

# New guidelines for utility relocates

Utility relocations typically present one of the largest potential risks to delivering major capital infrastructure projects on time or on budget within urbanized areas. Until now there has been little in terms of a standardized process in place regarding the coordination of the utility impacts and the management of the effects of the utility relocations on a project.

The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) public utilities management sub-committee has published a new document titled “*Guideline for the Coordination of Utility Relocations*,” which is, in essence, a road map for the coordination of these utility relocations. The purpose of this guideline is to assist various right-of-way (ROW) owners and utility agencies in developing new or enhancing their current utility coordination processes. The guideline gives utilities a consistent process they can follow when working with any ROW owner across Canada. This allows ROW owners to learn from the best practices and procedures of different parties and implement a process that will be readily accepted and adopted by utility agencies.

The guideline has been in development since 2013 by the volunteers at TAC, which has representation from across Canada in both the municipal and utility sectors. The guideline has been through numerous internal revisions, a public consultation process and is currently under final approval within TAC. It has just been published on the TAC website, and can be downloaded at [tac-atc.ca/en/publications-and-resources/free-resources-and-tools/reports/public-utilities-management-group-publications](http://tac-atc.ca/en/publications-and-resources/free-resources-and-tools/reports/public-utilities-management-group-publications).

The guideline has two major components: a detailed flow chart which highlights the various activities that should take place at different stages of a project, and a written guideline which delves into additional levels of detail regarding what and when tasks should be completed.

Below are some key principles that resonate throughout the guideline that enhance overall utility coordination, communication and cooperation:



Utility coordination efforts on the TTC Union Station Expansion Project.

## Define roles and responsibilities

A strong team is vital to a successful project. To build a team it is important that all parties know their roles on the project and are aware of their tasks. It is also important for the team members to know the responsibilities of other team members and how the team interacts.

- Have a formal coordination process

It is important that all parties understand the process that will be followed for the project. The new guideline provides an excellent framework for road authorities, in consultation with utility agencies, to develop or update a utility relocation process using the best practices that have been compiled from Canadian and international experts.

- Assign a utility coordinator

The role of utility coordinator must be formalized and made the norm on projects. With this formalization of the role, specialists are being developed that will have a solid background and understanding of utility impacts, as well as the processes involved in coordination.

- Complete subsurface utility engineering (SUE) mapping as per American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 38-02

The foundation of any utility coordination effort is the ability to have accurate, reliable drawings that show the

true location of the aerial and underground utilities within the project area. The ASCE 38-02 is a tried and effective standard to follow for creating accurate maps and its use is the benchmark for standard of care.

- Create reliable as-built records

An important and often overlooked aspect of the utility coordination process is the creation of accurate as-built records. The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) S250 Standard – Mapping of Underground Utility Infrastructure is an excellent reference to follow to ensure the as-built records are created properly.

Through the recently published “*Guideline for the Coordination of Utility Relocations*,” tools will be in place to properly manage utility relocations on major capital infrastructure projects and to subsequently avoid risks associated with budget and/or scheduling. As well, the role of the utility coordinator and the processes that they follow will become recognized and valued. It is time for Canadian professionals who work with utility agencies to become leaders in the field of utility coordination by using the guideline in order to reap the benefits associated with a smoother project management process.

**T2 Utility Engineers Inc.**

# ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTE

NEW PRODUCTS • 100+ SEMINARS • LIVE DEMOS • EXCITING COMPETITIONS



## YOU CAN'T COMPETE WITH THE REAL THING

This is World of Concrete—a firm foundation for the concrete and masonry industries and the first and most important annual event of the year. It's everything you need and nothing you don't. Put in four high-efficiency, low-cost, smart-work days at WOC 2017 and you'll see your bang/buck ratio go through the roof.

REGISTER NOW [www.worldofconcrete.com](http://www.worldofconcrete.com)



JANUARY 17-20, 2017

SEMINARS: JANUARY 18-20  
LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER  
LAS VEGAS, NV, USA

