

Current Notification Procedures for Future Construction Projects

Recommendation

That the September 29, 2020, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_7807, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the November 26, 2019, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report on current notification procedures for future construction projects. This report is to include:

- What the current standard is, including timelines, for notification of different types of City construction projects.
- How we determine which businesses and residents receive direct notification.
- Opportunities for business owners/operators and residents to raise any potential access concerns prior to the work commencing.

Executive Summary

Administration strives to provide Edmontonians with timely, relevant and accessible information about infrastructure projects.

Businesses and residents learn about City construction projects before and during construction via various processes and channels. These include but are not limited to:

- The public engagement process;
- Pre-construction information sessions;
- Project web pages;
- Localized road signage;
- Social media; and
- Direct mail bulletins.

Administration continuously enhances these and other tools while exploring new ways to provide timely and relevant information to businesses and residents.

This report describes current methods of communication for construction projects, how

these methods of communication are determined, and what opportunities are provided for individuals to voice their concerns prior to the start of construction.

Report

What is the current standard, including timelines, for notification of different types of City construction projects?

Given the variety of asset types, complexities, risks, public interface/impact and scopes of work required for different capital projects, the City uses a wide range of communication tactics. Assessing each project's characteristics and engagement needs at the planning stage helps determine the appropriate level of engagement (per City Policy C593) and communication required, including timelines. This approach ensures that the most effective method of communication is selected to address the specific and diverse needs of impacted businesses and residents.

To determine which communications methods may be required, the project team assesses stakeholder needs, recommends an appropriate communication and engagement approach, and measures the effectiveness of the selected approach throughout the project lifecycle.

For projects of low complexity, and/or low construction value, low public interface/impact or low risk, significant communications activities may not be required. Examples of such projects are:

- Transportation: Resurfacing projects such as 137 Ave (97 st to 127 st), 97 Street (137 ave to 167 ave), and 142 street (137 ave to 167 ave)
- Facilities: EPS Westwood Central Stores Renovations, Fire Rescue Services Training School Generator Implementation, and Chancery Hall Elevator Control Panel Replacement
- Open Spaces: Park and Wayfinding Signs, Minor Landscaping, Community-Led Projects, and Minor Trail Restoration

For projects of higher complexity, construction value, public interface/impact or risk, the City uses a specialized approach that is specific to the program and/or project in question. Examples of these type of projects include:

- Transportation: Groat Road Bridge, Ellerslie Road widening, and 135 Street Ramps at Anthony Henday Drive SW
- Facilities: Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre and Library, and Calder Library
- Open Spaces: Keillor Point, and the Jumpstart Playground.
- Building Great Neighbourhoods: Alley and Neighborhood Renewal

Timelines for communications and engagement related activities can vary by project. During the planning and design phase, the stakeholder or public engagement process for high complexity and high-risk projects may start as early as three and a half years prior to construction. The City does not typically undertake engagement for projects that are low in complexity, construction value and risk.

As a project enters the construction phase, pre-construction sessions provide further information to the impacted businesses and residents. The construction team uses the feedback received during these sessions to adjust the construction staging or detour plans, where possible. Pre-construction notices are then distributed a few weeks prior to the build phase as direct mail bulletins. As projects progress, businesses and residents receive updates through a variety of communications, as described in Attachment 1.

There is other infrastructure work that would not fall under the purview of the City to deliver with the same public engagement rigour as our capital project develop and deliver model (PDDM) outlines. However, Administration works to find alignment with internal and external partners where possible to mitigate against lack of awareness. Examples include:

- Utility: EPCOR Water and Drainage, ATCO Gas
- Emergent: Low-level bridge repairs
- Maintenance: Pothole repairs
- Developer-Led Construction: Private development (i.e. business accesses, driveways, arterial roads, etc.)

How do we determine which businesses and residents receive direct notification?

The businesses and residents most likely to be impacted by a construction project receive direct notifications from the City. Larger projects such as the Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program may be communicated more broadly to provide relevant project information to a larger audience.

Attachment 1 provides a further list of examples and brief descriptions of the various communications tactics used to inform businesses and residents of upcoming and in-progress construction projects.

What are the opportunities for business owners/operators and residents to raise any potential access concerns prior to the work commencing?

The opportunities for business owners/operators and residents to raise concerns depend on the overall complexity, construction value, and risk of the project.

When project complexity, construction value, public interface/impact and risk are high, the public engagement process conducted prior to construction can help businesses and residents understand the project impacts. These pre-construction sessions allow

two-way dialogue between the City and impacted residents, property owners or business operators, offering opportunities for these parties to provide feedback on construction staging or detour plans and allowing the project team to answer questions and address concerns.

Through this process, businesses and residents have the opportunity to:

- Attend public engagement events
- Complete online surveys
- Sign up for project email updates
- Review the project website
- Review What We Heard reports subsequent to the public engagement event
- Review display boards and other materials at public engagement events
- Speaking with project team leads
- Connect with project manager directly subsequent to engagement events
- Receive bulletins related to the project
- View local signage related to public engagement and construction

The City builds and nurtures relationships with impacted stakeholders and key city-building partners through ongoing conversations, before and during construction. When possible, the City works with stakeholders to mitigate direct impacts (e.g., project updates, wayfinding signage if appropriate, project timelines that help stakeholders prepare for upcoming work, and other efforts as appropriate).

Administration continuously reviews the City's communication and engagement tactics and tools and strives to connect with impacted businesses and residents using a strategic approach that aligns with project and stakeholder needs.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they work, live and play.			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play.	Edmontonians' Assessment: Connected to Community (percent of survey respondents who feel connected).	47% (2017)	45% (2017)
Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure.			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure.	Edmontonians' Assessment: Access to Infrastructure, Amenities and Services	68% (2017)	70% (2018)

	that Improve Quality of Life (percent of survey respondents who agree/strongly agree).		
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Attachments

1. Communications tactics used for construction projects

Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor