/ January 2019

60% District Plan Review

—

Halifax
Nova Scotia,
Canada

Towards a Human Scale

Cogswell

District

Gehl

Towards a Human Scale City: Cogswell District Design Input Review
2019

Funding Partners:

Atlantic Developments
Building Owners and Managers Association
Cushman and Wakefield Atlantic
Dalhousie University School of Planning
Develop Nova Scotia
Downtown Halifax Business Commission
Grafton Connor Group
Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel
Halifax Partnership
Halifax Regional Municipality
Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
HRM Apartments
North End Business Association
RAD Consulting
Southwest Properties
Urban Development Institute

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Gehl

What this is

This is:

- A review of the 60% design plan approved by Regional Council in June 2018
- Recommendations to guide design and planning moving forward

This is not:

- A design
- A traffic, density, or parking analysis or assessment of optimal floor area ratio
- A report out on findings from public engagement
- A final decision

This is being done separately.

A note about the 60% design plan

The 60% design plan was approved by Regional Council on June 5, 2018.

The plan finalized*:

- Street network, ROW widths, lane widths, grades, and geometric design
- Number and size of development blocks
- Placement of parks, urban square, plazas, privately owned publicly accessible spaces (POPS)
- Precedent ideas for park and open spaces
- Alignment of bikeways and multi use trail
- Relocated and new underground infrastructure - 75% design

The following elements were NOT included in the 60% design plan. They are to be finalized in the 90% design:

- Detailed design of parks, open spaces, plazas, and greenways
- Streetscape and landscape details
- Hardscale and site furniture details
- Transit plaza design
- Accessibility requirements for Rick Hassen certification
- Finalization of infrastructure design

**While these items were considered final, construction had not yet begun at the time of this review. In the following pages, Gehl outlines challenges and opportunities to strengthen this plan, some of which require taking another look at items that were previously noted as final.*



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Executive Summary

Removing the Cogswell Interchange is a bold move for Halifax. It is rare that historic, dense cities have the chance to redevelop 16 acres of centrally located land. This is no easy challenge and care is needed to ensure developments of this scale connect to existing city fabric and become places people want to live, work, and spend time. This challenge is compounded by the fact that cities change constantly, and this speed is accelerated by technological advances impacting how we live and interact with place.

While much of our urban future is unknown, our needs as human beings remain the same - we need places where we feel safe and comfortable; where we can walk or be active outside; where our children can play; and where we can interact with others. Places that support this tend to be places that succeed financially too.

The Gehl review of the 60% design plan revealed a number of core challenges that hinder the district's ability to become a great place for people. **To truly make this district a model for how to right an urban renewal wrong, fundamental elements need to change. Without these changes, the design can still be improved, but for the district to become a model for what's possible when people are put first in the city making process, key elements need to be rethought**:

- **People-first Vision and Targets:** the 60% design plan is driven by seven goals. The goals are relevant to good urban design, but they are broad and do not define specific metrics to guide the plan, targets related to the life or experience desired for the District, or a long-term vision.
- **Road Network:** the presence of two roundabouts indicate the efficient movement of vehicles is prioritized over people walking or biking. Roundabouts take longer for pedestrians to cross and the ones in the 60% design do not include bike lanes for east-west connections.
- **Building Type:** 18-story towers are planned along Barrington Street. Townhouses are present on Poplar Street, but the plan is dominated by podium towers that do not enhance connectivity or ground floor activation.
- **Undefined Open Spaces:** a generous amount of open space is provided in the plan, but much of this space is undefined. It is unclear how open spaces, currently labeled as POPS, will be managed to be inviting spaces to people.
- **Block Size:** generally, the block sizes are a walkable scale and similar in dimension to the downtown fabric. The block with Brunswick Place is larger than others, creating a mega-block and hindering pedestrian connectivity.

The following pages outline recommendations to diversify building type, improve connectivity, design streets as public spaces, and define a strategic, people first vision.

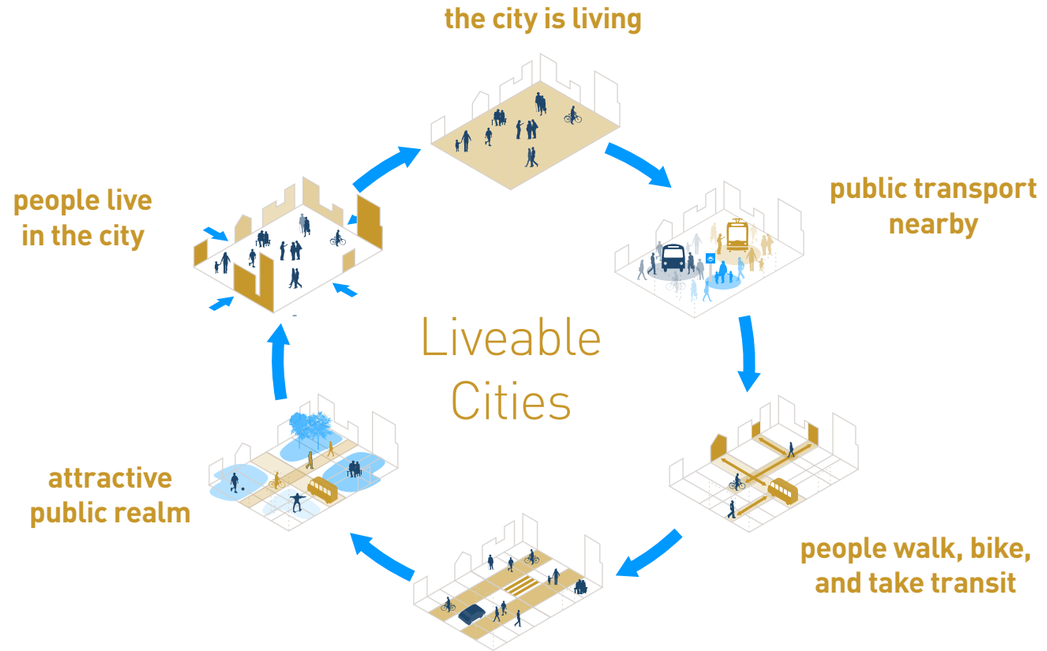
Approach

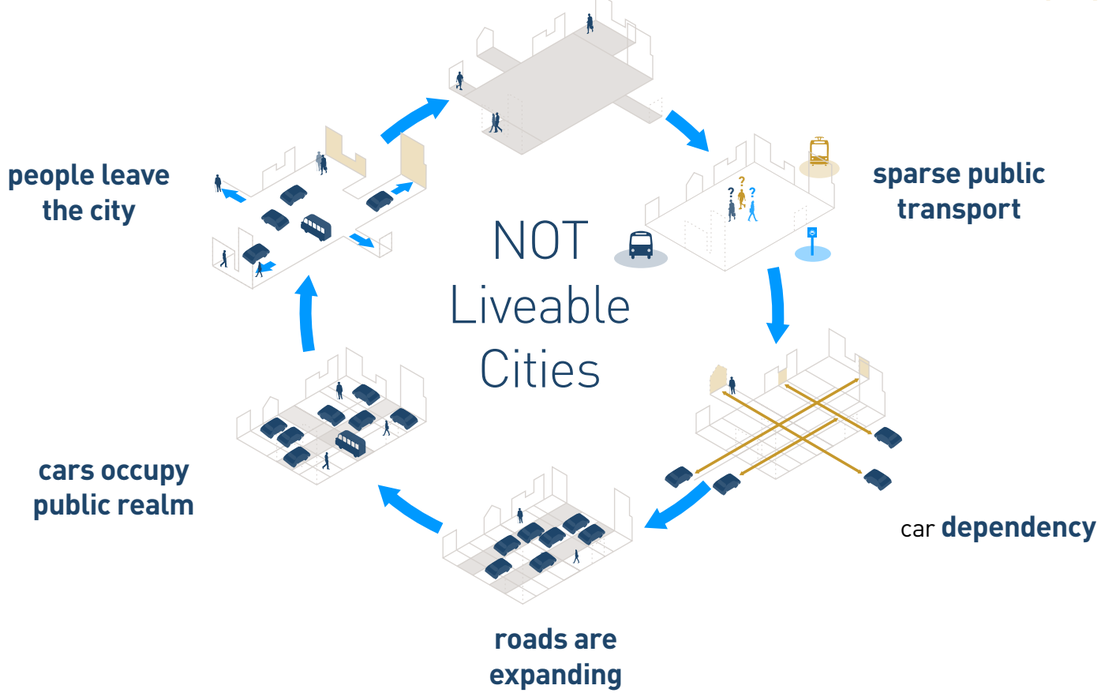
Gehl

Our Mission is to Create Cities for People

We work around the world to create connected and delightful urban environments, with and for city leaders.

We partner with cities ranging in size from 50,000 to 20 million to foster livable and equitable places — and to develop shared visions for residents, visitors, developers, and public agencies.





Form Follows People

We begin projects by exploring how a space is used by people now - what works? What could work better? This informs design for the space and the broader built environment.

Start with **life**



then focus on **space**

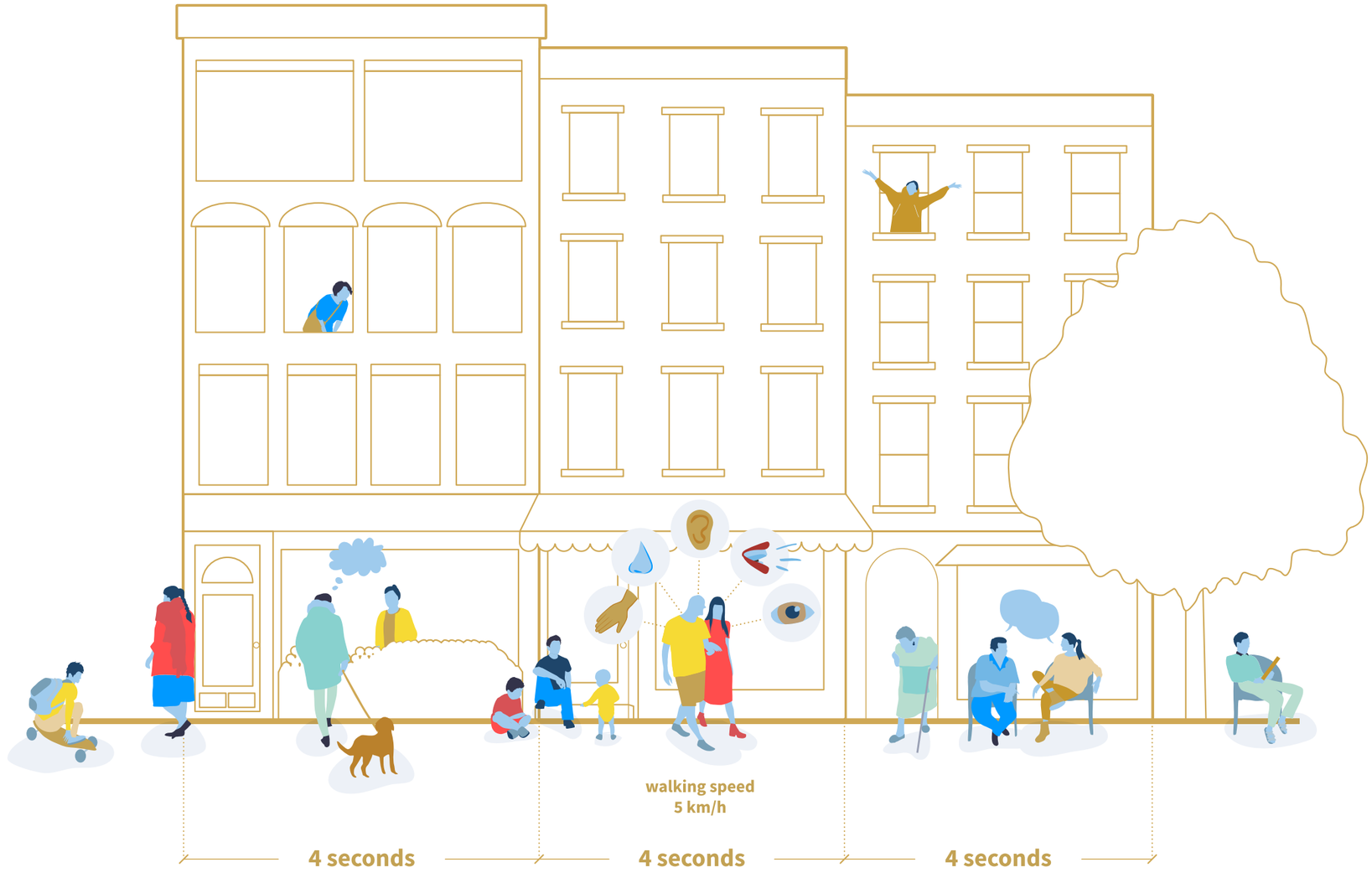


and then respond to people's needs with **buildings**



Build at the Human Scale

Our work is **based on the human dimension**. We believe that the use of public spaces is essential for quality of life in cities and for well-being in general. Having pleasant streets, vibrant neighbourhoods, and well-defined spaces increases social cohesion and makes it easier for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routine.



Quality Matters

Great cities provide quality over quantity: safe, comfortable, and enjoyable public spaces.

Gehl uses the 12 Urban Quality Criteria to evaluate and discuss hierarchy of needs in a space. Without basic protection from cars, noise, rain, and wind people will avoid spending time in a space. Without elements that make walking, standing, sitting, seeing, and conversing comfortable, a place won't invite people to spend time there. Finally, a great place distinguishes itself by including elements that invite people to be active and make use of the positive aspects of microclimate and human scale.

12 Quality Criteria

Protected

Protection against traffic & accidents — feeling safe
- Protection for pedestrians and cyclists
- Eliminating fear of traffic
- Safe crossings

Protection against crime & violence — feeling secure
- Lively public realm
- Allow for passive surveillance
- Diversity of functions 24/7/365
- Well lit / lighting in human scale

Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences
- Wind/draft
- Rain/snow
- Cold/heat
- Pollution
- Dust, noise, glare

Comfortable

Opportunities to walk/cycle
- Room for walking
- Interesting facades
- No obstacles
- Good surfaces
- Accessibility for everyone

Opportunities to see
- Reasonable viewing distances
- Unhindered views
- Interesting views
- easy orientation
- Lighting (when dark)

Opportunities to stop & stay
- Attractive & functional edges
- Defined spots for staying
- Objects to lean against or stand next to
- Facades with good details that invite staying

Opportunities to talk & listen
- Low noise levels
- Public seating arrangements conducive to communicating, 'talkscapes'

Opportunities to sit
- Defined zones for sitting
- Pleasant views, people watching
- Good mix of public and café seating
- Resting/waiting opportunities

Opportunities for play & exercise
- Allow for physical activity, exercise, play & street entertainment
- Temporary activities & events
- By day and night
- In summer and winter

Enjoyable

Dimensioned at human scale
- Dimensions of buildings & spaces in observance of the important human dimension in relation to senses, movements, size and behaviour

Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate
- Sun/shade
- Heat/coolness
- Shelter from wind/breeze

Aesthetic qualities + sensory experience
- Good design and detailing
- Good materials
- Fine views/vistas
- Rich sensory experiences: trees, plants, water

Review Timeline



1. DESIGN REVIEW SEPT 2018

- Review existing reports
- Discuss 60% design with stakeholders by phone

2. PRESENT DRAFT OCT 2018

- Review draft materials by phone
- Address questions

3. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS + SITE VISIT OCT 2018

- Visit Halifax and Cogswell District
- Meet with stakeholders
- Refine draft presentation

4. FINALIZE PRESENTATION NOV/DEC 2018

- Integrate stakeholder feedback
- Finalize presentation
- Present by phone



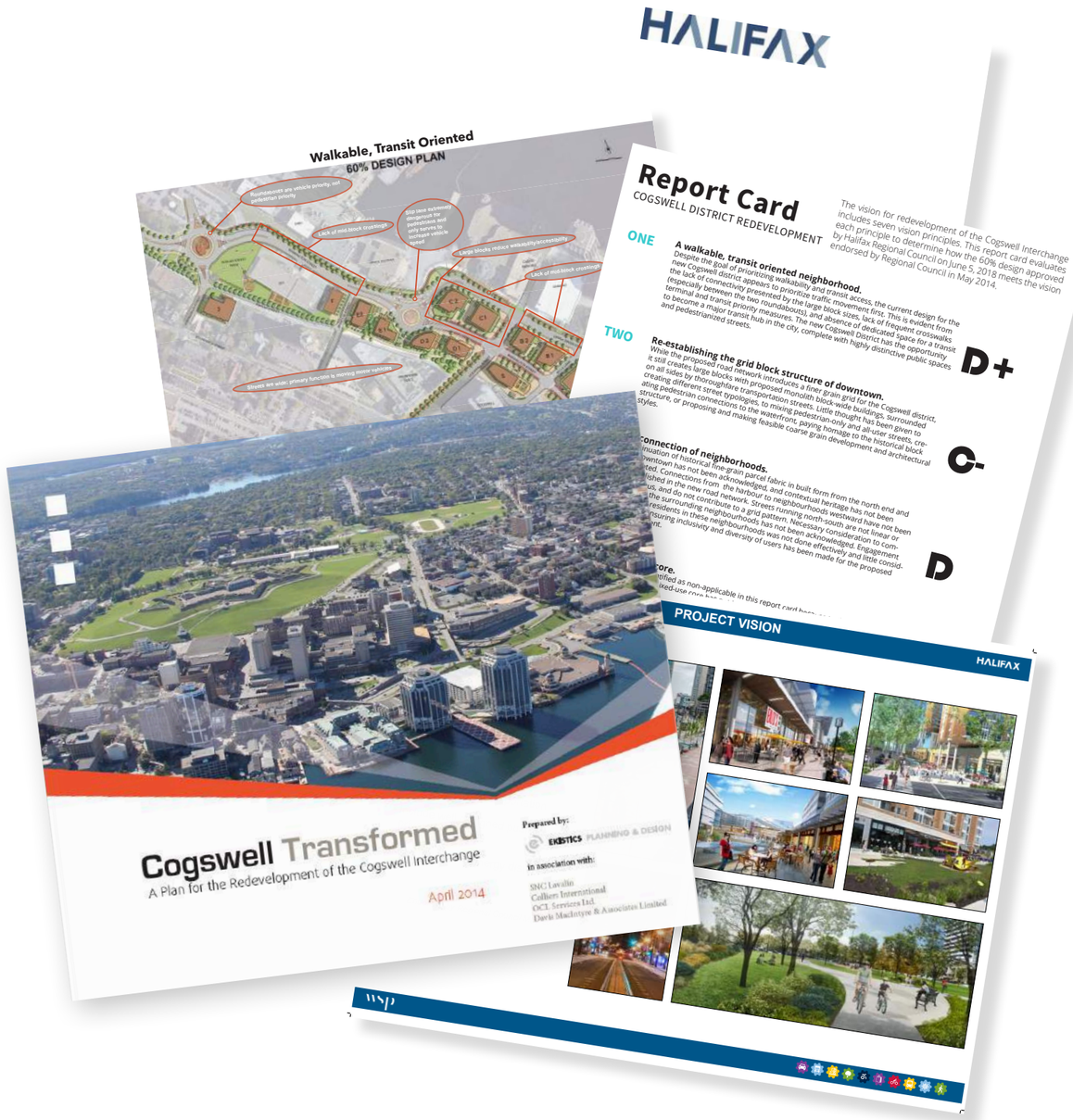
5. NEXT STEPS WINTER 2019

- People-first masterplan for Cogswell

Design Review

The design input review included reading a series of supporting documents:

- HRM 60% design plan (2018)
- Cogswell Transformed (Ekistics, 2014)
- Maps and plans related to adjacent context and neighbourhoods
- The North Boardwalk Plan
- Synopsis of FBM design charrette findings (Sept.24-27)
- Stakeholder feedback documented in the TEAL scorecard



Stakeholder Meetings & Site Visit

In October 2018 two Gehl staff visited Halifax to participate in the Art of City Building conference, conduct site visits in the Cogswell District, and facilitate stakeholder meetings.

