



The Best
Resources Ever
to Prepare for an

**AMAZING
DOWNTOWN**

**MAINE
FREE
MAX**

Maximizing downtown's potential!



MAX

PRESENTS



CHECK IT OUT!


This resource guide is where you will find answers to your construction questions, tips for keeping customers and employees informed, a checklist for your business and construction contact information. The Downtown BID and I encourage you to share the information you find in here with your employees, tenants and customers so that they can participate in the excitement of a changing downtown, too!





TIPS FROM MAX

We want to see your business continue to thrive throughout construction and beyond. I've put together these playful tips to make sure your business is headed in the right direction.



Tips from MAX



Look for me

Keep an eye out for my paw print throughout the downtown area to find your way through the construction zone.



Look for signs with my construction picture to find parking and locate the correct business entrances. We've included these wayfinding images on the enclosed disc so you can print signs and flyers communicating preferred entrances to your business as you see fit.

Be sure to tell your customers and tenants that if they spot me in person inside a downtown business or at a community event and are the first to tag me in a photo on Facebook they could win a prize!

Stay aware, stay safe

Construction on Main Street is happening in part to create a safer downtown but until then, there will be a number of safety hazards to be on the lookout for! If a road or sidewalk is closed or fenced off, it's for good reason; don't put your safety or the safety of others at risk for a shortcut. Pay attention to construction signage and be aware of roadside construction workers and pedestrians while driving around the downtown area—due to road closures and parking changes, they may appear where you are not used to seeing them!

Get that tail wagging

A safer and more attractive downtown is something to get excited about! It improves the already wonderful quality of life in Oshkosh and will show visitors and tourists that Oshkosh is a great place to be and that we take pride in our community. Just think—no more bumps driving down Main Street, wider sidewalks to enjoy Gallery Walk, benches to sit on, trees to mark ... I mean ... look at! I'm so excited I think my tail might fly right off!

Heel

I'm not going to puppy-foot around it, construction can be inconvenient. But we really appreciate your patience. Everyone is working hard to make downtown better for you and trying to inconvenience the people of Oshkosh as little as possible. If you do have concerns about noise, dust, accessibility or safety, please give the BID a call:

Maureen Lasky, OAEDC Downtown BID Manager
120 Jackson Street • Oshkosh, WI 54901
Phone: (920) 303-2266 • Cell Phone: (920) 642-0662
E-mail: Maureen@DowntownOshkosh.com

Speak

Be sure to tell your employees, customers, tenants and delivery people about the upcoming construction and keep them updated throughout. You will be able to find out how best to respond to questions in the FAQ section and this kit arms you with other tools, too. Make the brochures available to employees, customers and tenants, and make sure employees and tenants get one of the contact cards. On the disc in this tool kit, you'll find logos and pdf versions of select materials including a FAQ sheet for customers and tenants, maps with projected detour routes and renderings of the finished construction to use in your own communications—like flyers or e-newsletters—to help spread the word and build support!



Become a fan of downtown Oshkosh on Facebook


Go to www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh right now and become a fan today. Then, tell all of your employees, tenants and customers to do the same thing. This is where the most up-to-date construction information is, along with so much more. We hope that your business will post event listings, pictures of the construction progress, and special incentives or discounts to promote business and build community throughout construction and beyond. Don't you just want to slobber a big wet kiss on that?



HEY

MAIN STREET MAX, DO YOU KNOW ...?

This nifty FAQ sheet will hopefully answer all of your questions about the upcoming construction. I made one for you to hand out to employees and tenants, too—check the disc for the printable file.



What is going on?

Main Street will close to vehicle traffic in the spring, from the Fox River to Irving Avenue, and reopen late fall. Construction promises more pedestrian-friendly walkways, attractive tree-lined terraces and safer traffic routes. Additionally, this transformation will address storm and sanitary sewer issues, street lighting, and traffic signals to ensure a safe and viable street for the next 40-50 years. The result: A safe and pedestrian-friendly destination that will enhance and beautify the downtown area. I'm excited, are you?!

How will I know what roads are closed and when?

Maps and updates to road closures will be posted in real time at www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh.

Can I still go downtown during construction?

Absolutely! That's where I'll be! During construction it will be business as usual. The use of back or alternate entrances may be required and parking sites may change from time to time. Be sure to update your customers, tenants, employees and delivery people of any changes or direct them to www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh.

Where should I park?

Maps with parking information are included in the brochure, on the disc and at www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh. Additionally, throughout construction parking information and signage will be clearly posted on site—just tell people to look for my picture!

FAQs: Do You Know ...?

Where can I find updates and news about construction progress, road closures and parking?

The most up-to-date information and any breaking news relating to construction or the BID can be found at www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh.

What should I expect to see or hear during construction?

While construction crews and the BID will work hard to keep mess contained, you may notice an increase in dust around town—this dust isn't harmful and will be cleaned up as much as possible throughout construction and entirely at the close of construction in the fall. Your business can help maintain a safe and presentable downtown during construction by making sure your windows are kept clean and your building entrances swept of dust and debris. (Which reminds me, I should probably stock up on dog shampoo ...)

