

BUSINESS CONTINUITY



A guide to doing business
during construction and
road upgrades

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Working together with our business community to help minimise disruption during construction periods.



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Acknowledgement - Sunshine Coast Council, Business Continuity Guide



A message from the Mayor

As Victor Harbor grows, so does the need to upgrade local infrastructure to support the needs of our community.

Our Council is committed to investing in road, streetscape and other infrastructure upgrades to assist in creating a bright future for Victor Harbor, at the same time as ensuring our residents, businesses and visitors have access to the facilities and services they need.

We understand that it can be challenging for businesses during these upgrades, and we want to

work together with our business community to help minimise disruption as much as possible during construction periods. This has been the motivation for preparing this guide, which we hope will help prepare our business community for these important upgrades in our city's infrastructure.

I do encourage you to take the opportunity to talk with Council in our consultation processes, and contribute to the planning and development of future upgrades. We are all working towards the same goal – to ensure Victor

Harbor continues to be a great place to live, work and visit. Improved facilities, services and infrastructure is key to achieving this, and while there may be some challenges in the short term the long term benefits will be the reward.

I look forward to working together with you to make Victor Harbor even better. Please contact me if you have any concerns.

Dr Moira Jenkins
City of Victor Harbor Mayor

A message from Business Victor Harbor

Infrastructure upgrades provide long-term positive benefits for our growing community and, more broadly, our region.

However, we appreciate and are sensitive to the fact that some businesses may experience some short-term impacts during the 'works period'.

Business Victor Harbor supports this guide, which will provide key information and strategies for local businesses to use to best deal with some of the impacts and challenges experienced during upgrade projects.

With a growing population base, the Victor Harbor and South Coast region is home to a diverse range of businesses and it's vital we share information and

resources in order to achieve a successful local business community.

We hope you find this guide useful and encourage you, through membership with Business Victor Harbor to support future growth of our economy.

Business Victor Harbor

Take action to assist your business

The town of Victor Harbor is growing.

Upgrades to infrastructure, improvements to existing community facilities and streetscapes are some of the

positive initiatives that the City of Victor Harbor is delivering to help create a place of opportunity and lifestyle.

We understand construction projects may impact local business and residents, so we have prepared this guide as one of the tools to help you plan and prepare in advance of construction beginning in your area.

While construction projects can be frustrating, infrastructure maintenance is essential to maintain liveability for the community in the long term. Some examples of recently completed streetscape projects include the Railway Plaza redevelopment (Railway Tce), Adelaide Road corridor project, and Stages 1-3 of the Mainstreet Precinct Upgrade.

How council plans for projects

Well before construction starts on a streetscape or other major construction project, council undertakes consultation to work with the community to ensure a town's identity and community values are retained.

On many major projects, council looks at how proposed projects are going to assist with building a better community and creating a better place to live by focusing on long term commitments to people, places and partnerships.

After community feedback is received, council starts planning and designing. Then, once a budget is allocated, construction is scheduled. Consultation takes place throughout this phase.

How council helps support a community during construction

Council's project team and contractors make every effort to reduce the impact of major construction projects to nearby businesses including:

- wherever possible, avoiding planned work during peak holiday periods (such as Christmas and Easter)
- liaising with local organisations such as Business Victor Harbor and trader groups or community groups prior to construction to identify ways to help mitigate project impacts
- informing businesses of timeframes of upcoming work so they can plan ahead

- providing regular, detailed construction updates to local businesses and community members through project newsletters, emails and face-to-face liaison
- once work is underway, retaining access for customers and vehicles during standard trading hours (wherever practicable and safe to do so)
- providing advice and guidance from council's City Activation team to assist businesses to help mitigate construction impacts, and
- providing project information on council's website and social media platforms including the project benefits for residents, visitors and local businesses through to specific construction details such as changed traffic conditions.



Upgrades to infrastructure, improvements to existing community facilities and streetscape are positive initiatives.



Council looks at how proposed projects are going to assist with building a better community and creating a better place to live.



Council's project teams and contractors make every effort to reduce the impact of major construction projects to nearby businesses.

For more information about projects and planned works contact council on 8551 0500 or visit

victor.sa.gov.au



BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

What actions will you undertake?

Being proactive is essential for your business.



Communicate early and often with staff so they are aware of the construction period and potential impacts on business.



