

Ensuring Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Routes in Construction Zones

Toronto Accessibility and Advisory Committee

**February 5, 2024
City of Toronto
Stuart McGhie**

Reporting: TAAC

- Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) meeting
 - June 13th, 2022: [Agenda Item History - 2022.DI21.4 \(toronto.ca\)](#)
 - DI21.4 - Accessibility in Construction Zones: progress update on preserving accessibility in construction zones including the consultation activities and feedback
 - October 16th 2023: [Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee - Meeting 3 - TMMIS](#)
 - DI3.2 - Ensuring Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Routes in Construction Zones: Update on the city's process to ensure safe and accessible routes in construction zones, including what recommendations were generated from stakeholder consultation and engagement.

Engagement to Date

- Needs Assessment Survey: October 2022 - January 2023
 - Objective: Obtain both qualitative and quantitative input from Torontonians living with different types of disabilities, regarding the barriers they encounter on the City's sidewalks and streets. Explored six categories of barriers, of which construction work zones was one.
 - Organizational interviews (13 organizations, 25 people)
 - Organizational survey (35 responses)
 - Public Opinion Survey (1085 responses)
 - 69% of respondents placed construction zones among their top 3 (of 6) areas of concern regarding accessibility
- Four Workshop Session from May 24th – May 26th 2023
 - 26 participants representing 19 organizations across Toronto
- Virtual Town Hall: January 30th 2024
 - Over 75 participants

Stakeholder Advisory Workshops

Two Stakeholder Advisory Groups, drawn from organizations and advocacy groups, were engaged in developing the workshops for two types of users

- Pedestrians facing accessibility barriers
- Cyclists

Four broader stakeholder workshops held (two with each of the user groups)

- Discussion themes included: Communication, Safe Path of Travel, Training Staff, and Enforcement

Key Recommendations:

- Centralized communication platform with clear information on closures and disruptions
- Identification and mitigation of construction related barriers
- Comprehensive training on AODA standards
- Making AODA standards mandatory for all types of construction sites

Current work



New Policies, Standards and Specifications

- **Pedestrian Accessibility in Construction Zones Checklist**
 - A clear list of expectations now used in staff training and job aids, site audits, and development of contracts and specifications
 - Agreed on through inter-divisional process for consistent application across all project types
- **Special specification on Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Accessibility Considerations (GN134SS)**
 - Released April 2023 for inclusion on Request for Tender on construction projects
 - Reinforces that safety of pedestrians and cyclists, especially those with disabilities, shall be addressed in construction zones
 - Specifies ramp locations and widths, maximum slopes, acceptable materials

Updated Policies, Standards and Specifications

- **Contractor Performance Evaluation (CPE) & Professional Services Performance Evaluation (PSPE)**
 - Tools for City staff in evaluating Suppliers performing work on City projects. Poor results can lead to a Supplier being temporarily suspended from bidding on future work
 - CPE updated in May 2023. Edits include explicitly including “pedestrians and those with disabilities” in reference to the public and stakeholders
 - Updates to PSPE updates are underway
- **Comprehensive update of Construction Specification for Maintenance of Traffic TS1.00**
 - Construction Specification for Maintenance of Traffic TS1.00
 - Review and revision of specification TS1.00 started fall 2023
 - Will incorporate the content of GN134SS, construction zone checklist and reinforce prioritization order described earlier in this presentation

Industry-Focused Education & Outreach

Discussions with industry groups are in early stages, via presentations at standing meetings of established committees and industry associations active in constructing in the right-of-way, and content in annual training for utility contractors.

Further outreach is planned for Fall 2023-2024 including:

- Webinar presentations to outside agencies that perform work in the City roads, such as Utility companies, Developers, City Contractors, and public agencies that perform work within the road (e.g. TTC, Metrolinx).
- Meetings with various Construction Associations to educate and promote the City's approach to, and requirements for, accessibility.
- Provide Lunch & Learn seminars to reinforce staff comprehension of AODA requirements.
- Program of detailed articles, interviews and briefs in industry publications and local media.

New QR Code System of Construction Work Zone Information

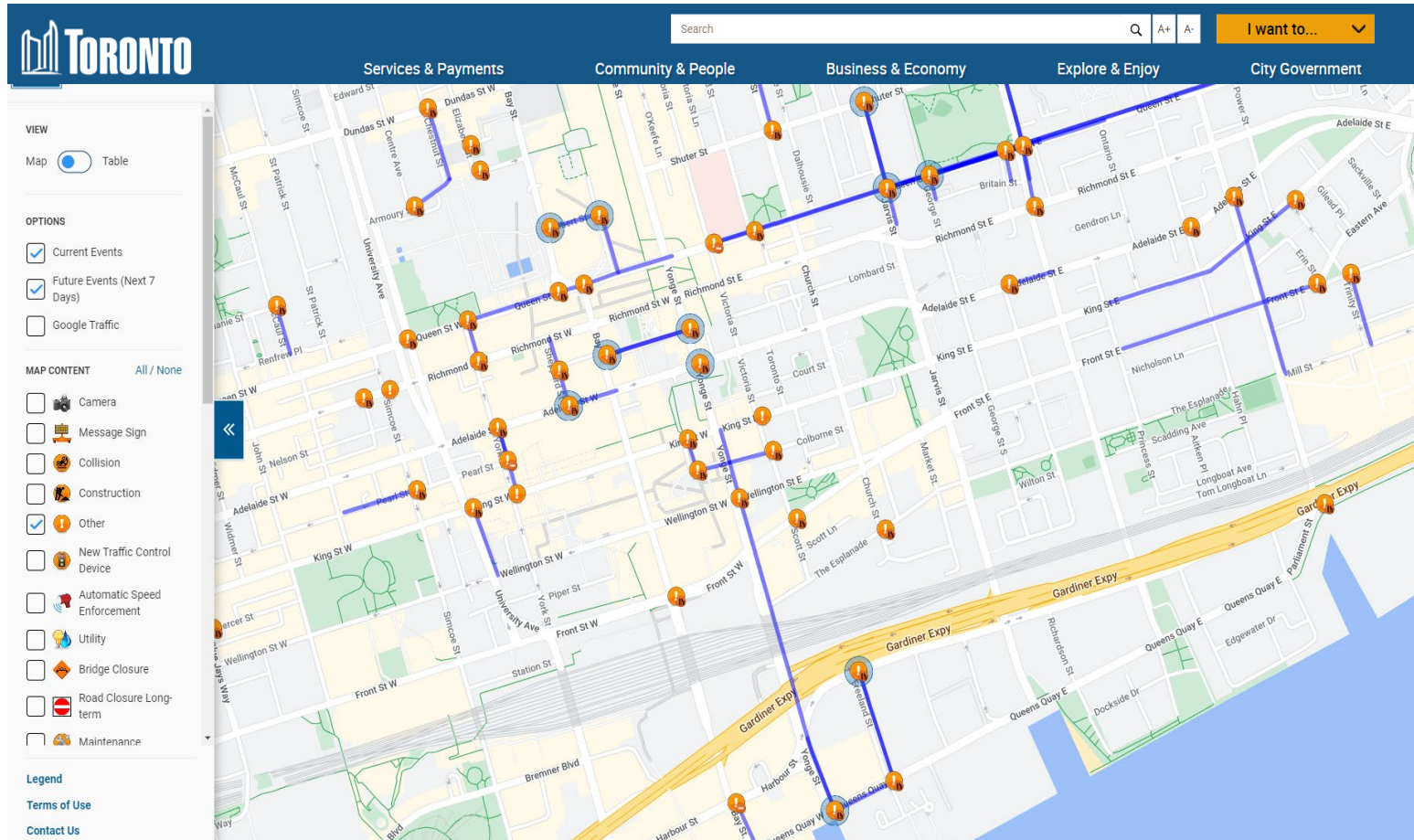


New Construction QR Code



In Q1 2024, it will be **mandatory** for all construction work zones to prominently display QR Codes with information on:

- Name of the applicant
- Duration and nature of the construction
- 24/7 emergency contact information



New Toronto Road Restriction Web Site

In Q1 2024, a new Road Restriction Web Site will be launched with more detailed information on:

- Name of the applicant
- Duration and nature of the construction
- 24/7 emergency contact information
- **impacts to both pedestrian and cycling infrastructure**
- Ability to provide open data to other Wayfinding Apps