Request for Proposals

Active Transportation Facilities at Interchanges: Synthesis of Practice

Issue Date: February 18th 2026

Submission Deadline: 13:00 ET, March 24th, 2026

A. INTRODUCTION

Interchanges, which facilitate the high-speed transition between arterial street networks and freeways, often pose a significant barrier to active transportation (AT) users, namely pedestrians and cyclists. While arterial streets increasingly prioritize the safety and accessibility of vulnerable road users, interchanges have historically been designed almost exclusively to optimize motor vehicle operations, with limited consideration for walking and cycling. As a result, interchanges typically feature multiple high-volume, high-speed turning, merging, and diverging movements that create numerous and severe conflict points. In urban and suburban contexts, this legacy approach is increasingly misaligned with contemporary safety, accessibility, and mode-shift objectives, significantly compromising the safety, comfort, and continuity of active transportation networks.

At the network level, interchanges represent the primary crossing opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists over or under freeway corridors. However, their current configuration often results in stressful and uncomfortable conditions, forming a major barrier to walking and cycling in urban areas and hindering progress toward local and provincial goals to increase active transportation mode share. These conditions disproportionately affect people with mobility impairments, low vision or blindness, children, older adults, and others for whom long detours or gap-acceptance crossings are not viable options. Despite the above issues, there is limited guidance available to help planners and designers provide safe and comfortable facilities for walking and cycling at interchanges.

To overcome this challenge, the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) is seeking a qualified consultant to develop a comprehensive **Synthesis of Practice for Active Transportation at Interchanges**. This synthesis will provide Canadian practitioners with both established and innovative design direction, as well as operational tools and strategies to reduce conflict, enhance vulnerable road user safety, and improve network connectivity at these complex junctions. The synthesis will also serve as the foundation for future guidance in the TAC *Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads* and *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada*.

B. SCOPE AND APPROACH

This project will synthesize and document established and emerging practices of Canadian organizations, to facilitate sharing with those that are studying, planning or implementing improvements to active transportation facilities at interchanges. It will capture and communicate beneficial practices, including established and emerging tools, in addition to successful case studies. Limitations of existing approaches will be included.

The project will include a review of relevant literature, surveys and interviews to gather information on policies, plans, programs and projects from experienced governmental organizations (municipal, regional, provincial and federal). Some organizations and individuals will be consulted in greater depth to leverage their knowledge and access to important resources.

The key objectives of this project are to:

- Provide descriptions of:
  - The network-level impacts of freeway corridors on active transportation, and the importance of planning for freeway "permeability" for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - The safety and operational impacts on active transportation users of all ages and abilities of conventional interchange designs (e.g. free-flow ramps with uncontrolled crossings, yield-to-vehicle conditions) and the resulting effects in terms of pedestrian and cyclist diversion, recognizing latent and suppressed AT demand.
- Document case studies of interchanges where:
  - Active transportation desire lines are maintained for all ages and abilities.
  - Conflict points are reduced or eliminated.
  - People walking and cycling experience a high level of comfort.
  - Collaboration between different orders of government has achieved positive outcomes.
- Synthesize established or emerging Canadian and international practices for:
  - Planning and network-level approaches to minimizing conflict points for active transportation at interchanges, including dedicated active transportation overpasses/underpasses and alternative interchange layouts.
  - Design approaches to accommodating active transportation at interchanges and the conditions under which each approach may be applicable. This may include:
    - Geometric design measures (e.g. ramp configurations, curb radii, raised features, truck aprons)
    - Traffic control measures (e.g. signs, signals, markings, AT or motor vehicle yielding requirements)
- Identify and evaluate possible future directions:
  - Goals and principles for accommodating active transportation at interchanges, with a focus on urban contexts (including both developed and future settlement areas), while recognizing that rural interchanges require different considerations.

- Key opportunities and challenges facing the creation of urban interchanges that offer pedestrians and cyclists a level of safety, comfort, and accessibility equivalent to urban intersections, including for users of all ages and abilities and individuals with low vision or blindness, mobility impairments, or cognitive disabilities, while considering a range of factors including freeway operations, speed management, and geometric self-enforcement.
- Key opportunities and challenges facing the retrofitting of existing interchanges using a systematic approach that recognizes site constraints and potential trade-offs. This may include interim or staged interventions that improve safety and comfort where full reconstruction is not immediately feasible.

The successful consultant will accomplish the above through key tasks which include:

- A **review of the relevant literature** focusing on the Canadian context (both research and guidance), in addition to international beneficial practice guidance relevant to the Canadian context.
- A **survey of key Canadian jurisdictions** to identify approaches, methods, measured outcomes (e.g. impacts on collision rates and severity, pedestrian and cycling comfort and connectivity, and traffic conditions), and document case studies, including associated photos and drawings.
- **Synthesis of current practice, guidance and lessons learned**, identifying key themes and promising/proven measures as well as documenting limitations and potentially unfavourable practices. Where conflicts between guidance are identified, the synthesis should document how such conflicts are resolved in practice, including decision frameworks and considerations applied.
- An **identification of gaps and opportunities to enhance** current TAC guidance, in addition to **conflicts between TAC and other guidance**.

