

LOCAL TRUCK ROUTES: A GUIDE FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS



Ontario
Trucking
Association

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Ontario Trucking Association

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) was founded in 1926, and provides services and public policy advocacy for trucking companies hauling freight into, out of and within the Province of Ontario. OTA member fleets operate over two-thirds of all commercial tractor-trailers on Ontario roadways and employ over 70,000 men and women who work in the trucking industry. OTA is the only trucking association in Ontario that represents all segments of the industry - for-hire carriers, private carriers, intermodal, suppliers, etc.

OTA members consist of trucking companies from virtually every Canadian province, as well as the United States. Our member companies are small and medium-sized operations, as well as many of the largest transportation enterprises in North America. OTA members come from all sectors of the trucking industry. Both for-hire carriers and private carriers belong to OTA. The Association's membership also includes a significant number of allied trades - those companies providing goods and services to the trucking industry.

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What is a Truck Route?

Although the national and international movements of freight are beyond the jurisdiction of a municipality, local governments have an important opportunity to facilitate safe and efficient trucking in their communities. By establishing appropriate truck routes designed with input from both the trucking industry and the community, a municipality can help ensure that mobility for all roadway users is preserved, freight and goods can move safely and efficiently and the local economy continues to grow.

WHAT IS A TRUCK ROUTE?

“Truck route” means the set or network of roads or streets that a local government has formally designated for certain trucks to use when traveling through or within that jurisdiction.

Overview

The efficient movement of goods is vital to the economic development and growth of commerce in Ontario. Trucks bring in raw materials for manufacturing and transport finished goods for consumption; thus many jobs are related to and dependent on the freight industry. An effective transportation system that optimizes freight capacity must exist if Ontario is to maintain and enhance its economic strength.

Trucks move goods and freight to grocery stores, markets and restaurants, manufacturing facilities, office buildings, and residences that receive delivery of goods and packages. Trucks come in many shapes and sizes; they range from large semis (delivering to grocery stores and moving vans) to gravel trucks delivering aggregates to local industries to smaller panel trucks that deliver overnight packages to homes or businesses. Like school buses, garbage trucks, fire trucks and other emergency vehicles, they have special operating characteristics for which communities may need to plan and accommodate.

The types of trucks traveling in your municipality will depend on the types of businesses and industries operating there. The nature of a community’s local businesses and industries will dictate the truck traffic and determine whether a truck route is needed to facilitate its movement. Each municipality will need to determine if a truck route is appropriate for its unique circumstances.

TYPES OF TRUCK TRAFFIC

Trucking activity can be broadly divided between those carriers handling traffic in full truckloads and those specializing in smaller shipments. Truckload traffic (TL) is usually moved direct from the shipper to the receiver. Less than truckload (LTL) traffic requires separate handling for pick up, consolidation, distribution, and delivery with the resulting need for terminal facilities that can accommodate shipment sorting and processing.

The movement of trucks within a municipality can be classified into four categories: 1) internal-to-internal trips; 2) internal-to-external trips; 3) external-to-internal trips; and 4) external-to-external trips. All types of truck traffic and truck movements are found in every municipality.

For example, internal-to-internal trips are those whose origins and destinations are both located within a municipality. Internal-to-external trips are those whose origins begin within the municipality and travel to a destination outside municipal boundaries. Conversely, external-to-internal trips are those whose origins begin outside of the municipality and travel to destination contained within the municipal boundaries. External-to-external trips are those whose origins and destinations lie outside of a municipality, and should be routed on the Provincial highway system within a municipality.

TYPES OF TRUCKS

Example of trucks that may be traveling in your municipality:



Tractor 4-axle Semi-Trailer



Tractor 5-axle Semi-Trailer



Tractor 6-axle Semi-Trailer



Tractor Triaxle Semi-Trailer
Aggregate Vehicle



A-train Double



B-train Double



Tandem-Axle Truck and Full Trailer



Self-Steer Triaxle Truck



Tandem-Axle Truck



2-Axle Truck

What is a Truck?

