



DOWNTOWN FREDERICTON URBAN RENEWAL





DEAR DOWNTOWN FREDERICTON PROPERTY AND BUSINESS OWNER:

We've all heard the joke that there are two seasons in New Brunswick: Winter and Construction. While this is a tongue in cheek comment, we know that construction in the downtown during the summer tourist season is no laughing matter.

In 2015 DFI and the City partnered in developing a new City Centre Plan which contains recommendations for public realm and open space, for new and existing buildings and for all forms of traffic circulation. It aims to reshape how Frederictonians and visitors experience the downtown. It has been designed to ensure the emergence of a coherent, vibrant and economically vital downtown.

The benefits of this plan are substantial: increased tourism, an incentive to businesses, new major developments and an increased sense of pride in our community.

With the adoption of the City Centre Plan we are realizing these benefits now with all the new construction and planned construction, property sales, a very vibrant retail sector and a healthy food and beverage industry, all supported by the private sector. A true sign of a growing and healthy Downtown.

Local businesses are presented with a number of challenges during urban renewal construction, but when the work is done, the improvements to underground infrastructure, streets and sidewalks significantly benefit not only businesses, but the community as a whole.



Urban Renewal projects which enhance the look and feel of the downtown helps encourage visitors and customers to spend more time downtown for shopping, dining and entertainment.

Downtown Fredericton Inc. is committed to working collaboratively with business owners and the City of Fredericton to communicate construction information in a timely fashion on multiple platforms, and to keep disruption to a minimum. Our hopes are that using this new process and coordinating and informing businesses of the plan in advance will help mitigate the construction woes.

This document outlines the Communication process (approved by City Council on October 7, 2019), includes a map of 2021 and 2022 construction areas, Best Practices Business Planning and an FAQ section.

We hope this guide will help you and your employees prepare for any future disruptions near your business. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

Matt Savage
President
Downtown Fredericton Inc.

ABC's of Construction Communication



**Accurate
Information**



Business First



**Construction
Timelines**



**Details and Scope
of Work**



Engage Partners



Future Plans

COMMUNICATION / NO SURPRISES INFORMATION SHARING PROCESS

**Approved October 7, 2019 by Fredericton
City Council**

The City's Engineering and Operations departments provide a long-term plan and priority list to city council which gives them a view of the infrastructure requirements to meet the future needs of the city as it continues to grow. These Capital Projects are then usually planned out in advance and then a five year plan is brought forward to City Council for tentative approval. This gives staff a clear direction to work towards.

Additionally, the City Centre Plan also informs the short, middle and long-term planning where Urban Renewal is concerned, taking advantage of infrastructure updates to also implement updates to the streetscapes.

It is important that business owners in affected areas are knowledgeable about these plans, so it has been agreed that Public Information Sessions will be held four times a year:

1. Pre-Budget (September/October) – initial discussion as to where and what is planned for the upcoming year.
2. Post-Budget (December/January) – Once the city budget is approved, re-confirmation of where and what, including some details on the scope of work.
3. Pre-Construction (March) – Construction plans set; all details are released and the job is ready for Tender.
4. Go Time (May/June) – Finalize plans, start and end dates, details on scope of work, design of wayfinding signage, detour signage and other pertinent information.

DOWNTOWN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS 2021





FAQ – FOR BUSINESSES IN THE CONSTRUCTION ZONE

How do businesses get deliveries during construction?

Please make sure you communicate your delivery schedule and needs with the Contractor/city.

How long will access be blocked to my business during construction?

As part of the contract for the construction project, the Contractor will maintain access to businesses during construction; however, there may be disruption for several hours when the sidewalks are taken up and laid down. For those businesses with parking spaces at the rear of their buildings, owners should consider that option. If access to a business must be closed every effort will be made to do so after the business' regular work hours.

How do residents and businesses put out garbage during construction?

Residents and businesses will put out their garbage and recycling as normal. The Consultant / Contractor will ensure that it's collected.

Will there be service interruptions during construction?

Yes, businesses should expect some temporary interruptions throughout construction - notice will be given for any planned work and the contractor will work with businesses to try to minimize these disruptions as much as possible.

What signage will be in the construction area?

Way finding signage to assist people in finding affected businesses will be placed on barricades where appropriate. Any vehicle detour information will be communicated as early as possible and the Contractor will handle signage for detours.

A working committee made up of downtown business owners and representatives from DFI and the City of Fredericton has been formed to design and implement customized way finding signage in the construction areas.

What communications will be happening during construction?

DFI will be your main contact. The Contractor and the Consultant will provide on-site communication with businesses and residents in the construction zone. The City/DFI will have public relations notices addressing construction communications with businesses and the public. The Downtown Fredericton Inc. office will send construction updates and promotional opportunities through e-mail.

What promotions will be happening during construction?

