

Report to Civic Works Committee

To: Chair and Members
Civic Works Committee

From: Kelly Scherr, P.Eng., MBA, FEC
Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure

Subject: 2024 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program
and 2023 Review

Date: March 19, 2024

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure, the following report concerning the 2024 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program and 2023 Review **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with a review of the 2023 Renew London Construction Program and highlight major City construction projects planned for 2024. This report outlines successes and lessons learned from 2023 and identifies potential risks for the upcoming construction season and the measures planned to mitigate those risks. This report includes the following information:

2.1 – A review of the 2023 Renew London Program including a program overview, discussion of carryover work and budget implications.

2.2 – A look ahead to the 2024 Renew London Program.

2.3 – A summary of emerging construction industry pressures and initiatives planned to mitigate potential impacts for 2024.

2.4 – An overview of the various construction mitigation, customer service and communication strategies applied to support Londoners through construction.

Additional supporting information has been included as appendices for reference.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

This report supports the 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan by contributing to the following strategic areas of focus;

- Mobility and Transportation: Identifying the building of infrastructure that provides safe, integrated, connected, reliable and efficient transportation choices.
- Climate Action and Sustainable Growth: London's infrastructure and systems are built, maintained, and operated to meet the long-term needs of the community.

Analysis

1.0 Background information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Civic Works Committee – April 15, 2020 – 2020 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program

- Civic Works Committee – January 11, 2022 – Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 406/19 On-Site and Excess Soil Management
- Corporate Services Committee – January 31, 2022 – Procurement of Goods and Services Policy Revisions Resulting from the Pandemic and Current Business-Related Needs
- Civic Works Committee – February 22, 2023 – RFT-2022-311 Dedicated Locate Services Contract Award - Irregular Result
- Civic Works Committee – March 21, 2023 – 2023 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program and 2022 Review

1.2 Context

The Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program manages the sustainability of London's infrastructure through a combination of road, bridge, bicycle, sewer, water, sidewalk, and intersection improvements. The program addresses existing lifecycle needs, system improvements, and growth-related priorities.

Renew was created to drive efficiency in infrastructure delivery and minimize delays and inconveniences to the public during construction by coordinating annual capital construction projects. The teams in Construction and Infrastructure Services (CIS) manage City construction projects and providing onsite inspection where required to ensure projects are well-communicated, completed on time and on schedule, and safely built in accordance with plans, specifications, and City standards.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Review: 2023 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program

2023 Construction Program Overview

The 2023 Renew London Infrastructure Program constructed many projects to expand and improve City of London infrastructure. 2023 featured key transportation improvement projects that have enhanced road safety, improved traffic flow for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users and maintained infrastructure in a state of good repair.

Overall, 2023 was a successful construction season with the reconstruction of 70 lane kilometres of road, 20 kilometres of sanitary and storm sewers, and 10.5 kilometres of watermains. Staff managed a portfolio of projects totalling approximately \$160 million. The cycling network expanded by 8 km in 2023, which included filling long-standing gaps in the network.

Identifying the building of infrastructure that provides safe, integrated, connected, reliable and efficient transportation choices remains a priority. These projects make London's roads safer for all users, encourage more emissions-free travel and leverage existing investments to connect to more people and places. The annual Renew London program also includes necessary underground work, replacing sewers, watermains and utilities and providing growth ready servicing connections to support growth, intensification, and the City's housing commitments.

Appendix A captures details of the 2023 Top 10 infrastructure renewal list, Neighborhood renewal projects and also highlights some noteworthy projects from last year.

2023 Contract Carryover Work

As with every construction season, some 2023 construction projects include planned carryover work and minor finishing touches to be completed in the spring. This work is often surface work including the top layer of asphalt, installation of permanent pavement markings and deficiency repairs. These finishing touches are included in 2023 tenders but are generally completed for road reconstruction projects in the subsequent year to optimize material placement in better weather and minimize settlement.

The following noteworthy projects began construction in 2023 with portions of the work carrying over into 2024:

- Fanshawe Road and Richmond Street Intersection Improvements
- Downtown Loop 3 & Wellington Gateway Phase 1
- Mud Creek East Branch 2A
- White Oak Road and Exeter Road Intersection
- Bradley Avenue Active Transportation Improvements
- Dingman Drive Improvements
- Elizabeth Street Infrastructure Renewal Project
- Southdale Drive and Colonel Talbot Road Roundabout

The top coat of asphalt will be placed on 40 lane-kilometres of road in 2024. All carryover work will be coordinated with the 2024 construction program to ensure conflicts with projects in nearby areas are mitigated.

Budgets and Schedules

The City ultimately managed approximately \$160 million in tendered construction project work in 2023 noting the original plan was \$200 million. The infrastructure renewal list is fluid and can be subject to changes in scope and schedule throughout the year with the reduction in value due to the deferral of some projects.

The CIS team takes great pride in delivering London's annual construction program on time and on budget. To support this, the team uses tools to monitor performance metrics throughout construction. Project Management Dashboards track and monitor construction project progress against the established budget and estimated working days and ensures all invoices are paid in accordance with prompt payment legislation requirements. Clear and defensible contract documents engaged project management. Active schedule and budget monitoring are tools used to safeguard awarded contract budgets.

Contracts also include a contingency to account for typical issues or change orders that can pop up in any project, often related to unforeseen underground conditions and utility coordination complications. Project teams annually monitor the use of contingency funds across all projects. With several large, complex projects underway, there has been an increase in the quantity of change order submissions through 2023, but a decrease in the value of contingency use as compared to 2022. Change orders as a percentage of contract value decreased from 4.3% in 2022 to 3.8% in 2023. Unused contingency funds are returned to program budgets once the projects are closed out to support additional infrastructure renewal projects in future years.

With the scale of London's annual construction program, there can be projects that encounter budget impacts exceeding the available contingency due to challenges that could not have been anticipated by the contractor, consultant, or the City. However, at the conclusion of 2023, nearly all projects remain on or ahead of schedule and within budget.

Project budgets are being closely monitored for just a few key projects as they complete carry over work in 2024, including the Bradley Avenue Active Transportation Improvement Project, Lyle and Elizabeth Infrastructure Renewal Project, and Dingman Drive Improvements. The project teams are all options to keep these projects within budget and will follow the requirements of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy should additional funds be required at a later date.

The Victoria Bridge Replacement project is a 2022 tender, with ongoing work in 2023 and 2024. This complex project has been impacted by budget pressures that exceeded the awarded contract value for contract administration consulting services. A companion report has been prepared for this same March 19, 2024, Civic Works Committee agenda recommending an amendment to the consulting services contract in accordance with the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy.

2.2 2024 Renew London Infrastructure Construction Program

2024 Construction Program Overview

The 2024 Renew program budgets will invest in key priority areas to support the city's growing population needs and make improvements to aging infrastructure. Focus remains on essential infrastructure and investments in replacing or expanding much-needed roads, water, and wastewater infrastructure.

The City is committing approximately \$270 million in construction improvements in 2024, making it the third consecutive year of record-breaking construction value. This year is on track to surpass 2023 as the City of London's largest construction season in terms of the value of tendered work with several large scope transportation and rapid transit projects as well as the usual slate of infrastructure renewal contracts.

Development charges and provincial and federal funding also continue to contribute to several important 2024 projects, such as Wellington Gateway: Phase 3, Phase 4 and Clarke's Bridge Widening, East London Link: Phase 3A, 3C and Highbury Bridge Widening, Oxford Street West and Gideon Drive Roundabout, and the Colonel Talbot Road Upgrades. Delivering these investments through integrated projects reduces costs by coordinating underground infrastructure work with the rehabilitation of roads, curbs, and sidewalks. This will improve and extend the lifecycle of London's critical road, water and sewer infrastructure and the reliability of its systems while protecting the environment.

