

we're open  
for you



Your guidebook  
for business  
impacts during  
construction

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## Tips for Success During Construction Guide

# INTRODUCTION

Dear Tahoe City Downtown Association Business Owner:

Road construction can present challenges for businesses, but with the right information, proper coordination and strategic planning, your business can not only endure the process, but also prosper during it.

This guide, funded by Placer County and produced by the Tahoe City Downtown Association (TCDA), provides strategies and techniques to help your business during the construction of the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project. Project construction started early April 2017 and completion is scheduled for October 2018. The TCDA STRONGLY encourages all businesses to plan, be proactive, and possibly make short-term adjustments to maintain your core customer base and minimize potential impacts.

We hope this guide helps you and your employees prepare for construction impacts. If you have any additional questions, please contact me. If you have questions about the construction project, please contact Margaret Skillicorn, Outreach/PR Specialist, Tahoe Transportation District (TTD), (see page 12 for contact information). TTD is the local lead agency, and Central Federal Lands Highway Division Central Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration (CFLHD-FHWA) is the lead agency for construction.

TCDA wants to help your business throughout the process. Road construction can be challenging at times, but the end result will have big rewards for your business and the North Lake Tahoe community as a whole.

Sincerely,



JT Chevallier

Executive Director, Tahoe City Downtown Association

# BUSINESS PLANNING DURING CONSTRUCTION



## Projects are essential to revitalizing our community.

Construction has short-term inconveniences; however, the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Project will provide long-term gains. Remember, once construction is complete your business and our community as a whole will benefit from the project's improvements.

## YOU control your business.

Embrace construction. Use this guide to mitigate the effects the construction project may have on your business.

## Take a deep breath, and please be patient.

Unforeseen issues that delay or lengthen projects may arise, (CFLHD) so recognizes along with project partners work with construction contractors to do their utmost to resolve issues and minimize delays. It's in their best interest to complete the project on time.

### PROJECT PARTNERS

- Central Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration (CFLHD-FHWA)
- Tahoe Transportation District (TTD)
- Placer County
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
- Caltrans
- Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)

## This Project will ultimately enhance our business district and the environment.

New sidewalks, street lights, traffic flow and improved public safety will make Tahoe City a better place to live, work, play, shop and dine. The project's main goal is to restore and improve the water quality of Lake Tahoe, our region's most precious asset. *Positive talking points located on page 9*

## Keep positive outcomes in mind.

Share them with your employees and customers often.

# BUSINESS PLANNING continued...

## **Work with your employees to develop a game plan.**

Talk to your employees about the process and strategies to stay prosperous during construction. Discuss or implement marketing efforts and allow employees to share any concerns they might have. Your employees will appreciate the opportunity, and the dialogue may spark new ideas that will benefit your business.

## **Inform customers in advance.**

Keeping your customers informed gives them the ability to navigate construction and access your business. Examples can include putting up signs, communications about alternate routes to your business, etc. Digital and social media are excellent mediums to use for these communications as messages can be changed often and with very low cost.

## **Gather customer contact info.**

...so you can keep them apprised of road conditions, best routes and promotional specials during the construction period. Consider sending periodic e-mails to customers—if you keep them informed and in the loop, they may not be as likely to change their buying habits during construction.

## **Use “deal-of-the-day” websites such as Groupon and LivingSocial.**

Promote your business and any deals that you are offering. Think about partnering with another business to make your offer more attractive and share the costs. This is a great way to bring both locals and out of town visitors to your business.



# TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS

## Contact Lenders.

Inform current lenders of the project and see if there opportunities to restructure existing debt and lines of credit in light of potentially diminished revenues.

## Secure a good line of credit while times are good.

It's important to get a line of credit during a good time when sales are up. That way, you'll have it when and if there's an emergency.

## Keep your staff lean.

It's an unfortunate reality, once construction begins in front of your business, you may need to consider keeping a lean staff. If someone quits in the spring, you may decide to keep the position vacant if there's a construction project coming up that summer. Other viable options may include job sharing or reducing hours.



## Reduce inventory.

When possible, reducing inventory can be a useful strategy to respond to potentially slower or decreased business volume due to construction.

## Consider reworking your budget.

For instance, more money might be required for cleaning. While there is little you can do to reduce the dust and noise of a construction site, you can focus on keeping your own business as dust-free as possible. If you only clean your windows once a week right now, you might consider increasing that when the construction crew is nearby. You may also decide to allocate more time or money for general cleaning and upkeep, in order to keep construction dust to a minimum.

## Don't relocate.

Occasionally businesses facing lease renewals consider moving to avoid construction. Keep in mind that the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project is in a very specific area - in and around the Tahoe City Wye with a project radius of less than a half a mile in each direction. Don't consider moving, as completion of the project will make accessing your business easier by foot, bike and public transportation.

# TIPS FOR SUCCESS

## **Consider using a back entrance to improve customer access.**

Access to your business may be affected during a construction project. The TCDA will be implementing "businesses are open" signage however business owners may want to supplement with signs of their own.

