

# Preparing for local construction works

A business guide to reducing the impacts of neighbouring construction works.



CITY OF  
ADELAIDE

## A message from the Lord Mayor

Building on our successes, Adelaide offers a unique and desirable lifestyle – a claim proven by our continued status as one of the world’s top ten most liveable cities – and thrives because of our innovative approaches to prosperity and wellbeing.

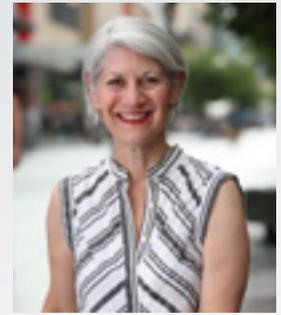
Adelaide today is home to many exciting growth sectors and is increasingly becoming a preferred destination for businesses, students, residents and visitors. Council is unwaveringly committed to giving businesses what they need to build a prosperous future.

Through undertaking transformation capital investments and infrastructure upgrades these become the enabler of future growth. During these upgrades, business can be impacted by a range of operational matters.

This guide will help local business get the right information and prepare for potential impacts on operations.

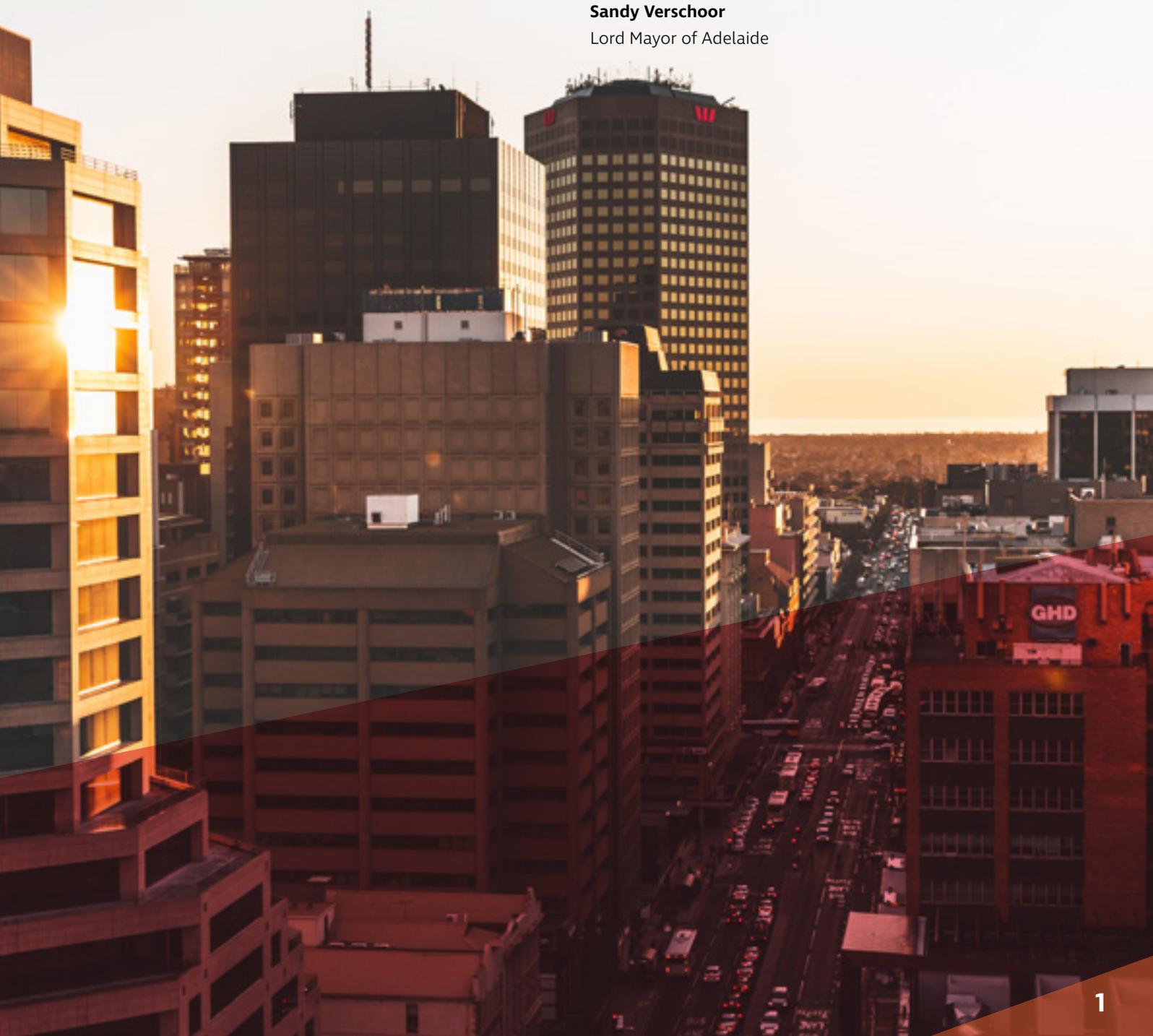
This guide will help you and your employees navigate and understand the construction works period, as it can be challenging at times, but the end result is a vibrant city economy which is a good thing for your business.

