WHO WE ARE

The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) is a not-for-profit, national technical association that focusses on road and highway infrastructure and urban transportation.

Our 500 corporate members include all levels of governments, private sector companies, academic institutions, and other associations. TAC provides a neutral, non-partisan forum for those organizations, and their thousands of staff, to come together to share ideas and information, build knowledge, and pool resources in addressing transportation issues and challenges.

TAC is continuing its important work to develop publications identifying best practices and encouraging harmonization of those practices across jurisdictions. While TAC does not set standards, it is a principle source of guidelines for planning, design, construction, management, operation, and maintenance of road, highway, and urban transportation infrastructure systems and services.

OUR VISION

Transportation that makes Canada safe, healthy and prosperous.

OUR MISSION

Working together to share ideas, build knowledge, promote best practices, foster leadership and encourage bold transportation solutions.
In my second year as President, it’s been rewarding to see TAC continue to evolve and advance its work through the engagement of our members and volunteers. It is this impressive commitment of the 750 volunteers representing more than 200 organizations that continue to push the Association toward its vision of transportation that makes Canada safe, healthy and prosperous. As a result, the past year was very eventful and we are proud to share the following highlights.

First, a new Strategic Plan was launched, a move that included new vision and mission statements, as well as the identification of focus areas that reflect how TAC achieves its vision, and strategic priorities that describe how we operationalize our mission. It’s been gratifying that members have embraced the new plan and the way in which the Association is evolving its work to meet members’ needs now and in the future.

A new edition of TAC’s flagship publication, the Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads (GDG), was released; important to the practice of transportation in Canada, the Guide has attracted significant attention and sold more than 1,000 copies in its first nine months. Nine other new English publications, in addition to the GDG, and seven French-version publications, were released for sale in the Association bookstore.

The 2017 spring and fall technical meetings welcomed more than 350 volunteers. We are seeing growth in these meetings which bodes well for the future as new and seasoned professionals continue to contribute their time and to work together through TAC to share ideas, build knowledge, promote best practices, foster leadership and encourage bold transportation solutions.

The 2017 TAC Conference and Exhibition, hosted last September by Newfoundland and Labrador Transportation and Works and the City of St. John’s, was a success. Nearly 1,000 people participated as delegates, exhibitors, speakers, companions or fall meeting participants. More than 50 technical sessions, panels and workshops covered a variety of topics, including emerging and critical issues and the conference theme, Investing in Transportation: Building Canada’s Economy. Efforts were made to modernize media in support of the conference. A new mobile app was promoted to delegates and a printed program brochure was provided. Poken™ devices were given to attendees to facilitate networking and information exchange. Conference papers were added to the searchable database on TAC’s website, and presentations were made available after the event to registered delegates.

Collaboration with partners was particularly productive in the last year. TAC worked with ITS Canada to promote the ITS World Congress and be part of the exhibition’s Canada pavilion. TAC staff worked with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to deliver a session on automated and connected vehicles in conjunction with the ITS World Congress. Work on the Canadian Guide to Traffic Calming was completed in collaboration with the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers. Exciting steps were taken towards convening a joint conference and exhibition with ITS Canada in 2019.

Governments at all levels are investing in transportation and there are many exciting opportunities to collaborate with industry partners to advance our common goals.

A new emphasis was placed on ensuring that TAC can help members contend with shifts in technological, environmental, economic and social contexts.

Pooled-fund projects received support from a wide variety of member organizations in the last year. Work continued on a new edition of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada, as well as seven other projects. Numerous projects without funding also advanced thanks to the dedication of volunteers on TAC’s councils and committees.

A new emphasis was placed on ensuring that TAC can help members contend with accelerating shifts in technological, environmental, economic and social contexts. As one example, in September 2017 the Board directed that TAC’s work on automated and connected vehicles be expanded; accordingly, priorities are being identified and a committee structure is being developed.