There will be 89 lane-kilometres of road reconstructed, 12.5 kilometres of sanitary and storm sewers replaced or added, and 6 kilometres of watermain rebuilt in 2024. Over 35 intersection improvements will be constructed to address safety concerns in growing areas. More than 18 kilometres of new bike lanes and 16 kilometres of new sidewalk will be added and about 20 kilometres of existing sidewalks will be replaced. Expanding cycling and sidewalks infrastructure will improve safety, connectivity and accessibility while supporting the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

In addition, 3.7 kilometres of watermain and 8.5 kilometres of sewers will be relined without having to dig trenches. These trenchless programs accomplish the goals of upgrading the infrastructure while allowing for significant capital cost avoidance and minimized social impact to residents and businesses by avoiding open cut construction.

The Top 10 Construction Projects are selected each year to provide an overview of the upcoming year's work and impacts. The top projects for 2024 involve areas across London, including the Downtown Sewer Separation Phase 4 York Street Reconstruction project, Richmond and Sunningdale Intersection Improvement Project, and multiple phases along both the east and south rapid transit corridors. This is also the third season of construction for the Adelaide Street North Underpass and Victoria Bridge Replacement projects, with both projects planned to reach their milestone completion dates in 2024. Appendix B captures details of the 2024 Top 10 projects.

There are also many other essential underground road and underground infrastructure upgrades and continued improvements to the cycling network throughout the city. Visit london.ca/roadconstruction to learn more about the 2024 infrastructure projects and to view an [interactive story map](#) of this year's Top 10 Construction Projects.

Communications efforts on the overall 2024 construction program and targeted communications on specific projects are either already underway or will be launching very soon. While the 2024 projects have been scheduled to minimize disruptions to traffic, commuting around the city will be impacted. Residents are encouraged to plan ahead and exercise patience when traveling around construction zones.

Downtown Construction

The Downtown core has experienced several years of focused investments first with Dundas Place followed by the ongoing Sewer Separation Program and then Downtown Loop Rapid Transit construction. This year will see impactful construction on some new corridors with construction easing up on others. Construction activity in the core will begin to reduce in 2025 and beyond.

Some major projects that have been impacting the Core will be wrapping up midway through this year. Phase 3 of the Downtown Loop will finish up on Wellington Street including application of the red surface treatment on the bus lanes for the entire "Loop". The Victoria Bridge Replacement project will also be completed this year and this connection into Downtown is anticipated to re-open to traffic by summer. Work on both the Wellington Gateway and East London Link rapid transit projects has also moved out of the Core.

New projects starting this year in the Core include the Downtown Sewer Separation Phase 4 York Street Reconstruction project and cycling projects on Ridout Street and Central Avenue. The York Street project involves major improvements to underground municipal and private utility infrastructure. This important work is necessary to support a growing population in the core and help preserve the health of the Thames River. The complex and impactful nature of this work will require road closures which will be managed by proactively protecting traffic flow on parallel corridors including King Street and Queens Avenue.

The Dundas Place traffic diversion will not be needed for construction mitigation purposes with work now substantially complete on King Street and Queens Avenue. Longer-term Dundas Place operational reviews will consider various aspects of traffic management as one of several considerations for the ongoing management of Dundas Place.

Local Road Reconstruction in Neighbourhoods

Although the Top Ten list typically spotlights large, impactful projects, it is important to also celebrate the annual investment and completion of dozens of local streets in neighborhoods across the city. The 2024 Local Road Reconstruction Program will rebuild about 30 neighbourhood streets. These projects are usually triggered by poor road conditions but will incorporate coordinated underground infrastructure renewal as needed.

Enhanced street-level engagement has now been introduced for 2024 local road projects. The goal is to give advanced notice and help prepare residents living on the street for what to expect so there are less surprises when construction starts. Engaging early provides the opportunity to provide enhanced communications around trees, timing of work and proposed changes to existing conditions. Residents are also given space to provide feedback, answer pre-construction surveys, or voice their concerns while the project is still in the early stages. The goal is to create a smoother construction experience for residents by offering opportunities for dialogue early on.

2.3 Emerging Construction Industry Pressures

The construction industry in London and across Ontario continues to experience a period of considerable change with new standards, legislative requirements, and market conditions. Civic administration monitors emerging and ongoing pressures that have the potential to impact project budgets, schedules, staff resources for the upcoming construction season with the aim of mitigating those potential impacts.

While the complex and ever-shifting conditions make it challenging to anticipate implications for the 2024 construction season with precision, the team continues to monitor industry trends and implement measures to minimize likely risks, disruptions, and financial pressures. The goal is to continue prioritizing flexible planning and mitigation strategies to appropriately respond to emerging issues.

General Pressures

Excess Soil Management Regulations

As of January 1, 2023, the Ministry of Environment, Parks and Conservation (MECP) has begun the full implementation of Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 406/19: On-Site and Excess Soil Regulation (“Excess Soil Regulation”) requiring soil sampling and testing, as well as documentation, tracking and registration of excess soil leaving construction sites. Contractors are required to identify potential re-use or disposal sites for excess soil in their bids and complete additional post-contract award soil sampling and testing before construction can proceed in full.

Municipalities and construction industry stakeholders across Ontario are all simultaneously adapting to the additional requirements listed under O.Reg. 406/19. Multiple Regulatory amendments have been proposed and incorporated since the Regulations initial introduction in December 2019, the most recent being in November 2023, and it is expected that the Regulation will continue to evolve over time. The schedule and budget implications of Regulatory requirements on City contracts remain untested until the industry has experienced multiple construction seasons under the new provincial regulations, including incorporation of on-going Regulatory amendments. City Staff have attempted to mitigate the potential constraints on construction schedules by completing most of the Regulatory requirements (including prescribed soil sampling) during the planning and design phases of each project.

Implementation of the full Regulatory requirements has led to an increased overall cost to the execution of the City’s construction projects. The full scope of the budgetary impacts to projects continues to be difficult to quantitatively assess due to the novel nature of the Regulation and on-going Regulatory amendments proposed and implemented by the MECP. Staff continue to include extra contingency costs into project budgets, particularly for larger projects requiring significant excavation. Staff will monitor the budget and schedule implications of this regulation over the coming construction seasons.

Labour Shortages

Ongoing labour shortages and increasing costs for skilled labour can add potential risk to projects that generally equates to increased project costs and longer project schedules. Many industries, including construction, are facing labour shortages as they struggle to keep pace with the volume of work. Elevated rates of staff turnover and vacancies have also been affecting local consultants and City teams, which City staff manage with strong mentoring programs to quickly onboard new staff so they can hit the ground running.

Locate Services

The timely provision of utility locates is a critical first step for any construction project to help ensure construction schedules are met. Some capital projects over the last few

years experienced extended waits for underground utility locates stemming from a combination of locate service providers having difficulty retaining staff, a shrinking pool of private sector service providers and significantly increased demand with near-record levels.

In April 2022, the option for a Dedicated Locator model was introduced through the Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012 to give the excavating community an option to better control the locate delivery for their projects. Since that time, many projects have used the Dedicated Locator model to gain more control over their project locates and reduce downtime.

A Dedicated Locator can be used for any project, but this approach comes with an additional cost and is best suited for long-term, large-scale projects with specific timelines or projects that have complex requirements. The City of London implemented the Dedicator Locate service for most projects in 2023 and will use it again in 2024 for select construction projects that are well suited to this program.

Security of Construction Sites

City construction sites continue to have experienced increased challenges related to security and safety of job sites. After-hours security is becoming an increasing necessity for several reasons with reported incidents of vandalism, trespassing and material theft becoming more brazen. Tender items for private security are being added to some contracts, particularly in the core, and staff regularly emphasize to contractors the need to secure the site and safely store loose construction materials as much as is practical. Project teams also continue to coordinate with Coordinated Informed Response (CIR) when responding to social issues in and around construction sites.

Encampments Near Construction Sites

The City and community outreach partners continue to approach encampments with compassion and a desire to support those who are living unsheltered in London. Leading up to the start of construction, the City works directly with individuals living in encampments near construction sites to help relocate them to a safe location. CIR teams then begin communicating early with people in encampments to inform them about the upcoming construction work and the importance of relocating. As needed, the CIR teams support individuals in cleaning up and transporting their belongings to a safer location of their preference, including indoors facilities where they can be further assisted. Ensuring everyone remains safe and connected to the right resources continues a priority for City teams.

Schedule Pressures

Infrastructure renewal and growth projects have become increasingly complex in recent years with servicing partners seeking to align multiple renewal needs, utility coordination and innovative design elements requiring specialized sub-trades all of which can impact the duration of a construction contract. As is, many of these projects require a full construction season to complete the required works, often with finishing touches and cleanup work carrying over into the spring. Supply chain interruptions, labour shortages and industry capacity have the potential to create additional pressures to the construction window in 2024 and beyond.

Supply Chain Challenges

Global supply chain issues continue to present risks for 2024, impacting the supply of equipment, steel, aluminium and plastic products, electronics and other necessary materials and equipment. It is critical that successful contractors are provided as much time as possible to order project materials to reduce the impacts of supply chain concerns. Pre-ordering materials can be an option for some specialized equipment, but most capital projects require the contractor to prepare shop drawings and source materials, which delays the purchase until the contracts are awarded.

Industry Capacity

2024 is once again the City of London's largest construction season to date. Funding contributions from other levels of government is driving several large rapid transit tenders this year on top of the usual slate of critical infrastructure renewal and growth projects. It will be important to monitor and coordinate across projects, particularly later in the season when multiple jobs will be looking for temperature-dependant asphalt, concrete, and pavement-marking work to complete or stabilize projects prior to freeze-up.

Traffic Controls for Intersection Work

When a signalized intersection is impacted by construction, the Highway Traffic Act requires that a paid duty officer is in place for traffic control, or a full intersection closure is necessary. Project teams typically work with London Police to request an off-duty officer for traffic control in order to minimize impacts on the travelling public, nearby residents, and transit.

Between record high construction volumes and resource constraints with London Police, there has been an increase in cases where an officer is not available for traffic control. This can be impactful to the critical path of construction schedules as switching to temporary traffic signals and activating permanent traffic signals requires the scheduling of several parties (contractor, City's traffic signal maintenance contractor, consultant staff, city staff and off-duty police) which can influence the schedule of subsequent work. In cases where it is not possible to adapt construction plans without significant schedule or cost implications, the City will consider a full intersection closure as a last resort. If required, intersection closures ideally would happen during off-peak hours or at night to reduce the impacts on the travelling public.

Budget Pressures

City staff continue to keep a close watch of economic pressures influencing project budgets and project teams were successful in limiting our budget exceedances in 2023. Still, we know that the factors impacting the cost of these projects remain volatile.

Inflationary Impacts

Inflationary pressures for consumers and businesses have been well-documented over the last few years and construction is no exception. One indicator of the impacts of inflation on construction pricing is the Statistics Canada Non-Residential Building Construction Price Index. This index saw a year-over-year increase of 12.5% from 2021 to 2022. Since late 2022, this index experienced significant fluctuations that are influenced by labor shortages, material availability, and other economic factors. The non-residential construction index is useful for tracking national economic trends and staff will continue to monitor future updates from Statistics Canada to stay informed about construction price trends in the coming months.

The City's multi-year budgeting approach allows for better planning and provides greater certainty to the construction industry as a way of offsetting inflationary pressures. Early notice of construction plans allows contractors to plan ahead. The annual tender list is shared with the industry in the fall so they can thoroughly prepare and bid on upcoming projects, mitigating the risk of price increases, and delivering the best possible value for taxpayers. Earlier tendering and a timelier contract award yield significant efficiencies and cost savings as it creates a more competitive bidding environment.

Early tender results for the first few 2024 contracts suggest that prices remain high, but the rate of inflation may be stabilizing. Staff will continue to monitor tender results.

Material Costs

Price fluctuations have been observed for items such as personal protective equipment (PPE), steel, copper, aluminum, lumber, paper products, electronics, plastics, utilities, and fuel. Tender bid prices may also increase due to late or uncertain construction start dates associated with supply chain delays.

Late Season Construction Costs

The above-noted schedule pressures have the potential to delay the critical path of construction projects, ultimately driving more work later into the construction season and possibly resulting in additional carryover work in the following year. There also leads to the potential for additional charges if contractors need to perform work too far into the cooler fall or winter months. While cleanup and deficiency work in the spring is normal, pushing larger components of the contract to the following year can have direct project costs and extend the impacts on residents and businesses.

2.4 Delivering Construction Excellence for London

Construction and Infrastructure Services (CIS) provides leadership as a Corporate “centre of excellence” around construction. The Construction Administration and Major Projects teams within CIS lead the administration, coordination, and communication of delivering the City’s capital construction program on an annual basis to maintain safe, reliable infrastructure and unlock potential growth through increased capacity. Project teams are focused on delivering capital construction projects in compliance with project plans while fostering a culture of safety, innovation, engagement, collaboration, and respect.

The Core Construction Program was first established in 2018 representing a fundamental shift in the way the city approaches construction projects. The teams managing construction projects have continued to build on that approach by expanding resources and communications to ensure it is providing “above and beyond” service to business and community stakeholders affected by construction.

This annual Renew London report is more than a review of the current and previous year’s Infrastructure Construction Programs. It also provides an opportunity to highlight the construction mitigation, customer service and communication strategies applied to support Londoners through construction. In addition to the main report, the included appendix documents provide additional information highlighting key lessons learned from the previous construction planned initiatives to support continuous improvement in the delivery of the City’s annual construction program.

Strategies to Mitigate Construction Impacts

Projects around the city do not happen in isolation. Rather, the City’s various project teams work closely together to ensure that construction projects are coordinated, and overall traffic impacts are mitigated and managed. The Renew London project teams take a wholistic approach to everything from communications to traffic calming, wayfinding, and coordination of early works.

Throughout the busy construction season, representatives from divisions across the City, London Transit Commission and private utilities meet weekly to discuss any works or events requiring lane restrictions or a full closure to protect parallel corridors and detour routes.

2023 was another record year for construction with a major focus in the core area to improve connections through Downtown and Old East Village, resulting in significant traffic changes for drivers, transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians throughout the construction season. Project teams have continued to develop an understanding of the social challenges and the need for business relations and extensive public engagement and stakeholder outreach before and during construction.

Daily deliveries, commercial and residential access, sidewalk access, and security are all important issues to consider when constructing projects in these urban environments. Courtesy wayfinding signage was installed to assist drivers in reaching key commercial areas and attractions. Project teams learned about managing the growing need for enhanced security to keep City and Contractor property safe. Maintaining pedestrian access throughout construction zones with regard for AODA requirements to support people with disabilities continues to be a major priority for all construction sites.

Maintaining road access is not possible for all construction zones. Traffic control plans are established at the start of projects and consider all modes, including vehicles, transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. Detour signs are installed to help road users navigate the project area and traffic changes and road restrictions are informed in advance through Public Service Announcements (PSAs), email notifications, social media, and direct outreach to impacted stakeholders. City-branded wayfinding signs are installed around construction zones in the core area to help pedestrians navigate through and around construction zones safely.

Appendix C contains a more comprehensive description of measures used to mitigate the impacts of construction for all Londoners.

Communications and Customer Service Strategies

In 2023, the city continued to prioritize strong communications efforts to support local businesses and keep Londoners informed during construction, especially in the core area.

In partnership with the core area BIAs – and relying on direct communications and valuable feedback – the project team continued to utilize various communications tools and resources to keep businesses, residents and the general public engaged and informed about the projects directly impacting them.

From having dedicated, on-the-ground business relations coordinators, to enhancing wayfinding signage and digital communications, project teams apply a variety of traditional and digital tactics to support businesses through construction.

Enhanced radio advertising, social media and promotional signs continued to be a key tool in 2023 to promote commercial areas in Old East Village and Downtown.

Appendix D contains a detailed description of communications efforts used to keep the community informed before and during construction.

Trees and Wildlife

With the City of London declaring a Climate Emergency, tree protection and preservation is of the utmost importance during construction projects. Despite best efforts, tree removals are often required to successfully and safely complete infrastructure projects.

Removal of trees is never the first choice and tree impacts reduced as much as possible in the context of providing safe and reliable infrastructure in London. During a project's design, City staff along with the engineer and arborist, assess each property to determine the current health of the trees, and how to best complete construction projects with minimal impacts. Any trees identified as impacted by construction or in poor health are removed before construction begins.

The underground infrastructure being added or replaced may disrupt the feeder root system in ways that aren't necessarily apparent when looking at the tree above ground – sometimes the removal of curbs can be enough to disrupt the root zone and make the tree unsafe going forward. Various strategies are used to minimize impacts to trees,

which may include hand-forming curbs, adjusting the width of excavation, installing underground infrastructure around tree roots when possible, establishing tree protection areas with construction fencing, and using alternative construction methods to trench where possible.

The City's regard for wildlife is paramount. The first three months of each year is a period when most tree removals across the city are completed ahead of the migratory bird nesting period, which starts on April 1st. In cases where tree removals continue later into the spring, bird experts are also engaged before tree removals take place.

When projects are completed, the City replaces the removed trees and evaluates additional new tree planting opportunities on these streets. Each project is unique, and the approach to tree replacement is tailored to the context of the area of the project. New trees are selected from an approved list of native species that is managed by the City's Forestry department. These species help to encourage pollinators and provide exceptional benefits to urban wildlife and insects.

The City of London also plants approximately 5,000 trees each year across the city to help reduce air pollution, provide shade, lower temperatures, and reduce stormwater.

Conclusion

The Renew London Construction Program manages the sustainability of London's infrastructure through a combination of road, bridge, bicycle, sewer, water, sidewalk, and intersection improvements. The annual program is planned to address asset needs for infrastructure lifecycle renewal while at the same time ensuring that the growth requirements of the community are met in a timely manner.

2023 was a successful construction season with a portfolio of Council-approved projects totalling approximately \$160 million. In spite of ongoing economic pressures stemming from labour shortages, pricing escalations, and global supply chain impacts, all 2023 contracts are currently on track to be completed on or ahead of schedule and remain on budget with a handful to be closely monitored during spring carry-over work.

The 2024 proposed construction portfolio is currently estimated at just over \$270 million. The program will reconstruct 89 lane-kilometres of road, add or replace 35 kilometres of sanitary and storm sewers, rebuild 6 kilometres of watermain and remove approximately 0.86 kilometres of combined sewer. Over 35 intersections will be improved along with adding more than 18 kilometres of new bike lanes plus 16 kilometres of new sidewalks and replacing about 20 kilometres of existing sidewalks. A robust communications plan for the overall 2024 program has already begun and targeted plans for individual projects are either underway or launching shortly.

Emerging market conditions and new regulations will continue to place pressure on project schedules and budgets. While it is challenging to predict how global and local pressures may affect the 2024 construction season, the team continues to monitor industry trends and prioritize flexibility and mitigation strategies in order to appropriately respond to emerging issues and ongoing pandemic impacts.

The city strives to offer robust construction mitigations as well as sustained, sincere, and strategic communications as part of its annual construction program. Lessons learned from 2023 projects and anticipated risks associated with the 2024 construction season have been communicated to project managers to support project management of this year's contracts as well as design and planning of future projects.

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Appendix A – 2023 Renew construction program top 10 list and project highlights
Appendix B – 2024 Renew construction program top 10 list
Appendix C – Construction mitigations strategies
Appendix D – Communications and customer service strategies

cc: Accessibility Community Advisory Committee
Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee
London Transit Commission
Downtown London Business Improvement Association
Old East Village Business Improvement Association

APPENDIX A – Update on the 2023 Renew construction program Top 10 list

The chart below looks back at the Top 10 City projects identified for 2024 and provides an update on the status and tendered contract amount.

Project	Tendered contract amount (millions)	Status
Adelaide Street North Underpass	\$60.2M	3-year project 2023 site work included installation of new rail bridge and excavation of underpass. Completion in 2024.
Downtown Loop Phase 3 (Wellington Street from Queens Avenue to York Street)	\$17.2M	1-year project Progress continuing over the winter of 2023/2024 for completion in 2024.
Wellington Gateway Phase 1 (York Street to north of Thames River)	\$14.9M	1-year project Major work completed in 2023 with minor restoration and top coat of asphalt to be completed in 2024.
East London Link Phase 2 (King Street, Ontario Street and Dundas Street)	\$16.9M	1-year project Major work completed in 2023 with minor restoration and top coat of asphalt to be completed in 2024.
Victoria Bridge Replacement (Ridout Street North)	\$22.8M	Steel bridge structure installed in 2023 with final completion and opening in 2024.
Mud Creek Phase 2	\$2.4M	2-year project Deferred to fall 2023 into 2024.
Fanshawe Park Road and Richmond Street	\$14.7M	2-year project Richmond Street work completed in 2023, with work on Fanshawe Park Road to be completed in 2024.
Southdale and Colonel Talbot Roundabout	\$8.7M	1-year project Majority of project complete in 2023 with final completion in 2024.
Quebec Street	\$6.3M	1-year project Construction in 2023 mostly complete with minor streetscape elements in 2024.
Dingman Drive	\$9.7M	1-year project Late start in fall of 2023 with completion in 2024.

2023 Project Highlight: Adelaide Street North Underpass

The Adelaide Street Underpass is a complex multi-year project. Reconstruction of Adelaide Street North from Elias Street to 80m north of McMahan Street, as well as Central Avenue from William Street to Elizabeth Street started in Spring 2022 and is anticipated for completion in Fall 2025.

In 2023, major excavation of the actual underpass began beneath the rail tracks and the new permanent rail bridge pieces were lifted in place – one on the south track, and one on the north track to continue to support rail operations in this area. Work for the Adelaide Underpass will continue through 2024, with some planned carry-over work in 2025.

The new pumping station was built in 2023, which is important to keep water out of the underpass once it becomes operational.



Above: Aerial view of the Adelaide Underpass construction site.



Above: A view of the construction site for the new road under the rail bridge at Adelaide Street North.



Above: Construction site for the Adelaide Street North Underpass project.

2023 Project Highlight: Victoria Bridge Replacement

Another massive and complex project that is underway is the replacement of the Victoria Bridge on Ridout Street between Thames Park and Horton Street. The former bridge was replaced in 2023 with a new “through arch” structure, which features a wider deck surface to better accommodate traffic, bicycles, and pedestrians, and improve connectivity with the Thames Valley Parkway.



Above: Lifting operation of the new steel arches.

Installation of the new two steel arches on the bridge was successfully completed in 2023. This operation was one of the biggest crane lifts in Canada this year, marking an important and essential milestone for the project and it was livestreamed reaching over 9,000 views in seven months.

The steel arches were fabricated over the winter months and early spring and was delivered in separate pieces to the project site for assembly. Each arch is approximately 90 metres in length and weighs over 130 tonnes. A large 650-tonne crawler crane was used for the lifting operation.



Above: A view of the new steel arches, which were lifted in place in the summer of 2023.

Following the successful lifting of the arches, structural assembly of the bridge began to add the bridge's floor joist, hangers, stringers, and arch cross beams. The summer also marked the removal of the concrete centre pier that was remaining from the old bridge.



Above: A photo of the new bridge floor joist, hangers, stringers, and arch cross beams work on the concrete deck formwork, including an elaborate grid of steel rebar was completed in the fall of 2023. In addition to replacing the bridge structure, the Victoria Bridge reconstruction project includes intersection improvements at the Horton and Ridout Street intersection to add new traffic signals, bike lanes and asphalt.



Above: An aerial view of the concrete pouring for the new bridge deck.



Above: Crews pouring concrete for the new bridge deck.

The work to replace the century-old bridge, started in 2022 with the installation of a temporary active transportation bridge that also supports temporary active utilities relocated from the demolished bridge.

The new bridge is anticipated to reopen in the summer of 2024.

Downtown Loop Phase 3 and Wellington Gateway Phase 1 Projects

The final phase of the Downtown Loop construction (Phase 3) began in 2023, simultaneously with Phase 1 of the Wellington Gateway project along Wellington Street. Both projects were tendered together to facilitate project coordination and to support traffic and access throughout this busy corridor.

Phase 3 of the Downtown Loop extends from Queens Avenue to York Street, where it connects to the Wellington Gateway Phase 1 portion of the project, which continues from York Street to the Thames River.

2023 was a busy construction season and working in partnership with the contractor was key to maintain at least one lane of traffic in each direction, while continuing to move the project forward.