The review of relevant literature shall include the following available guidelines:

- TAC *Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads (GDG)* Chapters 5, 6, & 10 (2017, 2020)
- TAC *Bikeway Traffic Control Guidelines and Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide* (2012)
- *Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 15* (2016)
- *Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 18* (2021)
- *Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) Bikeways Design Manual* (2014)
- *Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) Integration of Cyclists and Pedestrians at Interchanges: Final Technical Report* (2012)
- *British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide* (2019)
- *ITE Recommended Design Guidelines to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicycles at Interchanges* (2016)

This project also acknowledges the recent MTO funded academic report, *"Safe Accommodation of Active Transportation Through Highway Interchanges - Balancing the Needs of Cyclists, Pedestrians, and Motorists"* (August 2025), that explored this topic within the Ontario context and investigated tools for assessing trade-offs between different interchange design alternatives. The findings of the MTO report, along with other relevant literature, shall be reviewed as part of this project.

C. DELIVERABLES

This project will provide a thorough documentation of the literature review, survey findings, case studies, synthesis of beneficial practices, and potential future directions.

The successful consultant will provide the following key deliverables:

Comprehensive Synthesis Report

The primary deliverable for the project will be a report titled ***Active Transportation Facilities at Interchanges: Synthesis of Practice***. In addition to the content outlined in Section B, the report will include the following sections: Executive Summary, Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, Introduction, and References. Where appropriate, include diagrams, flowcharts, or matrices to support practitioner decision-making.

All information compiled during the project will be incorporated into the report. Appendices will contain any supplementary material that is not appropriate for inclusion in the main body.

Technical Memorandum

A second core project deliverable will be a technical memorandum prepared for the attention of relevant TAC committees. This memorandum will:

- Identify gaps and conflicts in existing TAC guidance, particularly in the *Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads* and the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada.*
- Highlight opportunities for improvement and areas where new, amended, or expanded guidance is warranted. Explore new concepts or approaches not currently reflected in TAC guidance.
- Suggest possible directions for further work to address these gaps and enhance consistency across TAC resources.

Other Deliverables/ Requirements:

Other deliverables will include:

- A table summarizing comments received during Project Steering Committee (PSC) review of deliverables, tracking who submitted each comment and specifying how the comment was addressed, to be updated after each commenting period (see Section D for anticipated PSC meetings).
- Bimonthly progress reports on task/schedule status and any perceived challenges, to be circulated to PSC members and presented at project meetings.
- A PowerPoint deck describing the work undertaken, report contents and PSC comments requiring further clarification and discussion to be presented by the consultant team leader to each online meeting with the PSC.
- A PowerPoint deck describing the work undertaken and report contents to be presented by the consultant team leader to online meetings of the PSC, Mobility Council, Active Transportation Integrated Committee, Road Safety Committee, Geometric Design Committee, Traffic Operations and Management Committee, and Safety, Design & Operations Council (with the deck circulated in advance to the PSC, inclusive of the presenter's notes).
- A PowerPoint deck suitable for a 60-minute TAC webinar (i.e. 30-minute presentation followed by 30 minutes of questions) to be delivered by the consultant after the project is completed, providing a high-

level overview of the project and its deliverables to a multidisciplinary audience.

The consultant will also provide:

- Microsoft Word/PowerPoint and PDF versions of the deliverables.
- All figures that contain text as separate files, with text accessible and editable by TAC for translation purposes; exceptions include where original-source French-language graphics are also provided, or where TAC agrees that the technical content should remain in English.
- Credits for images drawn from other sources, with evidence that written permission to reproduce them has been received.
- Any relevant spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel format.

Deliverables must be submitted in English. TAC will provide an electronic Word template with pre-set report headings and styles to which consultants must adhere, with any variations subject to TAC approval. In addition, the selected proponent must adhere to TAC's *Publication Guidelines* [1] and *Guidelines for Pooled-Fund Projects*[2].

D. SCHEDULE

The consultant should propose a project schedule that enables high-quality deliverables and varies from the following milestones only where a supporting rationale is provided:

- Contract award ..... April 2026
- PSC & Consultant Meeting – kickoff (online) ..... May 2026
- Submission of survey questions and list of known literature ..... June 2026
- PSC comments due on survey questions..... July 2026

- Submission of annotated report table of contents, literature scan and survey results..... October 2026
- PSC comments due on ToC, literature scan and survey results deliverables..... December 2026
- PSC Meeting (online) ..... December 2026

- Submission of 50% report ..... January 2027
- PSC comments due on 50% report..... March 2027
- PSC Meeting (online) ..... April 2027

- Submission of 100% report and memo to TAC committees..... July 2027
- PSC comments due on 100% report and memo to TAC committees..... August 2027
- PSC Meeting (online) ..... August 2027
- Presentation to RSC, GDC, ATIC, TOMC, and MC (online)..... September 2027
- Submission of final report and memo to TAC committees, graphics and slide deck..... October 2027
- TAC webinar delivery..... Spring 2028

The PSC will include about 15 representatives of project funding partners, and will be an active project participant. Members will review draft deliverables and require at least 15 working days to submit comments.

