

# **Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) 2013-14 Program Review**

## **Discussion of Key Findings with Regional Tourism Organization Executive Directors**

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March 26, 2014

# Presentation Agenda

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Time</b>
1.	TODS Program Overview	5 mins
2.	Status Report: 2013-14 TODS Program Review	5 mins
3.	Progress Update: TODS Program Delivery	10 mins
4.	TODS Program Review Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TODS Policy</li></ul> [Break] <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program Delivery</li><li>• Wayfinding</li></ul>	50 mins <i>10 mins break</i>
5.	Questions/Feedback	15 mins
6.	Next Steps	5 mins

# Meeting Objectives:

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- 1) To provide an overview of the TODS Program.
- 2) To present a status report on the 2013-14 TODS Program Review.
- 3) Summarize TODS policy and program delivery improvements made following the 2007 TODS Program Review.
- 4) Discussion with key stakeholders to validate TODS survey results and seek additional feedback on specific themes regarding the TODS program.

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- Today's is a continuation of our discussions from last Fall and will inform the development of final program recommendations.
- It is anticipated that final recommendations for the TODS program will be shared with the tourism industry in **Fall 2014**.

# Implementation of TODS Program Improvements

- Approved TODS program improvements will be implemented at varying times over the coming years.

## Minor Program and Policy Adjustments

Implemented mid-contract through advance notice to the Service Delivery Agent (CTODS).

(anticipated implementation in Fall/Winter 2014)

- New icons
- New Sign Operator Categories
- Operation Specific Eligibility Criteria
- Improvements to Program Awareness

## Program and Policy Changes

Negotiated and implemented at contract renewal as part of procurement process.

- Contractual performance measures and requirements
- New way-finding elements

## Significant Program and Policy Changes

Require negotiation and agreement with affected ministries (e.g., MTO) to ensure adherence with other policies (e.g., regarding road signage and traffic safety)

- Capacity:
  - Additional signage at exits
  - New types of sign displays

# 1. TODS Program Overview

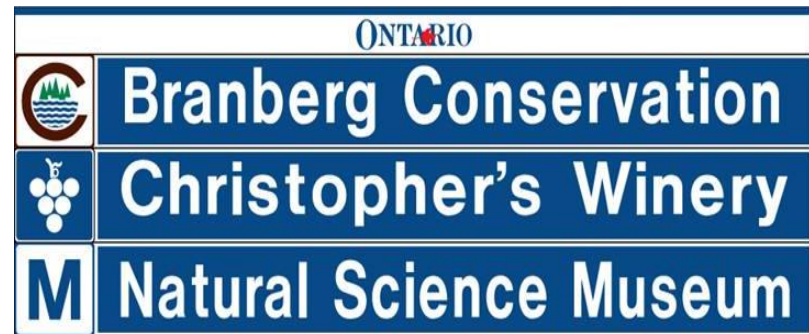
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- Objective: Provide an overview of the Ontario Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program

# TODS Program Overview

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- TODS signs are intended to be directional rather than advertising. They lead the motoring public to tourism operations and destinations.
- Canadian TODS Limited (C-TODS), a private sector company, administers the province's TODS program under the supervision of the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS).
- C-TODS is responsible for day-to-day operations and ensures that TODS signs are reliable and consistent in location, form and design.
- MTCS sets eligibility criteria, pricing, and program policy.
- MTO sets technical standards regarding sign sizes and installation, and approves the location of signs.



The signs are standardized (e.g., size, colour and message) depending on the nature of the attraction and location, and coordinated to ensure that they do not interfere with other MTO traffic signage or cause unnecessary motorists distraction.

# TODS Program Overview: Quick Facts

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## Participation

- There are approximately 3,000 participants in the TODS program and 10,700 panels displayed on provincial highways.
  - Signs are distributed relatively evenly across the province.
- TODS allows a broad range of tourism facilities to be signed in a consistent manner.
  - Of 46 categories signed, accommodations, golf and camping signs are most prominent.
- Ontario TODS has the greatest participation/ number of signs compared to any other province in Canada.

## C-TODS

- The parent company of C-TODS, Interstate Logos, runs 13 state TODS programs in the U.S. as well as Canadian TODS in Ontario.
  - The Ontario TODS program is significantly larger and more complex than any of the U.S. programs.
  - Of the 10,000 TODS structures built by Interstate Logos, more than 6,900 (or 69%) are in Ontario.
  - Over \$25 million has been spent on construction in Canadian TODS since the program's inception.

## Prices

- Annual prices range from \$60 for a low-speed trailblazer to \$4,500 for a major attraction sign on an urban freeway.
- Prices have not increased since 1996.