Talk to neighbouring businesses to see what plans they have to promote their business/products/services throughout the construction period. Identify if you can collaborate or share costs on any marketing initiatives.



Consider the possibility of taking your products and services offsite to new locations to expand business. This could include market stalls, or a mobile operation during construction.



Ensure your signage and wayfinding to your store (area) is easy to understand, clearly communicates that you are open and your hours of trade.



Is your customer database up to date? Emails and social media are efficient methods of communicating construction updates with your audience and promoting your business.



If you've been considering a business remodel/refurbish, why not do it during the construction period? Use this period to get things done that you haven't had time to address.

As a business owner, you're always planning and improving your business. When you're informed ahead of time, project construction is something you can prepare for. Here are best practice suggestions to help you manage during the construction process.

Communication

- As a business owner, it is critical that you communicate with the construction project team, your employees, other businesses and, most importantly, your customers.
- Construction timelines can be impacted by many factors including weather, funding, utility providers (such as phone, water, power) and underground services, so staying informed will allow you to plan your business operations more efficiently. Ensure you have the most current project information so that you can plan for your business accordingly.



- Communicate with your suppliers any changes to access and modify delivery days and schedules to suit.
- Speak with the project team to ensure deliveries can be made to your business during construction.

Marketing

- Historically, many businesses reduce advertising and promotional expenditure rather than slash fixed costs during construction periods. However, studies have shown that those maintaining or increasing advertising outlays during slowdowns wind up outselling rivals who cut back.
- Developing a marketing plan can help you identify how you will attract customers to your business during the construction period.
- Share pictures of the 'finished product' to help demonstrate that the construction inconvenience will be worth the gain once the project is completed.

Budget review

- Budgeting and understanding your cash flow situation is one of the most important areas of your business. You may need to investigate managing your cash flow tighter than normal and think about new budget line items, for example increased cleaning of signage, windows or general cleaning and upkeep to keep dust to a minimum.
- For more information about budgeting visit the Australian Government business website at business.gov.au or the South Australian Government business website at business.sa.gov.au

Stock and resources

- You may need to consider changes to trading hours and staff rosters to adjust to changes in customer numbers/visitation patterns once construction begins. Plan ahead for this important step and engage your staff early.
- Consider how you will manage your stock levels or orders prior to/during construction. How will you handle deliveries? Do you need to plan for changes in visitation patterns and deliveries?

- Well-structured social media advertising campaigns with high quality visual components can help you grow your following, better reach your existing followers and reach people within a geographic area who don't follow your pages.

Suppliers and lines of credit

- Inform current suppliers of the upcoming construction project and see if there are opportunities to collaborate. Do they want to be part of a special product promotion? Can they assist in providing deliveries when it suits you? Do you need to ask them to review your line of credit and payment schedule aligned to new customer visitation patterns?

Landlord

- Advise your landlord of the upcoming construction project and be sure to keep them informed of all construction information.
- Consider if they could provide support to businesses as they are likely to see an upside in assets and rents in the medium and longer term when the project has finished?

General information about council projects can be found at

victor.sa.gov.au

DURING CONSTRUCTION



Construction works are challenging for business, but staying informed and having a flexible approach can help.



Stay informed

- Attend project meetings held by council or others.
- Regularly check for construction updates and read all council notifications to learn about works that may impact business, including road closures or disruption to mains supply.



Create a friendly rapport with construction workers

- Target some marketing initiatives towards construction workers.
- Consider offering 'construction specials' or new products to generate interest in your business from tradespersons.



Encourage customers to visit the area and engage with your business

- Monitor and record data on customer visitation so you can adjust trading hours to accommodate times of high customer demand.
- Get creative. Introduce special offers and new experiences that may attract customers.
- Continue to foster a positive and transparent working environment with staff and customers to ensure retention of valued employees and customers. Ensure all staff and visitors know where they can park when visiting your business during the construction period.



The construction period is the time when you will experience the most amount of disruption to your business.

Customers may be deterred by noise, changes to building access, or temporary fencing blocking the view of your business. Continuing to take a proactive approach when communicating with staff, customers and suppliers is important to keep all stakeholders informed.

Businesses that think creatively and adopt a flexible approach are more likely to succeed during this challenging period.

Some creative examples of what other businesses have done to encourage visitation in areas undergoing construction include:

- Social media campaigns and advertising (free online training is available at [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)).
- Prize draws to attract customers.
- Information booths or hand-outs explaining the construction work, parking options, changed retail hours, etc.
- Customer loyalty programs.
- Packaged deals with products or services from other local businesses.

