



Business-Friendly Construction Policy

What We Heard Report – Phase 3

August 13, 2025



The City has been piloting and testing a variety of business-friendly approaches aimed at improving wayfinding during planned City-led construction.

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Executive summary

The City is developing a Business-Friendly Construction Policy to improve how businesses and their customers experience City-led construction. As part of this process, public engagement is being conducted throughout 2025. This report summarizes the first component of Phase 3 engagement, which focused on checking back with businesses and the public to gather feedback on key themes and draft policy objectives that were developed using feedback from earlier engagement phases.

From June 16 to July 4, a short survey was launched to collect input. Most respondents supported the draft policy objectives and overall approach. Feedback also highlighted areas for improvement, which the project team will consider as the policy is refined.

Input from Phase 3 will help shape the final policy objectives and inform the development of a phased implementation plan to work toward achieving the policy objectives over time. A detailed What We Did Report summarizing how feedback was considered will be shared before the policy is presented to Council in early 2026.

Phase 3 engagement

Objectives

Phase 3 of engagement included two elements, the first being a check back with businesses and the public on the overarching themes we heard from phases 1 and 2 and sharing our draft policy objectives to confirm that we are on the right track. The second part of phase 3 will include connecting with business organizations, and working with internal City teams and the construction industry, to refine and adjust the policy objectives and develop implementation strategies.

This document reports back on the completed public engagement portion to provide transparency in the process to date while work continues with internal City teams and with construction industry partners.

Approach

To ensure that, as we further develop our policy, it remains aligned with public needs and expectations, we shared the eight key themes and five draft policy objectives with the public.

We launched a short survey to gather feedback on the draft policy objectives. This helped us identify potential gaps and assess whether we were on the right track. The survey was live from June 16 to July 4, and its concise format and limited timeframe were designed to minimize engagement fatigue and make sure we were moving in the right direction.

Survey summary

In Phase 3, we asked for feedback on the key themes from previous phases of engagement and a set of draft policy objectives. We asked if respondents felt that the objectives would improve the experience for businesses, residents, and customers during City-led construction. We also asked if anything was missing and whether the draft themes reflected people's values and needs.

It is important to note that the key themes and policy objectives that were shared were in draft form and developed using feedback from Phases 1 and 2 of engagement. We will be refining the policy objectives throughout the rest of 2025.

The draft policy objectives shared in Phase 3 were to:

- Consider business access and operational needs when planning for City-led construction projects.
- Maintain connection with businesses and be responsive to inquiries and issues during City-led construction.
- Share clear and timely information about projects and their progress.
- Explore partnership opportunities with communities and organizations to support business areas.

- Create an accessible, comfortable and safe experience for customers and visitors; consider parking, signage and wayfinding solutions.

Based on these draft policy objectives, we asked the following questions:

1. If the City focused on these objectives, would they contribute to a better experience for businesses, residents and customers during City-led construction?
2. Is there something we may have missed or overlooked?
3. Did the draft themes and objectives reflect your values, and will they meet the needs of your business or community? Why or why not?

Insights

The survey provided valuable insights into how businesses and the public view the current draft policy objectives. While the number of respondents was small (24 contributors and 39 total responses), the insights help us understand whether we're on the right track. A strong majority of respondents agreed with the draft policy objectives and expressed support for the overall approach and intent. Others acknowledged the policy as a helpful starting point - "a place to start when creating an outline and for having guide" - while some expressed concerns about its effectiveness in meeting community needs. As one respondent noted, "there is no measure of success built in... so they do not meet the needs of the community in my opinion."

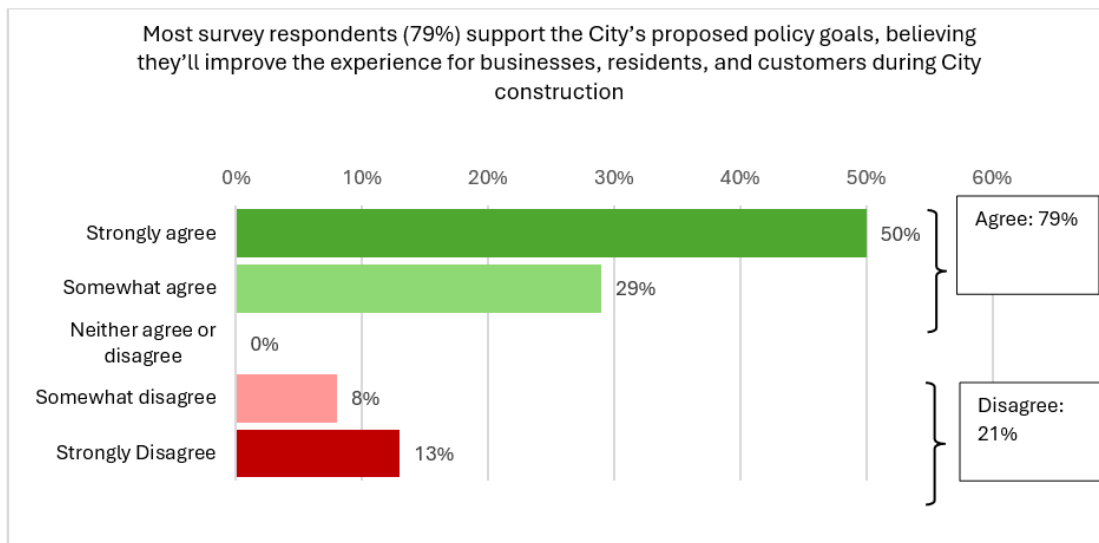


Chart 1 illustrating public sentiment.

