

## Overview of Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program Review Results – May 2015

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Since September 2013, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) have been engaging with a wide range of tourism stakeholders to collect feedback from across the province on the effectiveness of the Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) program.

The ministries have now completed the review of the TODS program, and are pleased to share the final results.

### **Program Review Snapshot**

- Received 830+ Survey Responses;
- Received 20+ Email/Written Submissions; and
- Conducted 10+ Targeted Engagement Sessions.

Participants provided input on signage needs for tourists, their measure of satisfaction with the TODS program, and suggestions for improvement.

### **What we heard**

Respondents indicated that motoring tourists find the TODS signs helpful – and most tourism operators who participate in the TODS Program tell us that this signage is an important tool for profiling and directing customers to their business.

Participants also indicated improved satisfaction from 2007 to 2013 with regards to eligibility criteria and the appearance of TODS signs.

There was general satisfaction with:

- Sign Appearance;
- Eligibility Criteria; and
- Maintenance.

Several opportunities for improvement were identified including:

- Operation Eligibility Criteria;
- Program Administration; and
- Program Awareness and Service Delivery;

The feedback received from tourism partners was carefully reviewed and considered to improve the program and better serve the needs of Ontario's tourism industry.

### **Policy and Program Improvements**

Based on feedback from our tourism partners, we will be implementing a number of policy and program adjustments that will strengthen and modernize the program. TODS policy improvements will be implemented starting in Spring 2015.

Significant improvements will include:

- Allowing tourism-designated outlet malls and regional travel information centres to apply for signage on our roadways;
- Extending full signing opportunities to campgrounds on freeways;
- Expanding eligibility criteria to allow for more rural downtowns, trail access points, museums, and cultural centres to qualify for signage;
- Modernizing Area Profile sign criteria to recognize Tourism Regions and bilingual signing opportunities;
- Strengthening program awareness and service delivery;
- Modernizing Basic Advertising requirements to focus on online advertising; and
- Introducing new generic icons for a wide range of sign categories to be made available in late 2015.

### **Status of TODS / Logo Service Contract**

The current service contract with Canadian TODS Limited (C-TODS) for the administration of the TODS and Logo programs expires in December 2018. Annual fees for the TODS sign program (since 1996) will be maintained until December 31, 2018.

In the coming months, the ministries will implement policy and program changes from the TODS program review and examine options for the future management and delivery of the TODS and Logo programs in anticipation of contract expiry in December 2018.

### **Additional Information:**

The Ministries are committed to continually improving our tourism signing program. For additional information please visit the [MTCS](#) and [Canadian TODS Limited](#) websites. Comments or questions can be directed to MTCS via phone or email.

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