



Private Entrance Ramps on Sidewalks

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee
September 27th 2017

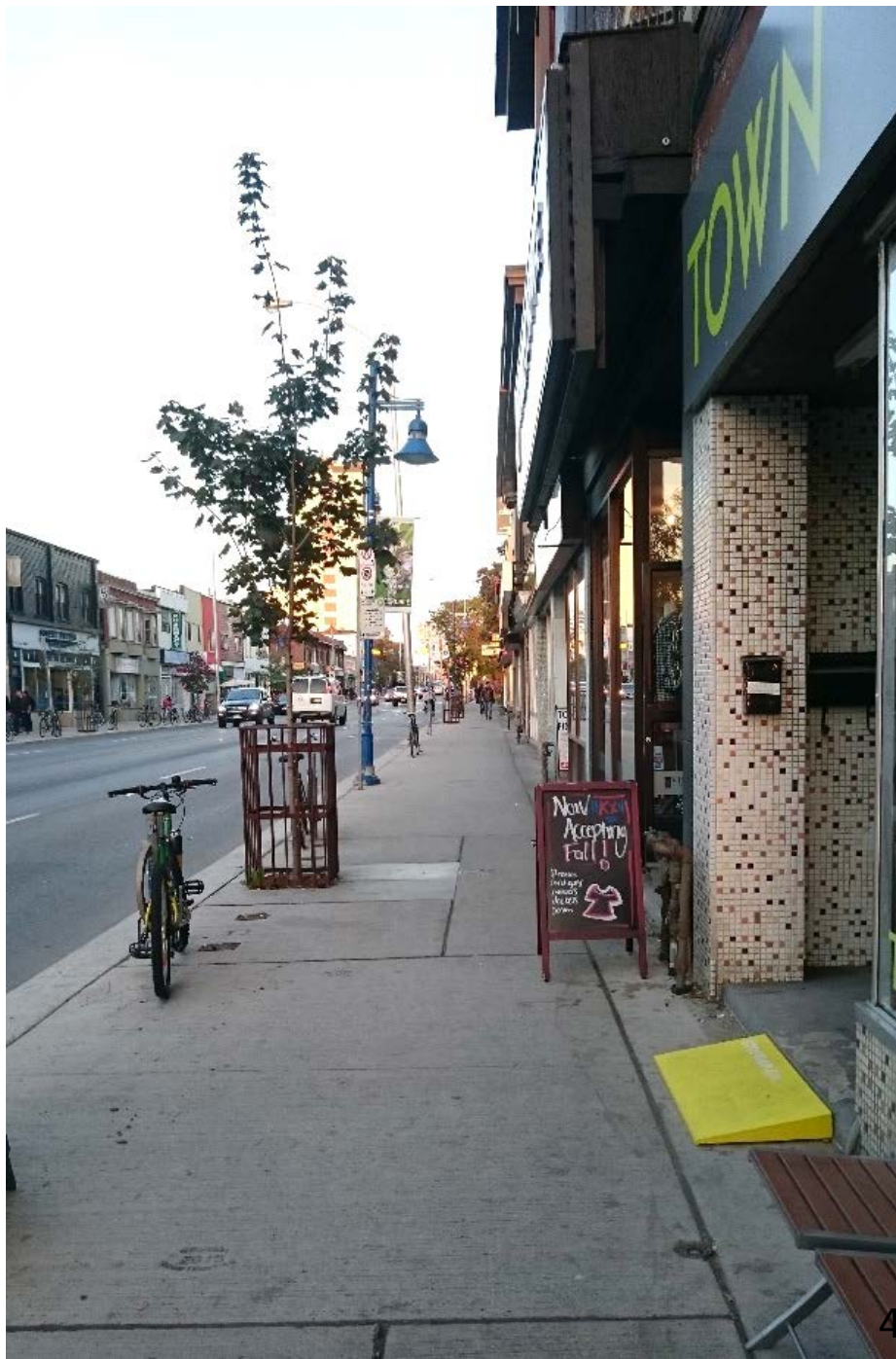
Background

- Many businesses in Toronto are located in buildings where the entrances are not completely level with the adjacent sidewalks.
- To provide access for customers with disabilities, some businesses have placed ramps on the sidewalk.
- The majority of these ramps are constructed out of wood.

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 743

Use of Streets and Sidewalks

- The current process to place a private ramp on public right-of-way is to submit an application to Transportation Services for an encroachment.
- Staff would review the application and, if deemed appropriate, issue a permit for the ramp.
- However, most of these ad-hoc ramps have *not* gone through the permitting process.





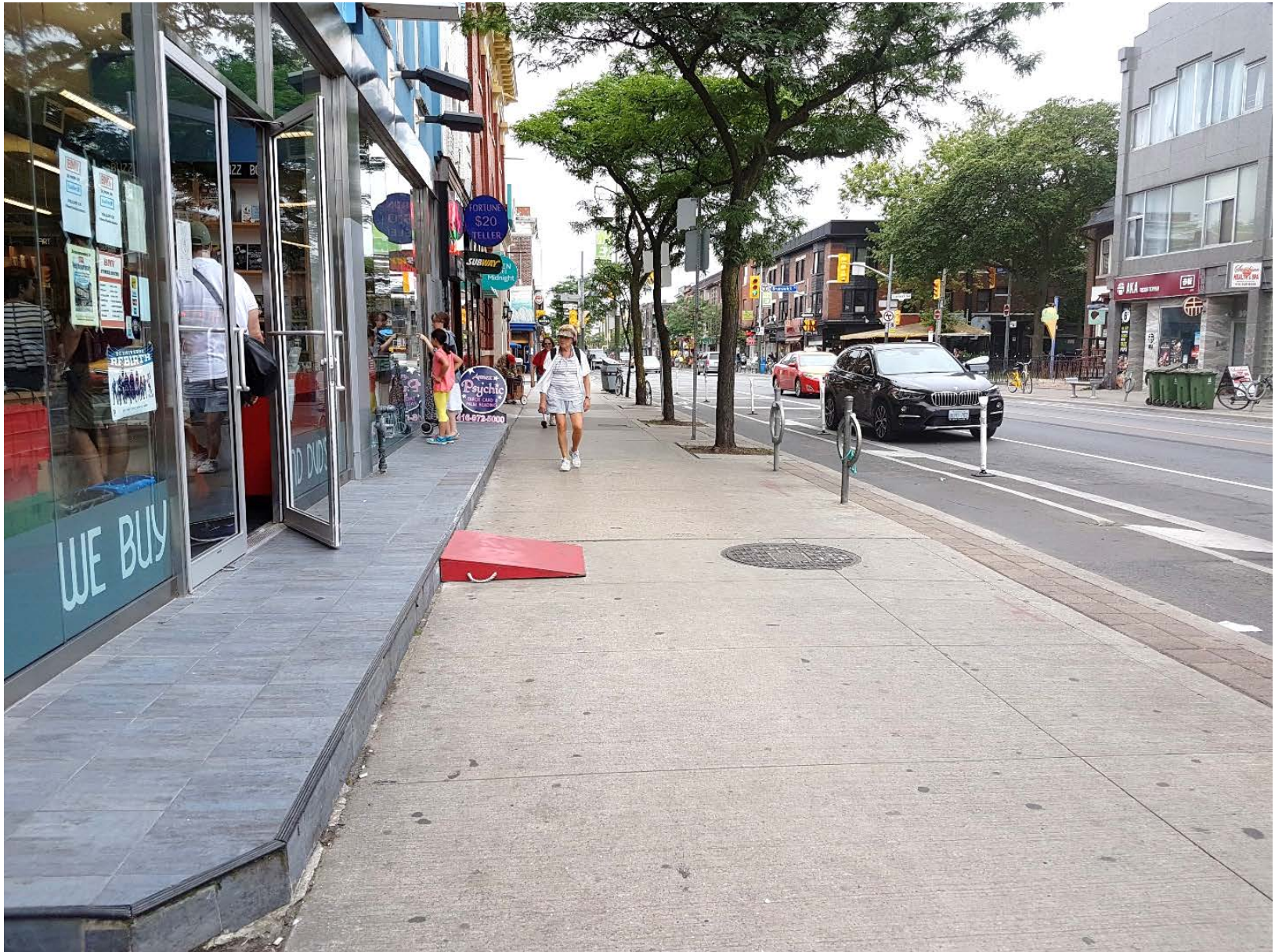


















Benefits

The ramps provide access for people who would otherwise be prevented from visiting businesses with stepped entrances.

Challenges: Location

- These ramps are located in public right-of-way and encroach on the sidewalk.
- In some cases, they reduce pedestrian clearways and may become tripping hazards

Challenges: Safety

- Many ramps are not constructed to standards or codes
 - minimum widths, slopes, requirements for handrails, etc.
- The City does not know:
 - how long each ramp has been in place
 - the loading that they can sustain
 - how they are being maintained
 - the duration for which they are fit for use

Ontario Building Code

- For many of these buildings, there is no short or medium term plan to retrofit the entrances **within private property**
- The Ontario Building Code is a go-forward regulation and generally does not apply to the maintenance or retrofit of existing buildings
- New requirements apply only to the new construction, change of use and extensive renovation of existing buildings
- The City cannot force additional requirements for private properties over and above the Ontario Building Code

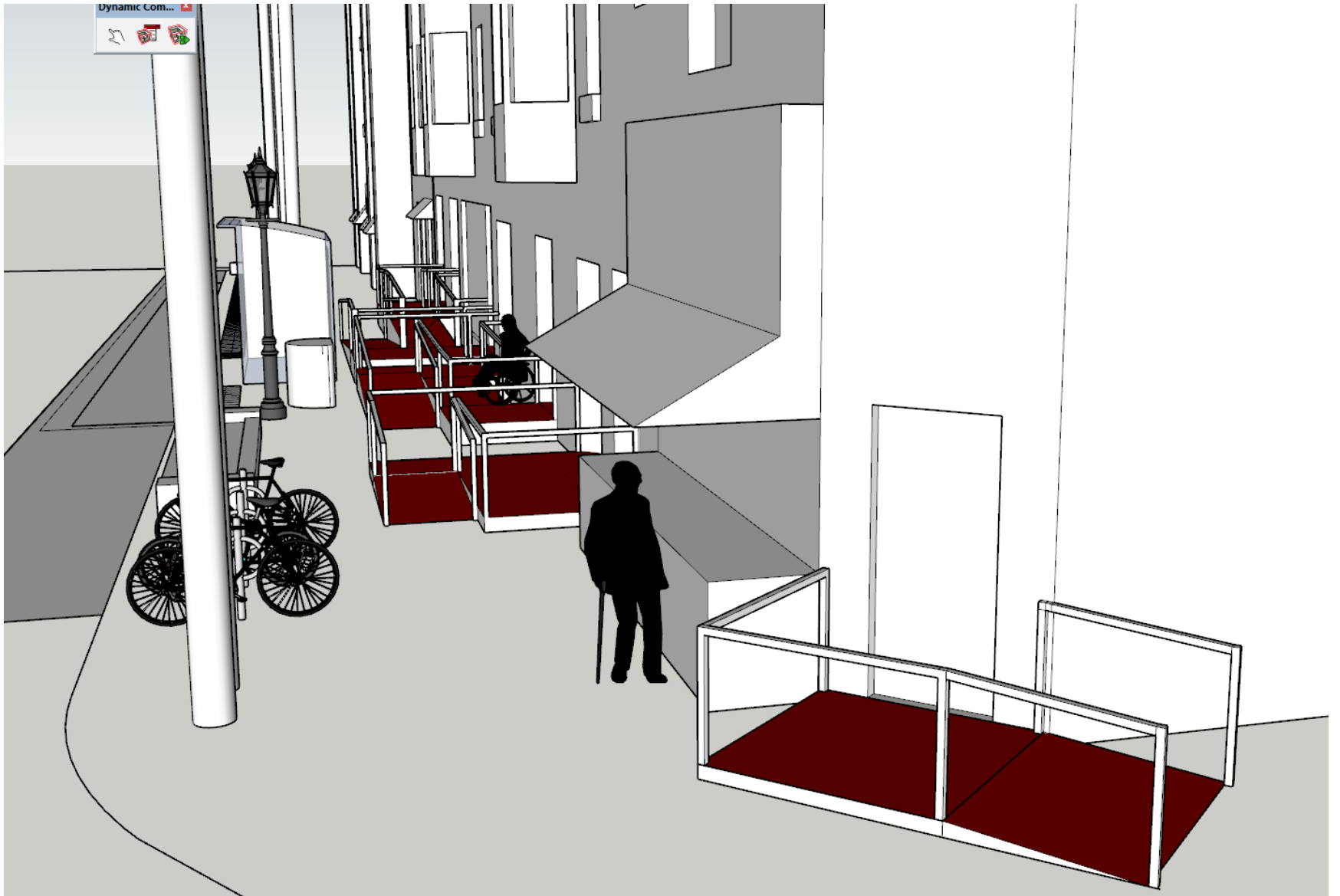
Resolving stepped entrances on sidewalks

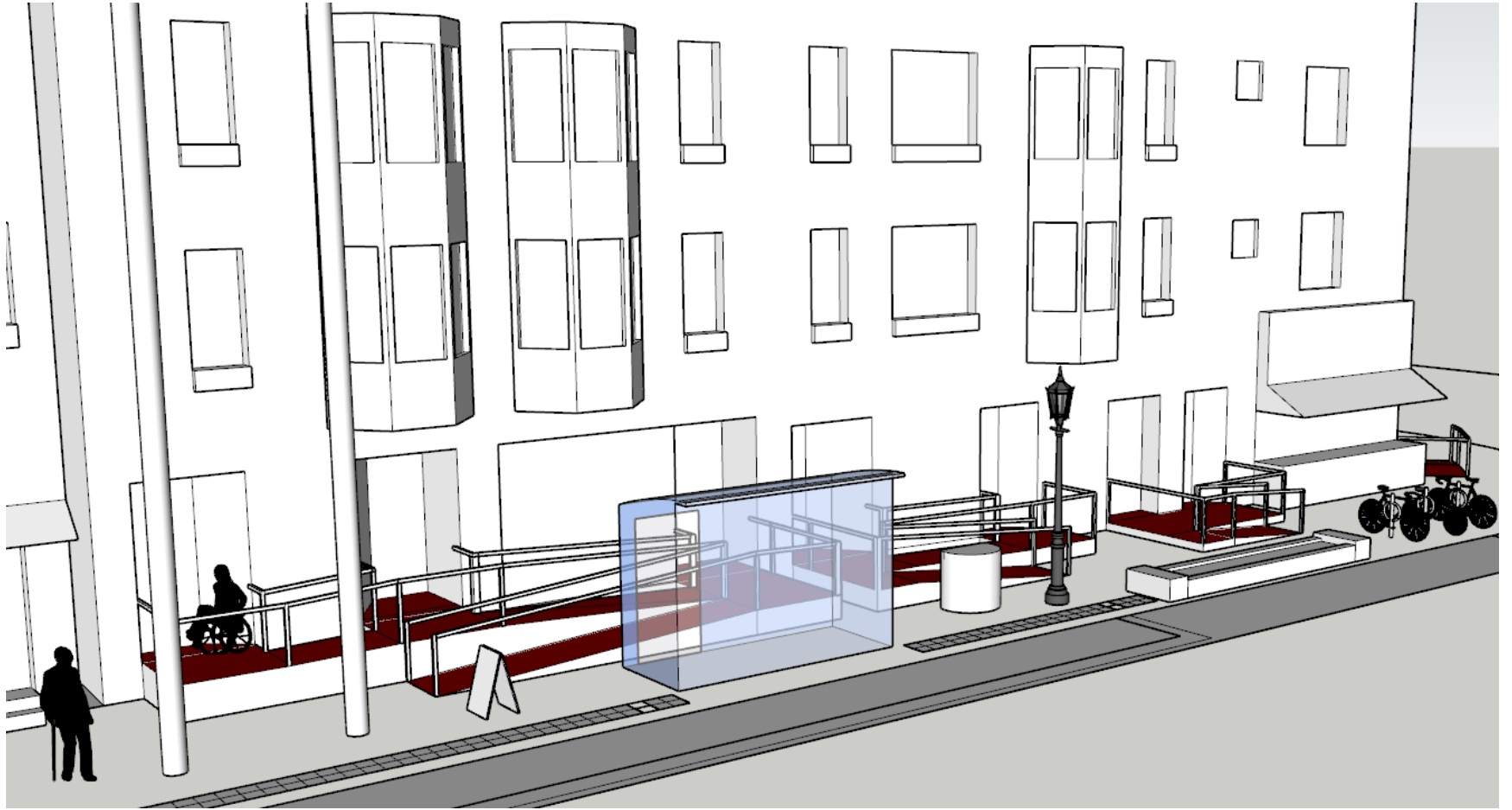












To Date:

- The City has not removed small wooden ramps used to address modest, one-step level changes:
 - they are a convenient and inexpensive option for businesses to provide better access
 - they can be easily moved
 - they do not intrude into the pedestrian clearway

Feedback

How should the City address larger ramps, or those that extend significantly into the pedestrian clearway?