



THE ROAD TO SUCCESS IS ALWAYS UNDER CONSTRUCTION. - ARNOLD PALMER

Construction Survival Guide



Crownsnest Pass
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Surviving Road Construction

by Crownsnest Pass Chamber of Commerce

Construction projects are a part of every community, as roadways and underground services do not last forever. While these projects can be hard on small businesses in the area, it is possible to mitigate the short-term inconvenience of road construction by planning ahead and employing the following tips for survival. When the project is complete, a new and improved roadway can boost your business for years to come.

Pre-Construction

- **Stay informed and voice your concerns.** Attend any project consultations/meetings that occur before construction begins. This is the time to communicate your business' needs (deliveries, customer access, etc.) to Municipal staff for consideration. It is also the time to learn about the project schedule and any expected traffic disruptions or parking issues.

- **Seek advice from other businesses.** There will be other businesses that have been there, done that. Whatever strategies worked for them, may work for your business too.
- **Keep your staff lean and your inventory leaner.** Once construction begins, it is likely you will experience a decrease in customers. If an employee quits in the spring, consider leaving that position vacant. Job sharing is another option, along with reducing hours. Take a close look at inventory levels and adjust ordering accordingly.
- **Secure a line of credit.** A line of credit is a lot easier to get when times are good, and it can serve as a back-up in an emergency.
- **Inform your customers early and often.** Start communicating with

your customers well before the project begins, and keep them updated along the way. The more they know, the more likely they will be to tolerate traffic disruption and visit your business during construction.

- **Help your suppliers identify alternate routes to your business.** Truck drivers will need to know where they can park to make deliveries, and how to get there through the construction.
- **Develop a game plan with your employees.** Brainstorm strategies to stay prosperous during construction. Sharing ideas and concerns can lead to innovative opportunities, as well as an effective marketing and communication plan.
- **Engage with the Chamber of Commerce.** As a representative of the business community, the Chamber can advocate on your behalf. Together, we can accomplish more!

During Construction

- **Be flexible and expect surprises.**
- **Keep your customers informed.** Create a simple map to tell your customers about the best alternate routes to your business, and where they can find parking. Use all the tools in your toolkit to deliver the message that you are OPEN during construction: social media, website, e-mail, advertising and signage. Make sure all employees know what to communicate with customers when they call.
- **Work together with other nearby businesses.** Affected businesses can accomplish much more when working cooperatively together. Resources can be pooled for marketing, signage or special events.
- **Remodel or redecorate.** Road construction might be the ideal time to renovate your business and maximize curb appeal.
- **Think outside the box.** If your customers cannot get to you, set up a temporary delivery service. Adjust your hours based on the daily construction schedule. Use a back entrance for better customer access. Set up a 1-800 number with construction updates and directions to your store. Collaborate on a "Where's Waldo" contest to bring customers into the area. Get creative!



- **Communicate with the project manager.** Ensure you know who to contact and how to get ahold of that person. If signs put up by construction crews do not make sense for your business, contact the project manager. Establishing an open line of communication will be beneficial for everyone.
- **Stay positive!** Customers do notice and employees are more likely to stick around in a positive, healthy environment.
- **Celebrate the end result!** Promote the new image, improved access and any other features of the completed construction area. Pool resources with other businesses for a neighbourhood celebration. Invite residents, elected officials and members of the media.
- **Capitalize on economic opportunities provided by the new landscape.** Wider sidewalks might provide an area to enhance outdoor seating. New street lighting could bring customers out at night. A revitalized area will attract more people. How can you make that work for your business?
- **Support other businesses affected by construction.** Share your knowledge - feedback based on your experience can be invaluable.

Post-Construction

- **Let your customers know that the coast is clear.** Use all of your communication channels to spread the word that the roadways are free and your business is open and accessible.

THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO POINTS IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION. – LEO AIKMAN



The Crowsnest Pass Chamber of Commerce bolsters and advocates for a diversity of businesses and organizations in a vibrant mountain community. A positive environment for business and community growth is encouraged through partnerships and collaboration.

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