- Meetings at the Downtown Halifax offices and walking tours with core stakeholders were held on October 30th.
- Stakeholder feedback is incorporated into the design review.





Halifax Today

A city with a lot to celebrate!

A fortified port with long culture of **trade** and **ship** building

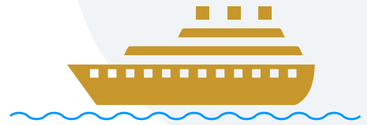


A growing population:

1 Million people live in Nova Scotia — **425,000** reside in Halifax Regional Municipality, and **37,000** are university students



Oldest salt water **ferry service** in North America



A city with history:

Inhabited by first nations **11,000 years ago** and settled by the British as Halifax in 1749

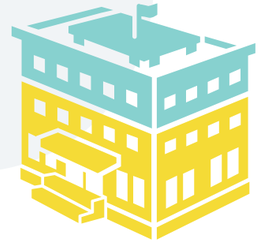


Inviting to visitors:

2.7 Million visits to the Waterfront in 2016



The largest City and Regional **centre for government services**, health care, transportation, and finance in Atlantic Canada



A city with a culture of public space

Halifax's existing public spaces not only provide diverse and high quality experiences, they are important city assets. Investment in the Cogswell District is an opportunity to strengthen the public space network and complement existing spaces with new programming and activities.



Granville Mall



Waterfront boardwalk



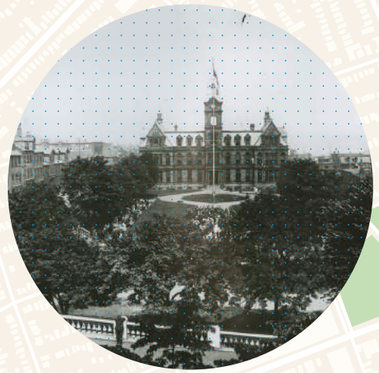
Halifax Citadel

Rich history + heritage

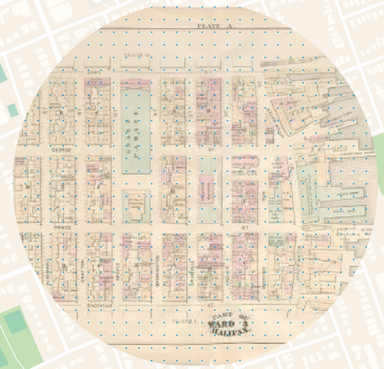
Halifax has a strong social and spatial history and culture. Development in the Cogswell District is an opportunity to do something new and to reflect the history that existed pre-interchange construction and that still exists nearby, in downtown and North End. Before interchange construction, Cogswell was home to a large African-Canadian population. This history and heritage should be researched and commemorated.



Africville



Grand Parade



Halifax Urban Fabric

Sources: Cogswell Transformed, Halifax Military Heritage Preservation Society, Hopkins Atlas: https://novascotia.ca/archives/maps/plate.asp?ID=3

Zooming in to the Cogswell District, we see assets to leverage...



The site as a Northern Gateway

Cogswell is north of and adjacent to downtown. It will be the neighbourhood one passes through if traveling to the downtown core from the MacKay or Macdonald bridges or inland from western Nova Scotia. What people see and feel will form their first impressions of urban Halifax.



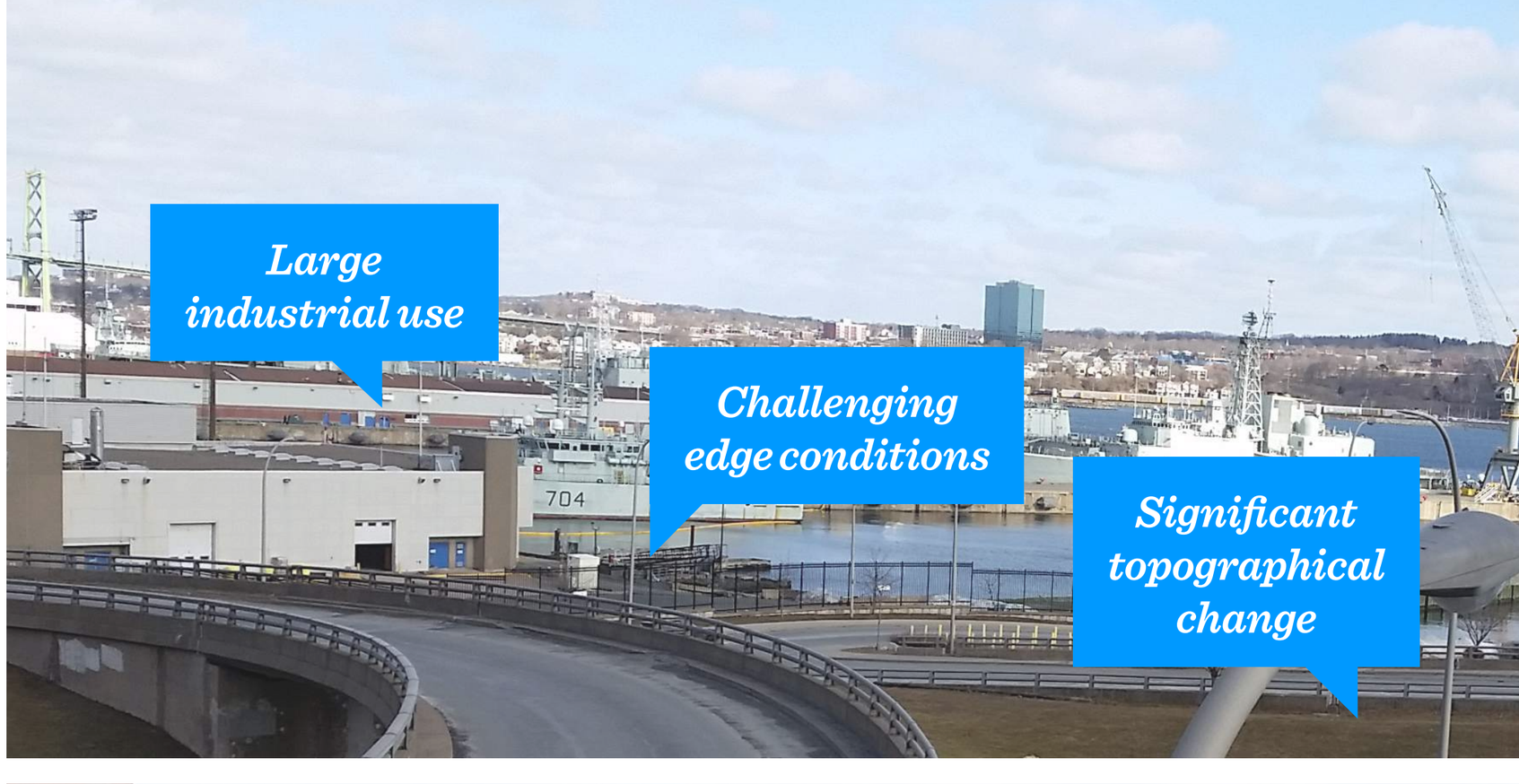
Walking distance to key destinations



and challenges to overcome...

Physical and experiential challenges

Centrally located between the active Port and bridges, the Cogswell District sees frequent truck and vehicular traffic. Despite being adjacent to the waterfront - one of the most popular tourist attractions in Halifax - its connection to the water is challenged by inactive ground floor uses (i.e. surface parking, blank walls). Additionally, dramatic topographic change between the North End and waterfront creates a steep west to east slope. The new development should take care to address these challenges and integrate plans with the wider city context.



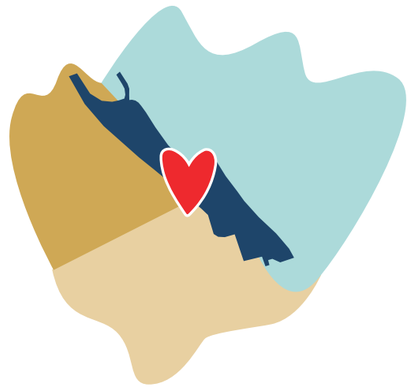
How can the new Cogswell District celebrate what makes Halifax, Halifax?

Halifax Tomorrow

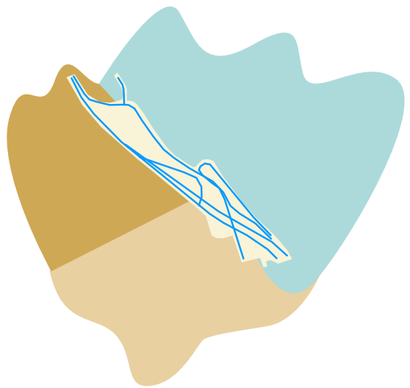
A common vision for the Cogswell District



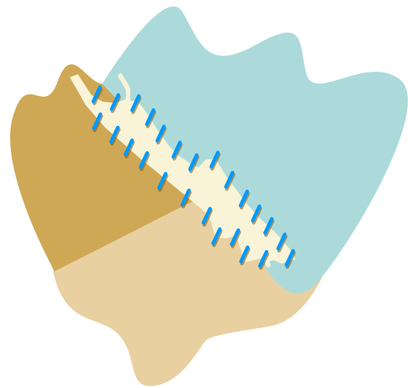
from **nondescript**



to **destination**



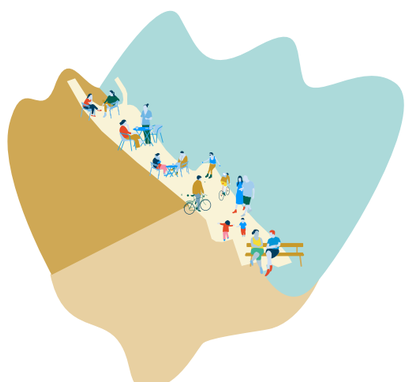
from **barrier**



to **connector**



from **car-oriented**



to **people-focused**

To get from where we are now, to where we want to be we have to take an honest look at the 60% design plan as it stands today...





...is the plan meeting the goals Council set out?

Framework

Design Review Framework

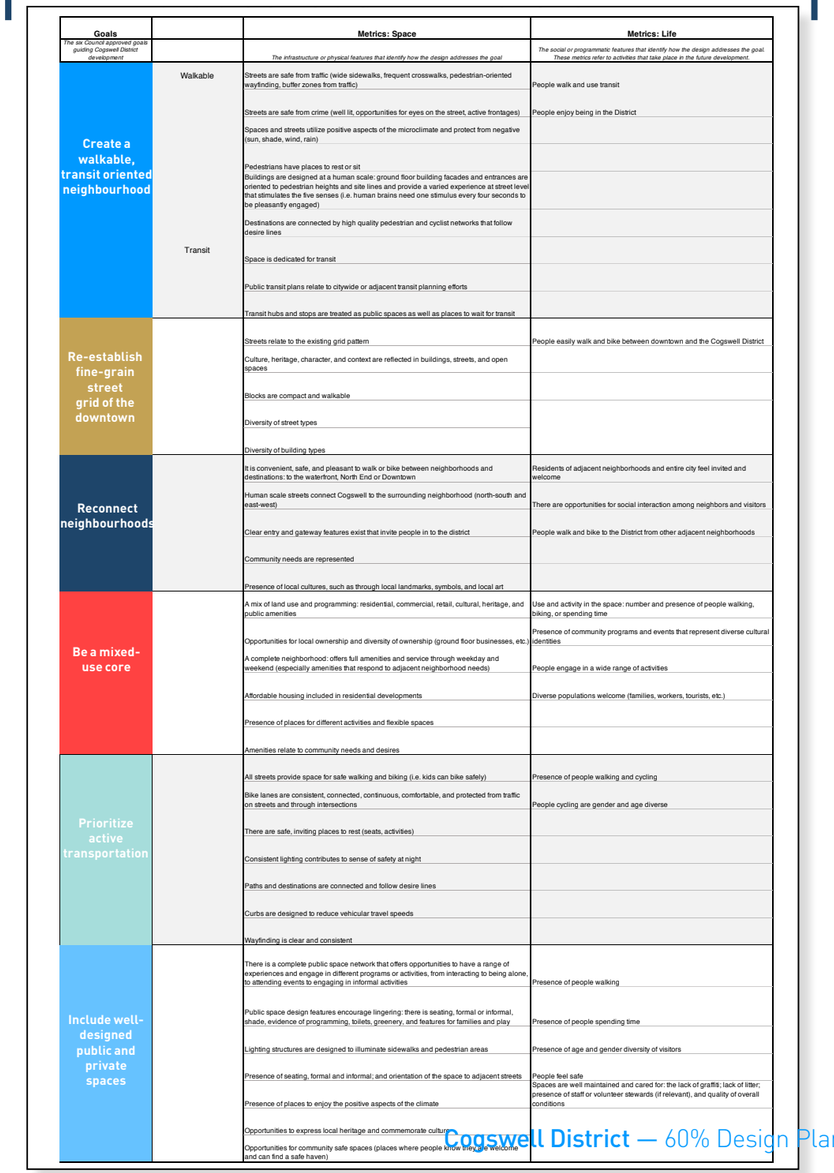
To guide the design review, Gehl identified specific metrics - spatial and social features - for six of the Council approved goals. The metrics represent items to look for to understand how the goal is reflected in the 60% plan. The metrics can be used to define public space, public life targets and to evaluate design progress.

Using the metrics as a guide, Gehl identified challenges and opportunities, organized into three themes: open space, connectivity, and urban block.

See separate Goals matrix document for details and for Gehl assessment.



Note: Goal #7 was not included in Gehl's review scope.



Goals		Metrics: Space	Metrics: Life
The six Council approved goals guiding Cogswell District development		*The infrastructure or physical features that identify how the design addresses the goal*	*The social or programmatic features that identify how the design addresses the goal. These metrics refer to activities that take place in the future development.*
Create a walkable, transit oriented neighbourhood	Walkable	Streets are safe from traffic (wide sidewalks, frequent crosswalks, pedestrian-oriented wayfinding, buffer zones from traffic)	People walk and use transit
		Streets are safe from crime (well lit, opportunities for eyes on the street, active frontages)	People enjoy being in the District
		Spaces and streets utilize positive aspects of the microclimate and protect from negative (sun, shade, wind, rain)	
		Pedestrians have places to rest or sit	
		Buildings are designed at a human scale: ground floor building facades and entrances are oriented to pedestrian heights and site lines and provide a varied experience at street level that stimulates the five senses (i.e. human brains need one stimulus every four seconds to be pleasantly engaged)	
		Destinations are connected by high quality pedestrian and cyclist networks that follow desire lines	
	Transit	Space is dedicated for transit	
		Public transit plans relate to citywide or adjacent transit planning efforts	
		Transit hubs and stops are treated as public spaces as well as places to wait for transit	
Re-establish fine-grain street grid of the downtown		Streets relate to the existing grid pattern	People easily walk and bike between downtown and the Cogswell District
		Culture, heritage, character, and context are reflected in buildings, streets, and open spaces	
		Blocks are compact and walkable	
		Diversity of street types	
		Diversity of building types	
Reconnect neighbourhoods		It is convenient, safe, and pleasant to walk or bike between neighborhoods and destinations: to the waterfront, North End or Downtown	Residents of adjacent neighborhoods and entire city feel invited and welcome
		Human scale streets connect Cogswell to the surrounding neighborhood (north-south and east-west)	There are opportunities for social interaction among neighbors and visitors
		Clear entry and gateway features exist that invite people in to the district	People walk and bike to the District from other adjacent neighborhoods
		Community needs are represented	
		Presence of local cultures, such as through local landmarks, symbols, and local art	
Be a mixed-use core		A mix of land use and programming: residential, commercial, retail, cultural, heritage, and public amenities	Use and activity in the space: number and presence of people walking, biking, or spending time
		Opportunities for local ownership and diversity of ownership (ground floor businesses, etc.)	Presence of community programs and events that represent diverse cultural identities
		A complete neighborhood: offers full amenities and service through weekday and weekend (especially amenities that respond to adjacent neighborhood needs)	People engage in a wide range of activities
		Affordable housing included in residential developments	Diverse populations welcome (families, workers, tourists, etc.)
		Presence of places for different activities and flexible spaces	
		Amenities relate to community needs and desires	
Prioritize active transportation		All streets provide space for safe walking and biking (i.e. kids can bike safely)	Presence of people walking and cycling
		Bike lanes are consistent, connected, continuous, comfortable, and protected from traffic on streets and through intersections	People cycling are gender and age diverse
		There are safe, inviting places to rest (seats, activities)	
		Consistent lighting contributes to sense of safety at night	
		Paths and destinations are connected and follow desire lines	
		Curbs are designed to reduce vehicular travel speeds	
		Wayfinding is clear and consistent	
Include well-designed public and private spaces		There is a complete public space network that offers opportunities to have a range of experiences and engage in different programs or activities, from interacting to being alone, to attending events to engaging in informal activities	Presence of people walking
		Public space design features encourage lingering: there is seating, formal or informal, shade, evidence of programming, toilets, greenery, and features for families and play	Presence of people spending time
		Lighting structures are designed to illuminate sidewalks and pedestrian areas	Presence of age and gender diversity of visitors
		Presence of seating, formal and informal; and orientation of the space to adjacent streets	People feel safe
		Presence of places to enjoy the positive aspects of the climate	Spaces are well maintained and cared for: the lack of graffiti; lack of litter; presence of staff or volunteer stewards (if relevant); and quality of overall conditions
		Opportunities to express local heritage and commemorate cultural	
		Opportunities for community safe spaces (places where people know they are welcome and can find a safe haven)	

Quality Criteria

The 12 Urban Quality Criteria, described earlier in the document, are embedded into the framework.

The criteria are a way to discuss a hierarchy of needs in a space. Without basic protection from cars, noise, rain, and wind, people will avoid spending time in a space. Without elements that make walking, standing, sitting, seeing, and conversing comfortable, a place won't invite people to spend time there. Finally, a great place distinguishes itself by including elements that invite people to be active and make use of the positive aspects of microclimate and human scale.