Both projects involve underground infrastructure replacement and upgrades as well as above ground improvements to support future rapid transit operations. The overall strategy has been to work in multiple blocks at once which has kept the project progressing and helped complete the bulk of this work as efficiently as possible.

Substantial construction work for the Wellington Gateway Phase 1 project wrapped up in the fall of 2023, with some finishing work planned in 2024. Construction for the Downtown Loop Phase 3 (Queens Avenue to York Street) continued over the winter months to progress essential work to install new sewers and watermain and to be ready for surface asphalt paving, concrete sidewalks, and other above ground elements in spring/summer of 2024.



Above: Aerial view of the construction site at Wellington Street and York Street.



Above: Aerial view of the construction site at Wellington Street and Queens Avenue (Downtown Loop Phase 3).



Above: Work underway to install the new bus platform at Wellington Road near South Street.

Construction of both projects will be completed in 2024. New permanent red paint and other bus-only lane markings will follow, as well as the installation of permanent signs, traffic signals, street lighting and other rapid transit and streetscape elements.

The Downtown Loop Phase 3 marks an important milestone for London's Rapid Transit initiative as this will be the first corridor to be fully completed in London. Local transit will continue to take advantage of this new infrastructure before the rapid transit system becomes fully operational.



Above: Aerial view of the Downtown Loop Phase 2 construction site at the Queens Avenue and Richmond Street intersection.

East London Link: Red paint

An essential element of rapid transit corridors in London is red paint, which serves as a visual cue to recognize bus-only lanes, along with other pavement markings and signs.

In 2023, red paint was added to the bus lanes on King Street for Phase 1 of the East London Link project. This is an exciting milestone for rapid transit as it marks the first phase of construction to include the red surface treatment.



Above: Red paint operations at King Street.

As part of the East London Link Phase 1 project, buses will be travelling in dedicated curbside lanes in both directions (east and west) of King Street between Wellington Street and Ontario Street, connecting Downtown and Old East Village.

While existing local buses have already been taking advantage of the eastbound curbside lane on King Street, transit operations on the westbound curbside lane will begin later in 2024. An education and awareness campaign will be launched to ensure locals, visitors and businesses are aware of this new configuration of the road. General traffic will continue to travel eastbound only on King Street.

Londoners are encouraged to visit [london.ca/bus lanes](https://london.ca/bus-lanes) to learn more about bus-only lanes in London.



Above: Aerial view of the new red paint at King Street near Waterloo Street.

Cycling infrastructure improvement projects

Identifying the building of infrastructure that provides safe, integrated, connected, reliable and efficient transportation choices remain a priority. The cycling network expanded by 8 km in 2023, which included filling long-standing gaps in the network.

Colborne Street bike lanes were extended north to Cheapside Street and a combination of cycle tracks and painted bike lanes were added on Cheapside Street, to complete the connection between Fanshawe College and Western University. An infrastructure renewal project on Quebec Street also extended protected bike lanes north to Oxford Street, to ensure that the important crossing of the CPKC railroad can be traversed by cyclists of all ages and abilities.

There were three important east-west cycling projects added in the south end of the City, with the completion of cycle tracks on Southdale Road, between Bostwick Road and Pine Valley Boulevard, cycle tracks on Bradley Avenue, between Jalna Boulevard West and Wellington Road, and multi-use paths on Dingman Drive, between the 401 overpass and Wellington Road.

The rapid transit project also extended the eastbound cycle track on Dundas Street to connect with the existing bike lanes on Egerton Street, and cycle tracks were added on Richmond Street as part of phase 1 of the Richmond Street and Fanshawe Park Road intersection upgrades.



Above: A photo of the new in-boulevard bike lanes constructed in 2023 as part of the Bradley Avenue Cycle Track.



Above: A photo the protected bike lanes on Cheapside Street.

APPENDIX B – 2024 Renew Construction Program List and Top 10

The 2024 City's Top 10 Construction Projects are selected each year to provide an overview of the upcoming year's work and impacts. City staff have identified the Top 10 projects that will take place during the 2024 construction season.

The Top 10 are selected based on the following criteria:

- Scope of work (e.g., complete utility and sewer rebuild, asphalt resurfacing)
- Construction duration
- Location in relation to other nearby projects and the expected future benefits
- Road classification
- Road user impact
- Transit impact
- Impact to neighbours
- Proximity to events, schools, community centres, parks, cycle routes
- Economic impact and Government funding
- Supply chain exposure
- Excess Soil

2024 City's Top 10 Construction Projects

Adelaide St North Underpass

1

Work Type: Improved Mobility, Road Improvements

Tender: \$60.2M

Benefits: Improved mobility, new sewer infrastructure, and enhanced lighting.

CP RAIL TRACKS

COLBORNE ST.

OXFORD ST. E.

PICCADILLY ST.

PALL MALL ST.

WILLIAM ST.

CENTRAL AVE.

ADELAIDE ST. N.

MCPAHEN ST.

CENTRAL AVE.

ELIZABETH ST.

ELIAS ST.

DUFFERIN AVE.

Legend:
Temporary sidewalk closures
LTC route impacts
Road closure

Website: getinvolved.london.ca/adelaide

London CANADA

Above: Adelaide Street North Underpass

Super Wellington – Wellington Gateway Phase 1 and Downtown Loop Phase 3

(Wellington Street from Queens Avenue to north of the Thames River)






Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$28.5M

Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS)

Benefits: : Improved mobility, connectivity to transit, streetscaping and water and sewer infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future growth.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC route and stop impacts
-  Phased road and lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/wellingtongateway



Above: Super Wellington – Wellington Gateway Phase 1 and Downtown Loop Phase 3

Clark's Bridge Widening – Wellington Gateway

(Wellington Road from just north of the Thames River to Watson Street)







Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$18.3M

Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS)

Benefits: : Improved mobility, connectivity to transit, streetscaping and water and sewer infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future growth.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC route and stop impacts
-  Bike path restrictions
-  Phased road and lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/wellingtongateway



Above: Clarke's Bridge – Wellington Gateway

East London Link Phase 3

(Highbury Avenue North from Oxford Street to the north of the Highbury overpass, and Dundas Street between Egerton Street and McCormick Boulevard)






Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$37.8M

Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS)

Benefits: Improved mobility, connectivity to transit, active transportation improvements, streetscaping and water and sewer infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future growth.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC stop impacts
-  Lane restrictions

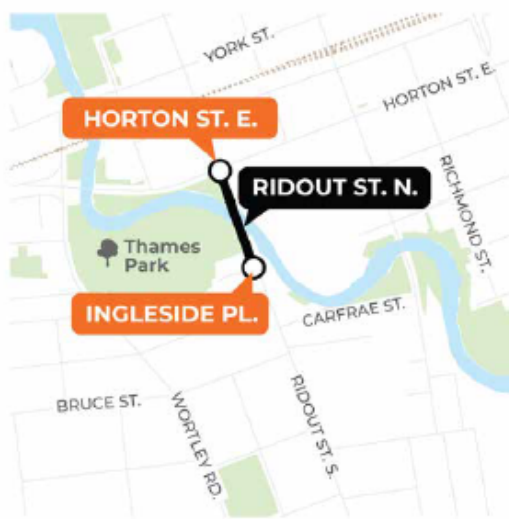


Website: getinvolved.london.ca/eastlondonlink



Above: East London Link Phase 3





Victoria Bridge Replacement



Work Type: Infrastructure Renewal

Tender: \$22.8M

Benefits: Replace an aging 1920s truss bridge with new through arch-structure and improve active transportation network with wider sidewalks and extend bike lane connection to Thames Park.

-  Temporary active transportation bridge
-  LTC route impacts
-  Temporary active transportation bridge
-  Road closure



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/victoriabridge



Above: Victoria Bridge Replacement

York Street & Wellington Street Infrastructure Renewal




(Wellington Street from York Street to just north of Horton Street and York Street from Clarence Street to Wellington Street)



Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$15.6M

Benefits: Replace aging infrastructure that has met its expected lifecycle, and to remove existing combined sewers. Streetscape improvements and sidewalk replacement.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC stop impacts
-  Lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/york



Above: York Street and Wellington Street Infrastructure Renewal





Fanshawe Park Road and Richmond Street Intersection Improvements



Work Type: Municipal Infrastructure and Intersection Improvements

Tender: \$14.7M

Benefits: Improved mobility to enhance comfort and safety for all road users, asphalt in-boulevard bike paths, new sidewalks, streetscaping and underground infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future growth.