## **Make sure signage is clear.**

Traffic delays are inevitable during construction projects, especially when construction takes place during the busiest visitor months in the year. However, signage can help get people to your business. Inquire with the TCDA as to what their signage program entails and then put a plan in place to augment the TCDA's efforts. Make sure there's signage properly directing your customers to parking spaces. We have produced an interactive parking map to assist your employees and patron in finding parking and transit in the area (*See page 12 for important resources*).

## **Create a friendly rapport with construction workers and know how to reach supervisors and project leaders.**

Onsite construction workers are not the appropriate people to express concerns to, but you can create a friendly rapport with them. You might supply complimentary ice water to crews in the summer. Construction workers follow instructions from their Project Managers/Supervisors. You should communicate concerns to project supervisors. Keep Project Managers' contact information close at hand. *Please refer to page 12 for contact information.*



# TIPS FOR SUCCESS continued...



## **Keep the project manager's contact information close at hand.**

*See page 12 for important resources contact info.*

## **Save premium parking for customers.**

Don't let employees make the area around your business more congested. Encourage your employees to park in the Grid, or better yet, use public transportation, bike or walk to work during the construction season.

## **Consider alternate means of getting your message out ...**

such as a website, email, text, Facebook or Twitter. A successful marketing outreach effort uses numerous means by which to reach people.



## **Contact suppliers to provide directions.**

Know when suppliers will be delivering, and talk with Project Managers to see if rescheduling construction in front of your business is possible. Communicate with suppliers to inform them, so they can plan accordingly.

## **Deliver products to your customers.**

To reach customers unable or unwilling to navigate the construction area, initiate a catering or delivery service.

## **Keep on message.**

Consider keeping a script next to your phone and add talking points to your website, so that you and your employees have quick and easy directions to provide to customers. Make sure all your employees know what to say and how to say it and keep it positive. *See Page 9 for positive talking points about the project.*

# TIPS FOR SUCCESS continued...

## Stay informed.

If you aren't already subscribing to the SR 89/Fanny Bridge Project E-newsletter, do so by signing up online at [www.FannyBridge.org](http://www.FannyBridge.org). Please read these project updates from Tahoe Transportation District in a timely manner. Attend all public meetings relating to the construction project to voice concerns, get ideas, and hear the latest news.

## Consider extending business hours.

Be flexible to accommodate customer demands and other perceived needs.

## Make the construction work for you.

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

**Be positive.** Encourage and generate a positive, healthy attitude and environment to portray to your customers and to support your staff. This will ensure retention of valued customers and employees.

## Use TCDA and your neighbors as a

**resource.** Reach out to other Tahoe City business owners and TCDA staff to share your worries, concerns and brainstorm ideas or use others' best practices for success and as a support system. You are not in this alone.

## Communication will be critical during the entire project.

As a business owner, you must stay informed and communicate with the project managers, your employees, other businesses, and most importantly your customers!



# ADVERTISE AND MARKET YOUR BUSINESS

## **Marketing creates results.**

If you are not used to marketing and advertising your business, now is a great time to start. Marketing will generate interest in and traffic into your business. TCDA members are entitled to discounted advertising rates offered by 101.5 KTKE, Moonshine Ink, Tahoe Weekly and The Official North Lake Tahoe Visitor Guide and Tahoe Quarterly.

## **Creative promotions"**

- Develop creative ways to provide an incentive for customers to patronize your business. Do something above and beyond what you would normally do to attract customers such as offer a free drink with an entrée, a bounce-back coupon to visit the business during a non-construction period, a frequent customer punch card.
- Are you a restaurant? Offer a lunch deal with the work crew. Ask them to talk to kids and families about the ongoing project.
- Consider partnering with neighboring businesses to offer joint-promotions; for example, package your product or service with a complementary product or service and share the marketing and advertising costs with your neighbor.

## **Create or Expand a marketing plan.**

Be proactive to construction by creating a marketing plan or if you have one, update or expand it. Make sure your marketing plan and budget are flexible and allow you to utilize new marketing opportunities to best adapt to today's fast-changing marketplace. Make strategic investments on marketing offerings that better position your business in places where consumers are increasingly going to research products or services and make purchases.

## **Build a simple & effective website.**

- It's more affordable than ever before.
- Make contact information visible and consistent
- Use defining and searchable keywords on the front and backen
- Keep current by regularly updating content
- Monitor website analytics.

# POSITIVE TALKING POINTS



## Focus on the positive.

Construction can be an uncertain time for you and your business. But remember, once reconstruction is complete, Tahoe City and your business and your community will benefit from all the project's improvements. Remember to focus on the positive aspects of the project instead of the negative ones. Below are some positive talking points for you and your employees to use. Share positive talking points with your staff, your customers and even with yourself if you are feeling frustrated or negative. And remember, construction is only temporary and you're not in it alone, so reach out to TCDA or a neighboring business for support!