Note: The colors are to distinguish theme areas and do not relate to the Council goals.



60% DESIGN PLAN



The 60% Cogswell District Plan was the focus of Gehl's design input review.

City

District

Review at
two scales

City

Cities are ecosystems where nothing exists in isolation. To understand one piece we must examine the many other elements influencing it. Cogswell is a key part of the Halifax ecosystem. Before diving in to the 60% design plan we explored key issues in the city and surrounding neighbourhoods.

City | Recommendations

This section explores how the wider context the Cogswell District sits within may impact future design and development. We present these issues as considerations as more work is needed to study them and the impact they could have on the Cogswell District:

- Consider how the Cogswell Plan relates to citywide planning, transport, and heritage initiatives
- Leverage the plan with adjacent development
- Realign road network with adjacent sites
- Maximize buildable area
- Design streets as places
- Create gateways into urban neighbourhoods
- Allow surrounding context to inform building heights
- Define people-first targets and vision

Studying some of these issues takes time, but a deeper look into them need not delay planning and design for Cogswell. Instead, these larger issues are more reason to create a flexible masterplanning framework that prioritizes adaptability.

Consider how the Cogswell Plan relates to citywide planning, transport, and heritage initiatives

Port

Halifax is home to an active port, located in the southern part of the city. Goods delivered to the Port are transferred to trucks, which drive north to the Cogswell Interchange. The Port is an important part of the city's economy, but truck traffic detracts from street life and downtown's heritage landscape. City leaders are discussing the future of the Port and trucks: will the Port move? Will trucks become obsolete in the future? Could goods be transferred to rail instead? These questions and how the Cogswell District can respond and adapt to change should be considered as the 60% design moves forward.



Transportation and the Cycling Network

The Cogswell District 60% design plan proposes a two-way bike lane and greenway on Cogswell, Upper Water and Barrington (northern district) streets, and a shared, multi-use trail adjacent to Poplar Street, between Cornwallis and Cogswell. Great networks share consistent, continuous, comfortable, and connected design and the cycling lanes planned for Cogswell should be integrated with the City's future cycling infrastructure and plans to build out the bike network.

Historic Preservation and Heritage

Halifax has history. Inhabited by indigenous peoples over 11,000 years ago and settled by Europeans in 1749 a strong heritage defines the city. Much of this heritage is found in historic buildings - some of which are threatened by redevelopment. Heritage buildings complement new development and are valuable assets that cannot be replaced. The connection to Granville Mall, directly adjacent to the Cogswell District, should be leveraged and re-enforced. Citywide, care should be taken to preserve historic places.



Leverage plan with adjacent development

Beyond the Cogswell District boundaries are a number of potential development sites. Consideration should be made to how these sites will be developed and can be leveraged with Cogswell developments.

— To the north and east, the **Canadian Navy has a large surface parking lot that could be considered for long-term development.** Consider how this site could be integrated and become an extension of the Cogswell District and North End.

— To the east, Develop Nova Scotia is exploring how to redevelop and design the northern waterfront. **How can the Cogswell plans ensure connectivity to the waterfront?**

— To the south and west is **Brunswick Place,** a large building slated for redevelopment. How could this site create opportunities to connect to the downtown street grid and reduce the size of mega blocks?

— How can site lines towards Purdy's Wharf and the Casino be enhanced?



Realign road network with adjacent sites

The 60% design gives prime land to a roundabout rather than to development. Removing the southern roundabout creates more land to build on, and considering the future development potential of the Brunswick Place parcel into the Cogswell design, provides an opportunity to stitch back the urban fabric with more walkable blocks. This:

— **Prioritizes pedestrians** with an intersection

— Extends Poplar St through Brunswick Place **to break down a large block** and create an additional E-W connection from Poplar to Barrington

— **Realigns the grid** by extending Poplar to Albemarle and redistributes vehicular traffic

— Aligns Bells Lane to Purdy's Lane for **better connectivity to the Waterfront**

— Provides **more consistent active pedestrian edges** on Barrington and Poplar

Financial feasibility should be considered.



60% Design Plan

Maximize buildable area

The 60% design devotes prime land to a roundabout rather than to development. Removing the southern roundabout creates more land to build on, and considering the future development potential of the Brunswick Place parcel into the Cogswell design, provides for opportunity to stitch back the urban fabric with more walkable blocks. This:

— **Adds land to develop** rather than use as road

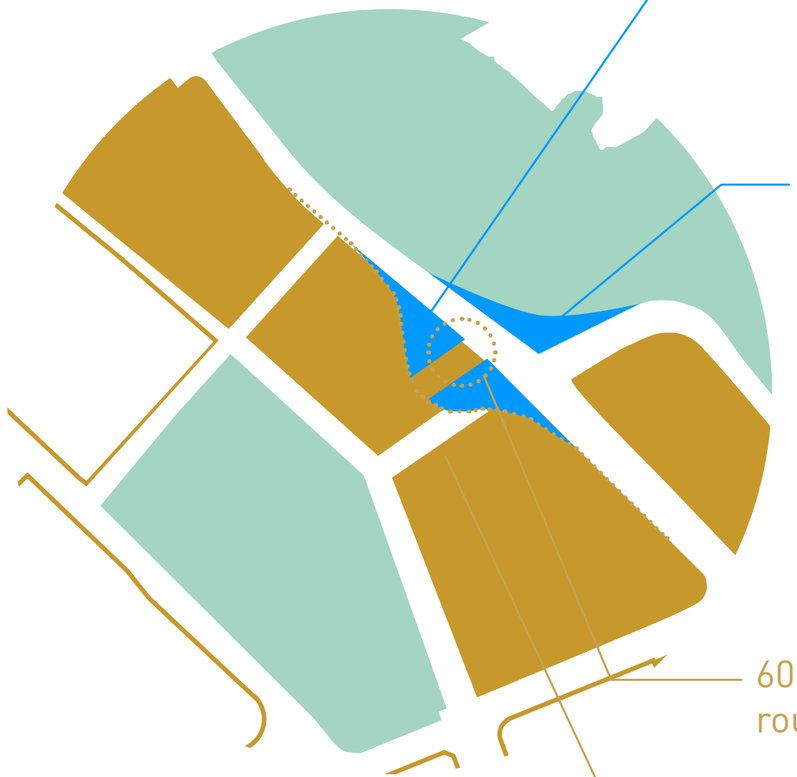
— **Uses an intersection rather than roundabout** where Barrington and Upper Water intersect

— Brings the **buildable area closer to Barrington**

— Creates more street frontage along Barrington Street and **extend the walkable blocks north**



60% Design Plan



60% design plan
Area of influence
Recommendation

Design streets as places

Removing the southern roundabout and incorporating Brunswick Place into the plan, as detailed above, creates an opportunity to disperse traffic. Not all streets need to carry equal volumes of traffic. Some will be busier than others, but all can be designed to invite more than moving from A to B.

— Create **alternative vehicular routes so drivers don't solely rely on Barrington Street** to travel through

— Connect **Poplar Street to downtown** by realigning to Albemarle Street

— **Designate safe space for all modes of travel**, even on higher-volume streets

from

Moving traffic



to

Creating places for people



Create gateways into urban neighbourhoods

Cogswell District has the potential to be a northern gateway into downtown and connector to the northern waterfront for neighbourhoods to the west. **Care should be given to treat core connector streets - Cornwallis, Cogswell, and Barrington - as gateways into the area.** This involves:

— Designing the roads to prioritize people: making sure there is safe, comfortable space to walk, bike, or take transit

— Considering visual markers and wayfinding to indicate one's entering a new neighbourhood



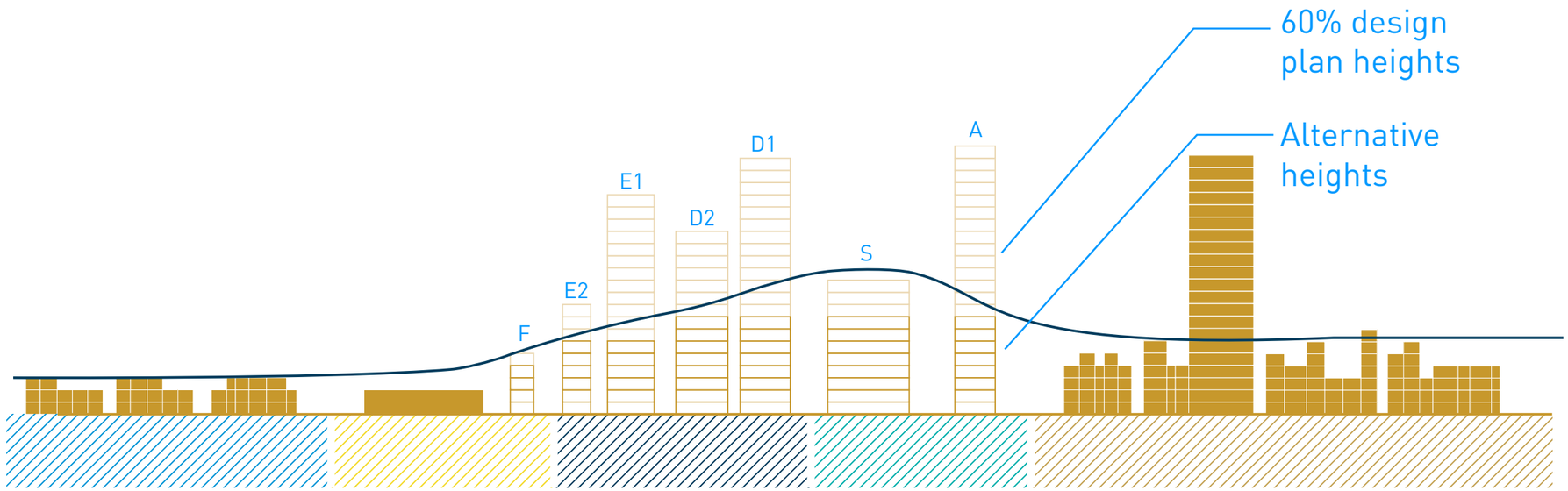


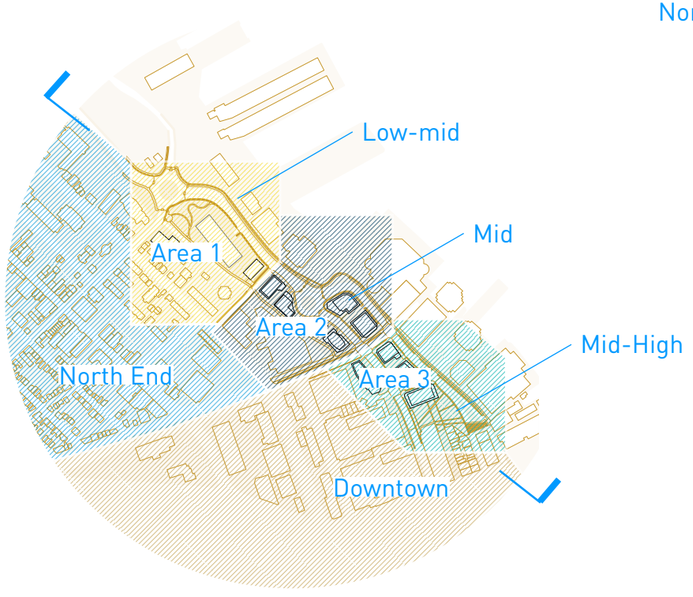


Gateway features can be visible in street design, plantings, public art and wayfinding.

Allow surrounding context to inform buildings heights

New and modern buildings can be designed to relate to the adjacent context. Consider how to achieve similar densities to what the Ekistics Plan (2014) proposed with heights that relate to those in North End and downtown. This may involve reducing parking requirements projected in the Ekistics Plan for the District.*





*A feasibility study related to density or parking was not completed by Gehl.

**This map is an illustrative example of current building heights downtown and in the North End. It is not an exact representation of current development.

Define people-first targets and vision

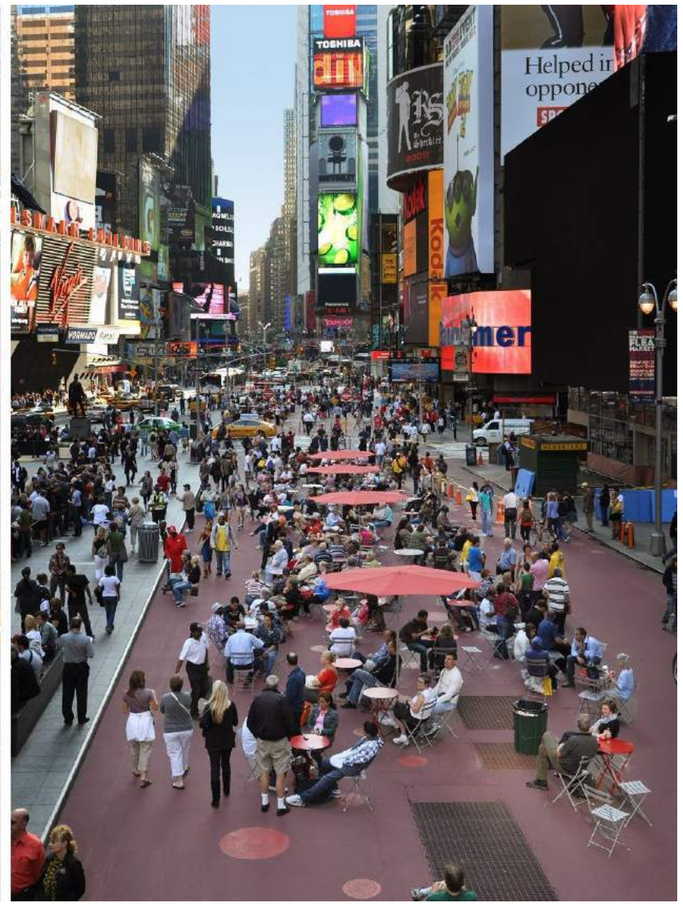
In what kind of city do we want to live? This is the question Gehl asks at the outset of any planning or design project. Rather than start conversations with road width or design detail, it focuses on the experiences we want to have in a place. Do we want to live somewhere we can bike to work? Where our kids can play outside?

Asking these lofty, yet simple questions are how we define people-first targets that guide design development and long-term strategies.

While goals have been set for the Cogswell District, **it is unclear what the goal is for the life of the place**. Stepping back to define these can guide the design process moving forward as well as serve as evaluation metrics.



Major changes to NYC's public realm, such as the transition of Broadway to a pedestrian plaza at Times Square, were tactics to support a long-term strategy outlined in *PlaNYC*, and updated by the current mayor in *OneNYC*.



District

The City section above describes fundamental changes to make the Cogswell District a model for people-first development. Here, in the District section, recommendations are made to improve specific places within the plan.

The review is organized into three key themes:

/ Connectivity

/ Open Space

/ Urban Block

Connectivity

While provision has been made for people walking and biking, the **District's roundabouts prioritize the efficient movement of vehicles** and signal that streets are for moving, **not spending time**.

Connectivity | Challenges

Road layout

A current reality of the Cogswell District is that trucks use the interchange on their way from the city's busy Port. While this important part of the local economy needs to be accommodated, the roundabouts signify that moving vehicles efficiently is more important than creating a walkable environment. Other roads in the plan should be designed as places for people as well as to move cars.

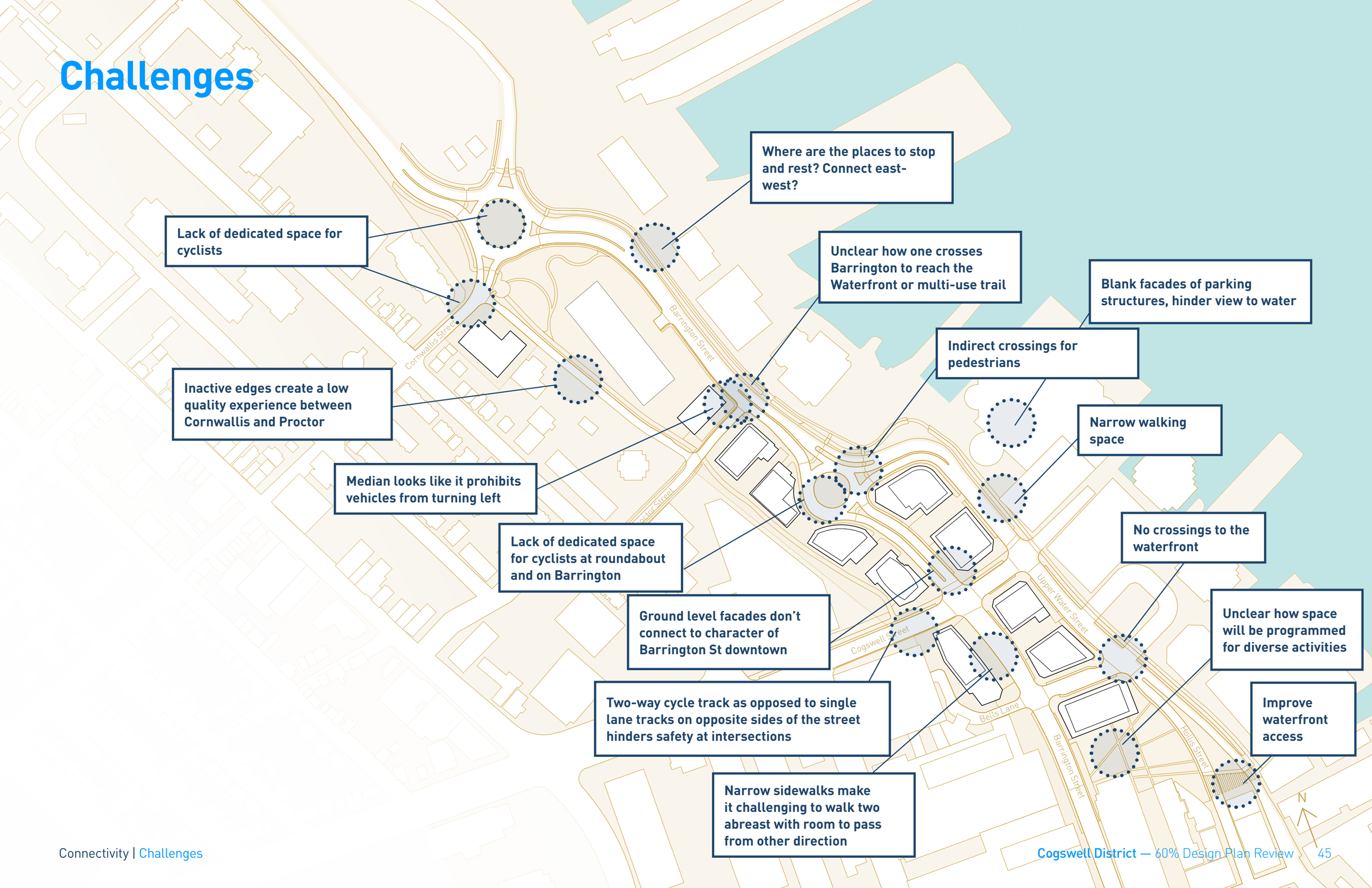
Quality of connections

While a multi-use trail is designed for Upper Water Street, a number of intersections lack direct pedestrian crossings: there are no designated spaces along Proctor and Cornwallis to cross Barrington to the Waterfront or at Upper Water Street to the Waterfront near the C-development block. The two roundabouts lack dedicated space for people on bikes who want to travel east-west.