Also, throughout construction, expect an increased level of noise from trucks and other construction equipment throughout construction. If you are a landlord, make sure your tenants have knowledge of this and are prepared for the construction crew's long work hours.

Are there any safety concerns I should know about during construction?

I'll be making sure that construction crews and the BID take great measures to ensure the safety of community members, visitors and construction teams throughout the project and that any potential hazards will be clearly marked or fenced off. Pay attention to these warnings and never cross areas that are fenced, marked or taped off. Additionally, be aware of roadside construction workers and pedestrians while driving around the downtown area—due to road closures and parking changes, they may appear where you are not used to seeing them!

What is the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID)?

The Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) is an essential entity to the Central Business District of Oshkosh. The BID, created in 1987, has maintained its initial premise to retain free parking in the downtown, as well as proactively support revitalization efforts. Through the BID the property owners assess themselves to pay for activities to enhance and improve the downtown and to bring customers to the area. The downtown continues to change as the mix of residential, commercial and professional customers fill the district. The BID welcomes these changes as opportunities to continue economic development in our central city.

What is BID doing to make sure that people still come downtown during construction?

The BID has been working with local businesses to prepare for the construction and communicate construction information to the people of Oshkosh. The BID paid for the production of this tool kit and for Maureen Lasky's help (she's the BID manager and my pal). The BID also maintains the www.DowntownOshkosh.com Web site and the www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh Facebook page. I've been working to rally support from the community—on Main Street and beyond—to turn this construction zone into an opportunity zone for a better Oshkosh!

Will Gallery Walk, Waterfest and other events continue as planned throughout construction?

Yes. Gallery Walk, Waterfest and downtown's many events will take place as scheduled and you can help us get the word out to customers by communicating this in your marketing efforts and your business' Web site. The BID will post these events and others on www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh.

FAQs: Do You Know ...?

How can I keep my employees, tenants and customers informed?

Use the brochures and cards included in this kit along with logos and imagery provided on the disc to create your own communications. The BID recommends that businesses use their own mediums, like e-newsletters or flyers or direct mail. Consider personal phone calls, staff updates or tenant meetings to share construction information and distribute materials. Drive them to www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh for the most up to date information.

What if I run out of brochures or cards?

All materials are in electronic format on the included disc and can be printed as you need them. You can also give Maureen Lasky a shout for any extras: Call her at (920) 303-266 or e-mail Maureen@DowntownOshkosh.com.

Whom should I contact with further questions or concerns?

Chances are, if you have a question so do others. Post it on the downtown BID's Facebook wall and we'll get back to you as soon as possible. Otherwise, feel free to contact the following:

Bill Bertrand, P.E.

Wisconsin Department
of Transportation
Northeast Region
PO Box 28080 • Green
Bay, WI 54324-0080
Phone: (920) 492-5708
E-mail: William.
Bertrand@Dot.Wi.Gov

Steve Gohde, P.E.

City of Oshkosh Dept.
of Public Works
215 Church Avenue
PO Box 1130
Oshkosh, WI 54903
Phone: (920) 236-5065
E-mail: Sgohde@
Ci.Oshkosh.Wi.Us

Maureen Lasky

OAEDC Downtown
BID Manager
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Oshkosh, WI 54901
Phone: (920) 303-2266
Cell: (920) 642-0662
E-mail: Maureen@
DowntownOshkosh.com


CHECKLIST FOR DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDERS


The BID has developed the following checklist, exclusively for downtown stakeholders, consisting of recommendations on how best to stay active and involved before and during construction. The overall goal of the BID is to improve downtown—they are here to help you maintain business as usual!




Checklist

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION:

-  **Attend meeting with WisDOT project lead**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's project lead, Bill Bertrand, along with the City of Oshkosh, project engineers and construction representatives, will hold an introductory meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, March 5, 2010 in room 404 at Oshkosh City Hall. In attending this introductory meeting, you gain a better understanding of the scope of construction and what to expect and how it could impact your business. This meeting will also provide you an opportunity to discuss access during construction, the project schedule, signage, and other issues.
-  **Join the BID Marketing Consortium Committee**

This committee will be the lead in planning special events and promotions for the community during this time. This committee is also a great way to build lasting relationships with your neighbors. Remember: We are all in this together!
-  **Meet the BID prime contractor**

Similar to the meeting with the project lead, this meeting will allow a behind-the-scenes glimpse at construction plans. Attend to further your understanding of the end goal and to see renderings. Exact date of this meeting is to be determined—a formal invitation will be sent to you at a later date.
-  **Contribute to Facebook**

Become a fan of downtown Oshkosh in order to contribute photos, participate in contests and let customers know about any sales or events. The Facebook page is where everyone will be going for information and talking about downtown—don't miss out!



Prepare your tenants

Make sure your tenants aren't surprised come construction time or unprepared for some of its inconveniences. Let them know about where they can park, if they have to use or avoid certain entrances, what the noise expectations are and easiest ways to navigate the changing road closures. Warn them of potential safety hazards and update them on any utility interruptions in advance. All in all, be proactive and use the tools in this kit and on the disc to prepare them and get them excited for the end result!