TAC seminars and webinars were delivered to about 700 professionals in 2017/18. Offerings included introductory seminars about the new edition of the Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads and webinars on topics ranging from mechanically-stabilized earth walls to application guidelines for speed display devices. The diversity of topics reflects the broad range of interests of TAC’s members and the myriad ways the Association can support them in their work.
Various efforts were made to further engage with, and support the involvement of, young professionals in the Association. A reduced conference registration rate for young professionals (under the age of 35) was offered for the first time in 2017; 74 delegates (11%) registered using that rate. The new Young Transportation Professional Award, which recognizes an employee of a TAC member organization who has demonstrated outstanding accomplishments as a young professional in the transportation industry, was awarded.

Finally, TAC’s most fundamental metrics were solid in 2017/18: membership remained steady at about 500 corporate members and about 750 volunteers continued to commit their time and expertise to TAC’s collaborative network. Financially, TAC remains healthy with revenues in line with operating expenditures, and reserve funds established to support our foundational documents and to protect the Association in case of emergency.

As my term as TAC’s President draws to a close in 2018, I want to thank the secretariat staff, the Board of Directors and TAC members for their support over the last two years. It has been an honour and pleasure to serve the Association, and I look forward to continuing to be involved. The future looks bright and there is much to be excited about in the transportation industry. Governments at all levels are investing in transportation and there are many exciting opportunities to collaborate with industry partners to advance our common goals.

TAC is a strong and vital organization that provides a tremendous forum for us all to work together in pursuit of our vision of transportation that makes Canada safe, healthy and prosperous.
THE GDG: A NEW EDITION OF TAC’S FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION IS RELEASED

New GDG brings together expert knowledge in era of evolving transportation needs

Long recognized as one of TAC’s flagship publications, the Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads (GDG) provides state-of-the-art guidance for roadway planning and design in a Canadian context. The release of the 2017 edition signals the latest step forward in what has been a fundamental reference tool for roadway design practitioners since it was launched in 1963.

Used by every jurisdiction across Canada, the GDG is such a fundamental tool for transportation professionals that it’s often called ‘the TAC manual’.

The new guide, which replaces the 1999 edition and subsequent revisions, is the result of a major three-year project to rethink and revamp both content and presentation. The project involved not just the expenditure of over $1 million but also the generous engagement of hundreds of experts and over 25 member organizations, all of them committed to the enhancement of transportation engineering and planning.

Completed on time and within budget, the new guide — available in both e-book and print formats — is a flexible, user-focused guide. It is already proving invaluable to planners and designers who are creating design solutions to meet the needs of all road users, from drivers to cyclists to pedestrians, while simultaneously dealing with challenges that range from legacy roadways to evolving public demands on roadway use. It features updated design and human factors research and practices for roadway geometric design in urban and rural settings while addressing the context of policy decisions and the surrounding environment. The new GDG also offers guidance on benefit cost analysis, value engineering and design exceptions.

The 2017 edition includes 10 chapters highlighting design philosophy; design controls, classification and consistency; alignment and lane configurations; cross section elements; bicycle integrated design; pedestrian integrated design; roadside design; access; intersections and interchanges.

Some chapters, like those providing guidance on bicycle and pedestrian integrated design, are entirely new. They recognize both the increased attention to building active transportation into our urban roadways and the challenges of doing so.

In other cases, chapters or chapter sections have undergone a substantial rewrite or inclusion of new perspectives. They include the guidance on roadside design and consideration of such human factors as distraction, decision-making in complex situations like interchanges and the growing contingent of older drivers.

Continued on page 8
THE GDG TEAM
A look at some of the TAC members involved

Carl Clayton
Project co-manager for consulting team
Formerly of Stantec Consulting; current Global Technology in Infrastructure Lead, IBI Group

“One of the major challenges in creating the new GDG was creating a single guide that reflects the differences between urban and rural roads and how we use them while still addressing the performance needs of both kinds of roadways,” says Carl Clayton.

While rural roads, which tended to dominate earlier editions of the guide, are still meant mostly to move people and goods long distances at high speeds, urban roads are different and changing.