Unclear invitations for public life

Great public spaces foster a range of social interactions, from simply being in the presence of strangers to interacting with friends. While Poplar Street Park is defined as a neighborhood park, it's unclear how the space will invite people in. Additionally this park's adjacency to the water treatment facility creates a perception and an olfactory issue. The lack of information about how other public spaces, such as Granville Square or the POPS, will be defined makes it unclear how public spaces will support public life.

Challenges

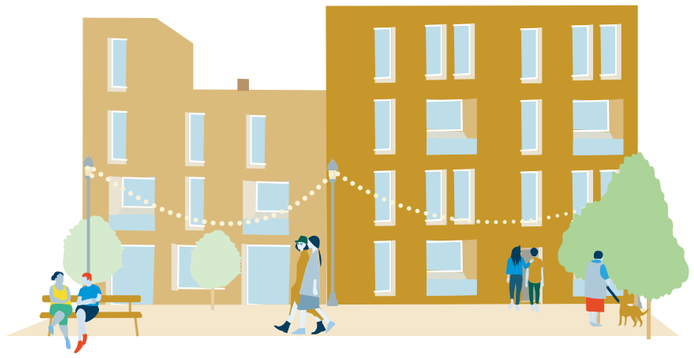

Where are the places to stop and rest? Connect east-west?
Lack of dedicated space for cyclists
Unclear how one crosses Barrington to reach the Waterfront or multi-use trail
Blank facades of parking structures, hinder view to water
Indirect crossings for pedestrians
Narrow walking space
Inactive edges create a low quality experience between Cornwallis and Proctor
Median looks like it prohibits vehicles from turning left
Lack of dedicated space for cyclists at roundabout and on Barrington
No crossings to the waterfront
Ground level facades don't connect to character of Barrington St downtown
Unclear how space will be programmed for diverse activities
Two-way cycle track as opposed to single lane tracks on opposite sides of the street hinders safety at intersections
Improve waterfront access
Narrow sidewalks make it challenging to walk two abreast with room to pass from other direction
Cornwallis Street
Barrington Street
Proctor Street
Cogswell Street
Upper Water Street
Bells Lane
Barrington Street
Hollis Street
N

Connectivity | Recommendations



1

Improve links within the District



2

Improve quality of connective tissue



3

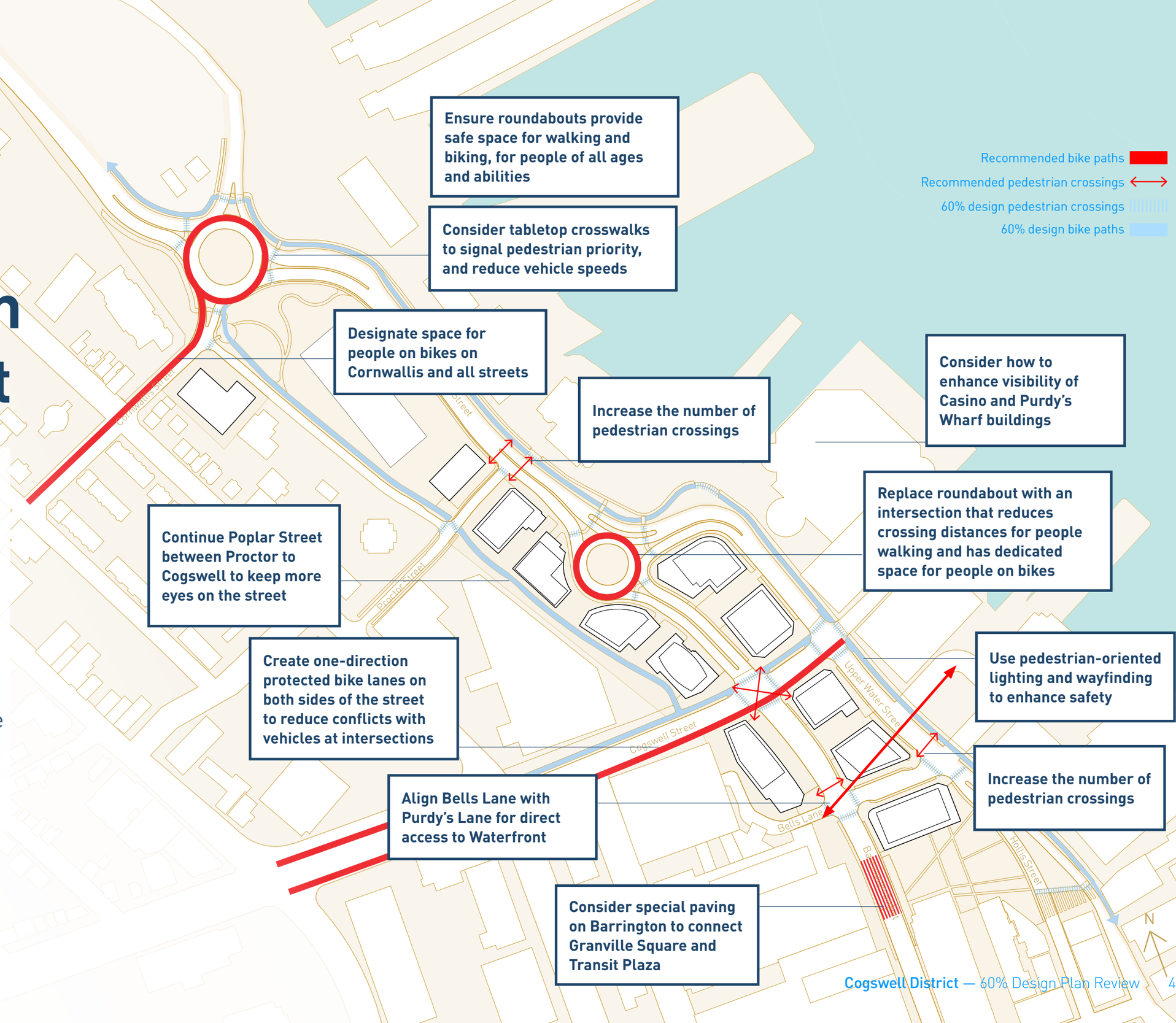
Create places for people to connect

1

Improve links within the District

Ensure all streets and intersections designate space for people walking and cycling and create frequent opportunities to cross east-west.

Treat all streets as places that contribute to a high quality walking environment and public realm. This can be done with the current road widths.



Example Pedestrian connection

Raised, at-grade crosswalks make people walking visible to drivers and indicate, through design, that pedestrians have the right of way. NACTO recommends level crossings every 80–100 m at minimum. If it takes a person more than 3-minutes to walk to a pedestrian crossing, he or she may cross along a more direct, but unsafe or unprotected, route.

Material and alignment with the sidewalk prioritize people walking

Raised surface reduces vehicle speeds

Paving materials support accessibility

Example Pedestrian scramble

Scrambles, or Barnes Dances, create a four-way stop for vehicles and allow people walking to cross in any direction at the same time. They are recommended at intersections with high volumes of pedestrian foot traffic. If not well-coordinated, it can create long waiting times for both pedestrians and motorists.

Direct pedestrian connections

Colorful ground treatment gets drivers' attention

Typically used at intersections with high pedestrian volumes

Example Protected Bike Lanes

Protected bike lanes provide a physical barrier between people on bikes and those driving. The style should be consistent with other lanes in the network. On busy streets with frequent intersections, bike lanes should be placed on both sides of the street, move with the direction of vehicles, and be continued through intersections.

Physical barriers to protect from vehicular traffic



Highly visible lanes, continued through intersections





Example Roundabout bike lane

If roundabouts are to be included in the Cogswell District, bike lanes that protect from traffic and create direct connections can be integrated into the designs.

Comfortable microclimate

Protection from vehicular traffic

Space to stop and stay

A direct route

Example Roundabout bike lane

If roundabouts are to be included in the Cogswell District, bike lanes that protect from traffic and create direct connections can be integrated into the designs.

Protected travel lane

Wide enough to ride two abreast

Bike path differentiated with color consistent with wider city network

Pedestrian crossings clearly delineated

Example Mobility: multi-use

Halifax's streets have to balance multiple travel modes. Nørrebrogade in Copenhagen - a busy retail street and bus route - has two 10 foot sidewalks, two 12 foot bike lanes, and two 10 foot bus / vehicle lanes.

Space for public transit

Width to cycle side by side or pass

Cycle lane and bus lane separated by curb

2

Improve quality of connective tissue

Leverage the connective tissue between buildings to create the highest quality public realm in Halifax. **Not all streets have to do the same thing and the character and use of each should be defined.**

— Road widths are similar to those elsewhere in the city - **to make streets great places design them as high quality public spaces where people can move and stay**

— Barrington can become a world-class pedestrian and transit street. It should relate in character to Spring Garden Road

— **Strengthen east-west pedestrian and bike connections** from existing neighbourhoods to Upper Water Street Greenway, by designating space for people on foot and bike

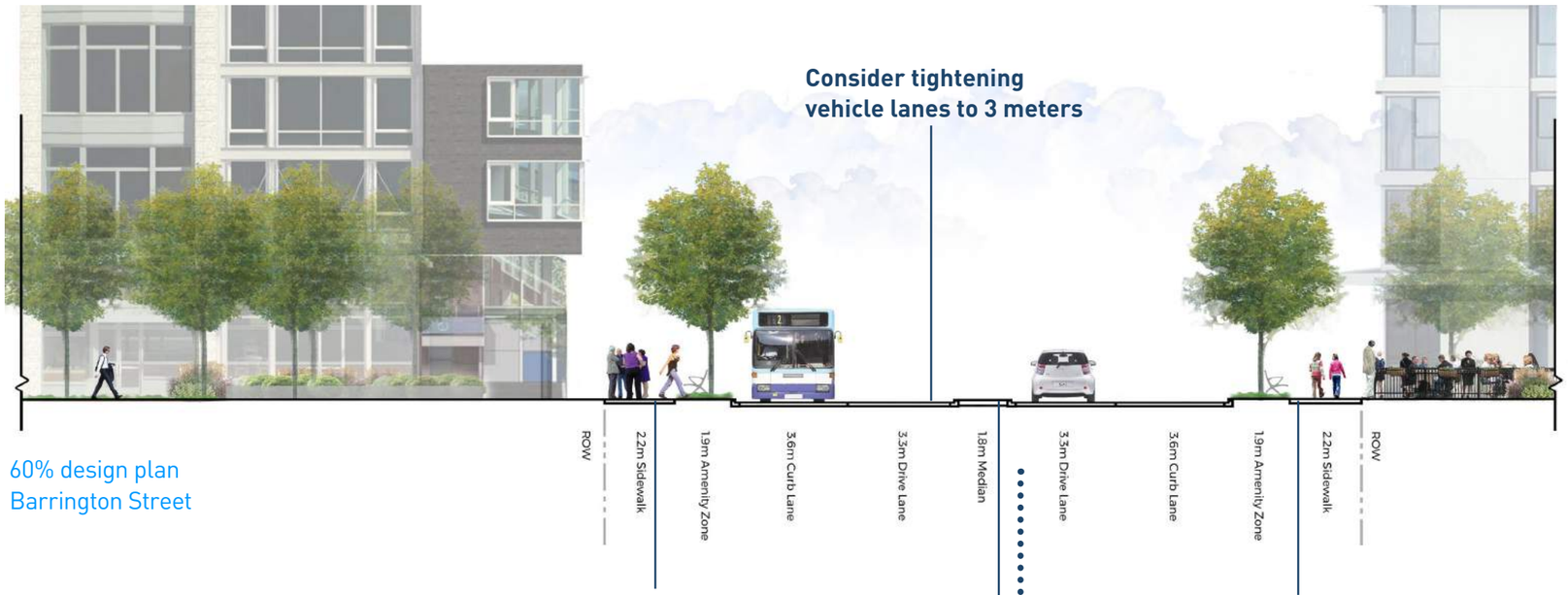
— Cogswell Street should have a protected bike lane in each direction



Prioritize comfortable connections:
Barrington Street // a multi-modal connector





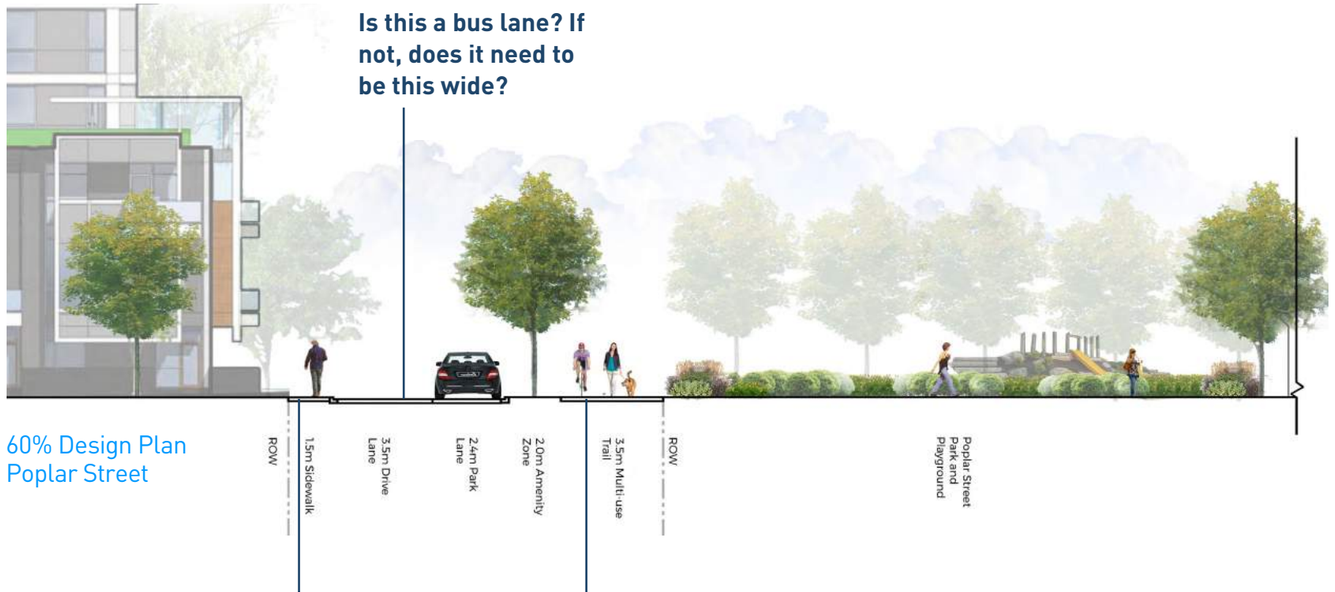


60% design plan
Barrington Street

Prioritize comfortable connections:
Poplar Street // a neighbourhood connector



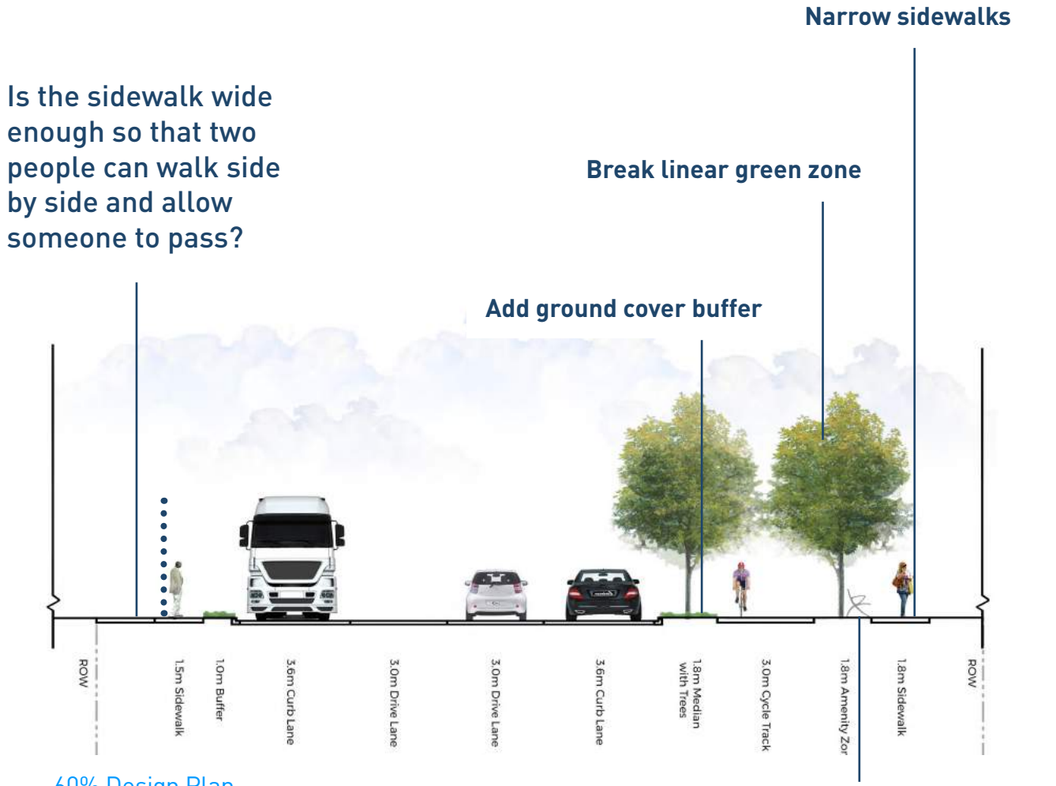




Prioritize comfortable connections:
Upper Water Street // a multi-modal greenway







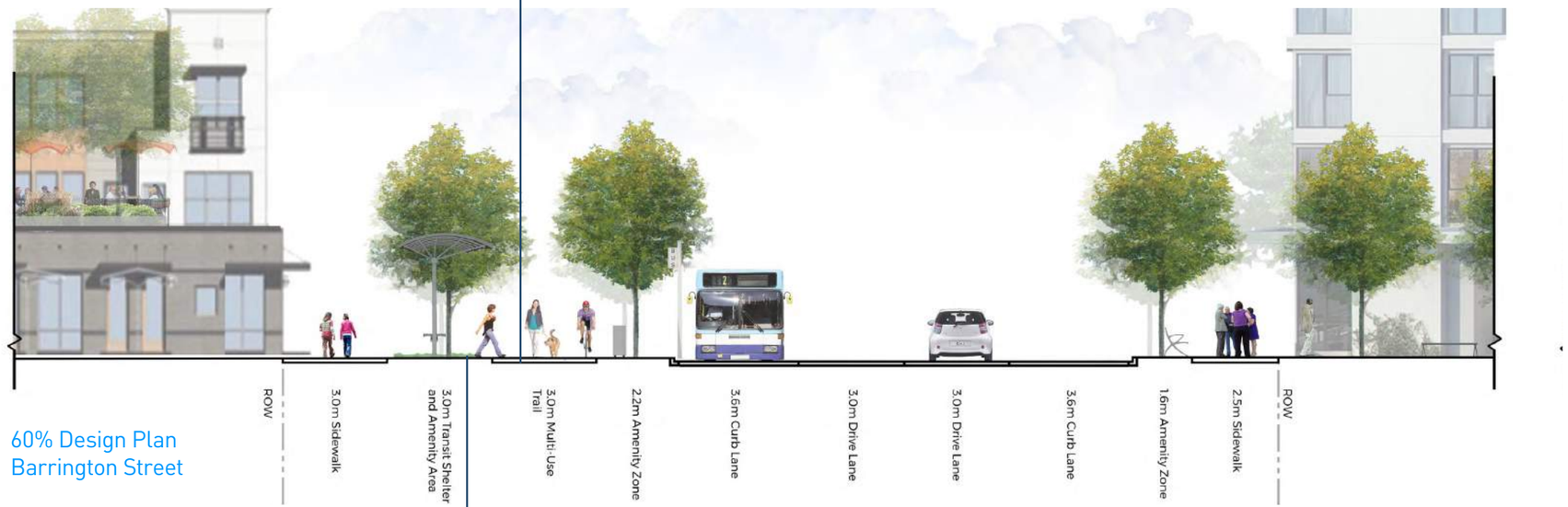
60% Design Plan
Upper Water Street

Unclear if green buffer is part of sidewalk

Prioritize comfortable connections: Barrington Street at Transit Plaza



Multi-use bike lanes with no clear connection. Where does it lead to if bikes are discouraged from Barrington Street?



