



Perris Press Release

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Improvements to Historic "D" Street Coming Soon

Work is set to begin March 25 on the next phase of improvements to Perris' historic D Street, upgrades that include new pavement, parking spaces, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and shade trees.

Construction on "Phase 5" of the long-term D Street improvements concentrates on the two-block area from Fourth Street to Sixth Street. Because access points leading to the work zone will be restricted from Third Street to Sixth Street businesses on that block also will be affected. Work is scheduled for completion in about 120 calendar days.

Construction will be conducted in several stages which should minimize the impacts to affected businesses. Perris officials will aid affected businesses by providing additional parking lots and spaces adjacent to D Street while construction progresses. Customized signs announcing that businesses are open during construction will be placed prominently around the work zone.

The cost of Phase 5 improvements is \$1.72-million and will be paid for through state and federal grants and from funds left over from the City's former Redevelopment Agency. Perris Capital Improvements Project Manager Michael Morales led a team of City employees that in early March contacted every one of the roughly 25 businesses in the path of construction seeking their input and soliciting comments and questions. About 15 business owners attended a follow-up meeting March 12 conducted by Morales. Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez and City Manager Richard Belmudez also attended the latter meeting.

Belmudez said continuing construction along D Street is part of the City's long-range vision to restore the historical corridor to its original look and feel. Since the 1880s, D Street has played a major role in the early development and commercial life of Perris. City officials have for years worked to restore historically significant buildings and provided grants to commercial business owners who renovate the front facades of their D Street shops. The City Hall Campus, the Bank of Perris, a new Senior/Teen Center and the 1886 Southern Hotel represent major renovations along D Street, along with the recent completion of the Mercado Apartments and ongoing construction of the Perris Station Apartments. Future plans call for additional apartments on the south end of D Street along with a fountain and amphitheatre.

"We are really excited to complete this next phase of the D Street project," Belmudez told the audience. "A lot of cities do not have what we have—an authentic downtown. There will be some growing pains with the construction but it will be well worth the wait."

Rodriguez thanked the business owners for attending the informational meeting, saying: "I appreciate your patience. You are part of the process that is moving our City forward." Hairstylist Diana Trinidad, who has worked on D Street for 10 years, said she is excited about the construction improvements.

"The whole Downtown transformation is exciting," Trinidad said. "Perris is a small town but its Downtown district is well known all over this region." Former Perris City Councilman John Motte, who helped restore the Southern Hotel and maintains property on D Street, agreed that improvements have "created a much more vibrant" shopping district. Additional improvements equal additional business, he said. "It's what we've been waiting for for a long time," he said.

Morales, in a briefing to Perris City Council members during their meeting later the same day, related the support expressed by the business community. "They were enthusiastic," Morales said. "They are excited to see new trees, new shade and new benches in the area." Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough said they were pleased with the City's outreach effort and that Phase 5 represents another step in the continuing revitalization of D Street and Downtown Perris.

Busch improvements will be first-class and well-received when construction wraps up this summer. Yarbrough the inconvenience caused by construction quickly will be forgotten once the improvements are completed. "When it's all done, it's going to be really, really nice," Yarbrough said. The City of Perris will provide regular updates about D Street Phase 5 construction on its website, www.cityofperris.org



Perris Capital Improvements Project Manager Michael Morales addresses a gathering of business owners to discuss the next phase of construction along historic D Street.



Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez said the next phase of D Street improvements continue the City's long-range vision to restore the historic corridor to its original look and feel. "We are really excited to complete this next phase."