

# Traffic Detour Evaluation Guide

It may be necessary to temporarily close a section of roadway or a ramp during construction to perform a specific work activity if traffic cannot be safely maintained. Temporarily closing a roadway or a ramp may also be considered if the traffic volumes are low enough, there is an adequate detour route, and the overall construction duration would be significantly decreased as compared to stage construction. For example, four weekend closures may be a preferred option as compared to eight months of alternating one-way traffic. The closure of an on-ramp may be needed during stage construction when mainline traffic is shifted and is not possible to maintain an adequate acceleration area.

If it is determined that a detour will be needed during construction, the following items should be completed:

1. **Prime Designer Traffic Detour Checklist** is required to be completed during design for every proposed detour. The following items should be investigated in order to complete Prime Designer Traffic Detour Checklist:
  - Review the hourly volume guidelines for a closure.
  - Check HFCL (High Frequency Crash Location) list and 24-hour traffic counts for detour route.
  - Determine if the detour route will have the capacity to accommodate the additional traffic.
  - Determine if there will be any other projects on the detour route that may be in construction at the same time as the proposed detour.
  - **Field review the detour route for:**
    - roadway width, grade and horizontal curves
    - turning radii at intersections - adequate for trucks
    - vertical clearance restrictions - overhead utilities and bridges
    - weight restrictions
    - condition of pavement
    - pavement markings
    - signs
    - guide rail
    - condition of drainage structures
    - traffic signals
    - railway-highway grade crossings
    - number of residences and businesses, how close they are to the road
    - length of the detour
    - sidewalks
    - pedestrian activity
    - no one-way streets
  - Determine if any traffic signals along the detour route will require timing changes to accommodate the additional traffic volumes.
  - Determine if any upgrades to signs and/or pavement markings are needed along the detour route.
  - Consult with the town/city emergency services to determine how the closure will affect their operation.
  - Determine if any transit or school bus routes will be affected by the closure.
  - Determine if there could be public opposition to the detour route, especially if it will be through a residential area.
  - Determine how pedestrians will be accommodated and if a signed pedestrian detour will be required.
  - All detour routes should be discussed with District Maintenance and reviewed by District Construction and the affected town(s).

## 2. Coordination with Municipalities:

- If traffic from a state road needs to be detoured onto town roads in order to construct the project as designed, then a letter to town(s) requesting concurrence to the proposed detour is necessary. The prime designer is responsible for the letter to town(s) and for coordination related to detour duration and mitigations.
- Detours involving expressway ramps which lead directly to and from town roads do not require a letter to town(s) since this traffic is coming from or destined to town roads.

## 3. Coordination with Operating Railroads:

Detours involving railway-highway grade crossings or intersections controlled by a traffic control signal with railroad pre-emption may require railroad coordination and/or additional improvements. Contact the Rail Section of the Division of Traffic Engineering if the proposed detour route contains a grade crossing or signal with railroad pre-emption. [List of Publicly Owned Traffic Control Signals with Railroad Pre-Emption](#) is provided in a table at the end of this guide.

## 4. Detour Plans, Estimates, and Special Provisions:

- Detour plans are required for every detour route included in a construction project. Refer to [sample detour signing plans](#) for some of the typical detour samples
- Changeable Message Signs (CMS) or construction signs must be placed at the closure locations two weeks in advance of the closure to notify motorists of dates/times of the closure. Refer to the construction sign detail for sign Nos. 80-9058, 80-9083, and 80-9079. Be sure to include an item for CMS in the construction contract or be sure to include a sufficient quantity for construction signs as applicable.
- Require the contractor to do any necessary improvements to the roads along the detour route prior to implementing the detour.
- TPCBC and Construction Barricades - Type III shall be used to block access to the closed roadway or ramp. Construction Barricades Detectable shall be used to direct pedestrians along temporary pedestrian paths and/or to block access to sidewalks.
- Additional quantity of Trafficpersons may be needed for a detour.
- Allowable periods and other detour limitations shall be included in the Prosecution and Progress and Maintenance and Protection of Traffic special provisions. A separate detour section is required for detours related to Railroad – Highway Grade Crossing detours. A Notice to Contractor - Detours may be provided for detours with unusual limitations or constrains.

## 5. Public Information Process During Construction:

A sufficient time in advance of the detour, the District Construction office will coordinate the appropriate public information process that may include the following:

- Press releases.
- Radio announcements (if appropriate).
- Coordinate with Highway Operations: VMS, Highway Advisory Radio, coordination with other states as appropriate.
- Coordinate with CT Rides.
- Coordinate with Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit.
- Coordinate with the operating railroad regarding the railway-highway grade crossings along the detour route.