## Project Benefits / Positive Talking Points:

- Improved transit travel times and connectivity to the Tahoe City Transit Center and user experiences due to reduction in traffic congestion.
- Complete street enhancements that include sidewalks, street lights and beautification elements.
- "Old SR 89", West Lake Blvd. from Fanny Bridge to the new roundabout near the Caltrans interchangeable message sign will become a local road allowing for temporary closures for street fairs and other festivals, farmer's markets, etc.
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist safety with new paved shared use paths.
- Implementation of two safety routes from the West Shore - new Truckee River Bridge and a rebuild of the 88-year-old Fanny Bridge with sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides.
- Gateway Signage welcoming visitors to Tahoe City.

# You Made it! Post-Construction – Now what?

**Once construction in your section of the project is over, acknowledge the hard work and support of all entities.**

Thank project contractors and engineers, local government departments and anyone who's gone above and beyond to work with local businesses. Everyone appreciates a letter of thanks.

**Consider promotions and advertising** to let customers know the roadways are free and access is unencumbered. Promote the new image and convenience of the improved or completed roadway.

**Celebrate as sections of the project are completed.**

Consider holding a ribbon-cutting ceremony and invite the news media to the ceremony. Or, consider pooling resources with neighboring businesses for a grand celebration and/or shared advertisement.

**Support other businesses that undergo a similar process.** Give them your patronage and provide helpful feedback based on your experiences.



### Open for Business Marketing Campaign

To assist businesses through construction, Tahoe Transportation District, Placer County & TCDA have developed an Open for Business marketing campaign to market Tahoe City as an open and welcoming place and to encourage residents and visitors to visit and patronize local businesses during construction. The campaign is funded by Tahoe Transportation District, Placer County and developed by TCDA Staff, Board and Committee members with input from local stakeholders.

### Campaign Goals:

- Maintain business volume levels during construction
- Make sure folks know businesses are open during construction
- Provide incentives to customers to visit and spend money in Tahoe City



### Campaign marketing may include:

Banners, signage, posters and in-business displays starting in June 2018 through mid to late October 2018.

# CONSTRUCTION RESOURCES / CONTACT INFO

## For Construction & Project Information & Updates:

- SR 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project website [www.FannyBridge.org](http://www.FannyBridge.org)
- Sign-up online for project updates distributed via an enewsletter at [www.FannyBridge.org](http://www.FannyBridge.org) or email [suggestions@FannyBridge.org](mailto:suggestions@FannyBridge.org)
- For additional information, contact TTD Community Outreach Specialist, Margaret Skillicorn at [Margaret@paragonpr.net](mailto:Margaret@paragonpr.net) or call [775.846.2381](tel:775.846.2381).
- Tahoe Transportation District, Project Manager, Russ Nygard [rnygaard@tahoetransportation.org](mailto:rnygaard@tahoetransportation.org)
- Placer County Department of Public Works, Associate Engineer, Lead County Engineer, Jon Mitchel, 530-581-6218, [jmitchel@placer.ca.gov](mailto:jmitchel@placer.ca.gov)
- Tahoe City Downtown Association, Executive Director, JT Chevallier, 530-240-5574, [jt@visittahoe.com](mailto:jt@visittahoe.com)
- Beat the Traffic: Avoiding Tahoe City Summer Construction - Google map <https://bit.ly/2LLjvtk>

## For Loan Information:

- Small Business Administration (SBA) Resources and Loan Programs - [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)  
The SBA works in conjunction with local banks as well, so be sure to check with your local business banker.

*This guide was produced by Tahoe City Downtown Association with support from North Tahoe Business Association and was funded by Placer County.*

June 14, 2018

Dear business owner and community partner,

On behalf of Placer County, we'd like to extend a sincere thanks for your participation in our recent sign compliance campaign. Its success has everything to do with your help and cooperation.

As you are well aware, the State Route 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project has broken ground and is projected to be completed in the late fall/early winter. While Placer County is not the lead agency responsible for mitigation efforts, we are working closely with the Tahoe Transportation District and Tahoe City Downtown Association (TCDA) to limit potential impacts to your businesses.

To help make it extra clear that our downtown businesses are open for business during construction, we're temporarily allowing the TCDA to place A-frame sign boards on private property in the downtown corridor and the "Wye" intersection. In addition, we are also allowing TCDA to place three large banners at each "gateway" to Tahoe City. While these types of signs are not consistent with our sign ordinance, we feel it is important for our business community to allow this unique, temporary exception for the signs administered and controlled by the TCDA.

The TCDA will remove the temporary signs concurrent with the projected completion date and/or when appropriate. All other elements of the sign ordinance remain unchanged and ongoing.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me for further explanation or assistance.

Looking forward to a more vibrant and enhanced downtown corridor,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Eiri".

Rick Eiri, Assistant Director  
Placer County Community Development Resource Agency