-  Temporary sidewalk closure
-  LTC route and stop impacts
-  Bike path restrictions
-  Lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/fanshaweandrichmond



Above: Fanshawe Park Road and Richmond Street Intersection Improvements

Sunningdale Road & Richmond Street Intersection Improvements




(Sunningdale Road from Villagewalk Boulevard to Redford Road, and Richmond Street from Villagewalk Boulevard to Uplands Drive)



Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$6M (estimate)

Benefits: Upgrade underground infrastructure and construct new in-boulevard bike paths and pedestrian sidewalks. The work includes widening Sunningdale Road from 2-lanes to 4-lanes through the intersection, and adding additional turning lanes to improve maneuverability.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC stop impacts
-  Lane restrictions



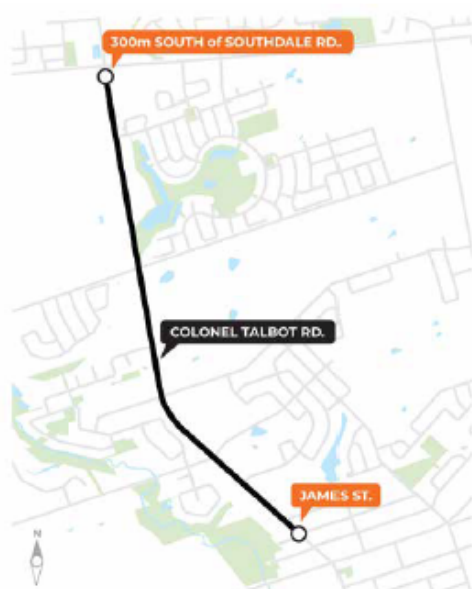
Website: getinvolved.london.ca/sunningdalerichmond



Above: Sunningdale Road and Richmond Street Intersection Improvements

Colonel Talbot Road Upgrades




(Colonel Talbot Road between Southdale Road West and James Street)



Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$18M

Benefits: Converting Colonel Talbot Road from the current 2-lane rural road with ditches and gravel shoulders, to a 2-lane urban road with concrete curbs and gutter. Install new sidewalks and streetlights, boulevard bike paths, landscaping features and pedestrian crossovers.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC stop impacts
-  Lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/colonel-talbot



Above: Colonel Talbot Road Upgrades

Wellington Gateway Phases 3 and 4

(Wellington Road Wilkins Street to Harlech Gate and between Harlech Gate and Greenfield Drive)






Work Type: Rapid Transit and Municipal Infrastructure Improvements

Tender: \$59M

Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS)

Benefits: Improved mobility, connectivity to transit, streetscaping and water and sewer infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future growth.

-  Temporary sidewalk closures
-  LTC route and stop impacts
-  Phased road and lane restrictions



Website: getinvolved.london.ca/wellingtongateway



Above: Wellington Gateway Phases 3 and 4

APPENDIX C – Construction Mitigation Strategies

The teams managing construction projects are regularly drawing upon lessons learned through the annual Renew Program to raise the bar on public service when supporting business and community stakeholders affected by construction. The following strategies are applied to help mitigate the impacts of construction for Londoners.

Project Coordination Mitigations

The Renew London Infrastructure Program was created to drive construction efficiency by coordinating capital construction projects across Environment and Infrastructure. There are additional opportunities for City Staff to coordinate projects across internal and private partners to avoid potential overlapping construction impacts.

Core Area Construction Coordination Committee (CAC3)

The CAC3 was established in 2018 to better coordinate transportation impacts in the core stemming from known projects and permits in or affecting right-of-way, to inform core construction communications. Coordination of all construction activities in densely developed parts of the city, which are used intensively day and night by multiple diverse users, involves collaboration across several City divisions. Effective communication is paramount internally and with the City's private partners, transit, and emergency services. The committee focuses on anticipating and minimizing impacts and achieving equity in the travel experiences of all road users (pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists) through weekly meetings during the construction season. In 2023, the core-area boundary being monitored by the Downtown Construction Coordination Committee extends from Horton Street to Oxford Street and from the Thames River to Ontario Street.

Utility Coordinating Committee

The mandate of the Utility Coordinating Committee (UCC) is to provide advanced planning of infrastructure work in the municipal right-of-way for over 20 different public and private organizations. Coordinating this work is a complex challenge compounded by hundreds of emergency and routine operational repairs undertaken by City Roads, Water, Sewer, and Forestry Operation teams annually. There has been a significant increase in project applications for telecom companies which will continue as fibre to the home programs blanket most areas of the city.

Advanced cumulative planning through the UCC allows the City staff to better respond to proposed and unplanned work and helps visualize the effects of all projects relative to others and promotes better definition of specifications around scheduling of contracts. The City's goal is to ensure that construction is planned and sequenced in a manner that minimizes impacts on traffic and disruption to the public.

Phasing and Staging Projects

Through experiences on several recent larger projects, the City has recognized the benefits of splitting large scale projects into phases over multiple years or into stages by location within a single season, where possible. As with most projects there are inevitable challenges that can affect a project's schedule. With a project spread out over multiple years the impact of any delays is minimized and the cost to the city can be significantly reduced and controlled. Phasing projects over multiple years can have benefits, but other factors such as funding, local impacts, and transportation impacts need to be considered when deciding if this approach is appropriate.

Mobility Mitigations

All work is being scheduled to minimize impacts on traffic as much as possible from the perspective of all road users. Construction schedules may vary due to weather and other factors, so it is important that Londoners stay alert and be prepared to adapt to changing conditions.

During construction, the public are advised to plan their travel in advance, consider alternate routes, be aware that street parking may be impacted, obey signage around work zones and be patient while traveling in and around work zones throughout the city. The city takes an active approach to coordinating construction to reduce prolonged disruption to local residents and the travelling public. Where possible, staff consider all the potential construction needs of a particular area and liaise with outside agencies such as the utility companies to coordinate their construction needs and plan how to complete the work together in stages or at the same time.

Pedestrian Impacts

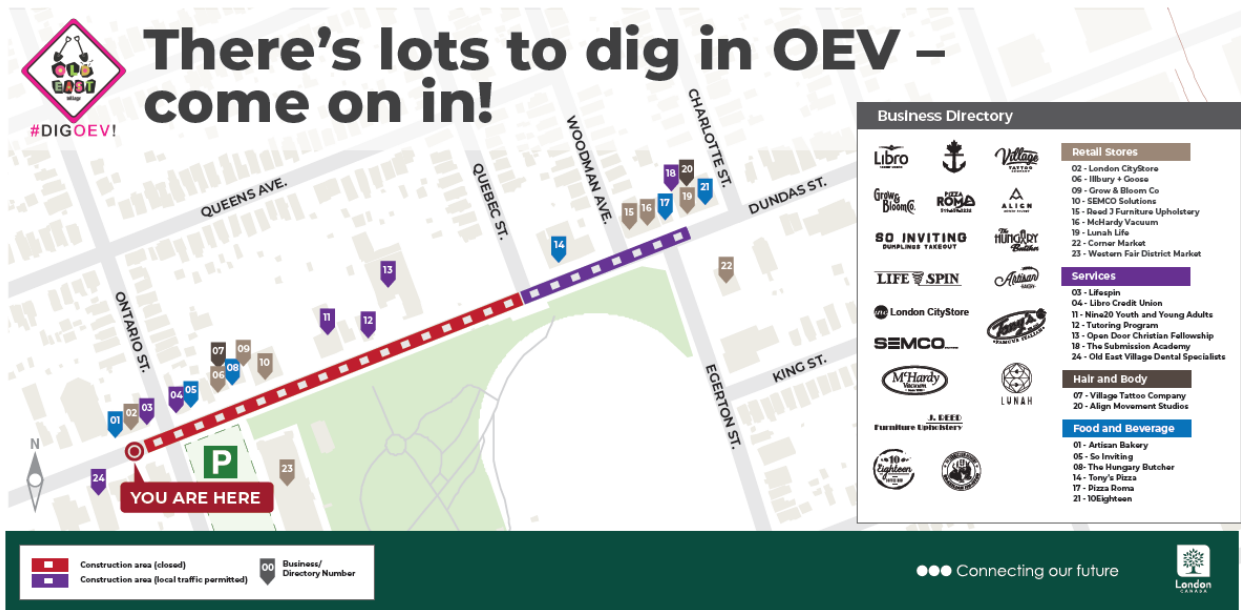
Accessibility around construction projects is a key consideration for all the City's construction activities. City contracts require that an accessible pathway through a construction site be maintained to the extent possible. When encountering certain project and site-specific constraints or disruptions, it is not always possible to continuously provide a safe and accessible route through a construction site. When construction activities require the temporary closure of an existing sidewalk for safety, the public will be notified of the disruption as per O. Reg. 191/11, Part IV.2, s. 80.48 (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, "AODA"). Where applicable, signage will be installed on site at either end of the work indicating that the sidewalk is closed. This will alert pedestrians to use an alternate route. While this alternate route may not always be most convenient way to reach a particular destination, it will ensure that the public is not entering into an unsafe situation.