Respondents shared a range of insights and concerns regarding the draft policy objectives, highlighting the following key themes:

Clearer goals, timelines, and accountability built into the policy. While the policy objectives are broad, respondents want more specific definitions of success. They called for measurable targets, regular progress updates and accountability for both City teams and contractors when delays occur.

Improve coordination across City teams and utility companies. We heard strong frustration about repeated disruptions—like roads being paved and then torn up again for utility work. Improve planning and alignment with third-party utilities, as well as stronger coordination between City departments to avoid delays and rework.

Dedicated staff in business zones. Include a commitment to assign dedicated staff to business zones during major construction projects. Respondents indicated they want someone they can easily reach out to with questions or concerns—someone who knows what’s going on and can help solve problems quickly.

Practical, on-the-ground improvements. Suggestions included removing lane restrictions when no work is occurring, improving supervision and ensuring adherence to project timelines.

Explore financial support mechanisms. Some respondents called for targeted rent or tax subsidies, emergency funding for significantly impacted small businesses or financial support for revenue loss during prolonged or delayed construction.

You can find detailed feedback and verbatim comments [here](#).

Next steps

From August to December, the project team will be working with several internal City working groups made up of subject matter experts to review and incorporate feedback gathered to date to further refine the policy objectives. The feedback will also contribute to the development of a phased implementation plan that will guide the practical application of the policy objectives.

A detailed *What We Did Report* will be developed summarizing how feedback from businesses, customers, internal experts and the construction industry helped shape the policy and implementation plan. This report will be shared back before the policy is presented to Council in early 2026.

Project background

Project overview

As directed by City Council, work is underway to establish a business-friendly construction policy that will clarify The City’s approach to mitigating potential challenges from construction and improve how businesses and their customers experience City-led construction. This issue is not unique to Calgary; major municipalities across Canada are facing similar requests from businesses, to implement business-friendly construction management approaches during construction.

Throughout 2025, we will engage with the public to better understand the experiences of businesses and Calgarians with City-led construction. We will be building on what we have been

learning, and we are actively seeking input from businesses and their customers and working with our partners in the construction industry to shape clear and effective policy objectives.

Note: The City does not compensate businesses for impacts from construction. There is no requirement in Alberta's Municipal Government Act to compensate business owners for the effects of City-led infrastructure construction (e.g. public utilities).

Policy goal

Develop a more consistent approach that guides how The City will work toward mitigating construction impacts on businesses and improving how businesses and their customers experience City-led construction.

Public engagement overview

The City will actively engage with the business community and key interest-holders throughout 2025. This engagement will involve gathering insights and feedback from a range of interest-holders, including businesses, customers, the construction industry representatives and City Administration.

Feedback from this public engagement, in combination with research, lessons learned from pilot initiatives, City policies and best practices, will be used to shape the draft objectives-based policy. The draft policy will be informed by participants' contributions, and this information will be considered further as Administration develops a plan to support The City to implement the policy over time.

How we engaged, informed and promoted

The public feedback portion of Phase 3: Refine and Develop was conducted between June 16 to July 4, 2025. The following tools and tactics were used to engage, inform, and promote these opportunities:

Engage



Online public survey

An online survey was the main tool for sharing information and collecting public feedback.

- 24 contributors, 1144 views and 977 visitors



Pop-ups

Held in accessible and informal settings allowing for spontaneous interactions with a diverse range of participants using interactive methods like surveys and project QR codes.

- 3 pop ups were held at the Calgary Municipal Building
- Dates: June 17, 24 and 25

Inform and promote



City webpages

Information banner featured on the project webpage and Business & Local Economy webpage to highlight open engagement opportunities.



Direct email

Information on upcoming engagement opportunities provided to business organizations, including all BIAs to share with their members.



Engage weekly

A dynamic, internally circulated online newsletter that delivers timely, accurate, city-wide, and ward-specific information on public engagement and research activities.



My Calgary newsletter

Content was provided to the My Calgary newsletter. This newsletter content is shared with all Community Associations across Calgary, all City Councillors and is posted to the My Calgary webpage and social media channels.



Social media

Paid and organic social media advertising launched across multiple platforms, including NextDoor, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads and BlueSky.



Postcards

Project postcards distributed to The City of Calgary's Community and Business Liaisons to support promotion within project areas.



Email newsletters

Engagement opportunities were promoted through three separate email newsletters: the Business-Friendly Construction Policy project newsletter, the Business Improvement Area newsletter to Executive Directors and the Business and Local Economy team's quarterly Business Beat newsletter.



Community Association outreach

Opportunities for community engagement were shared with Community Associations via their respective Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators.