

Downtown Battle Creek Streetscape Resource Guide

REROUTE *Battle Creek*

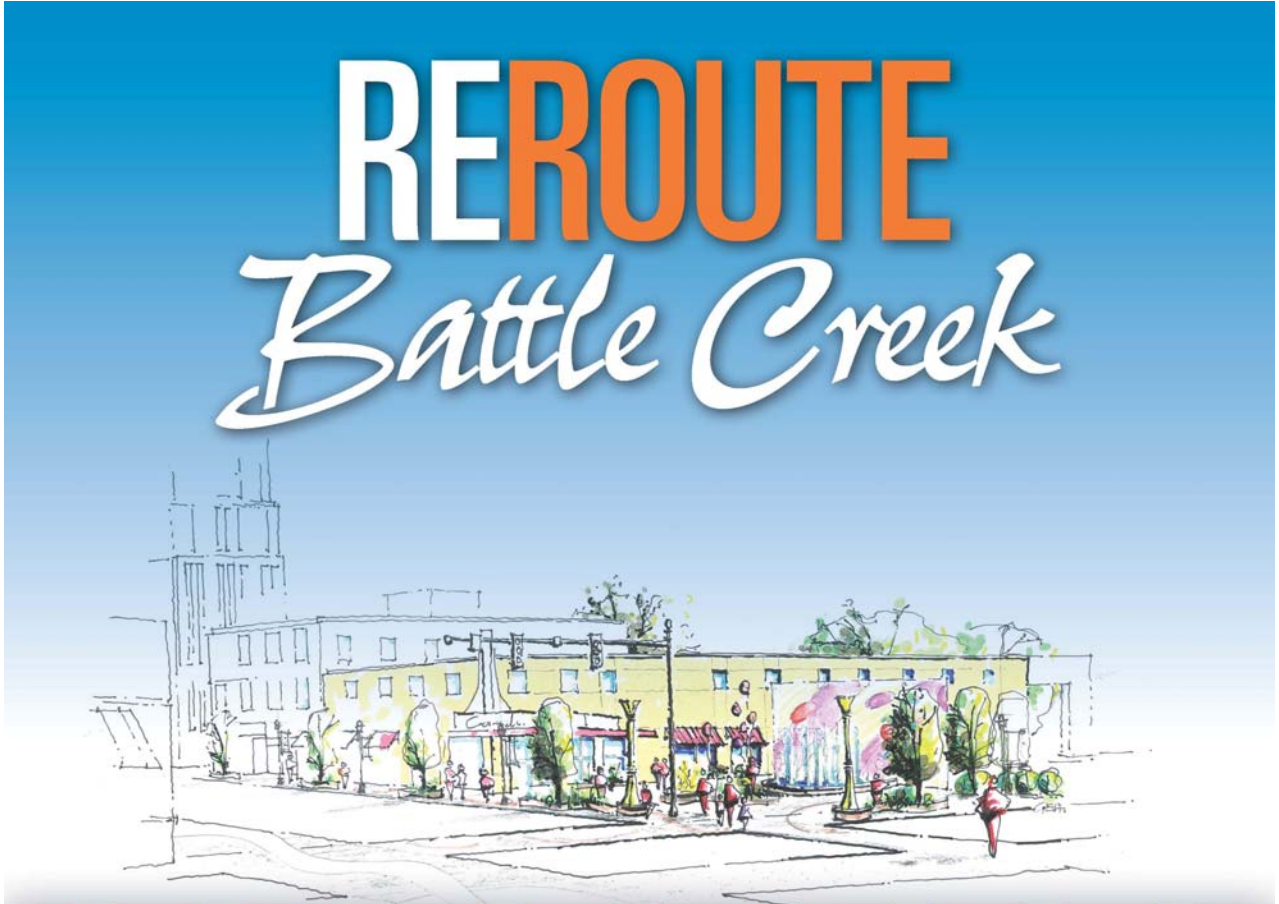


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February 2011

Downtown Businesses:

The City of Battle Creek in conjunction with Battle Creek Unlimited and the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership is proud to present the Michigan Avenue Streetscape Resource Guide. It is our hope that this resource will assist your business throughout this exciting time in downtown's history.

The guide is designed to help you navigate through the dirt, dust and detours.

Although this project may bring challenges to your business this is also an opportunity to be an active part in the reconstruction efforts.

Staying positive and through the continuous promotion of your business, you are more likely to find success through this period. Contained within this resource guide, you will also find a variety of ideas for sales promotions, business tips, and the importance of window displays, promotions, media contacts, sample press releases and more.

As developments occur, you will be provided with project updates, traffic shifts, promotions and additional tips which you will be able to add to this guide. This guide is a great tool for your employees as well.

Please take some time to look through the guide and do not hesitate to contact the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership should you have any questions.

Through dust and dedication,

Alyssa Jones
Communications and Events Manager

Construction Contacts

Please refer to this list when you have questions and/or concerns.

Battle Creek Downtown Partnership
Alyssa Jones
Office: 269-441-1668 Cell: 269-924-2443
Email: Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com

Parking Questions
AMPCO Parking, 269-966-3605

Sign Permits
City of Battle Creek, 269-966-3320

Building Permits
City of Battle Creek, 269-966-3382

In case of after-hours emergency: Department of Public Works Dispatch 269-966-3493.

Construction Timeline

The Michigan Avenue construction project will start as soon as April 2011 and continue through Fall 2012. Under the construction umbrella, two projects will be completed concurrently, water main replacement and streetscape construction.

Water Main Replacement

The water main that runs through downtown (under Michigan Avenue) will be replaced. This water main is what services the water throughout downtown. The water main replacement will include services, valves and hydrants.

Replacement of the water main means service to your business will be temporarily restricted at some point(s). You will be notified in advance of when water service will be disturbed in advance. In most cases, businesses will be notified at least 48 hours in advance.

Businesses should expect two (2) water service disruptions. Water service disruptions include:

1. Service line (up to one (1) hour)
2. Main line (up to four (4) hours)

Once water service is restored, you will need to take additional measure to be sure your water is running clean and rust has been washed out. As with any water main replacement or repair, you will need to flush your pipes prior to use. You will receive further notification as the replacement nears in your phase of construction.