Clayton says there had been growing requests from designers and planners asking for more guidelines on “how they should deal with an evolving urban context where the needs of everyone — drivers, pedestrians, cyclists — have to be met. It’s the new emphasis on ‘complete streets,’ which are very relevant to urban agencies but not so much to rural ones.”

Written to address the needs of users in diverse jurisdictions, the guide helps professionals achieve a balance between safety, cost and the environment, says Clayton. “There’s more emphasis on getting that balance, because urban areas now need to accommodate more people walking and using bikes.”

Clayton notes that the new guide has been published as ten separate chapters, so users can purchase only those chapters they need rather than the entire guide. Not only is this more efficient and potentially less expensive for users, but individual chapters can be easily updated and republished going forward.

Geoff Millen
Consulting team member
Regional Manager, Halifax, WSP Canada Inc.

The availability of fresh research and tools ranked among the key factors at play in creating the new GDG, according to Geoff Millen.

“We had a significant amount of new research on the safety impacts associated with design decisions,” he says. "There was a ton of information from New Zealand, Australia and the U.S., and sifting through that to determine what was appropriate for the Canadian context was important.”

Also at hand were new tools and techniques, including quantitative analysis methodologies, to predict road safety and operational performance associated with design initiatives such as narrowing roads to add bike lanes.

On the other hand, Millen notes that planners and designers are facing increasing demands from the public for context-sensitive design decisions and will turn to the GDG for guidance. He gives Cape Breton’s Cabot Trail as an example, where the aesthetic and environmental context has to be respected even as the road’s design is upgraded to more contemporary standards.

Knowledge of human factors has also evolved since the last edition of the GDG. The guide helps planners be more attuned to drivers’ limitations — for instance, the need to reduce drivers’ mental workload by decreasing unrelated signage on the approaches to intersections and other complex situations.

Millen also underscores the effort put into the bicycle component of the new guide. In the old version, cycling largely meant off-road paths. Now it’s integrated into road design, making the guide an essential planning and design resource.
In creating the new guide, the team had to navigate multiple emerging and sometimes conflicting expectations, according to Michael Chiu, project co-manager for the consulting team. Design decisions have grown more complex over the past two decades. Contemporary planners and designers are expected to meet performance objectives with fewer resources, deal with competing demands from drivers, cyclists and other road users, and make their decisions with an increased sensitivity to environmental impacts.

As well, design priorities vary across the country, just as they do in rural compared to urban settings. “We needed to achieve consensus from all these jurisdictions with different expectations and needs, and that’s a big challenge,” says Chiu.

It was critical that the new guide include greater attention to design exceptions, especially for rural roads, and lay out the processes for applying exceptions without compromising safety.

As well, says Chiu, the new guide puts greater emphasis on providing background, and on explaining the principles and rationale behind design guidelines and values, including human factors and safety considerations. That allows planners and designers to make context-sensitive decisions.

For the first time, each chapter has also been published separately, a boon to users who need information on only selected topics. In terms of learning opportunities, last year a series of one-day seminars was delivered across Canada. A series of two-day seminars is in development. Led by three of the guide’s authors, the program is intended to educate practitioners about geometric design in general and new GDG content in particular.

A webinar on new content and key changes in the 2017 edition is also available on the TAC website.

The new guide is complemented by the Canadian Roundabout Design Guide, which provides information and guidance on the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance and safety of roundabouts in Canada.

Like its predecessors, the new and much-anticipated GDG is playing a central role in the growth of regional, provincial and national roadway and highway systems across Canada. The growth of those systems is good for transportation and for the Canadian public, and the 2017 guide marks another milestone in TAC’s contribution to making the country safe, healthy and prosperous through transportation.


“One of the major challenges in creating the new GDG was creating a single guide that reflects the differences between urban and rural roads and how we use them while still addressing the performance needs of both kinds of roadways.”