Prepare your customers

Share the materials found in this tool kit and online at www.DowntownOshkosh.com with your customers so they are aware of the upcoming construction and notify them of where they should expect to park or enter your business. Encourage them to become a fan of downtown Oshkosh on Facebook so they can access the latest construction updates, maps and promotions for downtown businesses.



Prepare your staff

Your employees should be aware of the changes that are coming to Main Street. Stress that while customer service is always important, it is especially crucial during the nuisance of construction. Encourage staff to go the extra mile—ask them to stay current on the construction news so they can knowledgeably respond to customer questions or concerns, ask that they do not occupy the parking closest to your business and reward them for outstanding assistance.



Make sure your business's signage is clear

While the BID, the City of Oshkosh and WisDOT will take care of road and parking signs, it is your responsibility to make sure the signage for your business entrance is clear.

Checklist

DURING CONSTRUCTION:



Stay informed

Stay on top of the construction by attending regularly held business meetings and staying current on construction updates. Discuss any concerns with city or BID representatives and fellow downtown business owners. Don't forget to relay updates to employees, tenants and customers and to continue to participate on Facebook.



Stay positive

While construction might be a nuisance, don't let it get you down! Remember that once construction is finished, downtown Oshkosh will be a destination—one that is not only attractive but safe for those coming to shop or eat downtown. If you stay optimistic and positive and express excitement for the end results, you'll no doubt motivate employees and customers to feel the same.



Continue committee participation with the BID Marketing Consortium

AFTER CONSTRUCTION:



Attend the celebratory event!

**BE PROACTIVE—
GET
INVOLVED!**



Get Involved!

The best way to stay knowledgeable about downtown construction and to make sure your business continues to thrive throughout the transition is to become involved. While the BID and I are here to provide you with information and support, and to give community members a heads up, it's ultimately up to you to take an active role in developing a business plan and reaching out to your customers throughout the construction. Below are some pointers and resources to get you started. Be sure to check out the CD included with this kit for even more!

FACEBOOK

Hopefully you've noticed by now that one of the most up-to-date places we'll be posting news and information related to the downtown construction is on Facebook. We are hoping that this Facebook page becomes THE place for everyone in Oshkosh to go for information during the construction. We don't want anyone to have to go to eight different Web sites to find information for one trip to downtown. With your participation, the Facebook page can be a one-stop shop. Facebook also allows for us to easily update hundreds of people in a place that they are likely to see it. We chose Facebook as the go-to communications tool to encourage local businesses like yours and community members to interact with one another. It is a place to post information, pose questions, share tips and resources, post photos, and showcase discounts at your business to promote sales. Become a fan of downtown Oshkosh on Facebook today to participate.

If you don't have Facebook, you can still visit us at www.Facebook.com/DowntownOshkosh and see all the updates and photos and sign up for e-News alerts to be sent right to your inbox. Keep in mind, though, that Facebook could be a great way to connect with customers before, during and after construction and therefore, you may wish to create a personal profile (for individuals) or business page (for businesses).

To get started on Facebook today, go to www.Facebook.com and sign up for an account. If you're going to sign up as a business, be sure to create a business page instead of a profile page. Once you're in, here are a few resources for how to find your way around and learn the lingo:

For a personal profile page:

All Facebook: The Unofficial Facebook Resource

<http://www.allfacebook.com/facebook-tutorials/facebook-profile-tutorial/>

For a business fan page:

All Facebook: The Unofficial Facebook Resource

<http://www.allfacebook.com/2009/08/how-to-configure-your-facebook-page/>

General help:

Facebook's Help Page

<http://www.facebook.com/help>

Get Involved!

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Your downtown business may qualify for a Downtown BID grant or loan to help your business improve and remain viable throughout construction and beyond. For more information, download the applications.

Downtown BID Recruitment Fund Grant application:

<http://www.DowntownOshkosh.com/Images/August/August/BIDRecruitmentFundGrantApplication.pdf>

Downtown BID Loan application:

http://www.OshkoshChamber.com/Uploads/RLF_Loan_Application.pdf

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS RESOURCES

ADVOCAP Inc.

Provides technical assistance with business and marketing plans, financial and loan development, human resources and managerial strategies.

www.ADVOCAP.org

2929 Harrison St. | Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 426-0150

Origin Oshkosh

Helps new and current business owners and entrepreneurs by offering resources, mentoring, consulting and connections.

www.OriginOshkosh.com

120 Jackson Street | Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 303-2266

Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce

Connects businesses to resources, networks, labor recruitment and training, and demographic information.

www.OshkoshChamber.com

120 Jackson Street | Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 303-2266

Oshkosh Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Provides community members, businesses and visitors with information on area attractions, events, accommodations and more.

www.VisitOshkosh.com

2401 West Waukau Ave. | Oshkosh, WI 54904
(920) 303-9200

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Center for Community Partnerships

Offers professional education, applied research/consulting and internship services to students, businesses and community members.

www.UWOPartners.org

347 City Center | Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 424-1453

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Small Business Development Center

Provides free business counseling and low cost training programs for both existing and startup businesses.

www.UWOsh.edu/sbdc/

347 City Center | Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 424-1453