Michigan Avenue Streetscape

The construction on Michigan Avenue will include streets as well as sidewalks. Streetscape construction will consist of sidewalk replacement (within six (6) inches from building face), installation of new trees, planters, traffic and street lights, benches, and pocket park.

The construction transformation project will begin and be completed in phases. The first phase will begin as early as April 2011 and the final phase will be completed on or around September 2012.

The entire project will be broken into multiple phases to minimize the length of disruption.

Construction Timeline

The construction phases are broken down as follows:

Phase I

Projected timeframe April 2011 – July/August 2011

Michigan Avenue from Carlyle Street to McCamly Street (including the intersection of McCamly Street and Michigan Avenue). Pocket park at McCamly Street and Michigan Avenue.

Phase II

Projected timeframe June/July 2011 – November 2011

Michigan Avenue from McCamly Street to Capital Avenue

Phase III

Projected timeframe April 2012 – September 2012

Michigan Avenue from Capital Avenue to Division Street (including the intersection of Capital and Michigan Avenue)

Work for Phase I will begin on April 18, 2011 with completion of the first and second blocks of Michigan Avenue to be completed by November 2011. Phase III will be continued in spring 2012. Exact timing will be communicated as soon as it has been determined.

As information becomes available, the City of Battle Creek and/or the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership will provide you with updated information as soon as possible.

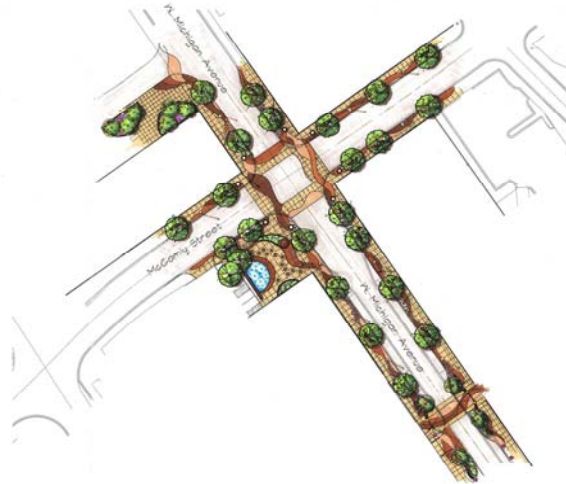
Streetscape Renderings

The streetscape portion of this multi-phase project will begin on April 18, 2011. Several streetscape meetings were held in 2010 to formalize the design elements and amenities based on community input. The overall concept is based on a water-history theme and is designed for longevity, compliance, cost, walkability, safety, sustainability, technology and entertainment.

The input resulted in the following renderings.

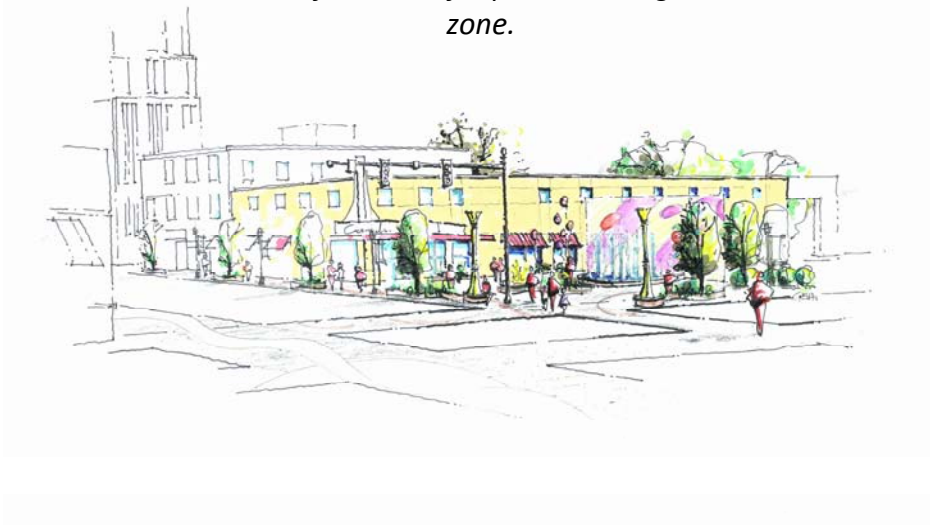
Overview of Concept

The concept represents the winding banks of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Rivers. The pavement design illustrates water movement accented with curvilinear benches and ornamental ironwork.



Concept of Gathering Spaces

Both large and small gathering space is incorporated into the overall design. The gathering places are locations where citizens are encouraged to enjoy. Amenities within the gathering place include an interactive water feature, a fireplace, seating, and internet access with a WiFi zone.



Streetscape Renderings

Concept of Amenities

Mindful of the environment, the public insisted on sustainable design.

The amenities include recycled materials and sustainable products including LED lighting.

Street lighting will be dark-sky friendly, energy efficient and low maintenance.

Light towers at intersections announce the arrival into the downtown as well as anchor plantings and seating areas. Additional lighting will be added into the sidewalk, benches and bridges to provide dramatic and colorful interest. Vine covered screen walls in some locations will provide textural interest and shade while benches will accommodate art and/or urban plantings. Trees will be alternatively spaced 64 feet apart and provide shade and proportional scale for years of growth and enjoyment.



Traffic and Parking Information

Michigan Avenue is a downtown thoroughfare, however, during construction the Michigan Avenue thoroughfare will **NOT** be open to through traffic.

Detours will be posted to route traffic around construction zones. This may result in minimal traffic by your business even if you are not currently under a specific phase of construction. (Note: Phase information can be found on page 6.)

Parking is open in all downtown parking lots with the exception of the McCamly Lot located on the corner of McCamly Street and Jackson Street. On street parking will be available only in areas not under construction, which also may be restricted. On street parking will not be allowed in the phase under construction.

As traffic routes are altered and parking availability changes you will be notified with as much advanced notice as possible. Please be sure your employees and customers are aware of any changes and provide them with the easiest way to reach your business.

Note: Please explore the opportunity for your employees to park in a location that will not inhibit your customers from visiting you. Keep the closest parking spaces available as much as possible.

To help your customers, clients, employees and visitors find their way in and around downtown, locate parking in close proximity to your location, what specific area is under construction, how to get to your door and more, please reference the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership's website at www.downtownbattlecreek.com.

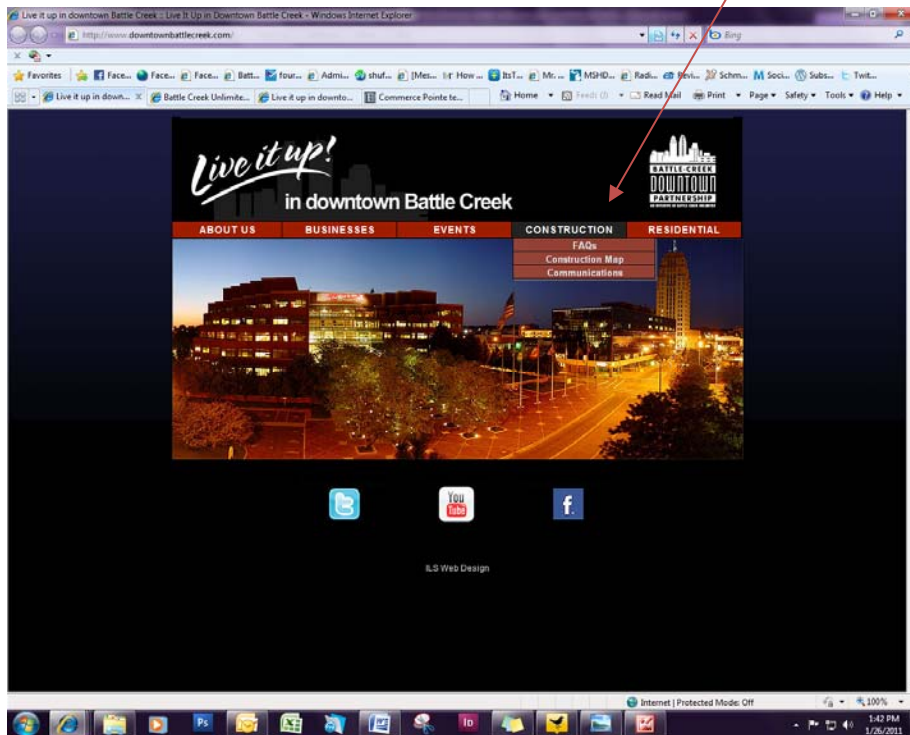
Additional resources can be found under the Construction Communication Tools section.

Construction Communication Tools

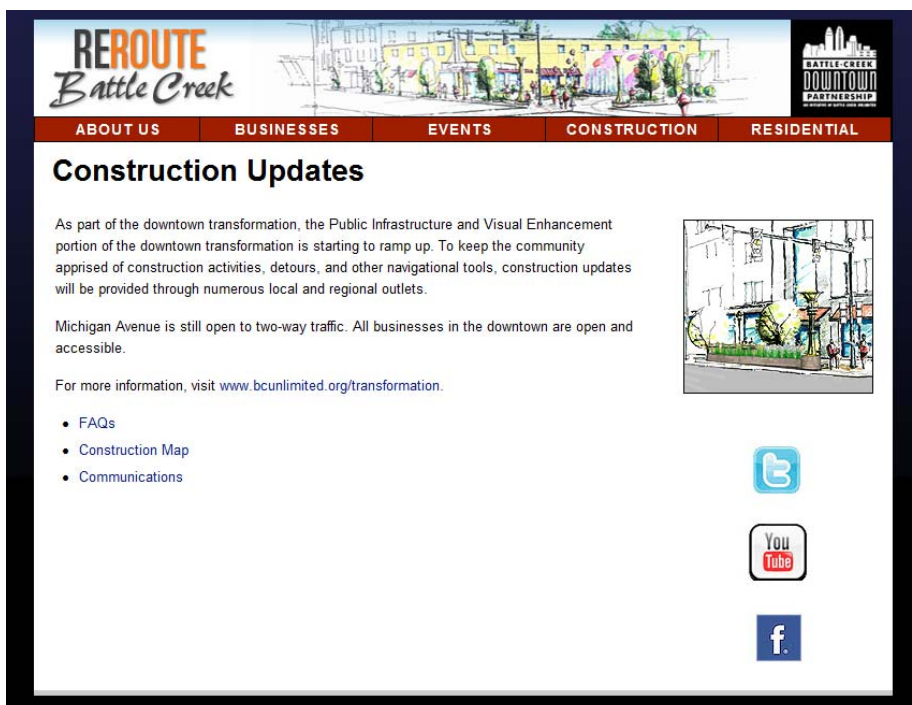
Website

The Battle Creek Downtown Partnership website has a dedicated section to providing complete details of the construction and the progress. www.downtownbattlecreek.com

All construction information can be found under the Construction tab.



Screen shot of the home page for Construction.



Construction Communication Tools

Website, continued

Under the Construction tab, you'll find information including FAQ's, an interactive construction map, contact information, active projects, archive projects and more.

REROUTE Battle Creek

ABOUT US | BUSINESSES | EVENTS | **CONSTRUCTION** | RESIDENTIAL

Construction Updates

As part of the downtown transformation, the Public Infrastructure and Visual Enhancement portion of the downtown transformation is starting to ramp up. To keep the community apprised of construction activities, detours, and other navigational tools, construction updates will be provided through numerous local and regional outlets.

Michigan Avenue is still open to two-way traffic. All businesses in the downtown are open and accessible.

For more information, visit www.bcunlimited.org/transformation.

- FAQs
- Construction Map
- Communications

Twitter, YouTube, Facebook

REROUTE Battle Creek

ABOUT US | BUSINESSES | EVENTS | **CONSTRUCTION** | RESIDENTIAL

Streetscape FAQs

When and where will phase one of downtown Battle Creek's streetscape start?
Construction will begin in Spring 2011. The project will be divided into phases. As of August 9, Phase 1 will be the first section to undergo construction and includes Michigan Avenue between Carlyle and McCamly Streets.

What is the progress of the building located at 67 W. Michigan Avenue where Kellogg is relocating employees?
Construction was completed and Kellogg employees moved into the renovated building in December 2010.

When is streetscape construction starting and who is the contractor?
The city and BCU are moving forward to install the water-history themed streetscape. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2011. Additional time is necessary to select materials, obtain appropriate approvals and complete required construction documents for upcoming public bidding and contract awards. This bidding process is expected to begin in February 2011.

Who came up with the ideas for the streetscape plans and arrangements?
The final streetscape concept was made possible by many residents who openly shared their thoughts, experiences and hopes for the city. Using input, landscape architects matched ideas with requirements for streetscape longevity, compliance, cost, walkability, safety, sustainability, technology and entertainment.

How long will the streetscape construction take? Is construction going to be divided into different sections?
The length of time for the streetscape construction to be completed is currently being explored. As of August 9, the construction will be broken down into three phases along Michigan Avenue.

- Phase I will begin early 2011 from Carlyle to McCamly Streets
- Phase II will begin mid 2011 from McCamly Street to Capital Avenue

Streetscape FAQs

View archived FAQs

See Concept of Final Streetscape

See Concept of Jackson St. Access Point

See Concept of Jackson St. Access Point

Construction Communication Tools

Website, continued

Under the construction map tab is a feature your customers will find helpful. It is designed to be user friendly and will be a great tool for your customers to use when planning to visit your business during construction.

The screenshot shows the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership website. The navigation bar includes 'ABOUT US', 'BUSINESSES', 'EVENTS', 'CONSTRUCTION', and 'RESIDENTIAL'. The main heading is 'Construction and Businesses'. Below this is a map of downtown Battle Creek with a red 'push pin' indicating a business location and green shaded areas for parking. A callout box for 'AccessVision' provides parking instructions. To the right, a legend for 'Downtown Construction' shows orange for 'Under Construction' and green for 'Available Parking'. Below the legend, it states 'Construction on Michigan Avenue begins April, 2011.' and includes social media icons for Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. At the bottom, 'Business Access Information' lists 'AccessVision Map' with contact details and a note about parking availability.

To the right of the business name, you will see the word [Map](#). If you click on the word map, a balloon will pop up to indicate where the best place to park would be.

Example: In the above photo, the business is AccessVision. The balloon provides instructions on where to park and the red "push pin" indicates where the business is located downtown.

Note: The red shading indicates where active construction is taking place and the green shading indicates available parking lots.

Construction Communication Tools

Website, continued

Another example:

A student is looking to go to Spring Arbor University. The student scrolls through the names listed under the tab Business Access Information and locates Spring Arbor University. The student will then click on the word **Map** next to Spring Arbor University and the following appears.

Phone: 269.962.5500
Web: www.facebook.com/printexprinting
Parking at the Door Coupons available during construction

Shivley & Associates [Map](#)
62 E. Michigan Avenue
Phone: 269-968-9154

Spring Arbor University - Battle Creek [Map](#)
70 W. Michigan, Suite 200
Phone: 269-965-2934
Web: www.arbor.edu
Parallel parking on West Michigan Avenue will be restricted during the construction tab for information on closures. Parking will be available in the West Michigan Parking Ramp. Access to the parking ramp is available on the corner of Carlyle Street and W. Michigan Avenue. A back entrance into the parking ramp may be available on an as needed basis. Please check the construction tab frequently for updates.

Vandervoort, Christ, & Fisher [Map](#)
70 W. Michigan Avenue Suite 450
Phone: 269-965-7000
Web: www.vcfllaw.com
Parking: Parallel and slanted parking on West Michigan in front of the building. In the West Michigan Ramp, Two entrances into the ramp are available across from Carlyle Street and the back entrance off the side of the building into the parking ramp.

REROUTE Battle Creek

ABOUT US BUSINESSES EVENTS CONSTRUCTION RESIDENTIAL

Construction and Businesses

Spring Arbor University - Battle Creek

Parallel parking on West Michigan Avenue will be restricted during construction. Please check the construction tab for information on closures. Parking will be available in the West Michigan Parking Ramp. Access to the parking ramp is available on the corner of Carlyle Street and W. Michigan Avenue. A back entrance into the parking ramp may be available on an as needed basis. Please check the construction tab frequently for updates.

Downtown Construction

- Under Construction (Orange)
- Available Parking (Green)

Construction on Michigan Avenue begins April, 2011.

[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)
[Facebook](#)

Business Access Information

The following businesses offer special access instructions during construction.

AccessVision [Map](#)
70 West Michigan Avenue, Suite 112
Phone: 269-968-3633

This tool will be actively marketed as the tool to help navigate to and through downtown.

Note: Downtown businesses are not automatically listed on the interactive map. If you would like to be added, please complete the Merchant Information Form (see Attachment F) and return it to Alyssa Jones at the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership office or via email at Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com.