Where possible, City projects include requirements to construct temporary hard surface sidewalks and, in some cases, temporary ramps to better facilitate accessible pedestrian movement. Navigational signage is also placed on site around large core area construction projects to support pedestrians and businesses.

2023 Core Construction projects such as Phase 2 of the East London Link project on King Street, Ontario Street and Dundas Street included enhanced site security, improved lighting, additional signage, and enhanced walkways to improve public safety. These improvements for pedestrians were implemented to provide a more comfortable and secure construction environment for residents, businesses, and visitors.



Above: Examples of navigational signage used around the construction area.



Above: Example of pedestrian navigation maps to be installed around construction sites.

Cyclist Impacts

Cyclists are an important consideration when designing and planning all infrastructure projects. While many projects include building new bike lanes and improving existing bike infrastructure, construction sites themselves are potential hazards for cyclists. City's bicycle routes should be safely accommodated through or around work zones. When possible, the city creates detour routes for cyclists, posts signage around construction, and shares notices, public service announcements and maps online about closures.



Above: Cyclist crossing the Ridout Street North and Dundas Place intersection adjacent to an active construction zone.



Above: Example of bike detour signs to help cyclists navigate construction safely.

Traffic Impacts

Congestion and closures caused by public and private construction is disruptive to all road users. City staff manage programs to mitigate the impacts as much as possible by reviewing all projects from a traffic and construction detour impact perspective. Some projects will require road closures to complete the planned construction for the safety of the contractor and the public, while others may only require lane restrictions. In any case, a detour to safely redirect traffic around the disturbed areas and permit the work to be completed in a timely manner will be implemented.

To optimize vehicle traffic flow in the areas affected by planned detours, the City may adjust traffic-signal timing, in addition to installing advance warning signage and optimizing the City's Renew London map to recognize the closure. The city will have greater ability to adjust traffic signal operation as the Intelligent Traffic Signal project benefits are realized. As an effective and highly visible tool, more electronic Portable Variable Message Signs are being utilized throughout the city to provide drivers with current updates/detour routes digitally, on a larger screen.

Notwithstanding posted detour routes, increased traffic volumes are often observed on some neighbourhood streets near construction areas as drivers look for shortest routes around the closures. In some cases, temporary neighborhood traffic calming measures may be implemented to mitigate this behavior.

The City strives to minimize the disruption to the public during construction and maintain access to the maximum extent possible. Separating a construction project into stages to maintain use is often considered. However, it can often lengthen the duration of a project, creates challenges from a constructability and increased capital cost perspective. A balance needs to be established that satisfies both objectives.

Transit impacts

City staff work closely with the London Transit Commission ("LTC") to identify construction impacts affecting bus routes. LTC prepares and communicates detour routes as needed throughout construction projects. Several projects for 2024 will impact LTC routes, and these route changes will be listed on the 'detours' section of LTC's website.

Access Mitigations

Pedestrian/Sidewalk Access

Maintaining sidewalk access throughout construction zones, especially in the core area, continues to be a challenge when sidewalk work is required. Contractors are asked to maintain clearly labelled pedestrian maps and signage in advance of pathway closures. Where necessary, crews also provide a temporary smooth surface of plywood, asphalt, or concrete within the sidewalk area for pedestrians.

AODA and Supports for People with Disabilities

There are many people in the community who due to age, infirmity, injury, or other reasons are dealing with mobility challenges and for them a construction zone can present lots of unexpected terrain and obstacles. Strategies to support accessibility during construction include clearly marked pedestrian routes with large signage at eye level to support those using mobility devices and brightly coloured fencing to help those with low vision. All construction workers are required to have AODA training and are encouraged to keep an eye for anyone that may be struggling and give a little extra assistance.

Motor Vehicle Access

While maintaining road access is not possible in all construction zones, two-hour free parking was offered through the Core Area Action Plan to incentivize drivers to continue to visit despite the removal of on-street parking in the work zone. The City will also assist visitors through the use of advance warning signs, social media updates and public service announcements.

Temporary and Courtesy Park and Pick-Up Locations

To help support businesses during construction, temporary courtesy park and pick-up locations have been added at various locations in the Core Area for customers and food delivery drivers when making quick food and parcel pickups. The need and locations for these short-term spots will continue to be assessed in 2024 to support local businesses.

Receiving Deliveries

Local businesses rely on the delivery of goods to operate. Understanding this, temporary loading zones have been designated in advance and will be clearly marked for retailers, suppliers, and rideshare services. In exceptional circumstances, new loading areas may be negotiated and installed. Concierge services can also be made available to assist with large or complex deliveries.

Service Interruption Mitigations

Service interruptions can be extremely disruptive to businesses. Over the past few years, communication has been improved around planned service interruptions in the core area. Bi-weekly emails are sent to businesses from the project manager detailing what work has been completed, and what upcoming work is expected in the area. Tailored email notifications are also shared with impacted businesses at least 24 hours in advance of a service disruption, unless there is an emergency, in which case notice is provided as soon as possible.

Site Condition Mitigations

Cleanliness of Work Site

Clean work zones are an important factor to deliver on positive experiences during construction. Sidewalk and street sweeping, sharps management, cigarette butt disposal, periodic window-washing, garbage/recycling receptacles for the general public and waste pickup for those living and working in the area will be included in tenders where possible. Coordination at/near key destinations (city-wide) for major closures led by third parties at or near critical destinations, such as hospitals, schools, community, and seniors' centres are critical to the community. Though internal training, increased efforts with regards to communication plans in these important locations. This includes increased oversight of third parties such as CN/CP Rail and utility groups.

Site security enhancements

In recent years, there was a need for additional site security on several projects, to keep City and Contractor property safe during inactive periods of the project. Incidents may occur, requiring the need for security personnel on site during working hours to assist with the safety of workers. Some major contracts have provisions for enhanced site security to ensure everyone remains safe around construction zones. Site security also aims to protect equipment, materials, tools, and other machinery and is used on a case-by-case basis.

APPENDIX D – Communications and Customer Service Strategies

As London experiences larger and more complex construction projects, the City is prioritizing communications to ensure impacted businesses, residents, and property owners are informed before and during construction.

On a typical construction project, stakeholder outreach takes place before work begins to review and discuss potential impacts, such as property access and accessibility, collect contact information, solicit feedback, and share project details. Information gathered during these conversations is essential to shaping communications for each project.

To streamline communications between the city, impacted stakeholders, construction crews, and key private partners – such as London Transit and emergency services – a Construction Project Manager is assigned to each project. The Project Manager’s contact information is shared before construction begins and members of the public are invited to connect with the Project Manager at any time during construction. This role is essential to ensure up-to-date information is always accessible, and to assist with construction inquiries and issues, manage Renew London updates, and keep Communications staff informed.

Anticipating exact impacts and unforeseen situations may be difficult due to the complexity and changing conditions for each project. However, Construction Project Managers work closely with Communications to ensure Londoners and impacted businesses and residents are informed about road closures, lane restrictions, sidewalk disruptions and other construction impacts that may arise. Key private partners and emergency services are kept informed on an ongoing basis through direct communications with Construction Project Managers, public service announcements, and the daily Renew London Road Report email.