60% Design Plan
Barrington Street

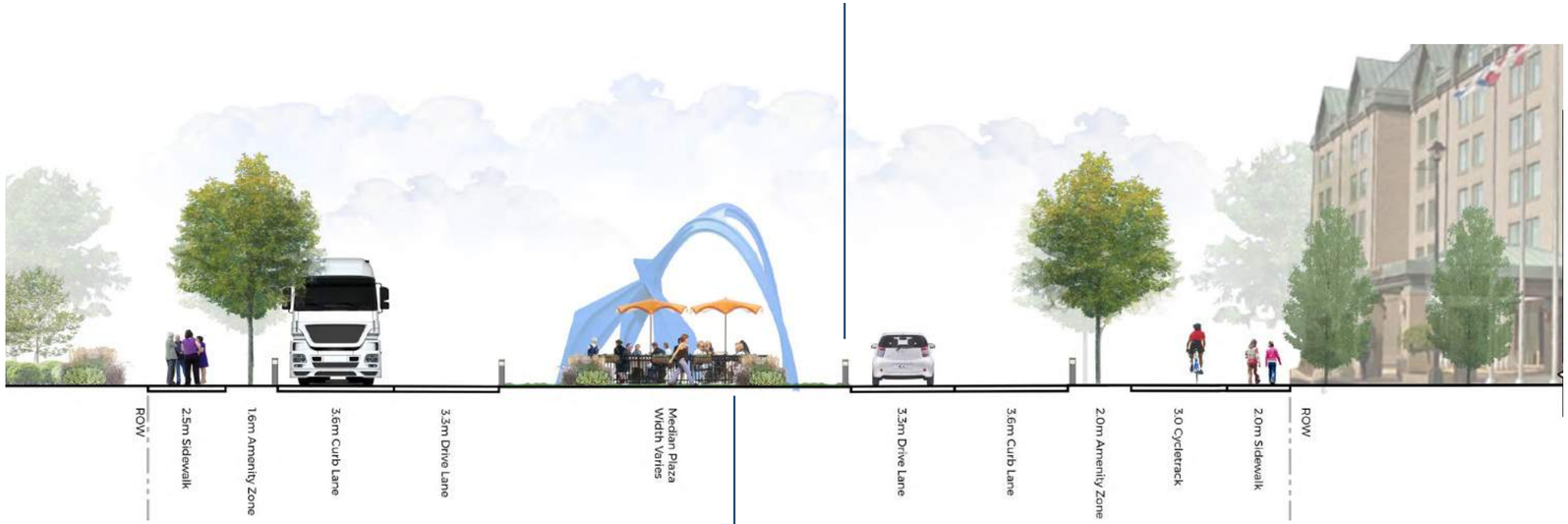
Pulled back waiting zone should be okay as long as there is a platform in the amenity area to step onto/off of.

Prioritize comfortable connections: Hollis/Upper Water Street // a gateway





Upper Water Street is anticipated to have high volumes of truck traffic. A curb less street could create vehicle and pedestrian conflicts. Clearly delineate space.



60% Design Plan
Hollis Street / Upper Water Street

Unprotected median space would make for uncomfortable conditions. Make sure median is protected from moving traffic.

3

Create places for people to connect

In our increasingly diverse cities, the public realm is where we cross paths with others. And as loneliness grows as a public health concern, public space is where we can be around others. Public spaces should be designed to encourage the entire spectrum of social mixing, from being alone in the presence of others to being with close friends.

Civic Mixing

No contact	Passive contact	Chance contact	Familiar Stranger	Friends
				
	Whenever someone is in the presence of others, they are experiencing Passive Contact. Passive Contact is measured by observational analysis, which captures volumes of people, as well as certain demographic characteristics of age and gender.	A Chance Contact is when someone picks up the scarf you dropped, asks you for the time, or another non-personal interaction. Chance Contacts are measured by Intercept Surveys which ask participants if they interacted with anyone they didn't know, and by observation, which captures people interacting.	The Familiar Stranger is someone who you recognize, but who you do not know by name. Familiar Strangers are place-based affiliations: maybe you have your coffee shop group or your bus stop group. You could be in completely different age groups, income brackets, or political parties, but for a certain bubble in space and time, you are in the same group because you are in the same place.	

Example

Streets as public spaces

Seating, formal and informal, helps streets become public spaces where people can spend time. Parklets placed into curbside parking lanes can be used to pilot seating interventions or to provide permanent rest areas.

Example

Streets as public spaces

Walkable streets need more than wide sidewalks - they need places for people to rest and be stimulated. Flexible design can support multiple uses and activities. Place for people can be leveraged with climate resiliency designs too, such as storm-water capture.

Place to move and stay

Active and flexible use

Seating and permeability

Flexible space and invitations for kids

Example
Streets as public spaces

Example

Streets as public spaces

Walkable streets need more than wide sidewalks - they need places for people to rest and be stimulated.

Public art and paint to highlight culture and community identity

Greenery for buffer

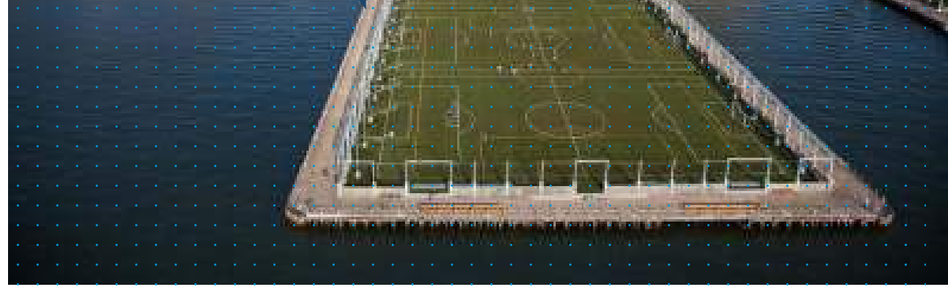
Places to sit

Example Brooklyn Bridge Park: a park for all

Formerly industrial piers were converted to places for people with a diverse range of activities, such as volleyball, soccer, basketball, and lounging. Each pier is connected to a waterfront esplanade.



Each pier offers different activities: some attract teenagers, others adults, others kids and families



First-come-first-serve bar-b-q area



Example Brooklyn Bridge Park: a park for all

Formerly industrial piers were converted to places for people with a diverse range of activities, such as volleyball, soccer, basketball, and lounging. Each pier is connected to a waterfront esplanade.

Safe play areas



Engaging for all ages



A place for different types of activities



Example

SplashJAM: invite neighbours together with water play

A temporary splash pad, installed in an underused park at the intersection of four neighbourhoods was able to bring neighbours with different backgrounds and experiences together. Gehl surveyed visitors and found that over the course of the two-month installation 1 in 3 people had interacted with new people in the space.

Moveable seats

Case Study
Social Life in NYC Plazas

Gehl and the J. Max Bond Center on Design for the Just City (JMBC) partnered to evaluate how public space contributes to quality public life, urban resilience, and greater social justice. Seven recently implemented plazas in New York City's Public Plaza Program were evaluated.

The economic benefits of the program were documented, but little was known about how these places performed for people and supported communities. We studied who feels invited, who doesn't, and how are they used.

Findings revealed that plazas support social interaction, especially among low-income earners; create a platform for neighbourhood health, entertainment and cultural events; and foster a sense of stewardship and ownership. The people using them are socio-economically diverse – typically more so than surrounding neighbourhoods.

Findings



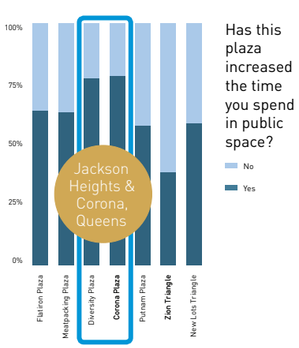
» **Increased time spent outside:** Neighborhoods most severely lacking open space report a greater increase in time spent outside.

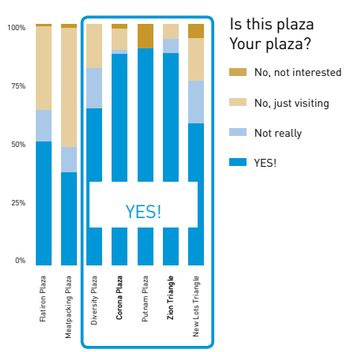


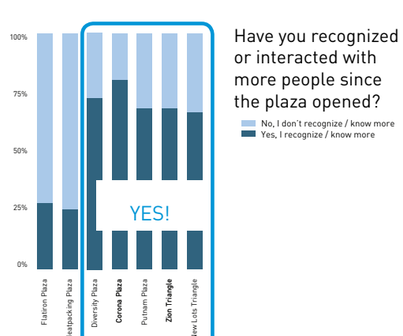
» **Feelings of Ownership:** Respondents in outer-borough plazas reported a stronger sense of ownership.



» **Opportunities to Meet:** High rates of local and frequent visitors - at residential plazas - correlated with high rates of interaction and recognition.

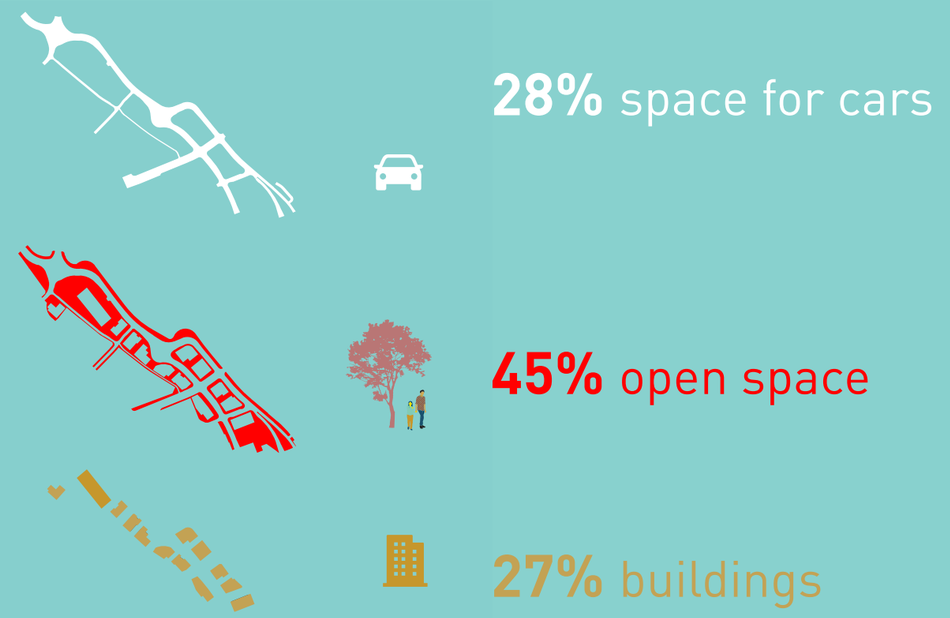






Open Space

Approximately **45%** of the land use in the Cogswell District is **devoted to open space** (including green space, plazas, POPS, multi use trails, and sidewalks) — **almost ½ of the land area!** This is a huge opportunity, but also one that requires spaces be clearly defined.



Open Space | Challenges

Undefined spaces

A large percent of land area in the District is open space, but it is unclear how these spaces will be designed to support different programs. For these open spaces to be inviting to all Haligonians, they need to be accessible, flexible, and able to accommodate different types of use, at different times of day and season.

Lack of hierarchy

Not all spaces are created equal. Some are designed to be open and inviting to all - like community parks managed by public entities - while others are designed for the residents that live alongside them - like courtyards managed by housing associations. Lack of clarity can generate confusion about how to navigate a place.

Exposure to microclimate

The quality of one's experience in public is impacted by the surrounding built environment. In the 60% design plan towers will cast shadows over open spaces and create wind-tunnel effects that detract from the pedestrian experience.

Challenges

What will the space inside the roundabout be used for?

Unclear how the park will be designed to offer a sense of protection from surrounding traffic and invitation given location next to the sewage treatment plant

Unclear how the northern edge of the park meets the street and is protected from traffic

Unclear what types of programming a park at this location, sandwiched by traffic and water treatment plant, can support

Unclear if seating will be provided on streets to improve walkability

Could some of the POPS become streets to increase east-west connectivity?

How will the POPS be managed to make sure it's clear how they are to be used?

Unclear what the activity zones are or how the Square supports a wide range of experiences

The edge conditions at Barrington Street are undefined – will this be open? A seat ledge?

Cornwallis Street

Cogswell Street

Bells Lane

Barrington Street

N

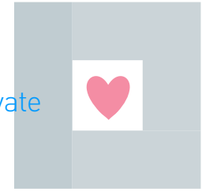
Open Space | Recommendations



4

Provide a variety of public spaces





5

Define access level



6

Improve human experience

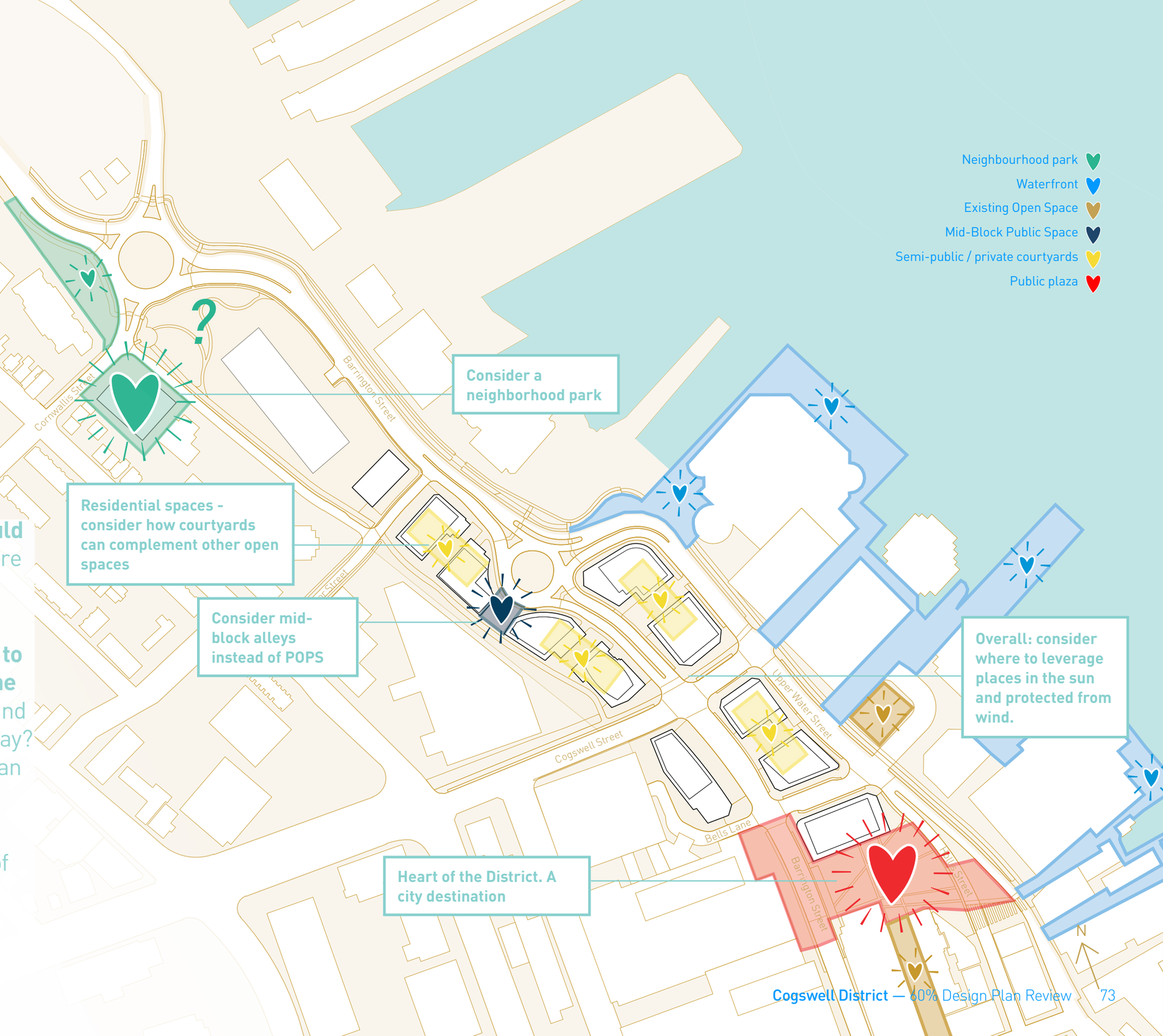
4

Provide a variety of public spaces

— A wide range of experiences should be available to be a space for the entire city**.**

— Cogswell has the open space - **activity zones for those spaces need to be defined, such as by articulating the hierarchy.** What spaces are passive and for seating? Which are active or for play? Which are for moving? Which areas can support temporary installations?

— The point is not to over-design or be rigid, but to provide a wide range of options that people can interpret and interact with differently, and that can **adapt over time**.



Granville Square 60% Design: Challenges

Active Ground Floor (Take advantage of South Facing Facade)

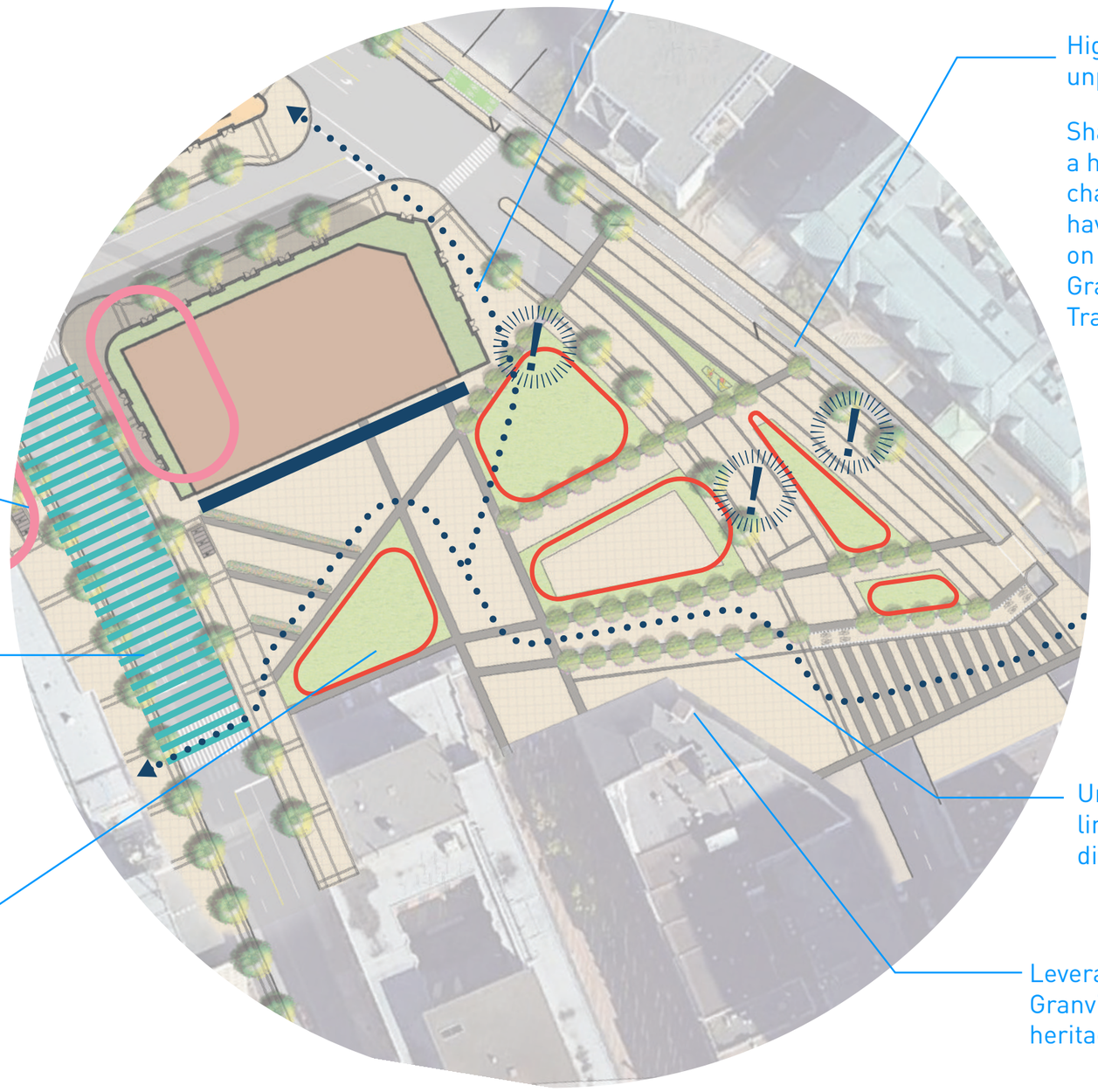
Pedestrian Path

Undefined zones

Transit Hub

Stronger connection between Granville Square and Transit Hub

High Traffic, Loud Noise



Block B is disconnected with unclear pedestrian path. Provide access for pedestrians.

High vehicular traffic, unprotected edge.

Shared street along a high traffic road is challenging. Consider having a shared street on Barrington between Granville Square and Transit Hub

Transit hub to be more than a stop. Create a high quality inviting place that supports a comfortable, dignified transit experience.

Create a stronger connection between Transit Plaza and Granville Square.

Unclear use of spaces. Create defined zones within the plaza.

Unclear pedestrian desire lines. Provide clear and direct path.

Leverage connection to Granville Mall and adjacent heritage buildings.

Granville Square: a sample program

Transit Plaza

— Design the area as a high quality, integrated public space with seating, shelter, free wi-fi and protection from rain, wind, sun, and traffic

— Consider integrating activities to do while waiting for bus transfers, such as play, exercise, or run errands

Granville Square

— Create multiple zones for different activities to invite diversity of visitors

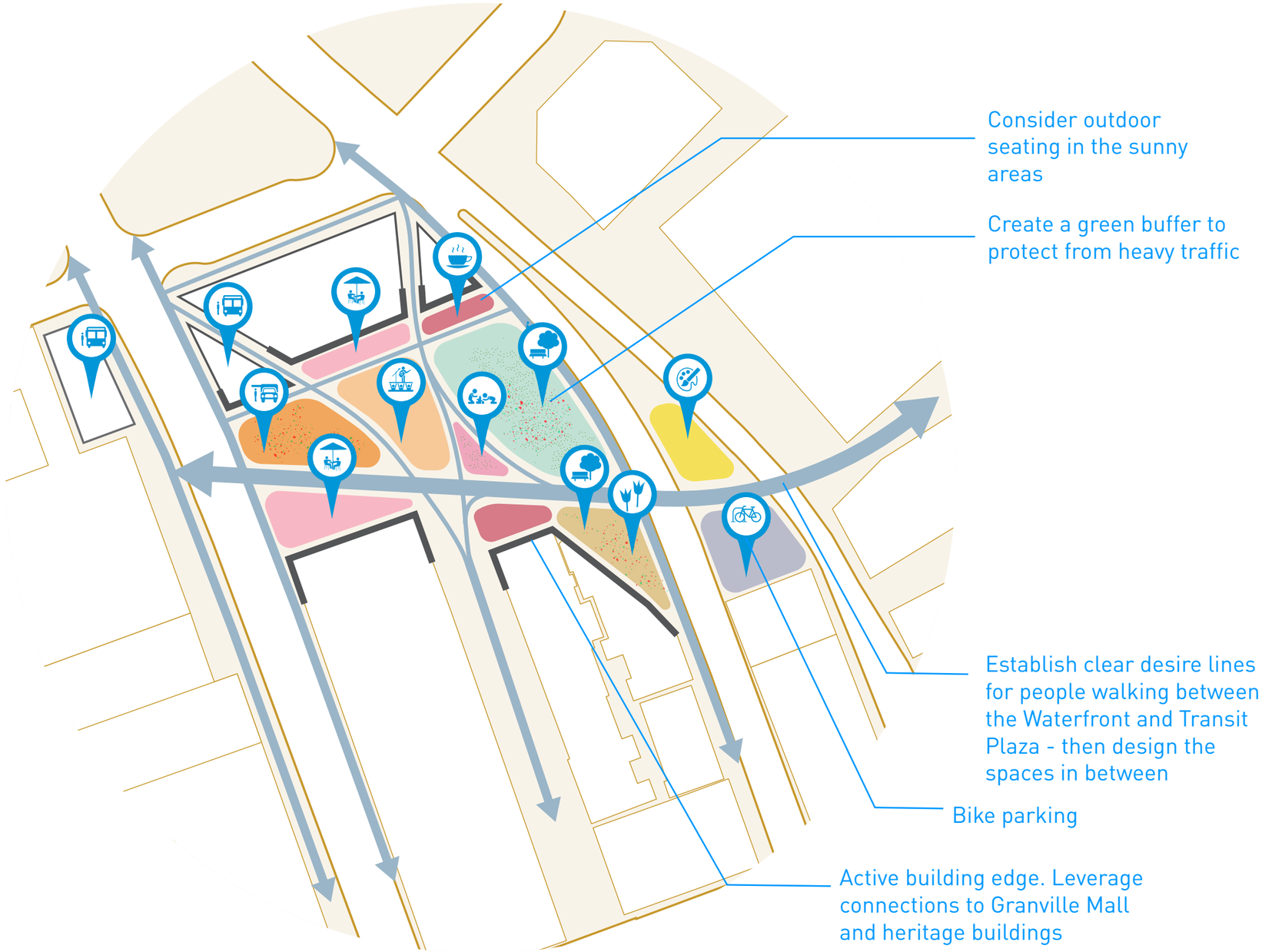
— Provide year-round activities

— Maximize solar exposure (south and west facing facades) for outdoor seating

— Provide a buffer from traffic along Hollis

— Provide pedestrian lighting

This is a sample program - a more detailed design process is needed to determine the design.



Open spaces come in all shapes and sizes

— What are the right types for Cogswell and **how will open spaces complement** other spaces in the District and outside of it, such as along the Waterfront?

— **What types of experiences do new residents want to have in the District?** And what spaces can support these needs?



Greenway / Linear Park



Semi-public / Private courtyards



Alleyways / Laneways



Streetscapes



Waterfront



Neighborhood park



Pedestrian priority streets



Plaza / Square

Example Neighborhood park diversity

The recently opened Domino Park covers 5-acres along the East River in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Four streets lead into the park. The wide range of options to visitors - group sports, sitting and lounging, play, eating, and experiencing public art - generate constant activity, day and night.

Options to sit, walk, lie down or play

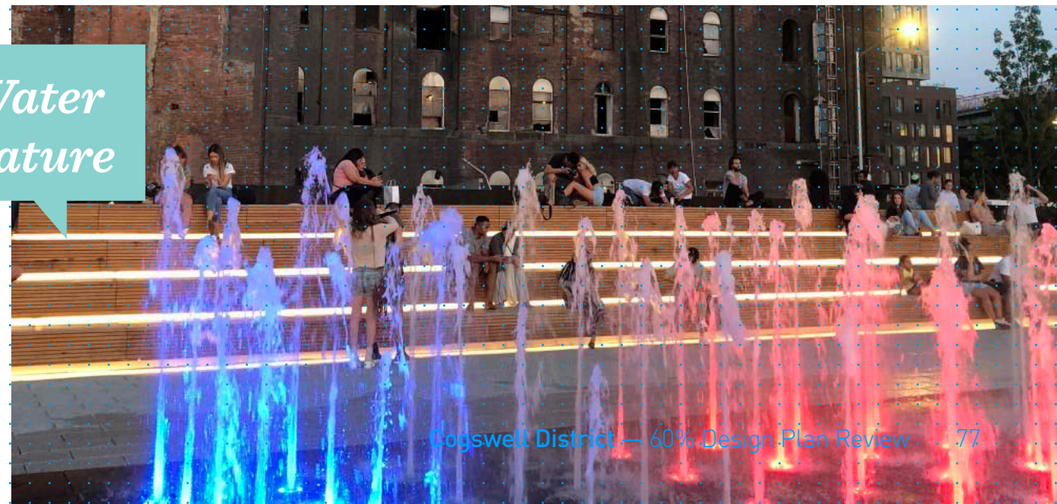
Social seating



Moments for respite



Family friendly



Water feature

Example Temporary activation

San José Civic Innovation Spaces: Re-Imagining the Heart of San José

San José, California wants to make its downtown a more inviting place to spend time - starting with City Hall Plaza. Working with the Tech Museum of Innovation, Gehl researched the existing life of the plaza, and crafted prototypes to invite more activities in the plaza, such as the flexible seating.

Interactive feature

Invites new types of social interaction

Colorful and delightful

Temporary furniture

Flexible and low impact

Formal & informal together

Example Waterfront spaces

The Halifax waterfront is one of the most visited spaces in the city - how can visitors be invited to walk north on the Boardwalk? And how can future Cogswell residents and visitors know they are a short walk from the waterfront? There are a range of spaces along the waterfront that can be programmed to offer varied experiences.

Night light for safety and evening activities

Space for gathering

Example Waterfront spaces

The Halifax waterfront is one of the most visited spaces in the city - how can visitors be invited to walk north on the Boardwalk? And how can future Cogswell residents and visitors know they are a short walk from the waterfront? There are a range of spaces along the waterfront that can be programmed to offer varied experiences.

Places to stay, and to walk

Get close to the water

Walking at night

Cooling off

Example Waterfront spaces

The Halifax waterfront is one of the most visited spaces in the city - how can visitors be invited to walk north on the Boardwalk? And how can future Cogswell residents and visitors know they are a short walk from the waterfront? There are a range of spaces along the waterfront that can be programmed to offer varied experiences.

Places to be out on the water



Engage all ages with play



Winter activities

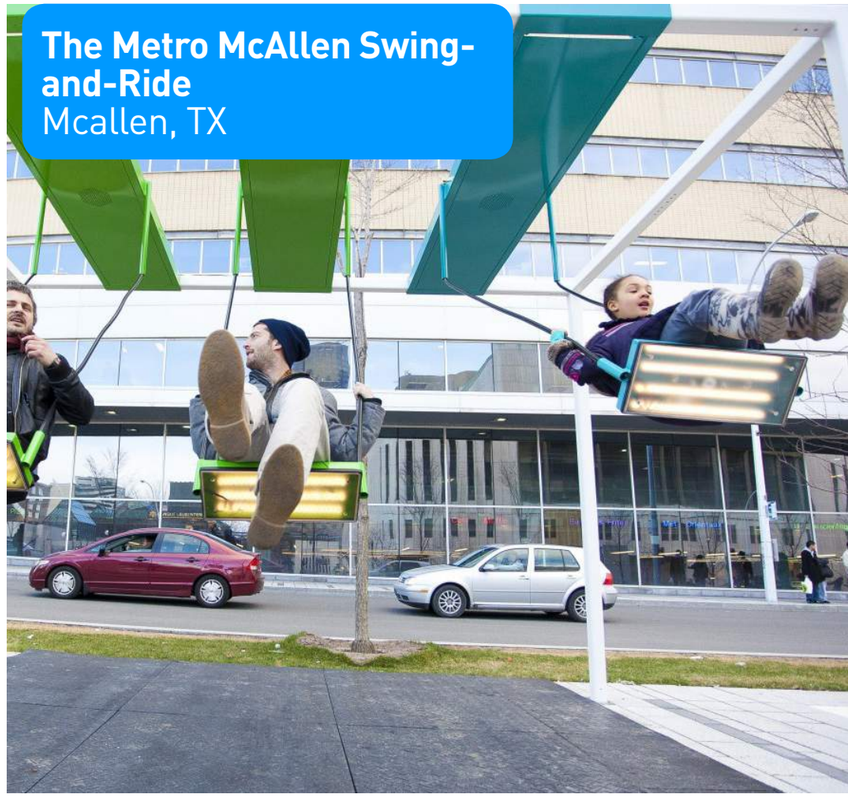
Example Places for play

How can play be used to activate open spaces and invite families to spend time in the District? How can local organizations be invited to design playful features as an interim activation?

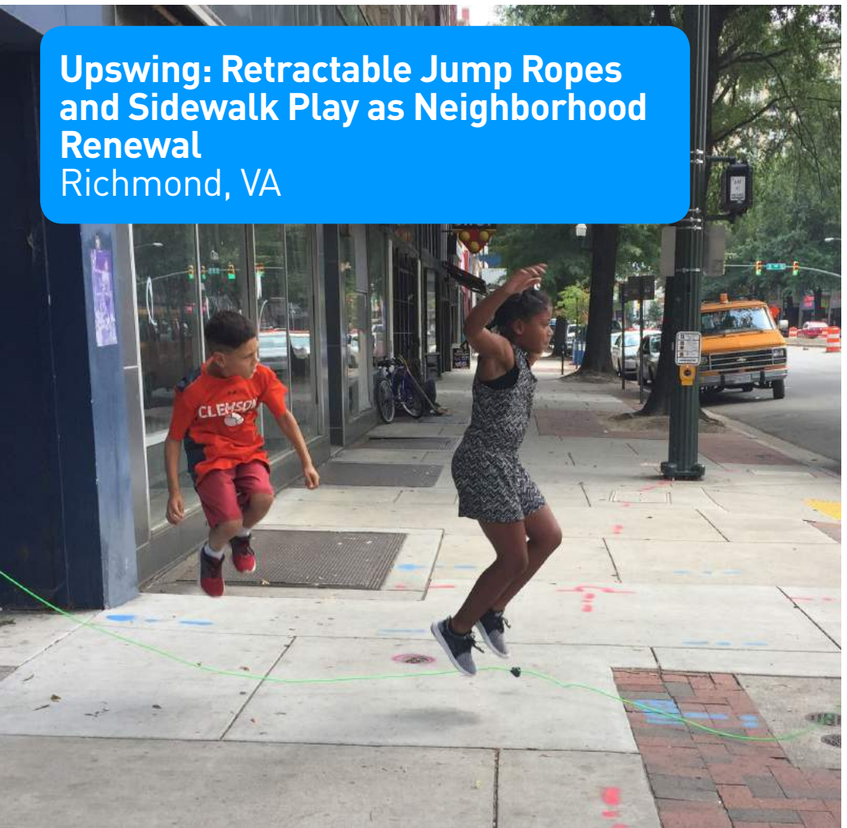
The photos here are from KaBOOM!'s Play Everywhere Challenge, a national initiative to fund 50 play projects across the US. in untraditional city spaces.



