

City of Toronto / MTO Agreement for the Maintenance and Operation of Ministry Owned Traffic Control Devices

Date: November 20, 2025

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: Acting General Manager, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 1 - Etobicoke North, Ward 2 - Etobicoke Centre, Ward 3 - Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Ward 5 - York South-Weston, Ward 7 - Humber River-Black Creek, Ward 8 - Eglinton-Lawrence, Ward 15 - Don Valley West, Ward 16 - Don Valley East, Ward 17 - Don Valley North, Ward 18 - Willowdale, Ward 21 - Scarborough Centre, Ward 22 - Scarborough-Agincourt, Ward 23 - Scarborough North, Ward 24 - Scarborough-Guildwood, Ward 25 - Scarborough-Rouge River

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek the authorization for renewal of an agreement between the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO), which formalizes and clarifies both parties' respective responsibilities for the operation and maintenance of MTO's traffic control devices (i.e., traffic control signals, traffic signage and pavement markings) that are owned by the MTO at on-off ramps intersecting the city's major arterial roads, at the Ministry's cost.

The MTO and the City have been operating under an existing agreement which came into effect between the two parties on July 1, 2014, and expired on June 30, 2024. This existing agreement requires necessary revisions to recognize changing technology, articulating clearer expectations of both parties and adjustment to the term of the agreement.

The term of the previous agreement was for ten (10) years. Under the renewed agreement the term would be for one (1) year from the date of its execution by both parties, with automatic yearly renewals. Either party may terminate this agreement at any time by serving written notice on the other party. However, termination would not become effective until such time as the MTO has made alternative arrangements for the operation and maintenance of the traffic control signals, as well as traffic signage and zone painting at the on-off ramps intersecting the city's major arterial and covered under this agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services to negotiate, enter into, and execute a renewed agreement with Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) for operation and maintenance activities associated with traffic control signals, traffic signage and zone painting on MTO expressway ramps intersecting with City of Toronto major arterial roads, generally as set out in the report (November 17, 2025) from the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services, and on such other terms and conditions satisfactory to the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no funding implications resulting from the adoption of this report. All costs associated with operation and maintenance activities associated with traffic control signals, traffic signage and zone painting on MTO expressway ramps intersecting with City of Toronto major arterial roads will be reimbursed by MTO.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of July 8, 9, 19 and 11, 2014 City Council authorized the General Manager, Transportation Services to negotiate and execute a new agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation for operation and maintenance activities associated with signs, signals and zone painting on provincially owned and operated expressway ramps intersecting with City of Toronto arterial roads.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2014.PW32.9>

COMMENTS

Background

The City of Toronto and the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario executed a legal agreement which gave authority for the City, on behalf of the MTO, to operate and maintain traffic control devices (i.e., traffic control signals, traffic signage and pavement markings) at seventy-five (75) on-off ramp locations where King's Highways (i.e., 400-series highways) intersect with City major arterial roads. This agreement had been in Staff report for Toronto-MTO Maintenance & Operation Agreement of MTO owned Traffic Control Devices

effect since July 1, 2014 and expired on June 30, 2024. The MTO notified the City in May 2025 of its interest to revisit certain terms and conditions in the existing agreement.

MTO expressways at signalized on-off ramps interface with many of the City's arterial roads. It is critical that the various traffic devices at these locations are maintained and operated properly to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The City and MTO staff have now negotiated mutually agreeable terms and conditions for a renewed agreement governing these signalized locations. The existing agreement will continue to be limited to the operation and maintenance of traffic control signals, traffic signage and zone painting.

Some of the key elements of the proposed agreement are highlighted below.

Included in the Agreement:

- The City of Toronto will carry out all maintenance and operational activities associated with traffic control signals, traffic signage and pavement markings (i.e., zone painting) at on-off expressway ramp locations approaching City arterial roads, with all costs fully recoverable from the MTO;
- If the MTO requests the City to carry out maintenance and/or operation outside of the City's routine schedule, the actual additional costs of any such authorized requests shall be fully recoverable from the MTO;
- The MTO is expected to consult with the City before directing the City to carry out any modifications (e.g., signal timing, relocation or enhancing hardware) to traffic control signals covered under this agreement;
- The City shall obtain written approval from the MTO prior to carrying out any improvements or changes to either of its Communication Systems or its central computerized traffic control system to which the traffic control signals are connected and covered under this agreement;
- Upon receipt of a public complaint, the City shall investigate and respond to maintenance emergencies related to the traffic control signals, covered under this agreement, and take the appropriate temporary responsive measures and notify the MTO of the situation within two (2) business days of the initial receipt. The MTO is then expected to respond to the City within three (3) business days of notification with their direction on the preferred remedial measures;
- For a specific traffic control signal location, the City is to provide the MTO with the most up to date copy of the legal drawings, and if not available the MTO will be responsible for developing such drawings; and
- The new agreement will be automatically renewable every year unless major changes to the agreement conditions is requested by either party, at which time a report to Council will be made and approval sought.

It is recommended that the longstanding agreement respecting the maintenance and operation of traffic control devices be updated and that authority be granted to the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services to negotiate, enter into and execute a new agreement with the MTO on terms and conditions generally as set out in this report and on such other terms and conditions satisfactory to the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

CONTACT

Elyse Parker,
Director, Policy, Data & Strategic Initiatives
Transportation Services
Tel: 416-338-2432
Elyse.Parker@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Ashley Curtis,
Acting General Manager, Transportation Services