# TODS Program Overview: Policy

1. Policy Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To provide and improve directional information to Ontario's tourist attractions, operations and services;</li><li>2. To increase awareness of Ontario's tourist attractions, operations and services located off provincial highways;</li><li>3. To promote and strengthen tourism in Ontario on a province-wide basis.</li></ol>
2. Wayfinding and Signing Principles	Attraction signing is designed to permit individual tourism operations to be signed from provincial roads. The process of following a specific route to arrive at a pre-selected destination is known as wayfinding.
3. Standards and Policies	Motorists become dependent upon signing, and they grow to expect it to be provided clearly, consistently, and accurately. For this reason, an easily identifiable "Ontario" word mark was selected to appear along the top of all TODS signs installed on provincial roadways. Sign installations follow one of many formats possible in the TODS system.
4. Technical Data	The contractor shall be responsible for conforming to all applicable standards and guidelines as outlined or referenced in the policy. The applicant is advised of eligibility and selection criteria which must be met in order to permit any TODS installation.
5. Administration	The contractor is the company contracted by the Province of Ontario for financing, administering, erecting, and maintaining the TODS system as set out in the policy. It is their role to provide an effective signing system, at a reasonable cost, in a manner that responds to the needs of the individual tourism operator.



# TODS Program Overview: Contract

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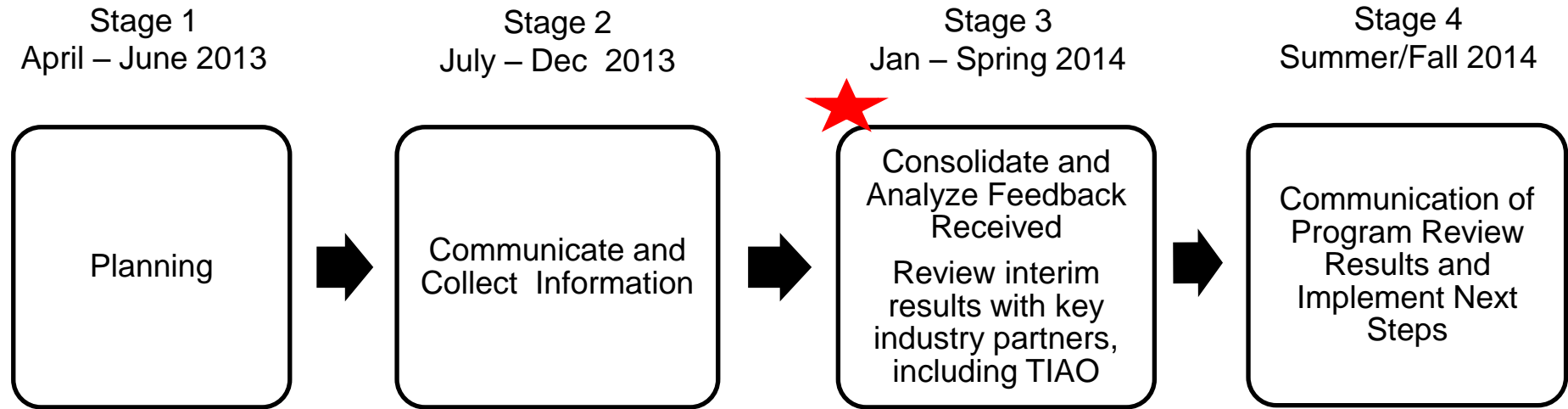
- In 2009, C-TODS was selected through an open procurement for a multi-year contract with two options for extension for two years each.
- To facilitate the TODS program review and a future procurement renewal process, the Ministries have extended the contract to December 31, 2016 by exercising the first optional extension.
- MTO and MTCS have committed to ongoing reviews of the TODS program. The extension ensures continuity of service during the TODS program review.
- While the agreement with C-TODS is until December 2016, the Ministries can make changes to the guiding policy (i.e. update sign criteria) mid-contract.

## 2. Status Report: 2013-14 TODS Program Review

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- Objective: Present a status report on the 2013-14 TODS Program Review

# Status Report: Program Review



- In Summer 2013, the Ministries initiated a review of the TODS program.
- MTCS discussed the proposed 2013-14 TODS Program Review approach with TIAO and Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) prior to its launch.
- An online survey and dedicated MTCS email address were launched in September 2013 to engage with tourism stakeholders about the TODS program. The survey closed on Oct. 31, 2013.
  - The results identified overall program recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the TODS program and customer service, and to better serve the needs of Ontario's tourism industry. Input was also sought regarding other wayfinding opportunities.

# Status Report: Program Review

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## Targeted Consultation Focus Groups

- The Ministries are now returning to a small group of industry stakeholders to communicate the survey results and seek additional feedback and clarity regarding preliminary results.
- These in-depth discussions with stakeholders will help inform the development of options for improving the effectiveness of the TODS program in the future.

## Additional Feedback and Analysis

- The Ministries regularly track the performance of the delivery agent (C-TODS) to ensure the TODS program is efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- MTCS has engaged the Ministry of Finance to conduct a consulting review of the TODS program with a focus on oversight and ongoing monitoring of the delivery agent's and program's performance.

## Scope of Potential Policy and Program Changes

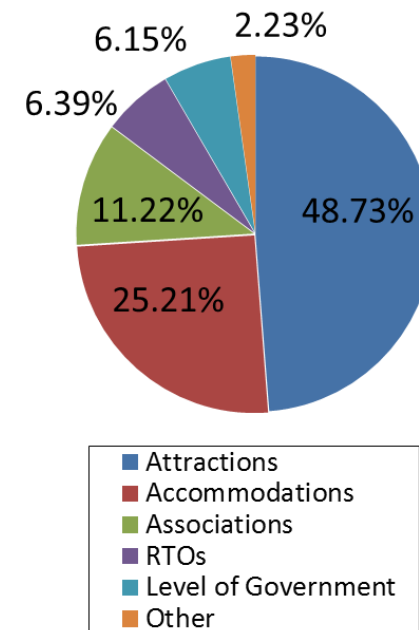
- Feedback regarding contract-related program adjustments (e.g., service standards and performance measures, other wayfinding activities, and TODS pricing) will be taken into consideration in preparation for the next procurement renewal as some changes are not possible within the current contract.
- All program and policy adjustments must adhere to MTO requirements regarding road signage and traffic safety.

# Status Report: Program Review

## Overview of Survey Results

- 830 survey responses were collected.
- 19 email messages were received.
- Type of Tourism Operation/Organization\*:
  - Attractions (404 responses)
  - Accommodations (209 responses)
  - Associations (93 responses)
    - *Includes economic development corporations, business improvement areas and DMOs.*
  - RTO (53 responses)
  - Level of Government (51 responses)
    - *Includes municipal and federal*
  - Other (19 responses)
    - *Includes media, traveler insurance, marketing firms, real estate and visitors*
- Survey Respondents:
  - Current participant in TODS program (45%)
  - Not a current participant in the TODS program (55%)

## Respondents by Type of Tourism Operation/Organization



\* Note: Respondents self-identified

## 3. Progress Update: TODS Program Delivery

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- Objective: Summarize TODS policy and program delivery improvements as a result of stakeholders' feedback from the 2007 TODS program review

# Progress Update: Improved Delivery

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- In 2009, MTO and MTCS awarded a new contract to C-TODS for the operation, management and financing of the TODS and Logo programs.
- This contract incorporated several improvements as a direct result of stakeholders' feedback in the 2007 TODS Program Review, including:
  - Program and contractual improvements to allow MTO and MTCS to define specific performance measures and service levels
  - Lower attendance threshold for major attractions in rural Ontario
  - New sign categories for spas, rural downtowns and public beaches
  - New icons for suspension bridges and kayaking
  - Stronger qualification criteria for zoos and animal displays
  - Restricted signing of operations that are predominantly retail
  - Establish a Joint Committee within government to manage TODS and Logo programs

# Progress Update: Improved Delivery

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- The current contract imposes financial consequences if C-TODS fails to meet minimum maintenance standards within defined time allotments.
  - Failure to meet the performance time limits set out in the contract may result in the issuance of deviation reports.
  - If so, C-TODS must complete the required corrective action within 30 days of the date on the deviation report.
  - If 30 days elapses, C-TODS will be required to pay each business owner identified on the sign in question the pro-rated amount of their yearly fee for the total amount of time the defect was in place.
- Current performance example:

Standard	Performance
• Signs in ground within 90 days of receiving all necessary MTO approvals	• 84% of signs installed within 90 days in 2013 * Delays can be attributed to weather, MTO construction, etc.

- Complaints received by the Ministries have subsided substantially since program start-up and now represent only a small fraction of total operator contacts.
- Client retention in TODS is currently 92%.



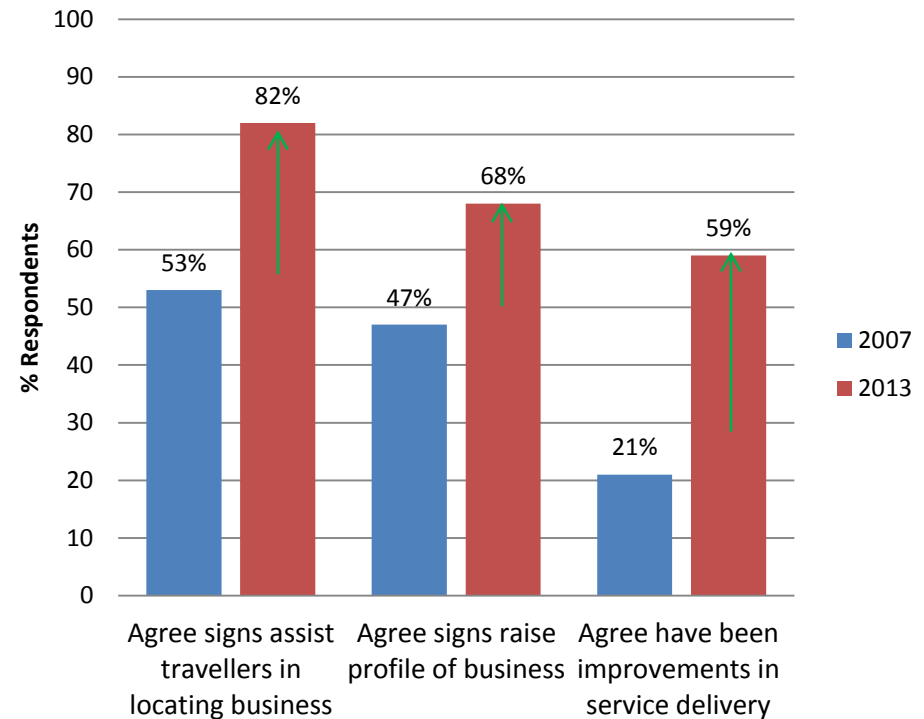
# Progress Update: Improved Delivery

- Key survey questions were maintained between the 2007 and current TODS program reviews for the purpose of comparison.

Some significant results were:

- Between 2007 and 2013, survey respondents increasingly valued TODS signs for assisting travellers in locating their business and in raising the profile of their business.
- 59% of respondents indicate improvements have been made to service delivery and service standards versus just 21% in 2007.
- Participants have also indicated improved satisfaction from 2007 to 2013 with regards to eligibility criteria and the appearance of TODS signs.

## TODS Survey Results 2007-2013



## 4. TODS Program Review Discussion

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- **Objectives:** Validate survey results and seek feedback and clarity from stakeholders on potential adjustment options with regard to the TODS Policy, service delivery, and wayfinding

# TODS Program Review Discussion

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- Based on feedback received from tourism stakeholders, discussion items will focus on the following key themes:

## **TODS Policy:**

- A. Potential **new sign categories** that reflect current tourism opportunities, for example:
  - Retail (i.e., malls)
  - Bowling Centres
  - Cinemas
  - Charitable Bingo & Gaming Centres
- B. Allow **full TODS signing of campgrounds** on freeways
- C. Improve signing **opportunities for 'Main Street Ontario'**
- D. Improve signing **opportunities for trails**
- E. Incorporate signing **opportunities for RTOs** into TODS
  - Regional/Area Profile Signs

## **TODS Program Delivery:**

- F. Enhancements to **service level standards**
- G. Improvements to **program awareness/coordination**
- H. Addressing **program capacity**

## **Wayfinding:**

- I. Suggestions for future **wayfinding opportunities**

# Discussion: TODS Policy

## 4A. Potential New Sign Categories

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# Potential New Sign Categories: Retail

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## Context and Considerations:

- Regular requests from Vaughan Mills, new Toronto Premium Outlets, etc.
- 7% of survey respondents advised they would like shopping centres & malls included in TODS
- Consistent with OTMPC marketing of shopping as a travel activity
- Would not want to sign large retail at expense of smaller tourism operations

## Options for Consideration:

- Potential units: malls, outlet malls, power centres, plazas
- Implement a tier system, with retail as “B” tier (i.e., secondary “B” tier category could be signed if space is available and there is no demand from traditional “A” tier categories)
- Exclude “big-box” retailers
  - Create a new category for “Tourism-Designated Malls” and/or Outlet Malls
  - Require visitor counts over 100,000; malls with a minimum of 100 stores, or outlet malls with a minimum of 50 stores; parking for a minimum of 1,000 vehicles, etc.

## Discussion Questions:

- Should retail be introduced as a new sign category? Why? Why not?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account for determining eligibility criteria?
- What are the impacts, if any, to current program participants and/or tourists?
- Are either of these icons appropriate?
- Do you have any additional comments?



# Potential New Sign Categories: Bowling

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## Context and Considerations:

- MTCS has received ad hoc requests to include bowling as a separate category.
  - This issue has also received some media attention.
- Requesting bowling centre indicates that league-bowling supports tourism.
  - E.g., league bowlers visit small towns each week during the April – September league-bowling season for special occasions and tournaments.
- Bowling caters to everyone regardless of age or physical ability.
- Five-pin bowling was invented by a Canadian.
- Would not want to sign bowling centres at expense of core tourism operations.



## Options for Consideration:

- Sign only “Bowl Ontario” (Southern Ontario) and “Bowl Canada” (Northern Ontario) member centres – 88 Bowl Ontario and 21 Bowl Canada member centres.
- Require daily public bowl times; centres open to the public 12 months of the year; adult and youth leagues; amenities (e.g., billiards, licensed restaurant, “rock n bowl”) .

## Discussion Questions:

- Should bowling be introduced as a new category? Why? Why not?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account for determining eligibility criteria?
- What are the impacts, if any, to current program participants and/or tourists?
- Do you have any additional comments?

# Potential New Sign Categories: Cinemas

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## Context and Considerations:

- Cineplex has requested cinemas be included in TODS:
  - Cineplex Cinemas are located throughout Ontario with large numbers situated within minutes of provincial highway exits.
  - Cineplex Cinemas exhibits Canadian films.
  - Cineplex has expanded its venue offerings to include Xscape gaming centres and VIP cinemas, including licensed lounges and in-seat food and beverage service in a cinema auditorium restricted to adults 18+.
  - Cinemas are open 365 days a year, including statutory holidays.
- Would not want to sign cinemas at expense of core tourism operations.
- Cinemas are primarily “recreational,” as opposed to a traditional “tourism experience.”



## Options for Consideration:

- Implement a tier system, with cinemas as “B” tier (i.e., secondary “B” tier category could be signed if space is available and there is no demand from traditional “A” tier categories).
- Must demonstrate significant tourist interest (e.g., attracts substantial number of visitors from outside the local area, has RTO endorsement); Require specific facilities (e.g., IMAX theatre).

## Discussion Questions:

- Should cinemas be introduced as a category? Why? Why not?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account for determining eligibility criteria?
- What are the impacts, if any, to current program participants and/or tourists?
- Do you have any additional comments?



# Potential New Sign Categories: Bingo

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## Context and Considerations:

- The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLGC) has requested their “Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres” be included in the TODS program.
- The OLGC, the Commercial Gaming Association of Ontario, and the Ontario Charitable Gaming Association are in the process of revitalizing Ontario's Charitable Bingo and Gaming industry.
- There are currently 73 bingo halls in Ontario that are registered with the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), down from about 380 previously.
  - 19 of these are “Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres” run by the OLGC. The 19 OLGC-run bingo centres have been modernized to include social gaming events, electronic bingo and other games.
  - The OLGC’s goal is to convert 40 bingo halls to “Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres.” In addition to the 19 that have already converted, 6 more are scheduled for conversion over the next year. 18 others have expressed interest, but are not scheduled to convert at this time.
- The licensing and regulation of charity bingo is a responsibility of the AGCO.

## Options for Consideration:

- Sign only OLGC-run “Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres.”
- Require OLGC management, charity component, modern gaming opportunities, etc.

## Discussion Questions:

- Should bingo centres be introduced as a new sign category? Why? Why not?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account for determining eligibility criteria?
- What are the impacts, if any, to current program participants and/or tourists?
- Do you have any additional comments?



# Discussion: TODS Policy

## 4B. Full Signing of Campgrounds

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# Full Signing: Campgrounds

## Context and Considerations:

- On freeways, campgrounds are only eligible for generic markers on tourist composites, and not for full TODS signing.
- The full name of the campground is not spelled out until the ramp terminal.
- On “King’s Highways,” the name of a signed campground is fully spelled out - they are eligible for regular or major attraction signing.
- C-TODS indicates there is sufficient space to fully sign campgrounds on freeways – some composite boards with one marker only are taking the place of regular sign structures.

Freeway: Generic Campground  
Marker on Composite Board



## Options for Consideration:

- Allow full TODS signing on freeways.
- Permit corporate logos on composite boards (e.g., KOA campgrounds).

## Discussion Questions:

- Do you agree with the change being considered (i.e., full TODS signing on freeways)?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account?
- What are the impacts, if any, to current program participants and/or tourists?
- Do you have any additional comments?

# **Discussion: TODS Policy**

## **4C. Opportunities for 'Main Street Ontario'**

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# Potential Opportunities: Main Street Ontario

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## Context and Considerations:

- MTCS is working with the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) as part of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment's Open For Business Roundtable process.
  - OBIAA has identified five priorities for government discussion and action to increase the economic contribution of Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).
  - One of OBIAA's priorities that is related to tourism focuses on BIAs as tourism destinations, including the alignment between tourism marketing and OBIAA's "Go ON" and "Main Street Ontario" branding.
  - BIAs indicate they would be interested in exploring:
    - Additional TODS icons for "downtown"/"main street" destination signage in order to help brand BIAs as an attraction.
    - Some BIAs have indicated they are being excluded by the 'less than 10,000' population requirement in the eligibility criteria for "rural downtowns."
  - There are more than 55,000 businesses represented within Ontario's more than 280 BIAs.
- Rural Downtowns TODS Signage:
  - "Rural downtowns" are recognized in the TODS program - 17 are currently signed.
  - Approximately 30 BIAs have a population less than 10,000 and thus may be eligible for TODS "rural downtowns" signing.
  - Survey results indicate that 6.5% of stakeholders would like to see changes to "downtowns" (BIAs, historic downtowns, municipalities).

# Potential Opportunities: Main Street Ontario

## Options for Consideration:

- Work with OBIAA to add an additional icon to the “rural downtowns” category that better aligns with the OBIAA brand.
- Modify the population condition in the “rural downtowns” criteria.
  - Increasing the population condition to 25,000 may make approximately 75 BIAs eligible for TODS; a 50,000 population count may open the category up to about 100 BIAs.
- Add a new category for “Main Street Ontario” with separate eligibility criteria and no population condition (consideration must be given to capacity challenges).

## Discussion Questions:

- Should the population condition in the “rural downtowns” criteria be modified? How? (e.g., Increased? To what number?)
- Is it more important to sign “Main Street Ontario”/ “rural downtowns” over larger retail operations (e.g., tourism-designated malls)?
- Are there other options that should be considered to support BIAs?
- Do you have any additional comments?

Current  
Generic Icon  
(TODS)



OBIAA “Go  
ON” Brand



Potential  
Additional Generic  
Icon (TODS)



# Discussion: TODS Policy

## 4D. Opportunities for Trails Signage

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# Potential Opportunities: Trails

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## Context and Considerations:

- The TODS program signs a variety of categories of trails: Natural Sites & Trails (Developed), Snowmobile Trail Access Points, Ski Operations (Nordic or Cross Country), and Riding Operations (e.g., Trail Ride Operations). To qualify, trail operations must meet basic criteria as well as trails-specific criteria.
- MTCS has received ad hoc requests from ATV Clubs to include ATV Trail Access Points in TODS.
- 6% of survey respondents advised they would like to see changes to “Trails” in TODS – but were not specific.
- However, because it was largely non-participants who expressed dissatisfaction with operation eligibility, it is possible changes may be desired because:
  - There are trails operations who do not qualify for TODS but would like to (e.g., ATV Clubs); and/or,
  - There are eligibility criteria that prevent certain trails operations from participating, for example:
    - Basic requirement for a reception structure. Trails may not have controlled gates, staff or interpretation panels.
    - Trails-specific requirement for a “Natural Site & Trail” to be owned and managed by a municipal or provincial government. Some trails may be managed by not-for-profit organizations.

## Options for Consideration:

- Include ATV Trail Access Points in TODS (i.e., “Snowmobile and ATV Trail Access Points”)
- Work with specific stakeholders (e.g., Ontario Trails Council, RTOs) to review the TODS eligibility criteria as it relates to trails to assess impacts and potential options for modernization of the trails criteria, if appropriate.

## Discussion Questions:

- Are these options appropriate?
- In your opinion, would there be a significant uptake should ATV Trail Access Points be included in TODS?
- Are there criteria (basic or trails-specific) that act as a barrier to a trail operation’s participation in TODS?
- Are there other categories of trails that do not qualify for TODS that should?
- Do you have any additional comments?

# Discussion: TODS Policy

## 4E. Opportunities for RTOs

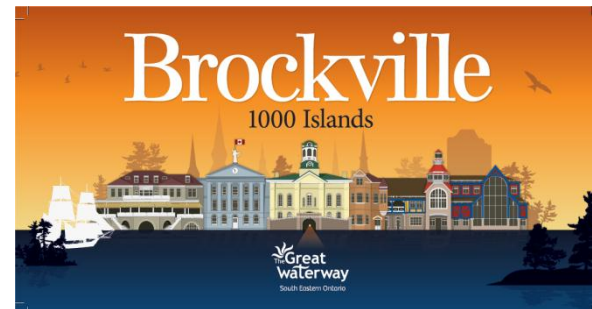
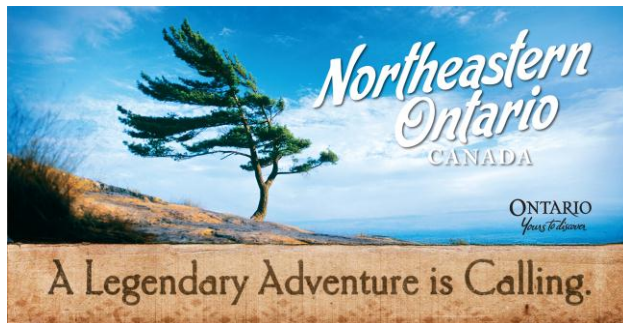
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# Opportunities for RTOs: Profile Signs

## Context and Considerations

- The current TODS Policy was created prior to the implementation of the Regional Tourism Approach and does not take into account the existence of RTOs.
- The TODS Policy permits a maximum of 2 **Area Profile Signs** (one in each direction) on each provincial highway which passes within 40km of its boundary, but which does not pass through the themed area.
- Area Profiles must support existing/ established marketing priorities of the area and demonstrate endorsement by local MTCS field staff.
- 39 Ontario “Areas” are currently profiled with 95 sign panels. Any adjustment to current Area Profile Sign criteria would need to consider how to address current Area Profile Signs (e.g., “grandfathering”).
- Northeastern Ontario is the first RTO to officially request a sign - to replace the “Rainbow Country” Area Profile Sign. Brockville has included the Great Waterway logo on their new Area Profile Sign.
- The Ministry is interested in ensuring consistency in the RTO approach to Area Profile Signage.



# Opportunities for RTOs: Profile Signs

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## Options for Consideration:

- Create a new category, similar to Area Profile signs, for RTOs: “Regional or RTO Profile Signs.”
- Modify the Area Profile Sign criteria to require the RTO’s endorsement of the Area to be signed.
- Require the RTO’s logo be placed on all Area Profile Signs in the Region.

## Discussion Questions:

- Should RTOs be incorporated into the TODS program?
- Are the options/considerations above appropriate?
- What other considerations should be taken into account for determining eligibility criteria?
- Do you have any additional comments?

# Discussion: Program Delivery

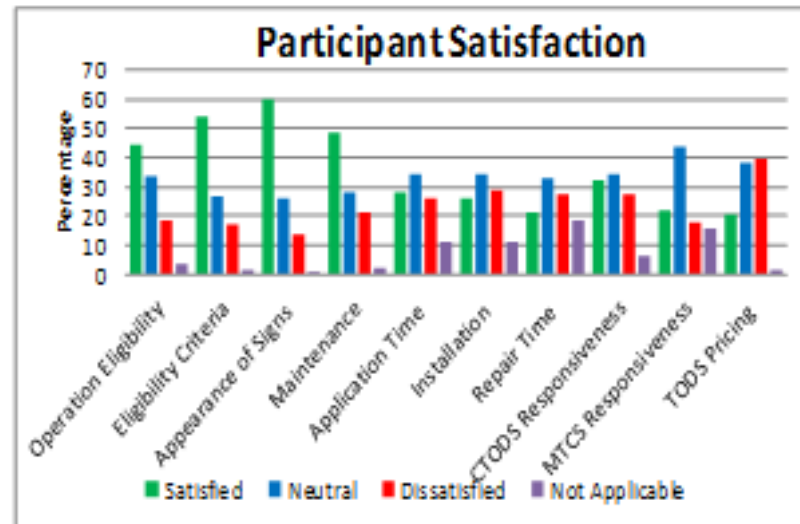
## 4F. Service Level Standards

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# Service Standards

## Context and Considerations:

- Since 2009, the delivery agent (C-TODS) is required to adhere to the following service levels:
  - Install signs within 90 days of receiving all necessary MTO approvals.
  - Address missing, illegible, obscured signs within 30 days of detection.
  - Correct defects within 60 days of detection (e.g., delamination, 'dead spots,' rust stains).
  - Correct improper positioning or location within 60 days of detection.
  - Fix missing/broken/bent hardware (e.g., fasteners, brackets) within 7 days.
  - Return phone inquiries/complaints within one business day, other forms within 10 business days.
- In 2013, most survey respondents indicated improvements have been made to service delivery since 2009. However, results suggest there is still room for improvement, particularly with regard to customer service (i.e., staff responsiveness).
- Survey results indicate that there may be room for improvement with respect to the following areas:
  - Application Time,
  - Installation,
  - Repair Time,
  - C-TODS Responsiveness,
  - MTCS Responsiveness, and
  - TODS pricing.



# Service Standards

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## Options for Consideration:

- Add an annual customer service training requirement to future TODS contract.
- Modify/add additional service standards/performance measures to future TODS contracts.
- Include more information regarding service standards that CTODS must adhere to within individual client contracts.
- Implement an annual survey to measure TODS customer satisfaction.

## Discussion Questions:

- Do you know of any specific tools or processes that may improve achievement of the service standards?
- Are there any additional service standards/performance measures that should be considered for inclusion in future contracts?
- Do you know of any specific tools or processes that may improve customer service specifically?
- Do you have any additional suggestions?

*Note: MTCS is also engaging with the Ministry of Finance to conduct a consulting review of the TODS program with a focus on oversight and ongoing monitoring of the delivery agent's and program's performance.*

# Discussion: Program Delivery

## 4G. Program Awareness

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# Program Awareness

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## Context and Considerations:

- Survey results indicate that 16% of stakeholders would like to see:
  - More RTO participation in the administration of TODS (28%)
  - Greater awareness/ assistance for stakeholders regarding TODS program requirements (34%)
  - Greater coordination with municipalities so there is consistency with wayfinding signage (38%)
- Some survey respondents indicated they were unaware of the specifics of the TODS policy and the categories currently eligible.
- Ministry involvement in ongoing issues management related to TODS suggests there is often confusion regarding the specifics of the TODS policy requirements.

## Options for Consideration:

- Require collaboration with, or approval by, municipalities and/or RTOs in particular instances (e.g., Area Profile Signs).
- Incorporate a redesign and modernization of TODS informational materials and website into next contract.
- Proactively provide RTOs/Municipalities with TODS information brochures so they can appropriately direct questions.

## Discussion Questions:

- Do you have any specific suggestions about how to better incorporate RTOs, municipalities or the Regional Tourism Approach into TODS?
- Do you have any other suggestions?

# **Discussion: Program Delivery**

## **4H. Program Capacity**

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# Program Capacity

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## Context and Considerations:

- Intersection sign structures are at capacity or near capacity in population dense and high traffic locations.
- There is limited sign space available at some key interchanges, for example, QEW to Niagara.
- MTO highway reconstruction and widening projects are limiting space further.
- Non-participant survey respondents identified sign availability as a challenge:
  - 26% of current non-participants ceased participation because of availability of signage.
  - 12% of respondents have never participated as a result of sign availability.

## Options for Consideration:

- Work with MTO to explore opportunities for alternative sign structures that alleviate capacity concerns and/or address reconstruction and widening projects (e.g., TODS Cluster signs, tiered sign categories, revised 'bumping' criteria).

## Discussion Questions:

- Are you aware of any best practices to mitigate the limited availability of sign space?
- Are there any technological solutions to consider?

# Discussion: Wayfinding

## 4I. Future Wayfinding Opportunities

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# Wayfinding Opportunities

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## Context and Considerations:

- The 2009 Tourism Competitiveness Study Report, '*Discovering Ontario: A Report on the Future of Tourism*,' included a recommendation to improve wayfinding. Since then,
  - A new TODS contract was awarded in 2009 with enhanced service improvements in directional signage on provincial highways and new sign categories.
  - MTCS is currently undertaking a detailed program review of the TODS program in consultation with the industry, including a broader discussion regarding wayfinding.
  - Some RTOs have used Ministry funding for signage and wayfinding activities.
- It is a requirement of the current TODS/Logo contract that “the Ministries will not sponsor or support the creation of parallel wayfinding highway signing systems similar to the TODS and Logo signing systems.”
- At this time, the scope of MTCS discussions on broader wayfinding initiatives is exploratory.

## Survey Results:

- Survey respondents suggested the following opportunities be considered in addition to TODS signs for future wayfinding initiatives:
  - Linkages with GPS
  - TODS smartphone or tablet app
  - Links to social media and tourism websites
  - Include QR Codes on signs
  - Coordinate with online tools such as Google Maps
- However, respondents also indicated that GPS is unreliable and that web-based technologies are often inaccessible or unreliable.

# Wayfinding Opportunities

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## Discussion Questions:

- What are some ways that technology could be used to advance wayfinding (e.g., GPS)?
- What are your priorities for improving wayfinding in the province?
- Can RTOs and/or other tourism stakeholders (e.g., attractions) play a role in supporting or improving wayfinding? How?
- Do you have any other suggestions?



## 5. Feedback? Questions?

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**Branberg Conservation**



**Christopher's Winery**



**Natural Science Museum**

## 6. Next Steps

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# Next Steps

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consolidate and analyze program review results and develop recommendations for policy/program changes</li></ul>	Spring/Summer 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate final program review results and approved policy/program changes</li></ul>	Fall 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementation of approved policy/program changes</li></ul>	Fall 2014/Winter 2015



# THANK YOU!

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