Kit of Parts
Boston, MA



The Metro McAllen Swing-and-Ride
Mcallen, TX



Upswing: Retractable Jump Ropes and Sidewalk Play as Neighborhood Renewal
Richmond, VA

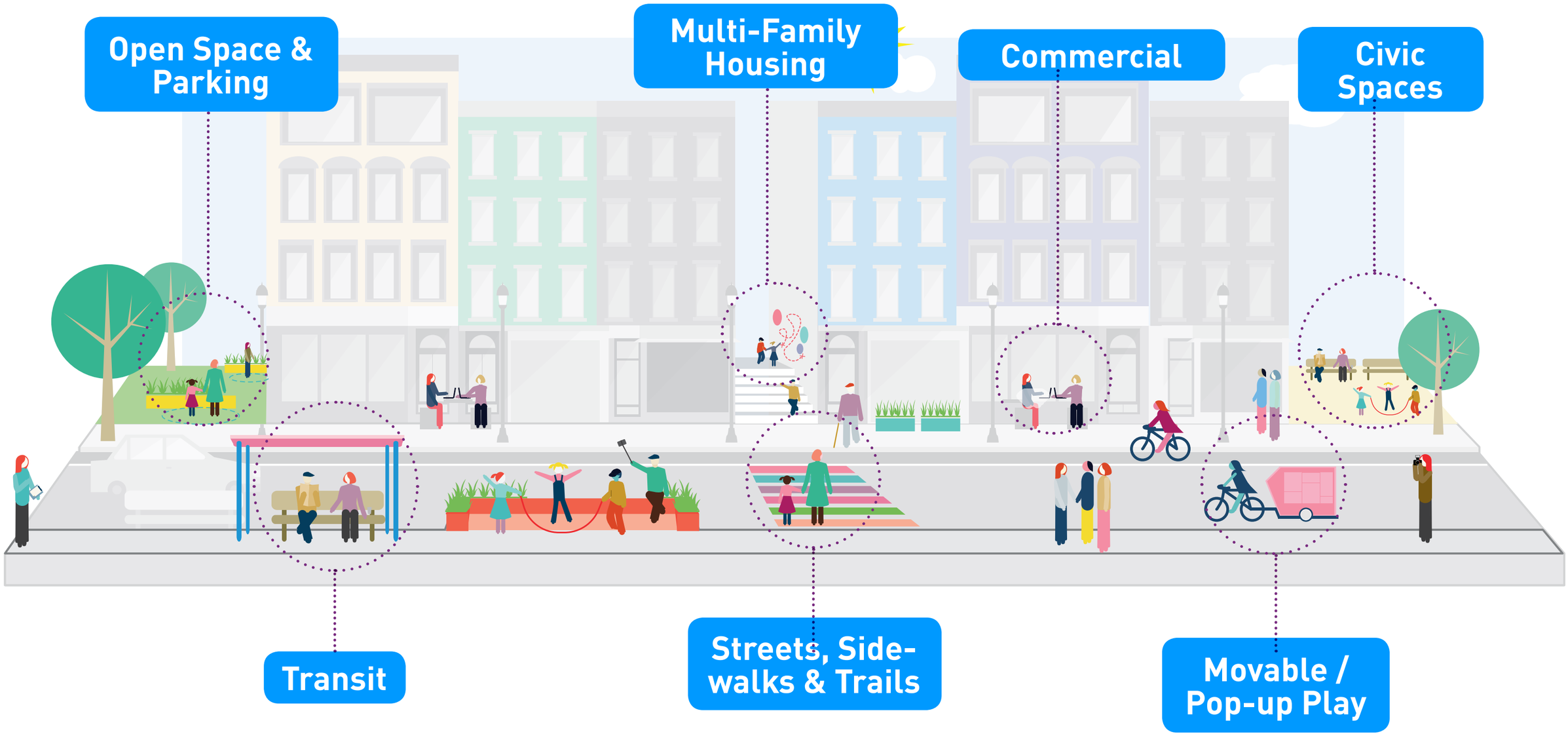


Perma Play Street
Knoxville, TN



iPlay MIAMI Streets
Miami, FL

City spaces to play with



Example Residential Courtyard

A semi-public space that is open to residents, but not the general public.

Places for neighbours to interact

Space to get outside

Softscape for play

Example Laneways / Alleyways

Zero to low traffic vehicular streets that improve connectivity for people walking or biking and for active ground floor uses.

Soft edges

Shade

Sit outside without worrying about traffic

Commercial and public space side by side

Paving and materials used to signal pedestrian and bike priority

Case Study
Norreport Station, Copenhagen

Norreport is a busy station in a dense urban context. Over 250,000 passengers/ day use both S-Train and Metro stations. It is one station from Copenhagen Central Station and the busiest in Denmark.

The plaza space is an important connection between two areas of the city. The new station design reclaimed road space to provide public space and bike parking.

Station design respects desire lines and movement patterns of people in the surrounding area and locates pavilions and other elements away from clear paths of movement.

Simple Station Elements



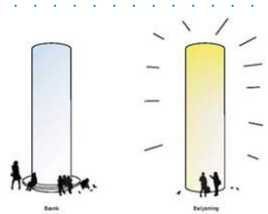
Outdoor seating



Space for markets



Space for food carts



Ventilation stack & lighting as landmark

Image and Diagram Source:
Cobe Architects www.cobe.dk



Visible entry



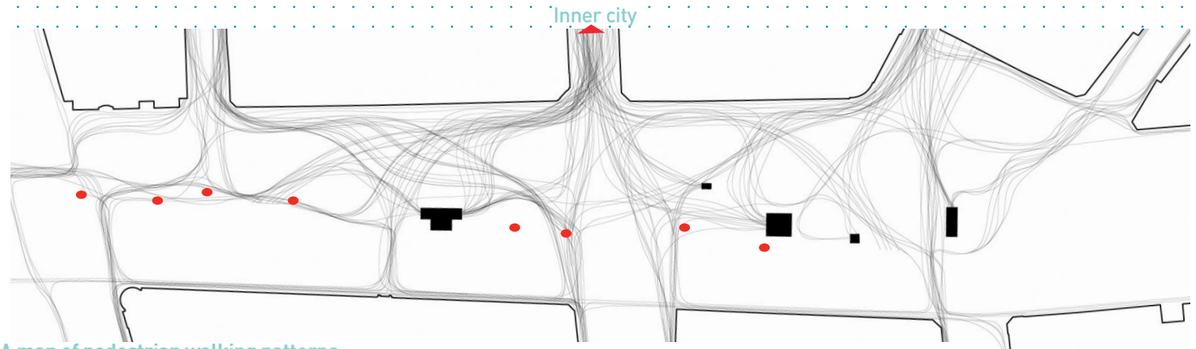
Larger roof elements protect waiting spaces in inclement weather



Then and Now



The station is open and transparent to promote visibility through the space and integrate with the city



A map of pedestrian walking patterns

Example Multi-modal Transit Plaza

Transit Plazas are about more than buses. They can be designed as multi-modal hubs where people can move between car, taxi, walking, biking and the bus seamlessly.

A Transit Plaza for all modes

If not for bikes, this space could be for seating

High visibility pedestrian crossings

Green roof

Norreport, Copenhagen

Sheltered space to protect from rain, snow, or sun

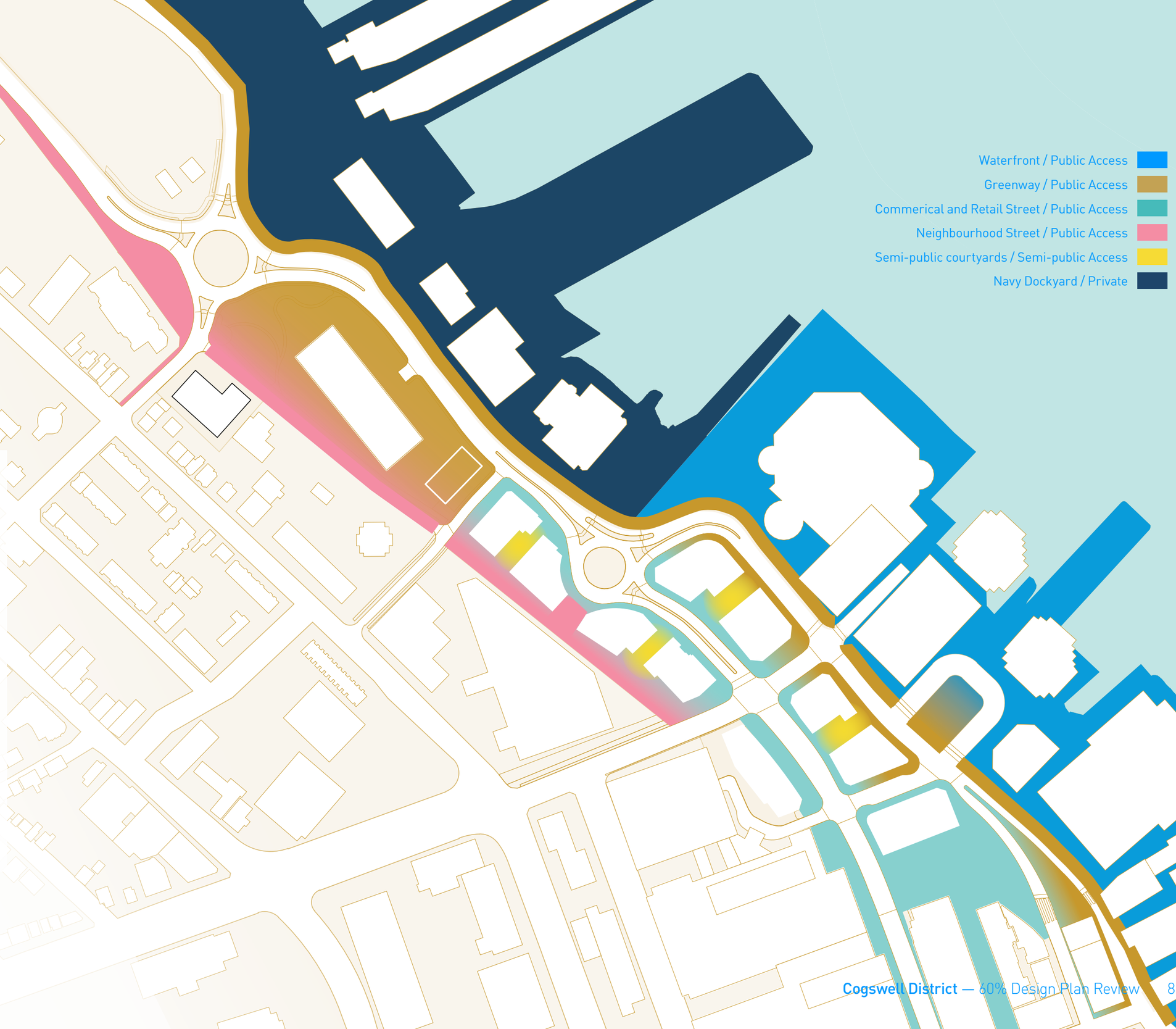
Lighting to increase sense of safety

Bike parking is visible and convenient

5 Define access level

— To ensure spaces are accessible it is important to **define the core audience, who will manage that space, and how much access the general public will have**.

— This is a sample of how the spaces in Cogswell can be defined. Some spaces will be intended for the general public while others will for residents of buildings on the courtyard, open to the public certain hours, if at all.



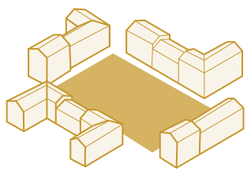
The spectrum of access

Public spaces should be public - open and accessible to all. But not all open spaces in the district need to be purely public. Some will be semi-public, such as residential courtyards, or private, such as front stoops for town houses.

Rather than create exclusive spaces, defining the intention of open spaces makes them easier to navigate.

Public

Low Control + High Capacity



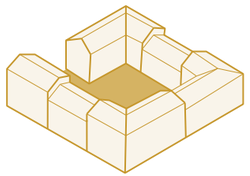
Clearly public / Clear territories



Public Square / Park / Street

Semi-Private

High Control + High Capacity



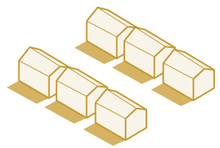
Sense of safety / Ownership



Semi-private enclosed courtyard

Private

High Control + Low Capacity



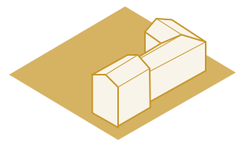
Clear ownership



Private garden

Undefined

Low Control + Low Capacity



Unclear territories / Uncertainty



Semi-public open courtyard

Uncommon Ground: Urban form and Social Territory (2016) / Eva Minoura, 2016

Example Public Park

Open to all, all the time - a genuine public space.

Clear and open access

Different activity zones

Abundant greenery

Example Semi-Private Residential

Courtyards may not be included in overall open space calculations, but are an added value in terms of providing a different typology with high capacity and high control.

Eyes on the street

Parking below courtyard— neighbours interact on their way to get cars

Protected spaces for children

Neighbour meeting place

Copenhagen

Example Semi-Private Residential

An open, public space that is accessed through private space and is more controlled in terms of opening hours and activities allowed.

Safe play space

Green buffer for delineation

Private space

Shared space

Space to sit and read

Example Semi-Private Residential

An open, public space that is accessed through private space and is more controlled in terms of opening hours and activities allowed.

Welcoming lush green path

Paris Boulogne Billancourt

Paris Boulogne Billancourt

Sluseholmen, Copenhagen

accessible to public

Hammerby, Sweden

Example Semi-Public Residential

An open, public space that is accessed through private space and is more controlled in terms of opening hours and activities allowed.

Access to the space is controlled

Flexible social seating

Example
Semi-Private Commercial

Open to the public, but managed privately. Commercial use dominates the space.

Public access

Active ground level

Beau Passage, Paris

Commercial activity

Space to spend time and move through

Example
Private life on the street

The transition zone between private property and public space, such as one's front porch or stoop.

Furnishing to activate street

Some residents interact more than others

Public walkway

Case Study
POPS Program

Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) vary in character and accessibility. While some are legible as public spaces, many are perceived as private. In cities across the U.S., general activity in POPS, which are mostly located in central business districts, is limited to weekdays during lunch.

For a Public Space, Public Life study in Downtown Vancouver Gehl designed a 'POPS' Quality Criteria - a tool to evaluate how inviting POPS were as public spaces.



POPS Quality Criteria

Rate each Criteria on a scale from 1 (Poor) to 4 (Excellent)

1. Legibility

- **Context** — Ability to meet specific public space demand, responsive to context, proximity to users, amenities, destinations and connections
- **Accessibility** — Accessible to users of all abilities, ages 8 to 80
- **Visibility** — *legible as publicly accessible space* — POPS are is visible and easy to find through design queues and wayfinding

2. Protection

- **Security** — Feeling at ease and comfortable in a space with transparency and eyes on the street
- **Safety** — *day and night* — Feeling secure in the space at any hour, with human-scale lighting and visibility
- **Sensory Experiences** — Protection from the elements and unpleasant sensory experiences: wind, rain/snow, heat/cold, pollution and noise

3. Comfort

- **Standing** — Opportunities to stand and wait in a comfortable environment
- **Leaning** — Opportunities to lean and wait in a comfortable environment
- **Sitting** — *diverse seating options* — Opportunities to sit and wait in a comfortable environment, with a variety of seating options

4. Enjoyment

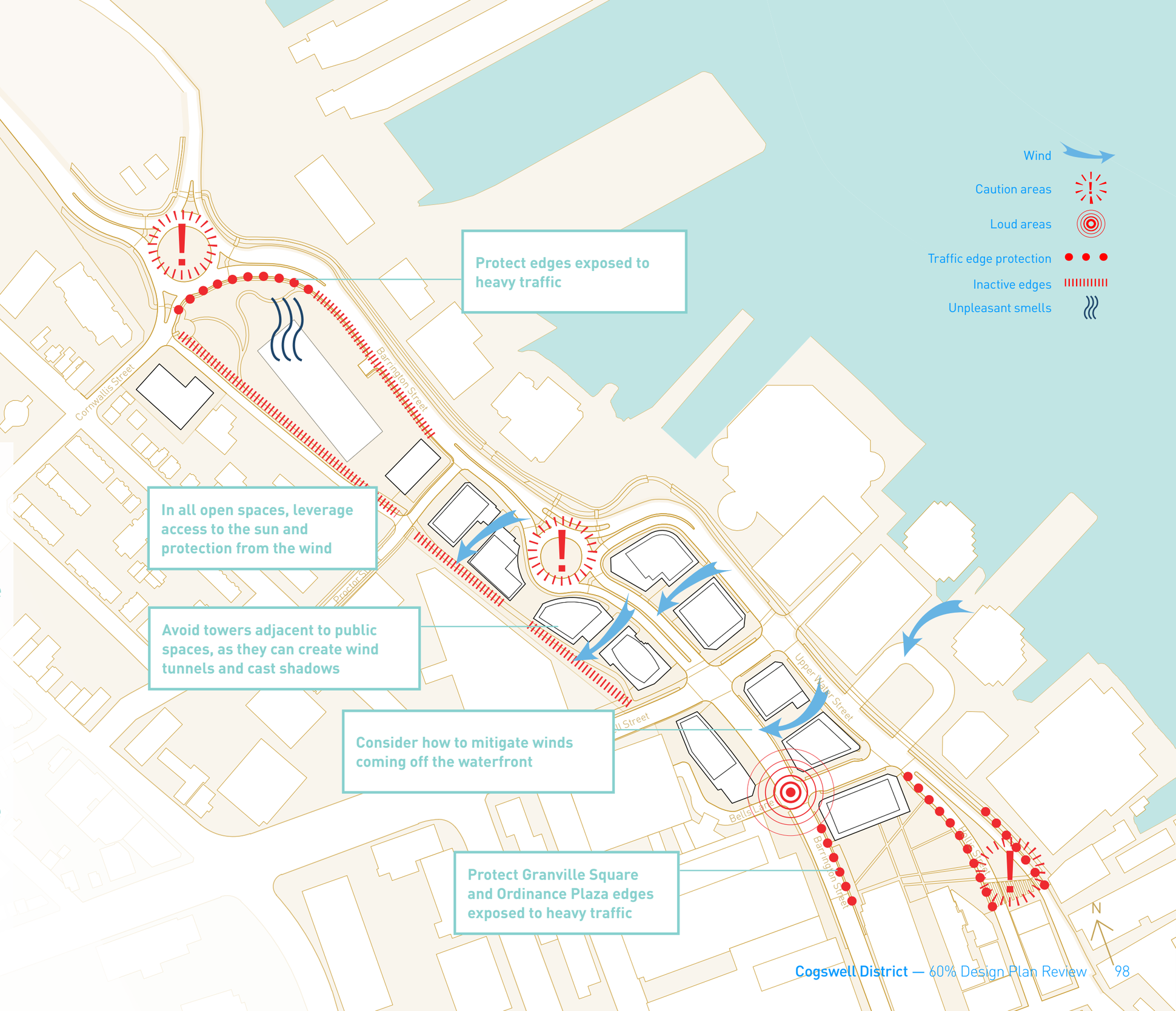
- **Aesthetics / Experience** — Quality of materials, even surfaces, presence of trees and vegetation, art, views, maintenance and cleanliness
- **Social Opportunities** — Opportunities to be social and engage in active or passive interaction
- **Programming** — *activate the space beyond lunch hour!* — Opportunities for culture, commerce and play and recreation to occur in a lively public realm

6

Improve human experience

— The quality of one's experience in public depends on how their senses are stimulated - can you find sun when cold? Or shade when hot? Are you protected from the wind? And from traffic noise? **Quality public spaces protect from unpleasant sensory overload.**

—Attention should be given to how to **protect people from the noises, smells, and exposure generated by truck and vehicle traffic, wind**, the sewage treatment plant, and general Canadian winters.

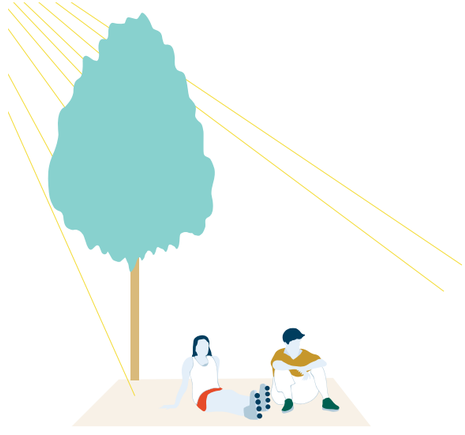


Design for human comfort

Consider what **design elements can be incorporated** that create opportunity to **enjoy positive aspects of climate** and environment and to **seek refuge** from the negative.