Construction Communication Tools

Website, continued

Events

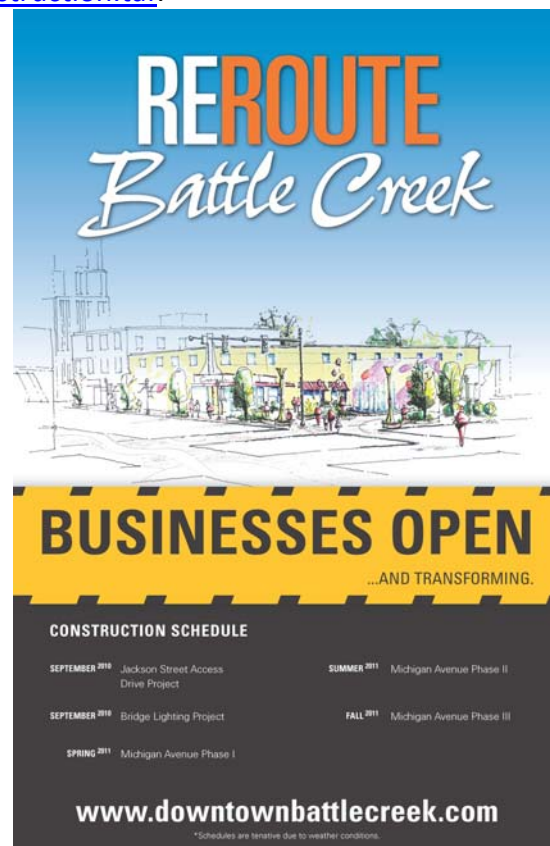
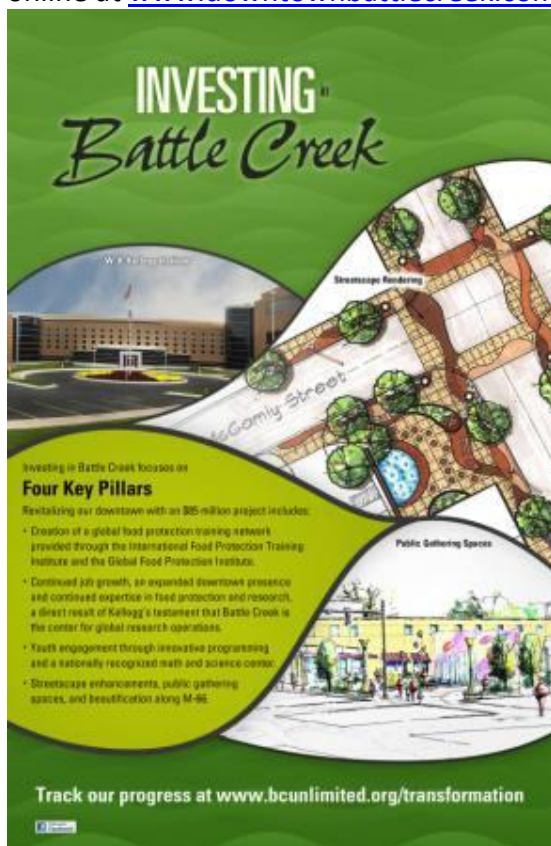
Even with construction, the events that regularly take place downtown will continue although alternate locations may need to be made to accommodate the larger scale events including Cruise the Gut, Cereal Festival and International Summerfest.

In addition to the large scale events, the smaller events sponsored by the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership will also continue and construction based events will also be explored. For a complete list of events, see Attachments C and D.

Posters

In the fall of 2010, two posters were created to assist in communicating the downtown transformation and construction to the general public. You can use these posters to help inform your customers, clients and employees.

The posters are available in the following sizes: 8.5 X 11, 11 X 17, 18 X 24, 24 X 36 and can be ordered by contacting the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership office at 269-962-1622 or order online at www.downtownbattlecreek.com/construction.taf.



Construction Communication Tools

Electronic Communications

ReRoute BC eBlast

Shortly after streetscape construction begins you will begin receiving ReRoute BC eblasts. Anything emailed with this title is construction related. The ReRoute BC eblasts are designed to keep you up-to-date on the latest construction developments.

Note: Even if a construction phase is not in front of your location, all downtowners who are currently receiving eblasts from Alyssa Jones with the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership will receive notification. If you are not receiving eblasts and want to sign up to receive them, please contact Alyssa at 269-441-1668 or via e-mail at Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com.

eNewsletters

Downtown Live, the eNewsletter for downtown, will continue to be produced and delivered electronically to subscribers. The eNewsletter will have a section dedicated to construction in downtown and will also showcase downtown businesses, services and happenings they otherwise might not know of.

Use this as a tool to send out to your clients. If you have an email database, forward it on to them. This tool is created to market downtown as a whole. Are you celebrating a business anniversary? Did your employees donate time to a charity? Do you have a great downtown story you want to tell? Contact Alyssa (Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com) at the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership and perhaps you will be featured in the next issue.

Downtown Battle Creek Events eBlasts

Weekly eblasts featuring downtown events will continue to be sent out to subscribers. If you have an event you are planning in downtown, please forward the information to Alyssa Jones (alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com) as soon as you can. This information will be listed on our website and included in the weekly eblasts. The more we know about your business, the better we can assist in promoting what is in downtown Battle Creek.

Construction Communication Tools

Downtown Business & Community Communications

Social Media

Downtown Battle Creek is very active in social media. Utilizing social media is one of the most effective tools for interacting with your customers. Now, during construction, and beyond, an intricate part of the communication plan includes social media platforms where downtown customers can receive up-to-date information on construction, events and more.

If you do not have a facebook page for your business, now is the time to explore this option. This is a great tool for you to utilize in keeping your customers informed of downtown construction, promotions and more.

Facebook

You can find downtown Battle Creek on Facebook.

Downtown Battle Creek Fan Page

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Downtown-Battle-Creek/186876837557?ref=mf#!>

Downtown Battle Creek Friend Page

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Downtown-BattleCreek/186876837557?ref=mf#!/downtownbattlecreek>

Twitter

You can find downtown Battle Creek on Twitter @DowntownBTLCRK

There are useful hashtags that help you locate information quickly on Twitter. Use or search the following hashtags on Twitter to find updates on the following:

#reroutebc – Construction updates and news

#downtownbattlecreek – Latest news in downtown Battle Creek

#buylocalbc – Great tool to help you locate local deals from locally-owned businesses

YouTube

You can find downtown Battle Creek on YouTube. Check out the Downtown Battle Creek

Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/downtownbattlecreek>

Construction Communication Tools

Downtown Business & Community Communications

Social Media, continued

FourSquare

Downtown Battle Creek is on FourSquare. This is a great tool for promotions before, during and after construction. FourSquare is a growing trend in our area and is a free social media tool.

For more information on Foursquare, visit <http://www.socialmichigan.com/battle-creek-foursquare-meet-up-2/> or contact Mike Savola at 269-924-2473 or blue7dogs@yahoo.com.

ReRouteBC Blog

During construction, the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership will utilize a blog to report what's happening downtown. More information on this blog will be made available to you as soon as it is determined.

Construction Communication Tools

Communication Protocol

During construction, the media will be utilized to communicate various construction issues.

Breaking news re: construction will be communicated to the Battle Creek Enquirer, WWMT Channel 3, WBCK 95.3 and WBXX 105.7 by the City of Battle Creek, Battle Creek Unlimited or Battle Creek Downtown Partnership.

