

The Road to Success Checklist

Tried-and-true tips for businesses impacted by work zones

Communication

It is important to share information quickly, efficiently and accurately. There's no magic bullet for success, but the points below should assist businesses of all types and sizes think through and personalize a strategy to make impactful connections throughout a project.

- Identify stakeholders.** Think about who you need to reach and why. Think suppliers, customers, other businesses – really anyone is fair game.
- What do they need to know?** Think about detours, routing and parking. Project fact sheets, explaining future benefits, can be useful as well. What questions are your customers most bound to have? WisDOT staff and the 511wi.gov construction pages are good sources of information.
- Striking the right tone.** Positivity is always best policy. Consider focusing on “construction specials” or any other factor that makes your business a destination regardless of adjacent construction.
- Information distribution.** Options include, but aren't limited to, social media, email, websites, flyers, traditional mail, paid advertising and local media outreach. Don't forget good old fashioned word of mouth as well. Consider developing talking points for all staff to use regarding the project.
- Frequency of communication.** How often should you make updates and how do you plan to make them?
- Partnership opportunities?** Neighboring businesses might consider working as a group. Businesses that stand alone as roadside destinations might consider working with chambers of commerce or other businesses in the area to coordinate opportunities for customers.
- Consider temporary signage to enhance visibility.**

Promotions

Creating special “under construction” promotions can encourage your existing customers to visit and attract a new customer base during construction. Some businesses may find additional benefit by partnering with nearby businesses to design unique promotions or create synergy and amplification of customer outreach.

- Design a logo and/or create a tagline to use in your “open for business” materials and promotions.
- Hold events prior to construction to draw attention to the area.
- Consider “hard-hat lunches” or other specials to draw new customers.
- Start a delivery service (or offer free delivery) during construction – maybe pooling resources with other businesses.
- Create or use an existing mascot to bring more energy to special events.
- Develop a single- or multi-day scavenger hunt to encourage patrons to visit multiple businesses while they're in the area.
- Incentivize customers to visit the area with giveaways, special sales or discounts.
- Plan groundbreaking (before construction) and/ or ribbon-cutting (after construction) activities and promotions.
- Hold promotions coinciding with achievements and completion of work throughout the project.

Business Activities

Adjusting your business plan to prepare for estimated changes during this time can save you time, money and stress.

- Work with your suppliers to arrange alternative delivery times or locations as necessary.
- Determine if there are necessary projects (parking lot resurfacing, building remodeling, etc.) that you plan to take on as an individual business owner that could coincide with construction to take advantage of a potential slow-down.
- Seek out partnerships to provide support and discuss if/how resources will be pooled among businesses.
- Partner with a local small business development center or other small business assistance organizations to seek out business consulting sessions or other support services.
- Adjust employee schedules to accommodate changes in customer volume.
- Consider adjusting hours of operation to provide customers expanded options during the evening or weekends when construction is not as busy. Coordinate these hours with neighboring businesses.
- Think strategically about inventory and hiring leading up to the construction period and adjust as needed.
- Determine if there are alternative entrances or access points to your business that could be used that would be more convenient during construction. Enhance and highlight that entrances prior to construction to show customers how easy it is to get to your business.