–Carl Clayton, project co-manager
UPATED MUTCDC TO OFFER INSIGHT ON NEW SIGNAGE, APPLICATION FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Slated for completion in 2020, the updated MUTCDC will offer guidance on roundabouts, bicycle lanes, electric vehicles and much more

Considered one of TAC’s flagship documents, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada (MUTCDC) is the go-to source for traffic engineering practitioners across the country when they’re seeking authoritative guidance on traffic control device types, use and placement. These devices, which range from regulatory, warning and dynamic message signs to traffic control signals and pavement markings, are the subject of intense industry interest, with new devices being introduced regularly. While the 2014 MUTCDC update consolidated many changes, the last full rewrite of the manual was in 1998. That’s made a new, comprehensive edition essential.

Slated for completion in 2020, the new manual has demanded the building of knowledge and attention to how it’s disseminated, according to Taso Koutroulakis, Manager, Traffic Management for the City of Halifax and a member of the TAC project steering committee responsible for the new manual.

For instance, he says pedestrian countdown signals are new since 1998 and “we have to give guidance on where and how to use them.” The same goes for signage around electric vehicles, including the need, not currently being met, for consistency in charging station signs so that motorists know what to look for in their travels.

Dynamic message signs — electronic signs with information about special events like detours and traffic jams — are proliferating, requiring an entire section in the updated manual.

Other changes on our increasingly busy roadways mean road agencies, designers and traffic engineering practitioners across the country need reliable and consistent guidance on traffic control devices for those roadways. Roundabouts, for example, are proliferating in many cities but weren’t even on the radar two decades ago, says Koutroulakis. The same goes for the explosion of bicycle traffic in many centres, where bicyclists, car drivers and pedestrians must now share the road to a much greater extent than in the 1990s.

“We’re not trying to get everything in the manual,” says Koutroulakis. Instead, links have been introduced to the manual so users can drill down to find more information on specialized topics such as pedestrian crossing and control for roundabouts.

He says that in building and disseminating the knowledge base on devices, the manual’s writers have to bear in mind and meet the varied expertise of potential users. In a big city that could be a traffic control specialist, but in a small town a RCMP constable might be the traffic professional.

Other innovations are being introduced in the manual. For instance, reader demand has prompted the creation of a new section illustrating how devices should be applied when they’re part of a system of devices such as one finds at intersections and interchanges, horizontal curves and school zones.

In addition to an updated MUTCDC, the accompanying Sign Pattern Manual is being brought up to speed to ensure consistency in sign design by manufacturers.

With the overall project, says Koutroulakis, “We’re trying to give a good standard of practice going forward.”
TAC AND CITE WORK TOGETHER ON UPDATE TO CANADIAN GUIDE TO TRAFFIC CALMING

As traffic calming measures spread to urban arterial roads and rural highways, two groups collaborate on an updated guide — with a new name.

The Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming, published jointly by TAC and the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers (CITE), has been used successfully across North America since 1998. However, the art of traffic calming has evolved significantly over the past two decades, and an updated guide was essential for practitioners striving to reduce the speed and/or volume of traffic. As both TAC and CITE recognized the need for an updated guide, it was an ideal opportunity for collaboration between the two groups; costs and responsibilities associated with developing the guide were shared equally, both parties endorsed the finished product and ownership is given to both by TAC and CITE.

“Traffic calming was once seen as a tool for neighbourhood streets. That’s why it was called the Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming,” says Rob Hird of Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and co-chair of the TAC/CITE committee that created the new document. “Today, there is interest in employing traffic calming measures on a much wider variety of road classifications. With the expansion outside of neighbourhood streets, the new guide will appeal to a broader audience.”

As a national reference tool, it’s also intended to foster consistency in traffic calming techniques and policies across the country.

The updated guide — which began with a needs assessment based on consultations and workshops with stakeholders and users of the 1998 guide — is a comprehensive document. It explains principles of traffic calming, suggests a process for introducing and implementing traffic calming strategies, and describes the applicability, effectiveness, and design principle for a wide range of traffic calming devices. Those devices range from vertical and horizontal deflections to education, the creation of shared space, and the use of emerging technologies and measures.

In all, the guide includes 46 measures and devices, of which 28 are new ones for traffic calming and speed management. The new guide also looks at the applicability of traffic calming measures by road type as well as using updated traffic calming applicability tables to identify potential benefits and disbenefits for each measure, explains Hird.

As well, speed management principles and devices have been added for all types of roadways including urban arterial roads and rural highways.

The section dealing with traffic calming strategies includes a discussion of how to develop and implement a traffic calming plan from initiation through to implementation and evaluation.

Underpinning all this is an emphasis on the interconnectedness of traffic calming. “You don’t want to be laser-focused on one street. You have to look at it holistically,” says Hird.

Like any project, building the new guide had its challenges, according to Hird. They included a lack of literature on some longstanding traffic calming measures, with only anecdotal evidence to support their use.

There was the perennial financial issue, caused by varying installation costs across the country and the lack of hard data on those costs.

Incorporating cutting-edge calming strategies with a high degree of promise was also a challenge when the strategies hadn’t been thoroughly researched. “We have an entire chapter on that,” says Hird, mentioning, as an example, pavement markings that give the optical illusion of being bollards or a channelization device.

The new guide has been restructured and contains colour graphics and photos of each type of traffic calming measure. It includes device summaries and sources along with updated applicability tables.

This successful partnership sees TAC offer the Canadian Guide to Traffic Calming through the TAC bookstore as a printed book or an eBook, with CITE providing training using webinars.
Few would dispute that traffic congestion has become a plague in most urban areas. For example, according to the congestion measuring site www.tomtom.com, Vancouverites spend an average 39 per cent more in travel time because of congestion than they would in a free-flow situation, while Torontonians’ travel time is increased by 30 per cent.

Those kind of scenarios are why, for many road agencies, developing measures to mitigate traffic congestion is a priority. Identifying congestion and its characteristics is the first step towards selecting appropriate mitigation measures.

With that goal in mind, *Guidelines for Defining and Measuring Urban Congestion* offers approaches for defining and measuring traffic congestion, identifies performance measures (indices) to quantify congestion, and provides guidance on how to use different data sources for measuring congestion and presenting traffic congestion information.

“Municipalities weren’t used to measuring congestion or doing it at a network-wide level,” says Orlando Rodriguez, a transportation engineer with the Government of Alberta and chair of the project steering committee that developed the new guidelines. “The way that municipalities were verifying congestion was different from the ways [private reporting agencies did], so when you started comparing jurisdictions it became difficult.”

The guidelines, he continues, are meant to offer consistency across the country while recognizing that perfect uniformity isn’t always possible.

To create the guidelines, the committee started with a literature search and jurisdictional survey to identify what was already known on the subject and what different jurisdictions considered congestion to be.

Some of the literature originated overseas, but the majority came from the U.S., including the Transportation Research Board and the Texas Transportation Institute.

Traffic congestion was then defined, the long list of indices adopted from the literature was evaluated against a number of criteria, and a range of performance metrics to measure and monitor traffic congestion was identified.

“Users need to ensure they are informed enough to ask the right questions when working with vendors that use privately sourced GPS data.”

— Orlando Rodriguez

The resulting guidelines support practitioners by providing a correlation matrix to assist in selecting the appropriate data collection method for measuring congestion in different applications such as intersections.

In addition, practitioners can draw on the guidelines’ recommendations for selecting tools to present congestion indices. As well, there’s a decision support tool to assist in selecting the most appropriate congestion indices, data collection techniques, and visualization tools like graphs for applications.

Additionally, the guidelines explore the various technologies and data sources that can be used to measure traffic congestion. Traditionally, the aggregated point traffic measurements from inductive loop detectors were the major source for identification of traffic conditions. However, the application of new technologies such as probe vehicle technology has become more common due to the rapid expansion of consumer generated probe data from GPS devices and mobile phones.

An interesting offshoot of the project concerned the different traffic congestion reporting sites in the market. In some cases, it was challenging to determine how the data is analyzed to produce the information reported by such sites.