We look forward to working with you to support your prosperity in the city now and into the future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Sandy Verschoor'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Sandy Verschoor**  
Lord Mayor of Adelaide



## Take action to assist your business

The City of Adelaide is forever transforming with unprecedented levels of private and public sector investment.

New apartments, office towers, upgrades to infrastructure, improvements to existing community facilities, and place making projects are part of growing a prosperous and progressive Adelaide.

We understand construction projects may impact local business, so we have prepared this guide as one of the tools to help you plan and prepare in advance of construction beginning in your area.

*Despite the pain, the construction project may ultimately be a good thing for your business.*

### Get involved early

Knowing when construction projects are announced is key to being prepared. Information on private or public future works and projects can be gained from a range of sources and can depend on the type of works/development.

It pays to keep alert, as while major projects can be planned for several years prior to construction others can happen quite quickly giving you little time to prepare as an apartment or office tower could begin construction six months from approval.

### Current and Planned Construction Projects

These online resources provide a range of tools to assist you to monitor projects prior to and during development stages.

#### City of Adelaide Lodged Development Application Register

An interactive dashboard which displays development applications lodged in the City of Adelaide Council area in the last five months. [cityofadelaide.com.au/lodged-development-application-register](http://cityofadelaide.com.au/lodged-development-application-register)

#### City of Adelaide Major Projects

City of Adelaide projects designed to improve buildings, Park Lands and our streets.

[cityofadelaide.com.au/projects](http://cityofadelaide.com.au/projects)

#### City of Adelaide Your Say

Your opportunity to provide feedback and ideas on council projects. Your input is vital in shaping our city.

[yoursay.cityofadelaide.com.au](http://yoursay.cityofadelaide.com.au)

#### Adelaide CBD 3D Development Activity Tracker and other interactive development maps (SA Government)

Multiple tools to monitor South Australia's planning system in action. The tools provide a bird's eye view to track current development activity across the state.

[sapanningportal.sa.gov.au/interactive\\_tools](http://sapanningportal.sa.gov.au/interactive_tools)

### How you can be proactive

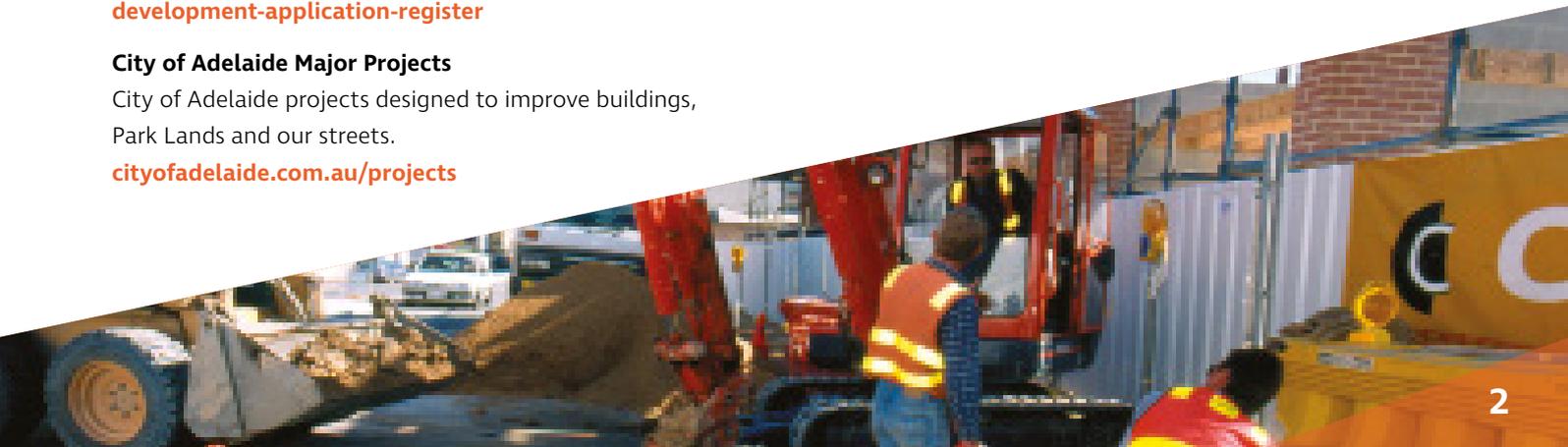
When projects are announced be proactive. The early stages of a planned project are the perfect time to brainstorm ideas that you can lead or partner with other businesses and business associations in your area. This will enable the identification of possible activities and events which could help drive business and attract customers before, during and after the construction period.

