

# Hurst-Euless-Bedford News JUNE 6, 2015

## With new expressway finished, Hurst is booming

BY ELIZABETH CAMPBELL

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HURST — City officials say their decision to adopt the slogan “50-yard line” to describe their spot along the 13.5-mile North Tarrant Express corridor is paying off.

Steve Bowden, the city’s executive director of economic development, told members of the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition recently that the headaches and problems associated with the \$2.5 billion construction project were kept at a minimum because of communication and planning.

“It was a nice Christmas present,” Bowden said, describing how Hurst is moving forward after the NTE completed the project nine months ahead of schedule.

Restaurants continue to pop up along the freeway — In-N-Out Burger and Outback Steakhouse — have been in place for months and the current buzz is about the June 18 grand opening of a Dairy Queen on the NTE frontage road at Precinct Line Road exit.

Pollo Tropical, a casual dining restaurant with a Caribbean theme, is scheduled to open July 1.

Bedford and Euless have also seen upticks in restaurants and retail along and near the NET in recent months.

Bowden said other businesses are looking at locating along the NTE in Hurst, but did not name them because negotiations are ongoing.

Bowden said at the height of construction, the Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chamber of Commerce, Texas Department of Transportation, NTE Mobility Partners and Hurst, Euless and Bedford made a strong effort to help the businesses stay afloat by forming the Airport Freeway Task Force.

One campaign involved banners displayed at North East Mall, which read: “Time for some retail therapy.”

The chamber also created a “lunch mob” to visit restaurants along the construction zone.

“We took the approach that if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em,” Bowden said.

Other shops/restaurants include a state-of-the-art Starbucks, a Potbelly Sandwich Shop and Pei Wei Asian dining locating in a former Marshal’s building.

Bowden said the highway expansion has had a positive effect on Hurst.

“It is going to be super as far as what is yet to come to our city,” he said.

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