DFI will be running several joint business promotions each year during the construction period. We'll send notice of our promotions through our e-mail.

Has your basement/foundation been inspected?

The City will be contacting property owners to inspect their basements.

Are you planning major building renovations?

Property owners considering having work done to their buildings need to discuss plans with the City to ensure schedules do not conflict. Check with DFI to see if you are eligible and qualify for a Façade Improvement Grant.

Are you thinking about upgrading your services? (gas, electrical, phone, internet services, etc.)

Property Owners – if you are thinking about upgrading the services into your building (larger capacity, fiber op, etc.), now is the time to do so. Significant cost savings will be realized by planning for it now. It may not be possible or will be more expensive to make these upgrades once construction is completed.

Communications and Promotions

Downtown Fredericton will be running various promotions and advertising campaigns during construction. We will send out construction notices as well as any promotional opportunities to downtown businesses and property owners through email. Make sure you are on our distribution list by contacting Krista Rae:

Krista@downtownfredericton.ca / 461-7484

BEST PRACTICES

If your small business is located in the construction zone, your business will likely be financially impacted. Things can happen during a construction: projects get delayed or extended due to unforeseen issues, despite project coordinators doing their best to make sure the project gets finished with minimal disturbance to your business.

Because of these unknowns, the time to start planning for the impact of construction is NOW. How will you mitigate the impact? What will you do before construction is at your door? What will you do during? What will you do after?

Will you push sales in advance of construction? Will you hibernate during construction and push sales after? Will you re-vamp your business and marketing strategies? Will you make no changes to how you operate your business?

BUSINESS PLANNING – A PROACTIVE APPROACH

- 1. Promotions** – Are you:
 - Doing more or cutting back?
 - Co-promoting with a business that has products/services complimentary to yours?
 - Planning to offer special sales before, during or after the construction period?
 - Holding special events?
 - Offering coupons or loyalty rewards to your customers who are buying from you now, that are redeemable only during the construction period?
 - Offering coupons or loyalty rewards during construction that are redeemable after the work is done as a thank you for their loyalty?
- 2. Marketing** – Be effective and efficient with your marketing strategies. Know your business, clientele, and what works best for your products/services. Start building an audience now! Know that you don't have to do it all! Need some help navigating social platforms and knowing which ones will work best for your business? Let us know, and we'll help you to figure out how to keep one or two social media platforms full of fresh, well thought out content, rather than taking on too much!

3. **Mail/Email Lists** - Do you have a mailing list for your frequent customers? This could provide a great way to target your offers to those people most likely to buy – loyal customers will find a way to get to your business no matter what!
4. **Signage** – Construction signage will be in place on or near detour / jersey barriers at the end of the street, indicating that businesses are still open during construction. Can you augment this with additional signage on your store (must follow sign bylaw regulations)?
5. **Alternate Entrances** – Do you have a back entrance to your business that customers can access? If so, what would it take to make it as easy to access as possible (think about signage, lighting, space to walk, making it inviting, etc.)? *If yes, consider utilising Downtown Fredericton’s Façade Improvement Program to help with associated costs.
6. **Inventory** – If you know you will be faced with construction in front of your store, should you consider reducing the amount of inventory that you order for that season? Should you augment what you would normally order for the next season? Are there other lines you could bring in that might appeal to a market that would be new to your business to increase foot traffic?
7. **Staffing** – If you expect business to be down during the construction period, should you consider hiring fewer people during that time frame, or hire a part-time person instead of full-time?



8. **Shopping** – Patronize your neighbour’s businesses – there are nearly 12,000 full and part time employees in the downtown. Encourage your staff to shop at businesses that are having work done in front of their stores – they will return the favour when it’s your turn. Do you offer discounts to staff members of other downtown stores? If so, do they know?
9. **Satellite Locations** – Could you open up a pop-up at a downtown location that is not inside the construction zone or partner with another downtown business to share some space?
10. **Alternate sales mediums** – Do you have the capability to show your product lines via a website or through social media? Can you take orders through a website, by email, social or by telephone? Can you deliver your products locally?
11. **Hours of Operation** – Could you open later in the day and extend your hours later than 5pm? This may allow you to be available to potential customers after construction crews have gone for the day.
12. **Do your own Renovations** – Do you have updates or renovations that you’ve been wanting to do at your business? Maybe the outdoor construction period offers the perfect opportunity to close your doors and put on a new coat of paint and update your decor, when customers are less likely to be stopping by.
13. **Think Outside the Box** – Do you have a great idea that you’ve always wanted to try? Get creative and explore new plans! Have a brainstorming session with your staff!
14. **Positive Attitude** – Operating a business with construction in front of your door isn’t easy, but it is doable. Talk to others who have been there and learn from their best practices! Stay positive – it won’t last forever and it will look great when it’s done!