The information in this guide is presented according to the three phases most projects fall into:

1. Planning/pre-construction
2. Construction
3. Project completion

Keep yourself ahead of the issues *seek out information; stay informed* and *take action*.

*The checklists at the end of this document have several useful prompts to work through during the construction phases.*



## Planning/pre-construction

When you're informed ahead of time, construction impacts are something you can prepare for.

Taking action in the pre-construction phase may help minimise impacts on your business, such as losing customers and reduced cash flow.

Here are some best practice suggestions to help you manage during the construction process.

### Partner with other local businesses

You're not alone. Collaborate and work together with other businesses and community leaders in your area so you can communicate effectively and make any concerns heard.

Develop a group plan to stay in contact and share information as working together has benefits in understanding considerations and developing ideas to deal with future issues.

Local community groups and trader associations could potentially assist you through promotional activities, information about road closures and any other relevant information.

Alert key customers via social media, online publishers, tenant/strata managers, local schools and other professional offices with a fact sheet explaining that shops are still trading and seeking their ongoing patronage and support. Make it personal. Tell a story.

### Communication

Construction timelines can be impacted by many factors including weather, funding, utility providers (such as phone, water, power) and underground services, so staying informed will allow you to plan your business operations more efficiently – whether construction is occurring directly in front of your business or in the nearby vicinity:

- Ensure you have the most current project information so that you can plan for your business accordingly.
- Ensure you stay aware of the various construction phases and what this will mean for your business, for example will customer access be affected? Will there be changes to parking or deliveries? Do you need to advise any suppliers of these changes?
- Plan how you will communicate with your customers. Think about the main message you want to give them about the project and its impact on your business. Also consider how customers will be able to reach you during the construction phase.

- It's important to discuss the projects with your staff as they may be impacted by changed hours, traffic changes or changes to parking. Having an open discussion provides staff with information and sets their expectations.
- Ensure you access any necessary resources required to best position yourself throughout the course of the development. If you believe your business may be affected by the development, Council has complimentary business advisory services which may be of assistance in promoting business continuity.

### Business Interruption Insurance

To reduce financial losses caused by neighboring construction works there is the option to purchase business interruption insurance and extend it to cover things like neighboring construction works. For advice speak to an Insurance Broker.

### Staffing

It's an unfortunate reality, but you may need to consider changes to trading hours and staff rosters to adjust to changes in customer numbers/visitation patterns once construction begins. Plan ahead for this important step and engage your staff early.

Having open conversations with your staff to share concerns can also be a useful way to spark ideas that could help your business.

### *Council support for devising strategies for success.*

As part of facilitating development, Council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is the receiver of all correspondence from external stakeholders relating to the development; including permit application discussions from builders and queries from neighbours or nearby businesses. If you have queries or concerns about a development near you, please email [s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au) outlining your queries where a Council representative can provide you with any relevant information relating to any permits or approvals the development may hold, and place you into contact with Council's staff to assist you in managing business disruptions going forward.

### Stock

Consider how you will manage your stock levels or orders prior to/during construction. How will you handle deliveries? Do you need to plan for changes in visitation patterns and deliveries?

## Suppliers and lines of credit

Inform current suppliers of the upcoming construction project and see if there are opportunities to involve them in supporting you during the construction activity. Do they want to be part of a special product promotion? Can they assist in providing deliveries when it suits you? Do you need to ask them to review your line of credit and payment schedule aligned to new customer visitation patterns?

Communicate with your suppliers any changes to access and modify delivery days and schedules to suit.