[1] TAC-Publication-Guidelines_2025-e.pdf
[2] pfp-guidelines.pdf

The consultant will respond to all comments, questions and suggestions, and requires at least 5 working days to review PSC comments and develop an initial response before meeting with the PSC. The consultant team leader is required to attend PSC meetings and presentations. Note that some number of online working meetings in addition to those listed above may be required, and would not constitute an increase in the scope of work.

E. BUDGET

This project's maximum budget is **$67,500**; this amount includes all fees and expenses, but excludes applicable taxes. Only fixed-price proposals will be accepted, and price is not a factor in their evaluation. Proposals exceeding the maximum budget will be disqualified. TAC will not accept invoices for cost overruns (fees or expenses) associated with the original scope of work. Note that the lead consultant must be a TAC member organization, and that no more than 20% of the budget may be assigned to subconsultants that are not TAC member organizations.

A detailed cost breakdown is requested as part of the proposal; invoices must link billing amounts to the percentage of completion of major tasks. TAC will retain a 10% holdback at the end of the project until the final deliverables have been approved by the Safety, Design & Operations Council and Mobility Council, and accepted by TAC. All work conducted in the 12 months leading up to March 31 of each year must be invoiced by that date.

F. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The following information should be included in the proposal:

Understanding – Demonstrate a clear understanding of the project's scope, objectives and specific priority issues, describe challenges that might be encountered in its execution, and propose measures to resolve them. Proponents should suggest and outline a prospective location that could be used as a case study.

Consultant team – Identify a project leader and team members including subconsultants, describe their roles, and identify their experience on similar or otherwise relevant projects as well as any experience with TAC projects and processes. The lead consultant must be a TAC member organization.

Methodology – Describe major tasks, major information sources, planned analyses, and possible limitations. Although the working language for this project is English, the consultant will be expected to review literature and communicate with stakeholders in French, as required.

Schedule – Propose a project schedule that enables high-quality deliverables, using Section D as guidance.

Resources – Identify a total cost with fees and hours broken down by task and team member, as well as travel or other expenses. Proposals stating a total cost greater than the maximum budget specified in Section E will be disqualified.

References – Identify three organizations for which senior members of the consulting team have conducted similar or otherwise relevant projects, including the organization's address and the name and telephone number of an individual familiar with the proponent's work. TAC reserves the right to request additional references.

Conflict of interest declaration – Disclose possible financial or organizational conflicts of interest in conducting the project; for example, the proponent's ownership, relationships or proprietary rights and interests could be perceived as jeopardizing its objectivity. Identify mitigating strategies for any such circumstances.

Proposals should include:

- A cover letter (not more than two pages long)
- Table of contents
- Main body (not more than 10 pages long, with 12-point single-spaced text and one-inch margins)
- Additional pages for:
    - Project cost breakdown (one page)
    - Project schedule (one page)
    - Project team organization chart (one page)
    - References
    - Conflict of interest declaration
- Team lead and principal(s) résumés (each not more than four pages long total)

Any material in excess of these scope and length parameters will be deleted from proposals before evaluation.

G. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

TAC's Project Manager (see Section I, below) must receive a PDF version of the proposal by email **no later than 13:00 ET on March 24th, 2026**.

Email any questions regarding this Request for Proposals to TAC's Project Manager **by February 25th, 2026**. Addenda with responses will be posted to the RFP page on TAC's website as soon as possible, but no later than **March 5th, 2026**. Note that proponents are responsible to check for addenda.

TAC reserves the right to:

- not accept the lowest price on any proposal,
- terminate the Request for Proposal for any reason, with no liability to TAC or recourse by the proponent, at any time prior to the execution of the written contract; and
- conduct negotiations with more than one proponent simultaneously.

H. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated by the PSC based on the criteria listed in Table 1.

When top proponents have average scores within five points of each other, the selection will be made by a vote of PSC members.

Table 1: Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Understanding of the project including its scope, objectives, specific priority topics, and desired deliverables	35
Demonstrated qualifications, experience and competence of consultant lead and team members in areas relevant to this project	30 (15 for team lead + 15 for team members)
Methodology for project delivery with sufficient level of detail for each task, in addition to at least one potential case study location	20
Adequacy of schedule and resources to ensure quality within required timeframes	15
TOTAL	**100**

I. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

TAC is not liable for any costs and/or expenses incurred by proponents in the preparation of proposals.

A contract for consulting services must be established with the consultant before work can begin.

TAC maintains an online collaborative platform to enable documentation sharing for this project. The working language for this project is English, though the consultant will be expected to review literature and communicate with stakeholders in French, as required.

TAC's Project Manager will act as liaison between the PSC and the consultant for this project and will work with the PSC to review project deliverables and ensure objectives are met. For more information, contact:

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