The importance of communicating this information to downtown businesses is imperative. As such the communication protocol is as follows:

1. Communication via email to all downtown tenants with a copy to media outlets listed above.
2. Once downtown tenants and local media have been notified, breaking construction news will also be communicated on our website, Facebook and Twitter.
3. Depending upon the need and the scope, other media outlets may be notified.

Media Contacts

Planning an event? Have an announcement to make? Send a press release out! Media contacts are listed below for local publicity and a template is available in Attachment E.

Battle Creek Enquirer
Elizabeth Willis - ewillis@battlecr.gannett.com

Battle Creek Shopper
Shelly Sulser - shopper@j-adgraphics.com

WWMT
Melissa Broderick - melibrod@wwmt.com

WBCK & WBXX
News Director – Tim Durkee, tim.durkee@cumulus.com
Downtown Account Manager – Cindy Johnson, cindy.johnson@cumulus.com

MiBiz
editor@mibiz.com

Business Review
Olivia Pulsinelli – oliviap@mbusinessreview.com

Business Planning

Before Construction Begins

As a business owner, you are planning and improving on your business model. When you are informed ahead of time, you are able to prepare. Here are a few suggestions to help you do just that.

- Keep your staff lean.
- Reduce inventories.
- Secure a line of credit.
- Gather customer contract information.
- Inform customers months in advance.
- Work with your employees to develop a game plan.

What to Expect Once Construction Begins (and how to negate problems)

- Allocate more time or money to cleaning.
- Create friendly rapport with construction workers.
- Make sure signage is clear at construction detour(s) and how to get to your business.
- If you have a back entrance, make sure your customers know it and know how to use it!

Survival Once Construction Begins

- Keep project managers contact information close at hand.
Communications and Events Manager: Alyssa Jones, 269-441-1668 or 269-924-2443 or Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com.
- Provide directions and access information for your employees.
Don't let them make the area more congested. Depending on the number of people you employ, you might consider offering a carpool from an agreed upon location.
- Join local business organizations or consider forming one.
Strength is found in numbers. Make sure to communicate with other local leaders so you can band together and make concerns heard.
- Provide signs to guide customers. If they don't make sense for your business, contact Alyssa Jones, 269-441-1668 or 269-924-2443 or Alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com. Be sure the signs installed by the construction crew make sense for your business. If they don't, contact the project supervisor.
- Deliver products to your customers.
To reach customers unable or unwilling to navigate the construction area, look into catering or offering delivery.

Business Planning

Survival Once Construction Begins, continued

- Keep your message to customers positive, current and consistent.
Consider keeping a script next to your phone so that you and your employees have quick and easy information and directions to provide to customers. Make sure all your employees know what to say and how to say it.
- Stay informed!
Attend all public meetings relating to the construction project. Be sure to open all City of Battle Creek, Battle Creek Unlimited and Battle Creek Downtown Partnership correspondence.
- Extend business hours.
Consider being open later in the evening after construction crews are finished for the day. Be flexible to accommodate customer demands and other perceived needs.
- Make the construction work for you.
If you were considering a remodel for your business, why not do it during the construction period. Use this slower period to get things done that you haven't had time to address.
- Creative promotions.
Businesses have come up with lots of creative ways to make construction period fun for customers. Examples include:
 - ✓ Local store owners established a version of "where's Waldo" inviting customers to search store windows each week for a hidden character. People submitted the location into an orange barrel and the names were entered into a drawing each week.
 - ✓ Create drawings
 - ✓ Consider pooling advertising resources with others businesses
 - ✓ In the construction zone to let the public know you are still open for business.
- Be positive.
Encourage and generate a positive, healthy environment to support your staff and ensure retention of valued employees.

You Made It! Post Construction

- Time to recapture market share and let your customers know the road to your business is clear and beautiful! Consider promotion and advertising to let customers know the road to your location is open. Promote the new image!
- Celebrate the project's completion.
- Support other businesses that undergo a similar process. Give them your patronage and provide helpful feedback based on your experiences.

Tips for Better Business

Tips for Surviving and Thriving

Communication

One of the most important aspects of having a business, in general, is communicating. Business owners need to communicate with their employees as well as their customers in order to be the best business they can be. This is going to be even more prevalent during construction. Prior to construction be sure to inform your customers what will be going on during construction and how it will affect your store. Have fliers available to customers so they know when and where construction will be and how best to get to the store. Make sure to obtain e-mail addresses of your customers to send out updates. If your business has a facebook or a twitter account, make sure your customers know that so they can follow those pages and stay informed. If your business doesn't have a facebook or twitter account then make one! If customers are informed as to what is going on, then they are less likely to change their shopping habits during construction.

Cleanliness

Even though it's a little bit of a mess outside, it doesn't mean that it needs to be inside! Make sure to keep your store as clean and organized as possible. If customers can go to the clean, comfortable store they have always known, then what's going on outside shouldn't be a problem. It may even draw more customers, knowing that they can visit businesses in the construction zone that are still selling great products and services.

Be Positive

A positive attitude can go a long way when directed at employees and customers. Of course the construction project is going to be a very frustrating time for business owners because it will create somewhat of a hassle. However, the construction is also extremely exciting. Talk with customers about what is happening in our downtown and how exciting it will be when it is done. By doing this, you may actually draw customers to the downtown so that they can keep an eye on the progress of our construction development. This is good for everyone as it draws more customers and boosts the morale of the general public.

Special Events

Something really fun that businesses can do on their own is holding a special event or sale at their store during construction. For example, you could team up with other stores in the downtown area and offer coupons to other stores if they shop at your store and vice versa. The possibilities are endless in this situation and the more creativity the better. People are always looking for fun things to do on the weekends or in the evenings and you could offer something out of the ordinary that would get them into your business. If you host a special event, remember to communicate this information to the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership as we can help promote your event. If you need help brainstorming up a special event, please ask.