“The data comes from GPS sources, but it is unclear what sources and what the actual calculations are to produce the congestion measures,” says Rodriguez. “Users need to ensure they are informed enough to ask the right questions when working with vendors that use privately sourced GPS data.”
Whether it takes 5 years or 45 years before they are cruising our roadways, the arrival of connected and automated vehicles is a given. And with them comes a sea change in road transportation, according to Garreth Rempel, CEO and Co-founder of TRAINFO, President of MORR Transportation Consulting and Chair of TAC’s Automated Vehicles Working Group.

“I think this is probably the biggest change to happen to transportation since we went from horses to cars,” he says. “Nearly everything about transportation system design and operation is centred around human factors and human drivers. Removing the driver changes almost everything in the design and operation of roads.”

Recognizing that, TAC established the working group in 2015 with the objective, says Rempel, of gathering and sharing information about connected and automated vehicles — including their impact on the transportation system (i.e., traffic operations and management, road safety, infrastructure design and maintenance, and transportation planning).

Thus far, the focus of the working group has been traffic operations and management. The potential impact of connected and automated vehicles on these two areas is both wide and deep. For instance, explains Rempel, connected cars, which are able to sense and maintain distance from other vehicles better than drivers can, might be able to operate in greater numbers on narrower roads than human-piloted vehicles.

And if vehicles can simply scan a code or get information from a digital map, why would we need the proliferation of human-friendly roadway signs we now have? Already, says Rempel, 3M has started to embed existing signs with machine-readable code in anticipation of what vehicle technology can do.

“The eco-system is changing and developing almost daily,” says Rempel.

By extension, that rapidly evolving eco-system will doubtless also influence the work of TAC, including its major publications like the Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada (MUTCDC).

It will also affect a broad constituency of transportation professionals, many of whom have either served on or communicated with the Working Group over the past year and are interested in identifying synergies and the potential for collaboration. That constituency ranges from policy makers, transportation planners and engineers, and road safety experts to automakers, information and communications technology professionals, cyclists, and transportation network companies. It also includes organizations from around the world, particularly the U.S., Australia, Europe and Asia.

To facilitate that communication and collaboration, the Working Group – which is being recast as a Task Force – has been busy over the past year. Webinar speakers and conference presentations have been organized, other TAC committees have been consulted and brought up to speed, and a library of technical material has been created. The team also collaborated with Transport Canada and ITS Canada to organize and host a two-day workshop with over 80 attendees from Canada and the U.S.

Rempel and his colleagues have assembled a great deal of information and input, and they are now creating a proposed terms of reference for the next stage.

Going forward, Rempel sees the work his group has done as directly supporting “our goal as transportation engineers: to eliminate all collisions and death on the road and to make sure people are never delayed by traffic. To think this technology is here today — how could you not want to jump on board with that?”
# Financial Summary

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OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TAC is governed by a Board of Directors elected from all levels of government, the private sector, and other organizations. The Board sets the strategic direction for our Association and oversees TAC’s volunteer structure.

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Acting General Manager, Transportation, City of Calgary

Dr. Sarah Wells
Corporate Secretary, TAC Executive Director

Board as of April 23, 2018
OUR COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

UPCOMING EVENTS

FUTURE TAC CONFERENCE & EXHIBITIONS

2018 – September 30-October 3, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
2019 – September 22-25, Halifax, Nova Scotia
2020 – September 27-30, Vancouver, British Columbia

FUTURE FALL TECHNICAL MEETINGS

2018 – September 27-October 1, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
2019 – September 19-23, Halifax, Nova Scotia
2020 – September 24-28, Vancouver, British Columbia

FUTURE SPRING TECHNICAL MEETINGS

2019 – April 3-9, Ottawa, Ontario
2020 – April 1-7, Ottawa, Ontario

See TAC’s website for full list of conferences and meetings
Transportation Association of Canada

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For more information about the Transportation Association of Canada and its activities, products and services, visit

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