

Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment – Halifax

Project Overview

The Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment is a major decommissioning and reurbanization project in the heart of downtown Halifax. WSP is working with the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) on detailed design for dismantling this relic of a different era in urban and transportation planning. As part of this project, WSP is also working with the Municipality to: reconnect Halifax's historic downtown with adjacent neighbourhoods; introduce contemporary sustainable growth and transportation measures; add valuable community public space; and, catalyze economic growth.

What innovations and future trend(s) did we consider?

- Urbanization, intensification and significant increase in people living/working/playing in urban centres
- Increased traffic congestion, lack of infrastructure for alternative modes of travel
- Increased value of city/downtown communities

How were they considered?

Halifax is in the midst of an influx of new residential, commercial and office growth within the downtown core, including the rental market. This is a positive trend as facilitating mixed use growth in the downtown creates live/work/play opportunities and reduces reliance on personal motor vehicles.

Providing infrastructure that facilitates alternative modes of travel has been particularly important. The design for the Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment includes bi-directional, protected bicycle facilities with traffic signal priority for cyclists. Additional space within the

right of way has also been provided to accommodate future transit improvements; as modal splits improve, this space will be utilized as transit-only.

Public spaces, streetscaping, and an improved pedestrian realm are critical pieces of the detailed design for the Cogswell Interchange. In addition to generous public realm space within the rights-of-way, four acres of land have designated as public squares, plazas, and parkland. Designated public spaces will be programed for different uses and users, however all are meant to generate a sense of identity and pride for the HRM.

How was our approach better?

Our designs reflect innovative solutions to rehabilitating and reconnecting downtown lands to historic neighbourhoods and current employment centres. They deliver liveable streets that encourage sustainable growth patterns, enhanced community identity and active streetscapes. They also prioritize the pedestrian realm and promote the use of alternative travel modes including walking, cycling, and transit use.

Given the uncertainty associated with autonomous vehicles, the Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment Project has preserved a linear corridor in and out of the city. This has been considered a key element of “future proofing” the project to accommodate autonomous vehicles in the downtown core.

The outcome

The Cogswell Interchange 60% detailed design was approved by Regional Council in June, 2018. Published design drawings have generated excitement and opportunity-driven feedback from Councillors, staff, residents, and stakeholders. WSP will continue bringing the project to 90% detailed design over the summer/fall 2018 for final approval followed by construction tendering.

The Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment project will be a historic milestone for the HRM and is a best practice case example for Canadian municipalities with similar reurbanization imperatives.

For more information:

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