A truck is a motor vehicle, other than a bus, that is larger than a passenger vehicle, SUV, pick-up truck or van, carries cargo and transports goods, freight, commodities, livestock, etc. A truck may:

- Be a single unit (cab plus cargo area)
- Be a combination vehicle (tractor and trailer(s))
- Have a variety of different cargo carrying configurations – enclosed, flatbed, open with sidewalls, containers, automobile rack, etc.
- Be operated under a for-hire common carrier or private carrier
- Also be operated by a truckload carrier (e.g. single load transported from origin to destination) or a “less than truckload” (LTL) carrier

How and Why do Trucks Move?

The increase in truck traffic across the transportation network of Ontario is influenced by the dramatic changes in the global economy, consumer demand, and growth in the logistics industry. Truck movement is essential to providing us with the goods and services we need in our daily lives. The efficient movement of trucks benefits residents by reducing the cost of shipping goods, and contributing to the economic growth of the municipality.

What is the Purpose of a Truck Route?

The purpose of a truck route system is to provide rules that balance the needs of commerce and the trucking industry with the desire to minimize the impacts of trucks on sensitive land uses. As such, a truck route system does not prohibit trucks from using any road within your municipality, but does require they use roads most suitable to the greatest extent possible, and limit their intrusion into the sensitive areas to the minimum possible.

The purpose of truck route planning is to define the street network that is (A) safest for the movement of large vehicles, (B) supports local and regional commerce and (C) provides enough capacity and adequate design features to accommodate the anticipated volume, size and weight of vehicles.

Why Establish a Truck Route?

The economy of Ontario relies heavily on the ability to move trucks effectively and efficiently. Truck movement, while reflection of global, and national economics, has a direct and significant local economic impact. More than ever before, decisions about where to locate businesses are based on how the transportation system functions. Congestion, an increasing transportation problem, has implications for a municipality's economic base not only from a commuter standpoint but from the position of local and national truck movement.

WHY ESTABLISH A TRUCK ROUTE?

Truck route planning may promote the safe and efficient movement of goods in and around a community. Effective routing can minimize community impacts and is crucial to the economy and well-being of a community and the greater region.

What are the Reasons for Establishing a Truck Route?

A truck route system may:

- Help trucks avoid inappropriate residential streets
- Reduce traffic congestion throughout the municipality and the region
- Increase logistics options that will benefit businesses, transportation providers and consumers
- Improve the economic competitiveness and attractiveness of industrial sites at major distribution points
- Provide a major benefit to the municipality's economy

The efficient movement of trucks benefits residents by reducing the cost of shipping goods, and contributing to the economic growth of the municipality.

Some municipalities may find that their current systems are working well and adequately serve community needs. However, other communities may benefit from planning a truck route. Each municipality must examine its unique truck traffic situation and determine a solution that serve the unique needs of the local community.



ECONOMIC STATS

- Trucks touch 90% of all consumer products & foodstuffs at some point in the delivery process
- Trucks carry 58% of Canada-US trade by value (rail 17%, marine 5.3%, air 5.3%, other 14.2%) totaling over \$290 billion
- 10 ½ million trucks cross the Canada-US border a year or once every 3 seconds
- For-hire trucking alone contributes 1.4% of Canada's GDP (@\$17 billion) More than rail, air & marine combined
- There are over 12,000 for-hire carriers of which about 100 carriers earning \$25 million or more account for 25% of total for-hire revenue of \$34 billion
- Industry employs over 388,000 Canadians (excluding private carriers)
 - 50% for-hire
 - 25% owner-operator
 - 25% delivery drivers
- Accounts for 46% of total employment in transportation services sector
- Trucking is a major employer in Ontario —over 200,000 people make their livelihood in the trucking sector.
- It is estimated that more than 95% of the goods moved within Ontario depend on truck transportation, either solely, or as part of a truck-rail intermodal shipment.
- There are between 175,000 - 200,000 trucks on Ontario roads on any given day

Source: Statistics Canada and Transport Canada

What are the Goals of Establishing a Truck Route?

The economic growth and development of a municipality greatly depends on the ability to minimize transportation time and costs for trucks and passenger vehicles. In general, the goals in selecting and establishing truck routes are:

- To provide safe, efficient and connective routes to best service commercial and non-commercial truck travel while minimizing impact to surrounding communities
- To provide a seamless transition between external truck traffic and the internal road network
- To provide easy access to truck information in the form of consistent, readable and accurate signage, readily available maps and reduced time and weight restrictions

Truck movement is essential to providing us with the goods and services we need in our daily lives. The efficient movement of trucks benefits residents by reducing the cost of shipping goods, and contributing to the economic growth of the municipality. The efficient movement of goods is vital to economic development and commerce in Ontario.



Who Could Establish a Truck Route?

Local municipalities may find it appropriate to establish a truck route system and bylaw to address the challenges of accommodating cars and trucks on the local transportation network. Truck and freight movement is vital to the efficient flow of goods that support economic development and the growth of your municipality.

COULD YOUR MUNICIPALITY ESTABLISH A TRUCK ROUTE?

Local truck routes may create an efficient transportation network of interconnecting streets, enabling truck operators the ability to effectively ship and deliver goods and services to the consumer.

What is the Importance of Planning a Truck Route?

Maintaining sufficient infrastructure to accommodate goods movement by truck is vital to the efficient movement of goods to support economic development and growth in your municipality. Municipalities should recognize that roads within their jurisdictions form an essential part of the broader regional freight network and may need to be upgraded and enhanced in response to the need for efficient goods movement.

Local truck routes serve an important role in creating an efficient transportation network of interconnecting streets, enabling truck operators the ability to effectively ship and deliver goods and services to the consumer. Improving the movement of goods and services within a municipality will advance the municipality's economic competitiveness and enhance the community's quality of life.

Any municipality, regardless of size, has the ability to develop a set of rules and policies that ensure future development does not impede the flow of goods. Each community has different characteristics and, therefore, different transportation needs. Smaller municipalities with less money to spend on capital-intensive projects can add freight-conscious policies

into their Official Plan, while larger jurisdictions with greater populations and greater freight movement concerns may undertake larger projects.

The contribution of trucks in helping achieve economic vitality is often undervalued. Municipalities may proactively plan to accommodate freight movements within their jurisdiction through the designation of a network of truck routes in their Official Plans and/or Transportation Master Plans. Ideally, the truck network should be the full arterial road network, designed for accommodation of all truck sizes and free of temporal restrictions.



ENVIRONMENTAL STATS

- Since 2010, trucks have been equipped with smog-free engines, reducing nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions by 90% compared to previous models.
- The Ultra Low Diesel Fuel now used in trucks contains 97% less sulphur than before.
- There is now a mandate in Canada that all diesel fuel sold in prescribed jurisdictions, including Ontario, must contain a two per cent biodiesel content.
- The smog free truck is expected to lead to 3 million kilogram reduction in particulate matter which is the equivalent of removing 100,000 trucks from the road. It will also lead to a 140 million kg reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions or the equivalent of removing 90,000 trucks from the road.
- In 2012 Environment Canada will introduce into law regulations governing GHG emissions from heavy trucks. This regulation is expected to reduce fuel use by heavy trucks in the range of 757 million litres between 2014 -2018 resulting in a reduction of 2 billion kilograms of CO2 emissions during the same period.
- Many fleets are adopting voluntary measures to further reduce their carbon footprint by introducing non-regulated technologies onto their trailers that further reduce GHG emissions by a further 40%.
- Trucking companies, depending on their operations, are exploring cutting edge technology such as hybrid and liquefied natural gas engines.

Sources: Environment Canada, Canadian Transportation Agency, Rocky Mountain Institute and the Environmental Protection Agency

Who Should be Involved?

When contemplating planning a truck route, the municipality should reach out to all relevant stakeholders, including the trucking industry, law enforcement agencies, emergency management agencies, municipal and provincial transportation officials, interest groups, transit providers, business leaders, school officials, and public works officials, etc. It may be beneficial to create a Truck Route Plan Technical Committee comprised of these officials to assist in the development of the plan. The keys are to have all relevant stakeholders involved in the planning process. Although all parties may not agree on the final result of the planning process, it is important to ensure that everyone has a voice in that process.

One of the most important aspects of local truck route planning involves regional coordination. Since major truck routes are typically located in multiple jurisdictions, each community must work cooperatively to ensure continuity regarding truck route bylaw plans, routes and existing and future land uses. A regional partnership is essential to preserve local truck routes, ultimately ensuring an efficient transportation system and a prosperous economy.



How do you Establish a Truck Route?

Local truck routes could serve an important role in creating an efficient transportation network of interconnecting streets, enabling truck operators the ability to effectively ship and deliver goods and services to the consumer. The process of identifying truck routes and ensuring sufficient infrastructure is in place to accommodate truck traffic is vital to the preservation of commerce in communities of all sizes. The impacts of trucks on a community's roadways may depend in large part on the local truck route plan and bylaw, and the specific designations for and/or restrictions of the use of local roads and provincial highways by commercial vehicles.

HOW DOES A MUNICIPALITY ESTABLISH A TRUCK ROUTE?

The process of developing a municipal truck route and bylaw is based on a comprehensive assessment of the truck situation and, if correctly implemented, the process leads to a systematic determination of options for accommodating trucks on the local street system.

The trucking industry serves the needs of the community by delivering goods, freight and services to businesses and residents. The movement of trucks in a municipality reflects the needs and commercial activities of the community. The efficient movement of goods and services is vital to supporting and improving commerce and economic growth in Ontario's communities. By establishing truck routes, a municipality may facilitate this improvement for itself and the Province.

A truck routing plan begins with a clear definition of the traffic problem leading to the development of a fair, workable solution. In developing a truck-routing plan, the municipality should consider forming a planning committee to assemble an effective scope of work to define and resolve the issue. It is important to involve all disciplines on the planning committee that may be affected including governmental agencies, trucking firms, and interest groups. The experience and knowledge of this committee can provide valuable insight in defining the problem and essential data collection efforts.

The process of developing a municipal truck route plan and bylaw is based on a comprehensive assessment of the truck problem and highlights a procedure to systematically determine a successful solution. The process involves collecting and analyzing data to define the work scope, evaluate alternatives, develop and implement regulations, and establish a periodic review to determine the overall effectiveness of the regulations and amend the plan and bylaw as necessary to achieve the desired results.



SAFETY STATS

- Tractor-trailers are involved in less than 2 - 3% of all collisions in Ontario
- Truck drivers are not at fault in approximately 70% of all collisions they are involved in
- Trucks are involved in 20% fewer collisions today than 15 years ago
- Vehicle defects are a factor in less than 1% of fatal truck collisions

Source: Ontario Ministry of Transportation

- Tractor-trailers involved in reportable collisions represent a small fraction of vehicles involved in collisions in Canada – an average of 1.98% from 2004-2008
- This fraction has steadily declined since 2004 and reached 1.85% in 2008
- Number of road user casualties in collisions involving tractor-trailers is on a downward trend and reached 0.78% of all casualties in 2008
- In 2009, tractor-trailers were involved in 0.01% of fatal collisions involving commercial and other vehicles
- In 2008, there was no apparent vehicle defect in 98.1% of all collisions involving trucks
- Commercial driver fatigue was a factor in 0.43% of reportable traffic collisions in 2008

Source: Transport Canada

How does Your Municipality Plan a Truck Route?

Planning for a truck route system began with the identification of the network of roadway segments to be studied. Following this, truck route roadway characteristics could be developed to help determine which major roadway segments may serve as truck routes. The roadway characteristics identified as most important in assessing a truck route are listed below:

- Existing Truck Routes
- Adjacent Land Uses
- Bridge Locations
- Roadway Classification or Type
- Number of Lanes
- Constrained Road Status
- Traffic Analysis

Improving the movement of goods and services within a municipality will advance the municipality's economic competitiveness and enhance the community's quality of life.



What are the Key Considerations When Planning Truck Routes?

The special issues to consider when establishing a truck route include:

- Anticipation, planning and incorporation of future development access needs
- Development of off-peak deliveries program in key commercial areas
- Identifying the businesses served by trucks
- Location of current trucking companies within the municipality
- Incorporation into and/or modification of major thoroughfare plan
- Consideration of the traffic impacts to surrounding roads if truck traffic is restricted to a single road
- Development of freight-supportive land use guidelines
- Development of the plan as part of regional approach to moving goods

Pedestrians

Crosswalks, median refuge islands, and curb extensions are three design elements that assist pedestrians in urban environments. On truck routes, however, these design elements can impede truck movements. With wider intersections for truck turning movements, pedestrians may have longer crosswalks to negotiate at intersections and curb extensions may not be possible. Longer crossing times may be needed for pedestrians. On wider roadways, pedestrian median refuges may need to be designed with mountable curbs and pedestrians need to be aware of large vehicles turning into the road they intend to cross.

Bicycles

When planning truck routes, consideration should also be given to avoid roads which form part of or are planned for a wider cycle network. Where this is not possible, alternative provision should be made. Protected space or priority treatments are therefore

needed where bicycle riders are likely to come into conflict with trucks. On designated routes with a significant number of trucks, physical segregation or an alternative route will be preferred by most bicycle riders. This may be achieved by:

- Directing bicycle riders along quieter side streets and away from busier intersections
- Offering signed routes through vehicle restricted areas or road closures
- Constructing off-road bicycle facilities

However, it must be remembered that designated cycle routes need to be direct, convenient and comfortable if they are to be well used.

Noise

Communities surrounding major truck-related businesses and distribution centers will experience truck traffic and the associated noises with truck traffic. Local communities can reduce noise exposure from trucks through transportation planning and land use policies. Such strategies and policies move truck traffic away from residents, reduce noise exposure, or discourage new development near truck routes. Typical measures to shield residents from truck induced noise include the installation of noise barriers, the sound-proofing of structures and/or routing traffic to reduce noise exposure.



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Local Truck Route Design Considerations

The process of planning for local truck route plan requires a consideration of the physical conditions of the transportation network, and its ability to accommodate truck travel. In order for a truck route to properly facilitate the transport of goods and services, roadways, intersections, pavement, crossings, lane width, turning radii, etc. must be designed to accommodate trucks. The types of trucks using the network must also be recognized as a major determinant of truck route facility design. As well, it is important to recognize the locations of local carriers and their needs within a municipality. Exemptions from truck movement restrictions may need to be explored for local cartage companies.

In determining appropriate truck routes, physical design features of the roadways are important considerations that significantly affect traffic operation and safety. Critical geometric design factors that directly influence truck-routing guidelines include vertical clearance, lateral clearance, sign placement, weight limits, turning radii, intersection and interchange design. A thorough review of any proposed route must include these basic factors and should also consider the standard design vehicle requirements for the most prevalent truck being driven on the route.

How Should Truck Routes be Communicated Once Established?

Even the most patient truck driver will be frustrated by the lack of information about municipal truck routes and conflicting local regulations. No government issued map shows all designated truck routes. Truck drivers need to call individual municipal governments or police departments to request printed maps, if available, or ask the shipper or receiver for this information. Lack of information frequently can result in inadvertent violations and stiff fines, as local police enforce laws and local bylaws even though the regulations are not easily known. Local municipalities should adopt these following practices in establishing Truck Routes:

Signage

To assist the trucking industry, municipalities should appropriately sign municipal truck routes and exceptional load routes using a common format and identify key intermodal connections and provide more comprehensive information for drivers than a simple directional sign. Appropriately signed routes provide clarity to truck drivers and ensure compliance with municipal restrictions.

Outreach and Education

The municipality should reach out to stakeholders, including the trucking industry, law enforcement agencies, municipal and state transportation officials, and residents to secure cooperation in implementing the truck route network and supporting policies. Education initiatives are crucial to ensure that all stakeholders share an understanding of the truck regulations, and act as contributors to the development and implementation of truck management techniques. For example, the municipality could sponsor information seminars for the local motor truck carriers to educate the drivers on the truck routes and regulations.

Route Planning Assistance

A municipality's website provides an excellent location for placing truck route maps and is an ideal vehicle for the dissemination of truck route information to trucking companies, shippers and couriers as well as the general public. The municipality may also request that major shippers, trucking companies and the OTA provide links to municipal truck route maps on their own websites. This would facilitate route planning for truck trips including the identification of alternate routes.

