

Examples of Work Zones

The following are examples of past work zones that illustrate both good and bad examples of pedestrian and cyclist accommodation in work zones. Each example discusses the pros and cons of the work zone and highlights where improvements could be made to make the accommodations safer and more convenient for active users.

1. Preston Avenue, between 14th Street and College Drive (2018)

Roadway improvements associated with Merlis Belsher Place occurred in 2018 which resulted in a temporary partial closure of the road and full closure of the multi-use pathway on the west side of Preston Avenue. This multi-use pathway is an important part of the pedestrian and cyclist network and there were limited options for pedestrians who happened upon the work zone.

The full closure of this pathway had significant impact on pedestrian and cyclist movement as the nearest path for available pedestrians was Cumberland Avenue. This detour added additional travel time of approximately 15 to 30 minutes for pedestrians.

The detour did not address the needs of all users, providing no guidance to users who may have a visual impairment and inadequate guidance for users who may not be capable of 15 to 30 minute detour, such as older adults, people with mobility limitations, or those with time-sensitive trips.

The guidance provided at the closure directed pedestrians and cyclists approaching from the north to use Cumberland Avenue, but no facility was available along College Drive to facilitate this movement. Further, no information regarding the distance of the detour was provided nor was advance signage placed to advise pedestrians and cyclists to choose an alternate route.

On the south end of the work zone there was an advanced sign, but its orientation was only to users proceeding east. Users travelling west intending to proceed northbound on Preston Avenue would not see the signs.



Image 1: Multi-use pathway closure signs at Preston Avenue and College Drive



Image 2: Recommended pedestrian and cyclist detour route at Preston Avenue and College Drive



Image 3: Poor orientation of detour sign at Preston Avenue and 14th Street

2. Spadina Crescent, between 21st Street and 22nd Street (2018)

This example involves a short duration temporary closure of the bicycle lane along Spadina Crescent. To complete minor repairs, temporary closures or diversions may be required for short periods of time. It is important that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are taken into consideration in these types of closures as well. In this particular instance, the temporary traffic control was improperly implemented. Signs were placed too close together, there was a lack of taper to direct traffic, and guidance was not provided to cyclists to indicate that the bike lane was closed, and that cyclists and motorists must share the traffic lane. The addition of signs communicating the closure of the bike lane and expected travel behaviour for both vehicles and cyclists would improve the safety of all road users in this type of temporary traffic control.



Image 4: Lack of signage directing cyclists and vehicles to share the traffic lane

3. 14th Street, between Preston Avenue and Weir Crescent (2018)

This detour is an example where a third-party was doing work adjacent to the multi-use pathway along 14th Street. The work zone lacked signage indicating that the area is restricted and there was no guidance directing cyclists and pedestrians to an alternative route.



Image 5 and 6: Lack of signage indicating the pathway is closed

4. 4th Avenue, between 22nd Street and 23rd Street (2018)

The diversion previously in place in front of the former Police Station on 4th Avenue is a good example of a work zone accommodation for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles that meets the intent of the proposed policy. This diversion respected the needs of all road users by replicating, as nearly as is practicable, the facilities that the work zone is disrupting. Further improvements to this diversion would include better accommodations for people with low vision or mobility limitations, such as a straight, detectable edge for people with visual impairments and ramps for people using mobility aids. Further, the protected bike lane is fully retained. This diversion is good example of how to provide safe, convenient temporary facilities for pedestrian and cyclists.



Image 7: Human-scaled signage indicating the spaces for pedestrians and cyclists



Image 8: Providing a straight, cane detectable edge would improve this diversion for people with visual impairments

5. COVID Pedestrian and Cyclist Detour Signs (2020)

To support physical distancing requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic, one-way travel restrictions were put in place on bridge pathways where two metre physical distancing could not be achieved. These signs were oriented toward pedestrians and cyclists and provided information to bridge users through advanced warning signs, access points, and directions to the alternative routes. The signs utilized for these travel restrictions are a good example of providing pedestrians and cyclists with the information needed to make timely decisions about their route.



Image 9: Example of sign oriented toward pedestrians and cyclists.

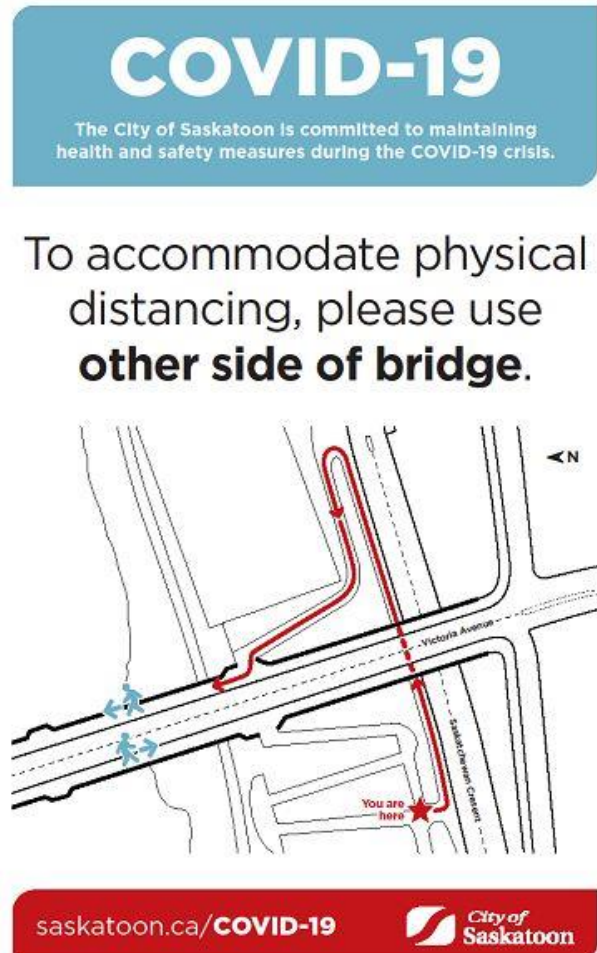


Image 10: Example of wayfinding signs to guide pedestrians and cyclists through detour.

6. Staff Trailer (2020)

In November 2020, a crew trailer was placed at the corner of 23rd Street and 3rd Avenue for City staff to use during the initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This trailer was installed without adequate signage and detour markings. As shown in the photos below, the bike lane was blocked off without any signs being provided to indicate that the lane was blocked or providing guidance to motorists or cyclists on what behaviour was expected through this construction zone. The lack of guidance has resulted in people riding in the bike lane “merging” with traffic just prior to the trailer, creating hazardous conditions for both motorists and cyclists.



Image 11: protected bike lane ends without guidance to cyclists or drivers



Image 12: Lack of signs indicating appropriate direction for cyclists or motorists