Communications and Correspondence

While frequency of correspondence may differ depending on the project’s location, scope, duration, and traffic and social impacts, the following communication methods may be used to inform Londoners who live, work, or own property in proximity to a city-led capital construction project:

Road construction projects

- Construction notice letter
- Direct communication with Construction Project Manager (email, phone, in-person)
- Advance warning and detour signage
- Updates on the Renew London website

Major construction projects

Any of the tactics above, plus:

- A minimum of three project update letters
- Project-specific web page on london.ca and/or getinvolved.london.ca
- Public engagement webinars and/or pre-recorded presentations
- In-person drop-in sessions
- Public service announcements (PSAs sent to media and posted on london.ca/newsroom) media updates
- Email notifications and updates to project-specific email subscribers
- Social media updates to communicate traffic impacts

Core/commercial area construction projects

Any of the tactics above, plus:

- A Construction Business Relations Coordinator, whose primary focus is on supporting businesses through the construction process. Working closely with core area BIAs, the Business Relations Coordinator becomes a familiar face to impacted businesses through ongoing, in-person and virtual outreach, and ensures business concerns and questions are addressed by the project team.
- Ongoing communications and promotions with Downtown London and Old East Village and other BIA's where applicable
- Custom wayfinding signage and navigation maps
- Collateral materials such as construction toolkits and contact cards
- Radio ads and social media advertising

Navigation

The City continuously promotes the use of the following tools to help Londoners navigate construction safely and efficiently whether they drive, bike, walk, or take transit:

- **Navigation apps:** Londoners continue to be encouraged to use navigation apps such as Waze or Google Maps to find alternative routes during construction.
- **Renew London interactive map:** By visiting london.ca/roadwork residents can search by street to learn if their commute will be impacted.
- **Honk app:** Through an official partnership with Honk, drivers can continue to find and pay for parking nearby during construction.
- **LTC's online trip planner:** City staff work alongside LTC to promote use of their trip planner and detour updates during construction.

Core Construction Program

The City of London has a vision to revitalize the Core Area as the cultural, civic, retail, and economic heart of London, and as a great place to live. Revitalization of the core area is essential to support city growth and mobility in the future. Not only are there major City-led projects planned in the core in 2024, but private development and private utility projects will continue as well.

The core construction program supports area businesses and resident with additional resources such as an enhanced wayfinding signage, small events, and marketing campaigns all using a consistent tagline "Connecting our future."

Enhanced communications and engagement will continue in 2024 to support construction in the core and surrounding areas. Key projects include carry-over work for the Downtown Loop Phase 3 and Wellington Gateway Phase 1, Victoria Bridge Replacement, Adelaide Underpass, and York Street Infrastructure Renewal.

Community relations

Based on lessons learned early in 2023, the City continues to build its formalized construction mitigation program in the core. This program provides enhanced resources and communications on core construction projects to:

- Provide a positive experience for visitors and locals
- Encourage movement in and around the construction zone
- Enable easy access to City services and staff
- Promote impacted areas and support businesses in partnership with the BIAs
- Prioritize and facilitate project information sharing
- Foster community collaboration where possible

Program elements can be identified by its tagline: Connecting our future.

●●● Connecting our future.

Measurement

To better understand the effectiveness of the core construction program, the City will continue to engage with business and residents to identify stakeholders' top concerns and issues related to construction, in order to provide focused communication and construction mitigation efforts where they matter most.

The most effective and well received communications, identified through direct interactions with business and residents are:

- Email notifications
- Project web page
- Construction letters and notices
- Sidewalk signs
- Social media
- Information from the BIA
- Conversations with City staff

A previous survey also identified the top five areas suggested for improvement:

- Pedestrian/sidewalk access
- Motor vehicle access
- Personal and property security
- On-street parking
- Receiving deliveries

City staff will continue to use feedback and interactions to refine the core construction program and is currently exploring ways to incorporate the feedback into other construction projects across London. Recognizing the value of stakeholder input on overall communications efforts, the team intends to continue soliciting feedback through direct communications and a future Core construction communications survey.

Accomplishments

Public Engagement (city wide)

The City's Get Involved continues to be the main online space for residents to provide comments, questions, and feedback on different projects across London. The improvements made to the Get Involved website in 2020, allow more interaction with the public through new and various types of digital engagement opportunities. The website has been used to host information about multiple construction projects.

It is recognized that not all Londoners are able to access project information online. Project teams also offered a variety of other options and accommodations to ensure that everybody was able to receive this information. This included mailed letters, phone conversations, and printed construction information delivered to residents and businesses.

Project teams are continuing to implement in-person outreach to connect with impacted stakeholders in addition to virtual meetings and events. In-person participation at local events, such 'membership mixers' led by core area BIAs provide an opportunity to engage with residents, businesses and those directly impacted by construction.

Business Relations Coordinator

To streamline communications between the City, construction crews and businesses, a permanent Construction Business Relations Coordinator role has been created to support core area projects. This role was originally created as a temporary position during Dundas Place and core-area construction in 2018 but has been consistently identified by businesses as an essential one-on-one support. Through this position, businesses have a dedicated resource to assist with high-priority issues like access to

their stores and parking, and a trusted conduit who is responsible for sharing – and addressing – their feedback with the project team. Following positive response to this role and increased demand for enhanced business supports, a second Construction Business Relations Coordinator position has been created to expand consistent business supports across the Renew London Construction program.

Email Notifications and Bi-Weekly Updates (core area)

All core construction projects provide the added benefit of direct email notifications to residents, business and property owners who choose to subscribe. Through this channel, the Construction Administration team has been able to provide advance notification about service interruptions, work occurring near properties, and major site changes. This method of communication also achieved an above-average open rate of 50% and has been identified as one of the most effective communication channels by residents and businesses. Email notifications are being extended this year to share project milestones and updates for the 2024 Top Ten projects.

Construction Letters and Notices (city-wide)

To equip residents with more accessible, easy-to-read project information, the City of London has made all its construction letters AODA compliant with the goal of improving readability for all. Additional improvements include a reorganization of content where necessary and making information about project impacts, timelines, and options to stay informed more prominent.

Enhanced Wayfinding Signage

In 2023, improved construction pedestrian signage was used to help label accessible routes within core construction zones. These additions were received positively by residents and businesses, and they will be applied to 2024's top ten projects. When possible, signage will be installed in advance of sidewalk closures and temporary narrow or uneven surfaces. Regularly updated, clearly labeled pedestrian navigation maps will also be produced and posted where applicable. All signs will be carefully designed to clearly state the specific impact without dissuading people from travelling through the area(s) leading up to the closure.

Last year, the City and the Core Area BIAs partnered on multiple signage initiatives Downtown and in Old East Village to offer some “surprise and delight” within construction zones. Downtown, song-themed signs with construction puns garnered a great deal of attention to the downtown core during construction. In Old East Village, enhanced wayfinding signage was installed to promote the area as well as indicating access to nearby businesses. Moving forward, the City will continue to work with BIAs and community members to exercise creativity through signage and other methods.



Above: Unique signs promoting OEV businesses during construction.



Above: Directional sign indicating access for drivers in Old East Village.



Above: A series of signs and social media graphics created in partnership with Downtown London to promote businesses using construction themed puns.



Above: Navigational sign indicating access to properties in Old East Village.

Promotion of the Core During Construction (core area)

Promoting the core with the help of Downtown London and the Old East Village BIA will continue in 2024. Similar to last year, radio, billboards, social media, and other tactics will be available to communicate construction impacts and support businesses.

2023 marked the final year of the Core Area Construction Dollars Pilot Program, which was developed with local partners to support London's Core Area and generate new growth and investment. As part of the Core Area Action Plan, \$92,000 were distributed to customers in the form of Construction Dollars through contest prizes, promotions, and giveaways led by the Core Area BIAs and their businesses. The program was developed to support the local economy during a busy construction season, incentivizing customers to shop, dine and experience the core.



Above: Downtown visitors receiving Construction Dollars.