Additional approaches may include displaying such maps on signage on key municipal trucking gateways and distributing hard copy maps to local shippers, receivers, truck stops and trucking firms.

How do we Know if the Truck Route is Working?

Because a local truck route plan and bylaw should be constructed to enable adaptation to changing community and trucking needs and issues, a municipality should review the truck route plan periodically. This review should look for any safety or community impact problems that have emerged since the initial implementation of the truck routes. Dynamics such as new freight activity centers and changes in highway access points should be part of any such review.

A municipality should undertake a periodic review of the effectiveness of the truck route to determine how well it is meeting the goals and objectives established during the planning process. This review should look for any traffic problems that may have developed after implementing the bylaw and establishing the route(s). The assessment should also examine the truck movements and how these movements may have shifted after establishing the truck route(s). By conducting regular reviews of the truck route plan and bylaw, a municipality can ensure that truck traffic remains well managed and moves safely and efficiently through the community.

Municipal Bylaws

Each municipality may calibrate a truck route bylaw for their unique circumstances. The municipality may assemble the appropriate elements into a truck route bylaw to resolve their traffic safety and operations problem for their municipality. Upon completion of the truck route bylaw, the municipality may have the governmental agency enact the bylaw into the local legislation to empower the regulations.

The enforcement of the municipality's truck routes and accompanying policies will depend on the drafting of a bylaw that is clear in its meaning and applicability. This bylaw must clearly, concisely, and fully describe the truck route regulations, where, when, and to whom they apply. Elements of the bylaw should include:

- Definition of the types of vehicles to which the bylaw applies, for example, vehicles over 4,600 kilograms in gross vehicle weight, or all commercial vehicles
- The type of trips that are affected by the bylaw, such as through trucks
- Definition of "truck route," the purpose they serve, and how applicable vehicles should make use of them
- And the municipal streets that are included in the truck route network. This list must be clear in its description of street names and segment boundaries

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What are Some Tools for Improving Municipal Planning for Trucks?

For municipal officials, it is important to address the community concerns and quality of life issues associated with truck movements while recognizing the needs and the economic importance of freight for the business community. Municipalities have a variety of avenues for improving the planning process for transportation and land use related to truck route planning. Possible tools for municipal truck route planning include:

- Clearly define existing truck routes through mapping and signage initiatives and identify new truck routes where possible. Identify and post signs in locations lacking clear indication of height restrictions and weight limitations.
- Incorporate Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies into the municipal transportation network to manage capacity and demand. ITS for traffic management includes dynamic message signs, which direct truck drivers and motorists to alternative routes to avoid accident scenes and congestion.
- Explore options for providing business incentives supporting off-peak freight transportation to minimize truck impacts on morning and evening commuter congestion.
- Proper land use planning can support truck transportation needs and promote economic development in a manner that reduces traffic congestion and increases both land use and transportation efficiencies.
- Locate freight intensive land uses close to major highways and freight rail routes and promote concentrated industrial development in suitable locations through a freight village concept, and encourage development of industrial sites that provide an array of services for the trucking sector and other freight industries in close proximity to each other. This reduces the number of trucks that need to travel on local roads between locations and helps cargo move more efficiently to their final destinations. Freight Villages, like truck stops and weigh stations, also provide a secure and convenient area for freight operators to eat and rest.
- Account for truck access and circulation for site plan approvals for nonindustrial sites with anticipated truck activity, such as retail centers. Include provisions for on-street and off-street loading zones in commercial districts.
- Address potential problems with trucks parking on public streets and highway shoulders by incorporating on-site truck parking requirements for industrial and commercial sites.
- Communication can also be an effective means of ensuring that trucking operations and facilities act as good neighbors within the community. Having a common understanding of the issues, educating and building awareness, keeping an open dialogue, and organizing and working together to craft solutions can help to avoid misconceptions and foster mutual cooperation.



The efficient movement of goods is vital to the economic development and growth of commerce in Ontario. An effective transportation system that optimizes freight capacity must exist if Ontario is to maintain and enhance its economic strength.



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