



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: September 8, 2021
Submitted by: Engineering and Operations Department – Project Delivery Services Division
Subject: Consultation with Businesses Affected by City Construction Projects

Purpose

To provide information on the City's notification and consultation process with businesses and residents that may be affected by the City's construction projects.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the report dated September 8, 2021 from the Engineering and Operations Department – Project Delivery Services Division regarding Consultation with Businesses Affected by City Construction Projects be received for information.

Background

At the December 2, 2020 Economic Development Committee meeting, the Committee passed the following resolution:

EDC20/030

THAT Council direct staff to undertake process improvements as quickly as possible in regards to any non-emergency street construction projects proposed by the City will include consultation with commercial and retail businesses located nearby the planned street and sidewalk projects, in order to avoid and mitigate adverse business impacts that might arise from the City's construction projects.

At the January 26, 2021 Special Council meeting, Council directed staff to report back on consultation with businesses affected by City construction projects with the following resolution:

RC21/034

THAT the report dated January 7, 2021 from the Economic Development Committee regarding Consultation with Businesses Affected by Street Construction Projects be referred to staff for action.

Discussion

Construction on City infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, water mains, sanitary sewer mains, stormwater mains, and other assets is necessary to replace aging assets to maintain safe and reliable service for the community. Construction projects may also be implemented to provide new or additional service that will serve future growth and increase the quality of life for the community.

Construction is, however, by nature disruptive to the surrounding area. Staff recognize the need to deliver exceptional services to our customers, even during the temporary period of project construction.

The City executes a significant portion of its annual Capital Project plan through the Engineering and Project Delivery divisions. Most moderate and large-scale capital construction projects are implemented by the Project Delivery Services team. The project team considers the following construction objectives on each construction project as it progresses to tender:

- inform those affected by construction as early as possible, ideally during project design;
- minimize the period of construction and the physical work area of construction but ensure that the construction site is safe for construction workers per WorkSafe BC guidelines;
- review seasonality and construction working hours and days based on construction productivity and amount of disruption to traffic, businesses, and residents;
- minimize the loss of power, water, and sanitary service to businesses and homes;
- ensure residents and businesses continue to have access to their property except where unavoidable and well communicated;
- ensure emergency access needs of Fire and Rescue are addressed;
- ensure that fire fighting capability is not compromised by hydrants becoming unavailable due to construction; and
- ensure that any unavoidable interruptions are minimized.

Every project requires development and approval of a project charter before it can be initiated. The project charter confirms the scope, schedule, budget, and other key project dimensions. The key stakeholders on every project are identified on the project charter. The charter designates whether these stakeholders need to be informed or consulted.

To disseminate clear information to various key stakeholders on a project, a communications staff member is dedicated to the project implementation teams. Due to the fluid nature of project communication, staff developed a Capital Projects Communications Flowchart (**Attachment 1**) several years ago to provide consistency and thoroughness in how and when communications should take place to the businesses and residents affected by the City's construction projects.

The key items on the flow chart are summarized as follows:

- A Communications Request Form is initiated by the Project Manager that anticipates the amount of communication and associated effort required on each project.

- If significant impact to businesses, residents, or traffic is expected, a formal communications plan is developed that may involve engagement with those directly affected by the project. Engagement may involve meeting residents or businesses in a group or individual setting. The Manager of Economic Development will attend if businesses are affected.
- Depending on the project scale and complexity, a Project Notice may be issued to businesses and residents expected to be affected by the anticipated project construction boundary. This occurs during project design, and the notice contains limited project information and only provides general construction dates (in quarters) as the construction scope may not be defined at this point. This advance notice is typically a letter sent by mail or hand-delivered.
- Once a project is confirmed for construction after a successful tender confirmed by project budget, a Notice to Businesses or Notice to Residents is sent out to the businesses and residents expected to be affected. This is a letter sent by mail or hand-delivered at time the tender is awarded. It includes a general project description, expected impact to businesses/residents, approximate dates, and City contact.
- After the contract with the construction contractor is executed, a Notice of Construction is sent out to the same affected group. This letter is hand-delivered a minimum of 48 hours prior to the start of construction and includes the project description, specific impact/disruption to businesses/residents, exact dates, contractor contacts, and City contact.
- Construction signage is placed at the boundaries of the work site prior to the start of construction. Changeable message signs (CMS) may also be employed to inform surrounding motorists.
- To alleviate the impact on commercial/retail businesses inside or adjacent to the construction zone, the City will also erect 'Businesses are open during construction' signs and/or post similar messages on social media.
- If the project timeline changes or is disrupted as the project is underway due to unforeseen circumstances, project staff will provide further information to businesses via phone, email, or letter, depending on the circumstances.

As part of the City's standard process on construction projects, the Roadworks and Construction web page contains up-to-date information about all current construction project timelines. In addition, project staff provide City front line customer service staff and senior managers information about the project as it goes into construction. Any inquiries from the public would be directed to the project team for response and follow-up.

Staff recognize the challenges of businesses operating in or around a construction zone. To further reach out to businesses on projects with potential adverse impacts to retail or commercial businesses, the Manager of Economic Development will follow up, in person as much as possible, on the project notices as described above to confirm acknowledgement.

To further improve the process, when possible, staff will involve the Manager of Economic Development earlier in the annual capital project planning process so that any advanced feedback from businesses may be considered in the overall schedule of the projects.

It is important to note that not all aspects of construction are within the direct control of the City once the project is tendered for construction. Staff have to work within the terms set out in the construction contract, issue change orders, or face possible delay or extra cost claims from the contractor if requirements extend beyond those initially specified in the contract. Unforeseen issues may also arise as the project commences. Weather conditions, traffic and pedestrian flow, externally imposed construction completion dates, and site productivity are all balanced against minimizing disruption to affected residents and businesses.

Other Option(s)

This report is for information only. No other options are being presented.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

There are no communications and civic engagement initiatives associated with the recommendations in this report.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

This report's recommendations relate to Council's Strategic Plan Objectives of Community Evolution and Exceptional Service.

Attachment(s)

1. Capital Projects Communications Flowchart, September 20, 2019.

Report Author

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Manager of Project Delivery Services

Report Approval Details

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| Document Title: | Consultation with Businesses Affected by City Construction Projects.docx |
| Attachments: | - Attachment 1 - Capital Projects Communications Flowchart September 20, 2019.pdf |
| Final Approval Date: | Sep 21, 2021 |

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Jeff Moi, General Manager of Engineering and Operations - Sep 14, 2021 - 9:11 AM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Sep 14, 2021 - 5:56 PM

Natasha Vander Wal for Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Sep 15, 2021 - 4:58 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Sep 17, 2021 - 11:26 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Sep 21, 2021 - 11:14 AM