Ideas for Growing Your Business

- Hire the right people. Employees can be a great tool or a great detriment to your business. Thus it is important to hire the people that are going to do great things for your business and your customers. After all, they are the ones interacting with customers every day.
- Treat your customers well. Without customers your business cannot and will not succeed. It is important to treat your customers with the utmost respect. Thus, those customers will become return customers.
- Be creative. Draw in customers with fun, inexpensive marketing. Try to stand out by doing something out of the ordinary such as a fun window display. Run fun promotional deals and events to get more customers interested.
- Get involved. There are events constantly going on in the area. Become a sponsor or get involved by participating in the event. It will get your name out there and show people that you care about the community.
- Team up with peers. Partner up with surrounding businesses to create valuable relationships. Chances are your customers aren't just shopping in one store when they come to the downtown. By gaining relationships with other stores you can help each other out by sending customers to stores as well as possibly creating promotions together.
- Talk to your customers. You won't be able to sell to your customers unless you know what they want. Talk to your customers to find out what kind of things they want from you, whether it is a new product line, special sales or events, etc. This will get more people into the stores because they will see that you care about what they say.
- Share customer databases and do a joint mailer.
- Extend your hours.
- Send a thank you note to your customers with an incentive for a specific time frame.
- Offer special services as an added value.
- Barter your services and expertise with other downtown businesses.
- Do in-store demonstrations that may lead to purchases within the store or new customers.

Additional Resources

We're not alone. Downtown Grand Haven recently went through the same process...construction in a thoroughfare. Thank you to downtown Grand Haven for sharing this list of great books that may be helpful for small business owners.

- The Big Book of Small Business: You Don't Have to Run Your Business by the Seat of Your Pants by Tom Gegax and Phil Bolsta
- The Small Business Owner's Manual: Everything You Need to Know to Start up and Run Your Business by Joe Kennedy
- The E-Myth Revisited: Why Most Small Businesses Don't Work and What to do About it by Michael E. Gerber
- How to Succeed as a Small Business Owner... and Still Have a Life by Bill Collier
- Streetwise Small Business Book Of Lists: Hundreds of Lists to Help You Reduce Costs, Increase Revenues, and Boost Your Profit by Gene Marks
- Small Business Survival Book: 12 Surefire Ways for Your Business to Survive and Thrive by Barbara Weltman

These are just a few good suggestions of some interesting books that offer good tips. Make sure to share any good books you come across with your fellow small business owners!

The following is a list of websites that may be helpful for your business during construction and beyond.

- www.downtownbattlecreek.com
- www.bcunlimited.org
- www.battlecreek.mi.us
- www.battlecreek.org
- www.sba.gov
- www.inc.com
- www.entrepreneur.com

Attachments

Attachment A - Sales Theme Ideas

In today's economy, people are always looking for a deal. Even if it is to bring in customers, a deal is a great idea. There are tons of creative ways to offer without seeming like a business that's desperate to make money. Think of some of these when planning out your next deal. While most of these are geared towards retail, most of these ideas can be adapted to any business setting.

Seasons

- Fall into Sales
- Road Construction Warrior
- Restaurants: Let's Wine about Winter, A Toast to Construction
- Splash into Summer
- Spring into Sales

Holidays

- Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.
- Try obscure holidays (visit <http://holidayinsights.com/> for ideas!). For example, March 1 is Peanut Butter day. You could pass out peanut butter cookies to visitors that day.

Sports

- Try something like March Markdown Madness or a Super Bowl Sale.
- You could also incorporate local sports teams.

Community Events

- Have a homecoming sale for your local high school with a special discount for students and families.
- Another idea is to do something for the community through your business and once you reach your goal have a celebration sale. This is a good cause, gets you good publicity, and creates a great event!

Construction

- What better way to promote our exciting project than to have construction based promotions? Try Back Door Specials during the time that you choose to use your back door as an entrance. That way it encourages customers to use alternate entrances and makes them aware of that option.
- Another fun idea would be hardhat or construction/orange cone days. You could place a hardhat or hardhat stickers on one of the racks to indicate a certain markdown that is applied to that rack!

Anniversary Sales

- Celebrate how many years you've been around by having a big promotion.

Get Creative

- Have a sale where things that are only a certain color are on sale or where things that are small or big are on sale.
- Another fun idea would be to have a full month of sales where each day you go through the alphabet starting day one with A and finish on day 26 with the letter Z. For the last few days everything could be on sale for anyone who missed out.

The possibilities of sale ideas are endless. Make sure to share with your fellow business owners and think of the possibility of teaming up for exciting new sale ideas!

Attachment B - Window Displays

Every Business Has a Billboard

On April 19, 2011, be sure to take part in the Destination Downtown Workshop that will be held in downtown Battle Creek. Consultant Jon Schallert will be in downtown Battle Creek and his workshop will be a great opportunity for you to learn new tips, tools, and market your business as a destination.

One tip Jon will talk about is window displays. Stay tuned for an opportunity for retailers and restauranters to receive funds to assist you in instituting the lessons Jon will share.

Every Business Has a Billboard

Businesses often spend hundreds of dollars a month on advertising mediums that don't give them the return on investment that they anticipated. Radio, print media, and local cable access, to name a few, are often great ways to get your name out to prospective customers. Unfortunately, many businesses forget about one of the most important and cost effective tools at their disposal to attract new patrons and welcome established customers back into their stores.

Every business has a billboard, and it's not located on the interstate or highway on wooden or metal stilts. In fact, it's something they're already paying rent on or they may own it free and clear. It can be seen by customers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What am I talking about? That billboard is the storefront and the window display.

Shop owners might be surprised to learn how high a value customers place on their initial perception of a business. For his book, *Predatory Marketing*, C. Britt Breemer conducted research, which showed that 53 percent of shoppers base their initial perception of a store and their decision to shop there up on the store's exterior! It only makes sense to capitalize on something that could draw in more than half of a store's potential customers.

How does a storeowner capitalize on that 24/7 billboard? First, let's look at consumer

habits. Grace Butland states in the July 1999 issue of the *Crafts Report* that the average shopper moving along at three to four feet per second will pass a storefront in eight seconds. If it's a passing motorist, a shop's "window of opportunity" is reduced to one second. Eight seconds or less doesn't give a shopkeeper much time to convey a message to a potential customer.

