fandel, Executive Director 300 N Cascade, Suite 1 Montrose, CO 81401 970-249-2436 ext 206, vince@region10.net www.region10.net

Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce Gale Ingram, Administrator 970-626-5181, raccingram@gmail.com www.ridgwaycolorado.com

Town of Ridgway Main Street[©] and Creative District
Diedra Silbert, Community and Economic Development Coordinator
970-626-5308 x. 215, <u>dsilbert@town.ridgway.co.us</u>
www.town.ridgway.co.us

Accion

(financial resources, business support and promotion services) 303-904-9362, accion@accionco.org www.accionnm.org/index.php

Colorado Business Loan Agency (capital investment financing, business counseling) 720-897-8421 www.coloradobla.com

<u>Colorado Enterprise Fund</u>

(business loans, advising, and marketing, profit maximizing services) 303-860-0242 www.coloradoenterprisefund.org

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (small business financing)
303-297-2432, concerns@chfainfo.com
www.chfainfo.com

Colorado Lending Source

(business, Main Street, and commercial real estate loans) 303-657-0010, info@clsloans.org www.coloradolendingsource.org

Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (financing, technical business assistance)

Jeff Kraft
303-892-3840, jeff.kraft@state.co.us

www.advancecolorado.com

Colorado USDA Rural Development Business Programs (Delta Office) (rural economic development loans, grants, and investment programs) Pattie Snidow, Community and Economic Development Director 970-874-5735 ext. 132 or 970-290-6467 (mobile), pattie.snidow@co.usda.gov www.rurdev.usda.gov

EcoAction Partners

(Green Business Certification) Ashley Babcock, Green Business Program Coordinator 970-728-1340, ashley@ecoactionpartners.org www.ecoactionpartners.org/green-business-certification/

Ouray County

(renewable energy rebates and other resources) 970-325-7320 www.ouraycountyco.gov

Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute (business loans and coaching)

720-941-5037, <u>info@rmmfi.org</u>

www.rmmfi.org

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Colorado District Office (business consulting, training, and start-up assistance) Greg Lopez 303-844-2607, greg.lopez@sba.gov

www.sba.gov

(The above list is not comprehensive but an excellent starting point for assistance with small business training, support, consulting, and financing such as loans and grants.)

Local Project Coordinator:

Jennifer Coates – Town Manager jcoates@town.ridgway.co.us 970-626-5308

CDOT Project Manager:

Brian Campbell Brian.campbell@state.co.us 970-385-1414

Project Website: www.codot.gov/projects/sh62rampupridgwav.com

Project Map and Scope





Sales Themes

Unique marketing programs will be important to all businesses during construction. The following are some possible ideas for sales events.

Don't forget cross promotions! These can offer you twice the advertising and promotional value for half the money and can expand your market share by bringing you new customers already accustomed to shopping downtown.

| ☐ It's Gotta Go |
|-----------------------------------------|
| ☐ Luck Of the Irish |
| ☐ It's Your Birthday – Celebrate with a |
| (the person's age) % off discount |
| ☐ Marathon Sale |
| ☐ March Madness |
| □ Night Sale |
| ☐ October Extravaganza |
| □ Our New Year's Resolution – |
| Keep you happy as a customer |
| ☐ Private Sales for Special Groups |
| □ Rainy Day Sale |
| ☐ Red White and Blue Sale |
| ☐ Salute to Senior Citizen's Sale |
| ☐ Salute to Veterans |
| □ Sell-A-Thon |
| ☐ Stretch Your Dollar Sale |
| ☐ Trick or Treat Sale |
| ☐ Warm Up to Our Cold Day Specials |
| ☐ Welcome Skiers Sale |
| ☐ Win Discounts with your Losing |
| Lottery Tickets |
| ☐ Winter Preview |
| ☐ Winter Close-Outs |
| |
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| |

Fun Factoids to Plan Some Marketing Ideas The following is a list of unusual – but true – American holidays that you also can organize sales events around.

| January is National Hobby Month, National Soup Month and Hot Tea Month January 2 is Run Up the Flagpole and See if Anybody Salutes It Day January 6 is Bean Day January 15 is |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February is Black History Month, National Embroidery Month, National Grapefruit Month, National Snack Food Month, Responsible Pet Owner Month, Creative Romance Month, International Twit Award Month, Canned Food Month February 7 is Charles Dickens Day February 10 is Umbrella Day February 15 is National Gum Drop Day February 23 is International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day February 24 is National Tortilla Chip Day February 26 is National Pistachio Day February 27 is International Polar Bear Day February 29 National Surf and Turf Day |
| March is Foot Health Month, Humorists Are Artist Month, National Frozen Food Month, National Noodle Month, and National Peanut Month March 1 is National Peanut Butter Lover's Day March 3 is National Anthem Day (On this day, President Hoover signed a bill making the Star Spangled Banner our national anthem.) March 11 is Johnny Appleseed Day March 12 is Alfred Hitchcock Day March 15 is Everything You Think Is Wrong Day March 16 is Everything You Do Is Right Day |
| April is Keep America Beautiful Month, National Humor Month, National Welding Month and National Garden Month April 2 is National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day April 5 is |
| May is |

| May 21 is National Waitresses/Waiters Day May 28 is National Hamburger Day May 31 is National Macaroon Day |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June is |
| July isNational Baked Beans Month, National Ice Cream Month; National Tennis MonthJuly 5 isWorkaholics DayJuly 6 isNational Fried Chicken DayJuly 7 isNational Strawberry Sundae DayJuly 9 isNational Sugar Cookie DayJuly 15 isRespect Canada DayJuly 16 isInternational Juggling DayJuly 17 isNational Peach Ice Cream DayJuly 23 isNational Vanilla Ice Cream DayJuly 24 isAmelia Earhart DayJuly 28 isNational Milk Chocolate DayJuly 30 isNational Cheesecake DayJuly 31 isParent's Day |
| August is |
| September is National Chicken Month, National Courtesy Month; National Honey Month, ational Piano Month, National Rice Month, and Classical Music Month September 10 is Swap Ideas Day September 12 is National Chocolate Milkshake Day September 14 is National Cream-filled Donut Day September 16 is Collect Rocks Day September 17 is National Apple Dumpling Day September 18 is National Play-doh Day |

September 19 is National Butterscotch Pudding Day

September 20 is National Punch Day

September 26 is National Good Neighbor Day and National Pancake Day

September 28 is. Ask A Stupid Question Day September 30 is. National Mud Pack Day

October is. Hispanic Heritage Month, Adopt-A-Dog Month, National Clock Month, National Dessert Month National Pickled Pepper Month, National Popcorn Poppin'Month, National Pretzel Month,

National Seafood Month and Vegetarian Awareness Month

October 1 is. World Vegetarian Day

October 4 is...... National Golf Day October 6 is..... German-American Day

October 0 is...... German-American Day

October 14 is Be Bald and Free Day and National Dessert Day

October 16 is Dictionary Day

October 24 is National Bologna Day October 30 is National Candy Corn Day

November is . . International Drum Month and Peanut Butter Lover's Month

November 2 is National Deviled Egg Day

November 3 is Sandwich Day

November 4 is Waiting For The Barbarians Day

November 6 is Saxophone Day

November 7 is National Bittersweet Chocolate With Almonds Day November 12 is National Pizza With The Works Except Anchovies Day

November 15 is National Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day

November 22 is Start Your Own Country Day

November 23 is National Cashew Day

December is. . . Hi Neighbor Month and Read A New Book Month

December 1 is. National Pie Day

December 2 is. National Fritters Day

December 6 is. National Gazpacho Day

December 9 is. National Pastry Day

December 15 is National Lemon Cupcake Day

December 16 is National Chocolate Covered Anything Day

December 17 is National Maple Syrup Day

December 19 is Oatmeal Muffin Day

December 30 is Festival of Enormous Changes at the Last Minute; National Bicarbonate Of Soda Day



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