Do you need to ensure deliveries can be made to your business during construction?

## Landlord

Advise your landlord of the upcoming construction project and be sure to keep them informed of all construction information.

Think about how the landlord could be part of your planning. Can they provide assistance / support to your business? Keeping in mind they are likely to receive the long term benefit of increased property capital values if in the vicinity of any new investment and improvements. If you have a lease you may have clauses to claim against business interruptions.

## Budget review

Budgeting and understanding your cash flow situation is one of the most important areas of your business. You may need to investigate managing your cash flow tighter than normal and think about new budget line items, for example increased cleaning of signage, windows or general cleaning and upkeep to keep dust to a minimum.

For information on how to create a budget see Federal Government's business portal [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au)

## Social media

Well-structured social media advertising campaigns with high quality visual components can help you grow your following, better reach your existing followers and reach people within a geographic area who don't follow your pages. Facebook ads can reach a much larger audience than traditional advertising for small businesses with a small advertising budget. Remember, great photos and short videos are key for this, but you can capture great content on your smartphone and use photo editing apps to enhance them.

Consider having a private Facebook group for you to share ideas, tips and concerns with other businesses in the area impacted by construction. Only communicate positive opportunities externally. Facebook provides some great free online training resources for those who don't know where to start at [facebook.com](https://facebook.com)

## Driving customers to your business

Historically, many businesses reduce advertising and promotional expenditure rather than slash fixed costs during construction periods. However, studies have shown that those maintaining or increasing advertising outlays during slowdowns wind up outselling rivals who cut back. Here are some tips for driving customers to your business:

- If you haven't already started a customer loyalty rewards program, website or text/SMS marketing program, this may be a good time to do it.
- Provide kerb service or other convenience-oriented services.
- Find out what events and festivals are coming up and consider how they could be leveraged. Current information can be found at [cityofadelaide.com.au/whats-on](https://cityofadelaide.com.au/whats-on)
- Work with your business neighbours to run special promotions such as BBQs, pop-up markets, street parties or prize draws.
- Do the unexpected, delight your customers with exceptional customer service.

## Extend business hours

Consider staying open later in the evening after construction crews have finished for the day or opening a little earlier to take advantage of construction teams in the area (particularly if you are a food related business).

Be flexible to accommodate customer demands and other perceived needs where possible.

## Make the construction work for you

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

Pre-construction is the time to brainstorm ideas to identify possible activities and events which could help drive business and attract customers before, during and after the construction period.

For support with ideas contact the City of Adelaide's free business advisory service on **(08) 8203 7203** or [city@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:city@cityofadelaide.com.au)

## During Construction

The construction phase of a project will likely be the most disruptive for small businesses. When construction is underway, customers may be put off visiting your business due to:

- dust, noise and vibrations
- restricted access from road or footpath closures
- fewer available parking spaces
- interruptions to public transport
- loss of visibility due to temporary fencing or
- construction vehicles blocking businesses.

The biggest impact you are likely to experience during the construction phase is a reduction in customer numbers.

### Other impacts could include:

- logistical issues such as disruptions to receiving deliveries disruption to your ability to make deliveries
- loss of utilities such as water, gas and electricity
- loss of staff access and parking
- internet interruptions.

*Despite the negative impacts, you should aim to communicate positive messages to your staff and customers. People may be put off visiting an area if they only hear negative things.*

### During the construction phase consider:

- Implement the plans you developed in the pre-construction phase, for example, customer communication plans, product or service diversification.
- Monitor your business activity – is it tracking as you expected?
- Review and amend your plans if necessary.
- Keep in contact with the project team and site manager.
- Keep track of cost, profit and customer numbers in case there is an opportunity to claim compensation.

During the construction phase it is important to keep the lines of communication open between you, other businesses in the area, customers and the project team.

You should also monitor how well your pre-construction plans are going by keeping an eye on the number of customers and revenue taken once construction begins. Small tweaks to your plan could lead to increases in revenue.

## Handy tips once construction begins

### Stay informed

- Attend meetings held by council, business associations, or others relating to the project.
- Connect with **Council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC)** by emailing [s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au) or calling **(08) 8203 7881** for large scale complex projects to get updated information.

## When disturbances become a problem

Construction noise is one of the most common forms of local nuisance. Noise from construction is generally permitted between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday, however there may be some circumstances where works are permitted outside of those times. Head to **What to do when the disturbance becomes a problem** to read about what to do if construction activities are unreasonably impacting you.

### Create a friendly rapport with construction workers

- Consider offering 'construction specials' for coffee, breakfast or lunch if you are a food related business.

### Be positive

- Encourage and generate a positive, healthy working environment with staff and customers to ensure retention of valued employees and customers.
- Have a positive attitude, especially when dealing with the public and customers. People want to have a pleasant experience in your community and business district.
- Don't apologise for the construction situation, unless you really need to. Everyone knows construction can be an inconvenience, you don't need to remind them. Negativity and complaining will drive people away. A positive, fun atmosphere will bring them back.

## Post construction. You made it!

The project's construction phase is over and hopefully your business has minimised any negative impacts you experienced.

While the 'dust' may be settling post construction, your business may still be feeling the impact. Existing customers may be slow to return to the area or you may find you have a new demographic of customers attracted to the area because of the changes.

Regardless of whether your business is still feeling the impact of the construction, it is wise to review and evaluate the plans you implemented to determine if there are any elements that may still benefit your business (e.g. cost efficiencies).

Some things you might want to consider include:

- Celebrating the project's conclusion and benefits with your customers and other local businesses.
- Think innovatively about how an improved area can be celebrated and used as a catalyst to bring the crowds and partner with local business community to create.
- Review your customer demographic – if you lost regular customers during the construction phase, think about how you might encourage them back. If you're attracting new customers, think about whether you need to adapt your product range or services in line with their needs/wants.
- Review your amended business plans. Are there any aspects of the amended plan that would benefit the business in the long term? If so, consider how you could incorporate these into future operations.
- Undertake promotions and advertising to let people know the construction is over, and it's business as usual.
- Send thank you letters/messages to your supporters and the project team.



## Your business continuity checklists

### Before construction

- Stay informed about upcoming construction projects in your area.
- Attend project meetings and provide feedback, voice any concerns you may have during these meetings.
- Contact other businesses in previous project areas for their experience and tips on how to trade during construction projects.
- Develop a marketing plan to identify how you will attract customers to your business during this time. Construction may take many months, what initiatives can you plan in advance to encourage customers? In other project areas, 'construction coupons' have been introduced.
- Collaborate with businesses, local business associations and other community associations in your area on marketing initiatives like advertising, social media or events that could attract visitors to the street or precinct.
- Plan staff levels during construction. You may need to discuss this with your staff, for example changed hours might be an option.
- Contact lenders and landlords to inform them of the construction timeframes and potential impacts.
- Review your lease and business insurance policies to see if they have clauses to claim against business interruptions.
- Review your inventory. Do you need to stock-up or manage a just-in-time model? For example, will you still need the same amount of fresh produce or general stock levels? Consider reviewing your lines of credit with suppliers over the construction period.
- Rework your budget or look at your outgoings – can you make adjustments? How will you manage purchasing? Reviewing the budget allows you to plan, forecast and manage better cash flow where possible.
- Collect contact information for your customers and notify them of the project in advance. Having an up-to-date database has many benefits including providing accurate information to customers, project information, sales you're planning, events happening in the area and any changes to parking during the project.

### During construction

- Pool advertising and marketing resources with other businesses in your area.
- Stay informed and attend public meetings about the project.
- Develop a friendly rapport with construction workers.
- Signage at your shop front and discuss with Project Manager about direction signage and alternative access point options.
- Provide information and access directions for staff.
- Keep a script about the construction work next to your phone.
- Use social media to keep customers informed, offer contests, vouchers, etc.
- Continue to work with local business associations or groups through collaboration.
- Consider extending business hours.
- Deliver products to your customers or increase online business.

### Post construction

- Advise customers that roads are open and promote the new image.
- Celebrate with an event or grand reopening event.
- Support other businesses undergoing construction work in their area.
- Acknowledge the benefits of the project and thank your staff and customers for their patience.

For more information about projects and planned works contact City of Adelaide on **(08) 8203 7203** or visit [cityofadelaide.com.au](http://cityofadelaide.com.au)

#### Additional Resources

Council Single Point of Contact:

**(08) 8203 7881** or [s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:s.spoc@cityofadelaide.com.au)

Economic Development Team

**(08) 8203 7203** or [business@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:business@cityofadelaide.com.au)

City of Adelaide

Phone: **(08) 8203 7203**

Email: [city@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:city@cityofadelaide.com.au)

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