Remember that much of retailing is centered on the sense of sight. A storefront must present a strong, clear, positive visual image. Small things like signs, lighting, and window displays are all key factors to a potential customer's perception and willingness to walk through the front door and add money to a store's bottom line.

Today's consumers are not just shopping, they are looking for experience. The first part of a consumer's experience with any store takes place before they enter. Here are some tips to help your main street business owners take advantage of their billboards:

Cleanliness. This may seem obvious, but I can't count the number of times I have seen dirty windows, dust, dead flies, etc., in a store's front window. This gives a potential customer the immediate impression that the merchandise is outdated and in the same condition as the front of the store.

Visibility. Step outside and look at the windows. Can you see the window display or only glare? Now imagine what the customer sees in that eight seconds or less. Fluorescent lighting is a poor choice for window displays as it often adds to the glare. Spot lighting makes a display more visible and attracts the customer's eye to a focal point. Just like a Broadway play, the spotlight says "this is important!" Keep



The well-lit and colorful window at left projects an inviting image to passersby, while the sporting goods store (bottom left) effectively uses a fall theme both in the window and throughout the store. Remember, 8 seconds or less is all the time you have to capture the attention of a potential shopper (below.)



the spots on after store hours to take full advantage of this advertising medium.

Color. Select colors that are easily visible through the window as some colors just disappear. Light, bright colors work best. Be careful not to over-do it in order to avoid "visual clutter."

Less is more. Window displays should act as a teaser to show what the store sells. They should provide a glimpse of the merchandise mix, but still intrigue the customer to enter and find out more. A window packed with merchandise loses the desired effect.

Pick a theme. Holidays, school activities, festivals, seasonal events, etc., all provide great ideas. Continue the theme throughout the store.

Change is good. At a minimum, change window displays monthly. If a window display is always the same, customers will think the store is carrying the same old merchandise.

Window dresser – If you, or one of your work associates, don't feel like you have enough creativity, hire someone to do the job. This will give you one of the best bangs for your buck! Great window displays don't have to cost a lot of money. Convince your district's store-owners to take advantage of what they have and even to trade window props with other merchants. Remember, windows reflect a store's image. That image should be a good and lasting one that customers will tell their friends about.

*By Mark Miller, Main Street Arkansas Small Business Consultant
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Attachment C – Battle Creek Downtown Partnership Schedule of Events

Spring into the Arts

Friday, May 13, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Downtown Battle Creek

Yoga in the Park

Mill Race Park
Tuesdays
June 7, 14, 21, 28 / July 5, 12, 19, 26 / August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
5:30 p.m.

Post Band Concert Series

Mill Race Park
Thursdays
June 9, 16, 30 and July 7, 14 & 21
7:00 p.m.

Outdoor Movies

Mill Race Park
Saturdays
June 18, July 16, and August 20
Dusk

Festival Market Music Series

Festival Market Square
Wednesdays
July 6, 13, 20, 27 and August 3, 10, 17 & 24, 31
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Vibe@5

Friendship Park
Fridays
July 15, 22, 29 and August 5, 12, 19 & 26
5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Fall into the Arts Art Walk

Friday, October 14
Downtown Battle Creek
5:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Downtown Halloween Walk

Michigan Avenue
Date: TDB
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Farmers Market

Festival Market Square
Wednesdays and Saturdays
May 7 – October 29
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attachment D – Construction Schedule of Events

The Battle Creek Downtown Partnership is working on a slate of promotional events in addition to regular summer programming to encourage additional traffic in the downtown throughout the construction period. While these events will bring additional people into the downtown it is important for you as a business to participate, invite your customers to attend, and tie the event in with your business.

Shop Downtown Program

More information will be communicated as details come together.

Chalk the Avenue – June 18, 2011

As downtown Battle Creek undergoes major streetscape construction and water main replacement, the community is invited to decorate the downtown sidewalk before the new sidewalks are installed. Chalk the Avenue will also be a contest with different divisions including children, families, adults and professionals. Winners will be announced in each category and prizes will be awarded.

Paint a Cone

The Downtown Partnership is putting together a “Paint a Cone” event. The event will feature construction cones that everyone can come and paint! More information will be communicated as details come together.

Downtown Treasure Hunt

Explore your downtown on a scavenger hunt. More information will be communicated as details come together.

Downtown Window Decoration Contest

More information will be communicated as details come together.

Attachment E – Sample Press Release

< Company Logo >

NEWS RELEASE
Date

Contact Info
Title
E-Mail
Phone

Title in Bold and 14 font

Subtitle in 12 and Italics

Downtown Battle Creek, Mich. – This is the introduction of the press release. The very first sentence needs to catch the reader’s eye and make them interested enough to read more. The introduction should be somewhere between 30-70 words long and should show why this is a newsworthy story.

The following paragraphs of the news release should be the body of the release. It should explain the who, what, why, when and where of what you are covering. Make sure to be detailed as far as the hard facts in this situation. If it is too much work for the reporter who is covering the story, they will be less likely to call you back. Also make sure that you make the story/event/etc. sound interesting. If it is not interesting to the reporter then they won’t deem it to be interesting enough for the general public and will choose not to publish the story. Be clear, concise, and interesting!

Finally, it is very effective to include a quote from an important source. If it is an event at a store, then include a quote from the storeowner or a frequent customer. The quote should come from someone who is considered a reliable source for the story or someone who will be considered interesting to the general readers. Make sure to end the release with a statement on how to find out more information.

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Below the pound signs, feel free to include a boilerplate. A boilerplate is a few sentences of information on the business or organization that has submitted the release. This is a good idea for a reporter who doesn’t know much about your business. It will also help them in reporting your story to the general public.

Attachment F – Merchant Information Form

Questionnaire for Downtown Battle Creek Merchants

This questionnaire will help us collect information in preparation for the construction season. The information you provide will be used on an interactive map and website for people looking at the construction communications.

Please fill out this form and return it to Alyssa Jones (alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com) at the Battle Creek Downtown Partnership.

Please tell us what you would like your customers and visitors to know about you during construction.

Name of Company/Organization:

Address:

Phone:

Hours of Operation:

Email:

Website Address:

Access to business during construction:

Special news or coupons:

Other information: