

Local businesses looking for support during Airport Road closure

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Closures to Airport Road are not only blocking the streets and making commutes harder for residents, but it is also causing difficulties for local businesses that are located on the road while construction takes place.

This construction will be active now through September 7 and will limit access from Airport Road from Emma Street to Hilltop Drive.

Business owners delegated to Council's July 28 meeting to discuss if more measures could be put in place to let not only residents, but commuters alike know that these businesses remain open.

A motion to do just that came from Councillor Doug Maskill who has been hearing concerns from the community.

Ramzia (Shammy) Birko, owner of Frank's Barber and Hair Salon, took the lead to voice her concerns to Council on Tuesday night and asked for better signage or a way to notify others that they are still open and wanting people to support the community.

"Since the road is being closed, many businesses have experienced, very hard to lose of the customers, many of our clients come from outside Caledon and that's lots of people," said Birko. "When they see the construction, barriers they often decide not to make this trip, and they turn around because they believe the road was closed."

Birko explained she understands the need for this construction, acknowledged it is important, and that the community will benefit in the long term; however, the local business community is concerned as what this will look like for them.

"One of the biggest issues that has been confusing is the surrounding area with lots of signing and communications that we keep asking to correct them in the [weeks] before the closure, it was a big sign that was placed saying the area is closed," said Birko.

"It was and is still creating the impression that the business was inaccessible. As business owners, we spent countless hours to trying to reassure the customers that yes, we are still open. We have heard also from customers that concern [being told] they could not pass through a certain area, or they have to walk long distances just to get to us."

She went on to explain that many business owners do not feel that they are included in the process of this project especially as they are heavily affected by it.

Council was receptive to the feedback that they were provided by Birko, have spoken with the OPP and contractors on this job, and are hopeful to work towards more solutions and better communication for these business owners.

For those looking to support these businesses and find more information about the construction, visit peelregion.ca/construction/project-19-4060.