- Pop up events in parks or other open/unused space.
- Introducing online services or experiences, where possible.
- Collaborating with a local radio station and hosting a live broadcast from a business, or arranging an interview with a local business owner.

If planning events, make sure you touch base with the City of Victor Harbor's City Activation team to identify if any of your planned activities require approval.

You can contact the team at 8551 0500 and ask to be directed to the Festivals and Events Officer.

POST CONSTRUCTION



The post construction period is an opportunity to drive customers to your business.



Consider promotions and advertising

- Let customers know that the project is finished, roads are open and it is 'business as usual'.
- Promote the new image and convenience of the completed project.



Celebrate the project's completion and host a reopening event

- Talk to your local project staff, council or business association or join with other local businesses to hold a celebration or community event and invite the local news media, customers and the community to the event/ceremony.
- Become a Victor Harbor Brand Ambassador and use the brand assets and logo to leverage your business. More information is available at brandvictorharbor.com.au



Compensation

Council appreciates that there are many challenges for all types of businesses during construction activity. The law recognises that it is in the greater public interest that government be able to carry out public works. Other than under compulsory acquisition, this generally entitles federal, state and local government organisations to construct works including streetscape and place making projects without providing financial compensation. Some businesses may have clauses in their insurance policies to cover lost trade/ income or landlords may agree to provide rent abatements or reductions for a period.

Your business continuity checklists

Before Construction

- Stay informed about upcoming construction projects in your area.
- Attend project meetings and provide feedback, voice any concerns you may have during these meetings.
- Contact other businesses in previous project areas for their experience and tips on how to trade during construction projects.
- Develop a marketing plan, to identify how you will attract customers to your business during this time.
- Construction may take many months, what initiatives can you plan in advance to encourage customers?
- Collaborate with businesses, Business Victor Harbor and other community associations in your area on marketing initiatives like advertising, social media or events that could attract visitors to the street or precinct.
- Plan staff levels during construction. You may need to discuss this with your staff, for example changed hours might be an option or discuss with neighbouring businesses how you can manage staff impacts/levels.
- Contact lenders and landlords to inform them of the construction timeframes and potential impacts.

- Review your line of credit by discussing the situation with your suppliers. You may be able to amend the terms and conditions of your arrangements, which may allow for greater cash flow.
- Review your inventory. Do you need to stock-up or manage a just-in-time model? For example, will you still need the same amount of fresh produce or general stock levels?
- Rework your budget or look at your outgoings – can you make adjustments? How will you manage purchasing? Reviewing the budget allows you to plan, forecast and manage better cash flow where possible.
- Collect contact information for your customers and notify them of the project in advance. Having an up-to-date database has many benefits including providing accurate information to customers, project information, sales you're planning, events happening in the area and any changes to parking during the project.

During Construction

- Pool advertising and marketing resources with other businesses in your area.
- Stay informed and attend public meetings about the project.
- Develop a friendly rapport with construction workers.

- Signage at your shop front and discuss with Project Manager about direction signage and alternative access point options.
- Provide information and access directions for staff.
- Keep a script about the construction work next to your phone.
- Use social media to keep customers informed, offer contests, vouchers, etc.
- Continue to work with local business groups through collaboration.
- Consider extending business hours.
- Deliver products to your customers or increase online business.

After Construction

- Advise customers that roads are open and promote the new image.
- Celebrate with an event.
- Support other businesses undergoing construction work in their area.
- Acknowledge the benefits of the project and thank your staff and customers for their patience.

For more information about projects and planned works contact council on 8551 0500 or visit victor.sa.gov.au

Additional resources

As a business owner, you are at the heart of your day-to-day operations and therefore know what's best for your staff and customers.

Council is here to provide advice and assistance to help minimise disruption as much as possible.

Economic Development

The City of Victor Harbor's City Activation team deliver a range of functions including business engagement, economic development projects, co-ordination of targeted training and business advisory services.

More information on initiatives and projects being coordinated by the City Activation team can be found on the council website at victor.sa.gov.au

Supporting Business in SA

The South Australian Government offers information, services and resources to help you successfully start, run and grow your business.

The government website at business.sa.gov.au has useful information on starting a business, running a business, protecting your business, leaving your business, grants and support services, and events.



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 Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

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