Covered walkway



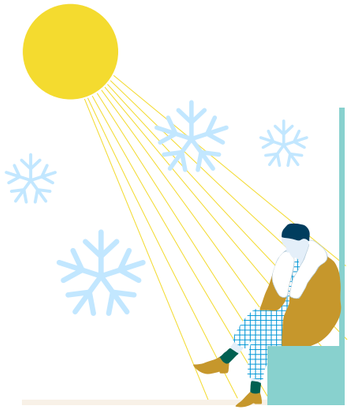
Trees for shading



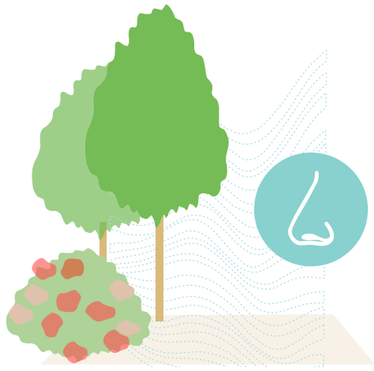
Seating



Protection from strong winds



Winter: sitting in the sun



Pleasant smell-scapes



Human-Scale lighting

Example Microclimate

Temporary shade structure

Moveable seating, for sun or shade

Diverse greenery

Pleasant scents

Formal and informal seating

Example
Winter climate

Winter activities

Seats in the sun

Heaters

An art exhibit that keeps people moving

Example Winter climate

Warm winter activities

Get warm



Example
Open spaces & sustain-ability

Streets and open spaces can be leveraged to capture storm-water and support resiliency.

Green and flood-able space

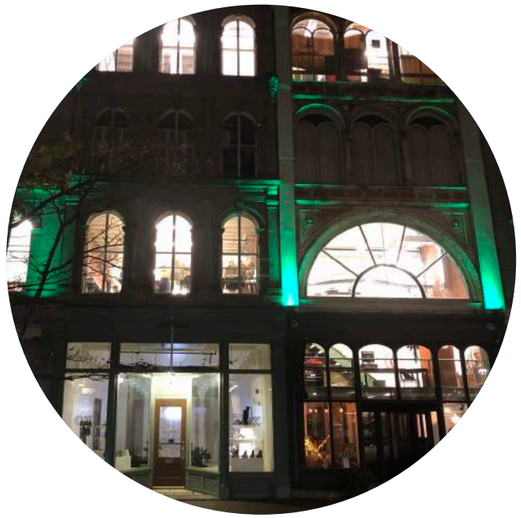
Traffic calming and storm-water management

Outdoor classroom, green space, & catch-basin

Identify opportunity to commemorate culture + heritage

— Throughout Halifax there are a number of cultural commemorations, from public art celebrating First Nation cultures to nighttime lighting displaying heritage buildings to Adirondack seats adjacent to historic memorials.

— **Where are the places for Indigenous, Black and other cultural history and heritage to come through in the new district?** As the detail design moves forward, research is needed to better understand the communities displaced by the building of the Cogswell Interchange and how this history can be recognized moving forward.













Urban Block

One of Halifax's assets is its fine grained urban fabric, but this is lacking in the 60% design plan. The 60% design plan proposes urban blocks similar in dimension to the existing downtown grid, but the **large footprint buildings** contrast to existing building heights and are not currently human scaled.

Urban Block | Challenges

Large scale buildings

In the current 60% design plan, the majority of the buildings are towers on a podium with multiple floors of parking. The lack of variety in building form and typology not only limits the opportunity to create a rich and varied district, it often creates undesirable microclimate conditions, with shaded areas and wind drafts in the surrounding spaces.

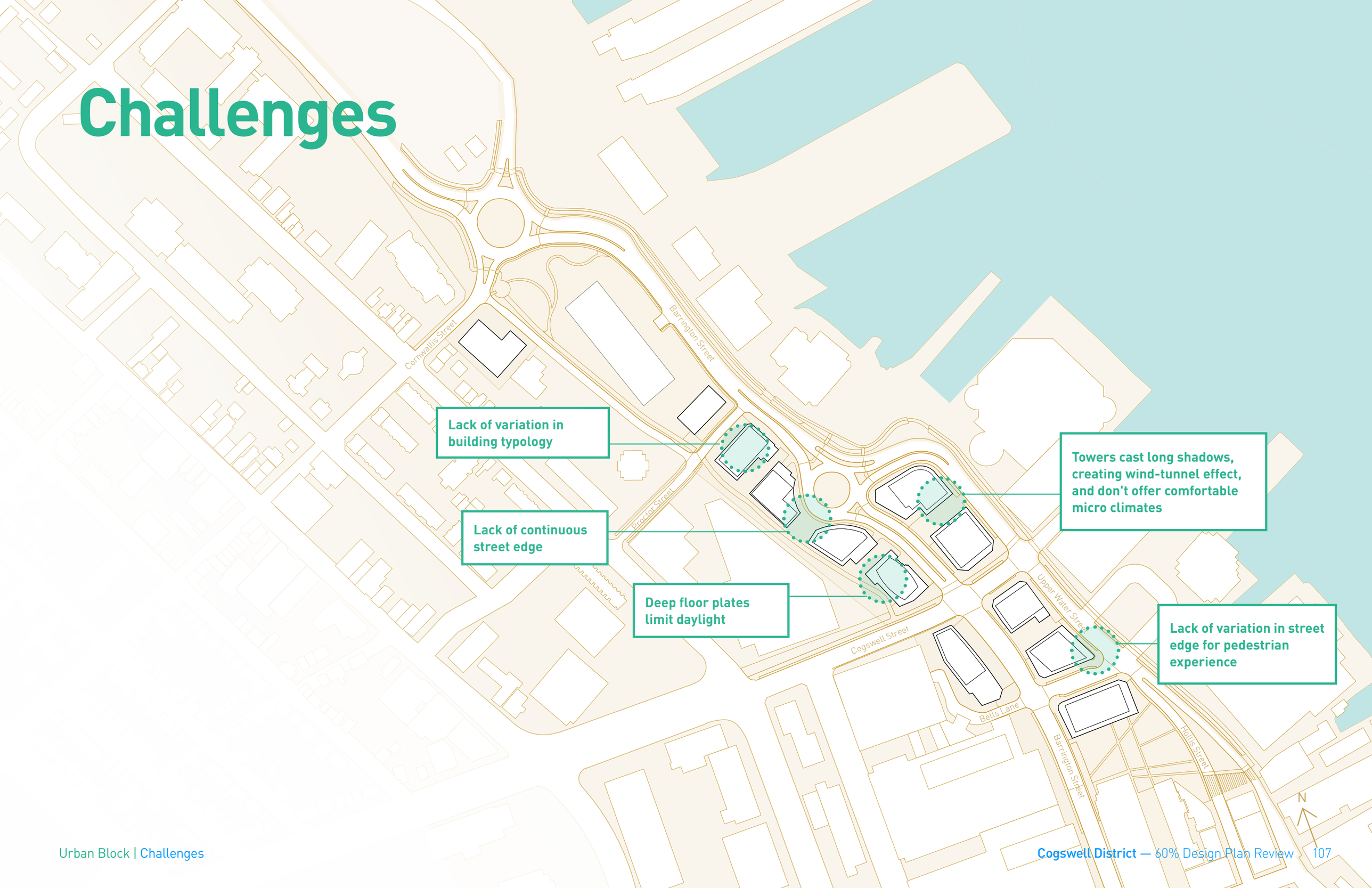
Inactive edges

Large scale buildings with large floor plates often times generate a monotonous, repetitive, and inactive ground floor that does little to contribute to vibrant street life. Without a clear urban guideline on the articulation of the ground floor the quality and experience of the person walking through the district can be compromised.

Culture and heritage not visible

The heritage buildings and the fine-grained urban fabric that can be seen in many neighbourhoods across Halifax, including the adjacent Granville Mall, downtown and North End, is a big part of what gives Halifax a rich identity. These are assets that cannot be replaced. Consider building typologies that integrate better within the surrounding context. Respecting heritage doesn't mean no progress; there are many ways of creating new contemporary buildings that relate to historical contexts.

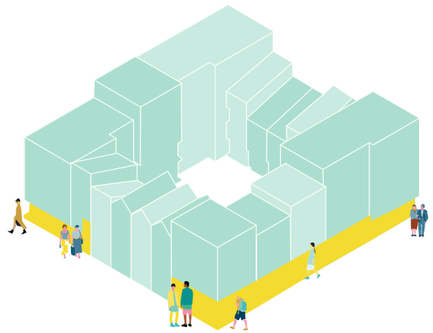
Challenges


Lack of variation in building typology
Lack of continuous street edge
Deep floor plates limit daylight
Towers cast long shadows, creating wind-tunnel effect, and don't offer comfortable micro climates
Lack of variation in street edge for pedestrian experience
Cornwallis Street
Barrington Street
Proctor Street
Cogswell Street
Upper Water Street
Bells Lane
Barrington Street
Hollis Street
N

Urban Block | Recommendations



7
Diversify building typology



8
Create vibrant, defined edges



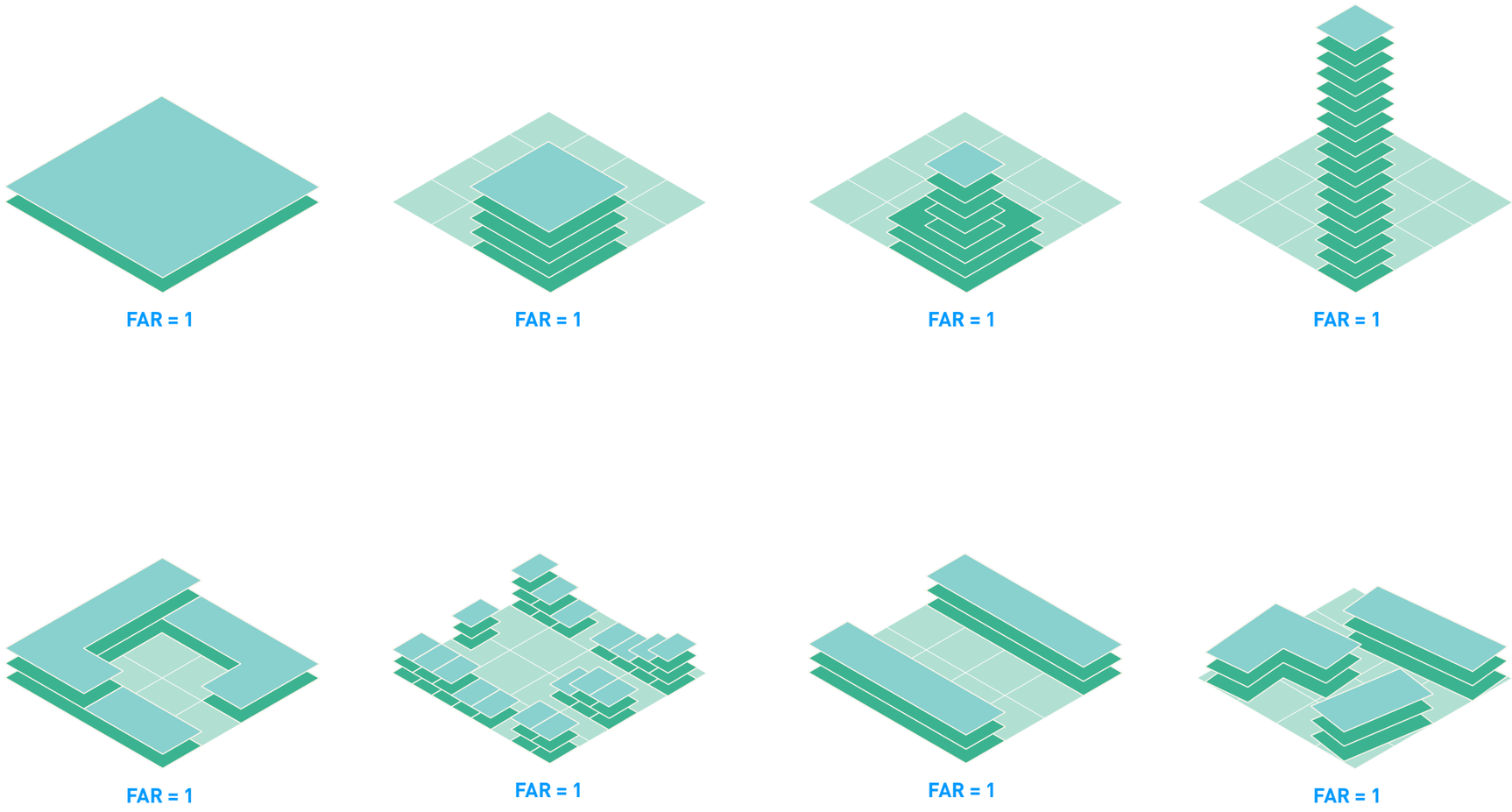
9
Reflect Halifax identity

7

Diversify building typology

— Density can be achieved in many ways. **High density doesn't have to mean high-rise.**

— Compact, smaller-footprint buildings offer more use flexibility than towers and are therefore much more adaptable over time. For example, buildings with large footprints are challenging to convert to residential uses as too little light reaches the core of the building to have units throughout.



Each box shows how the same building floor area can be distributed.

Consider residential density with diverse building types

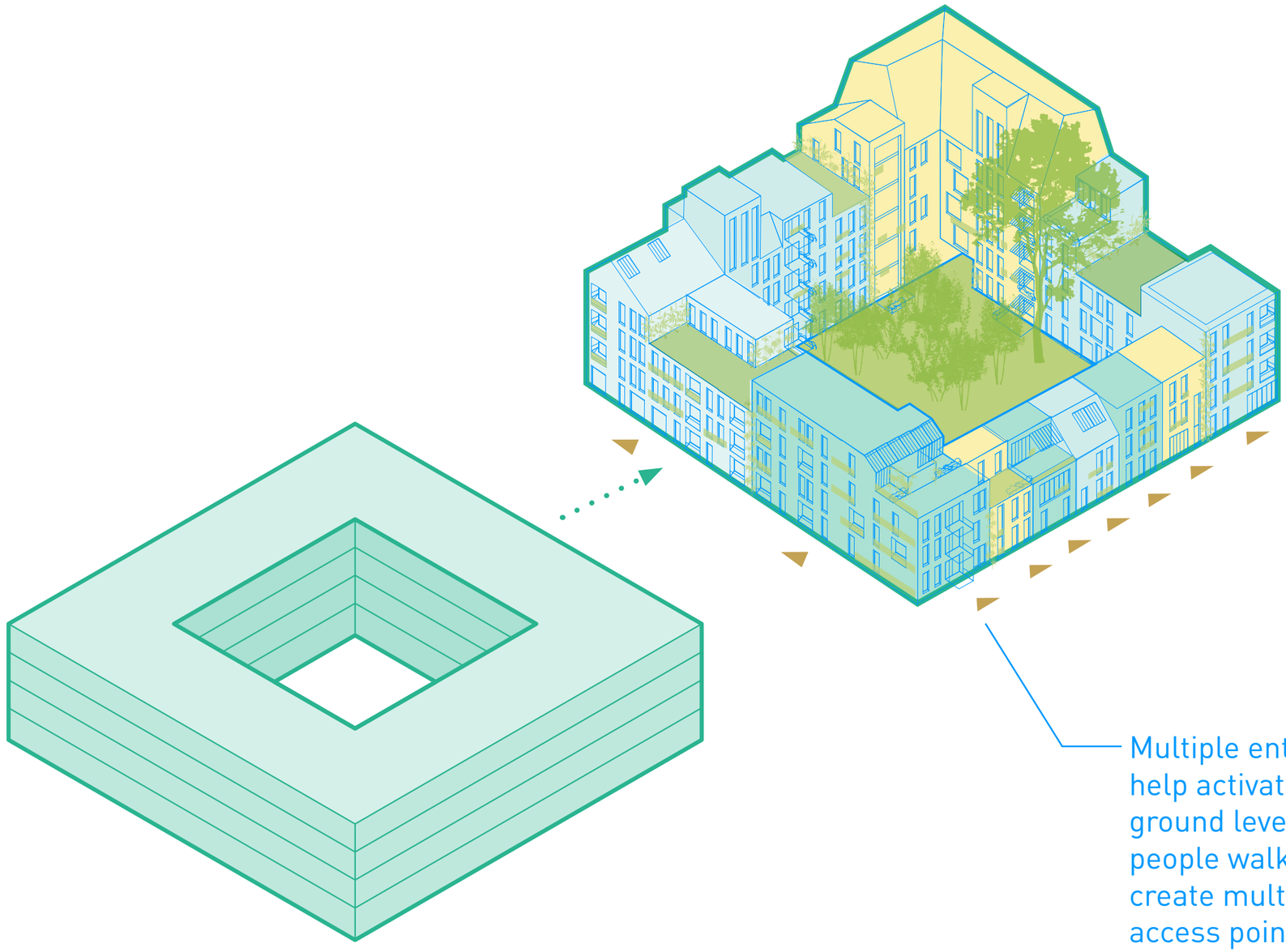
— Promote **architectural and ownership diversity through form and facade articulation**

— **Perimeter building** typologies **with courtyards** can **create dual aspect residential units** with a public street side (urban & active) and a private/semi-private quieter side

— Create **semi-public courtyards and residential open spaces** for smaller and intimate spaces

— Provide **different, small scaled entrances** for active street edge

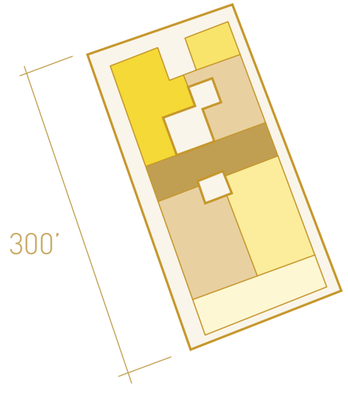
More detailed analysis is needed to explore wind and sun exposure and financial feasibility.



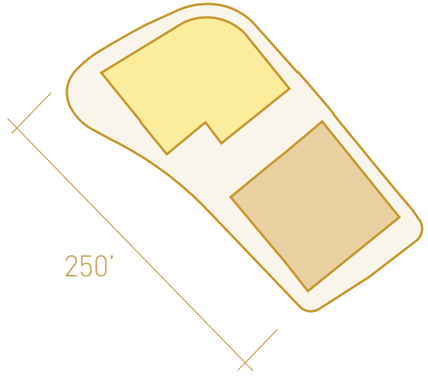
Block comparison

— While the block sizes in the Cogswell District are comparable to those in downtown, the **building footprints are larger**. This makes it more **difficult to create a walkable street** that provides active ground-level experience.

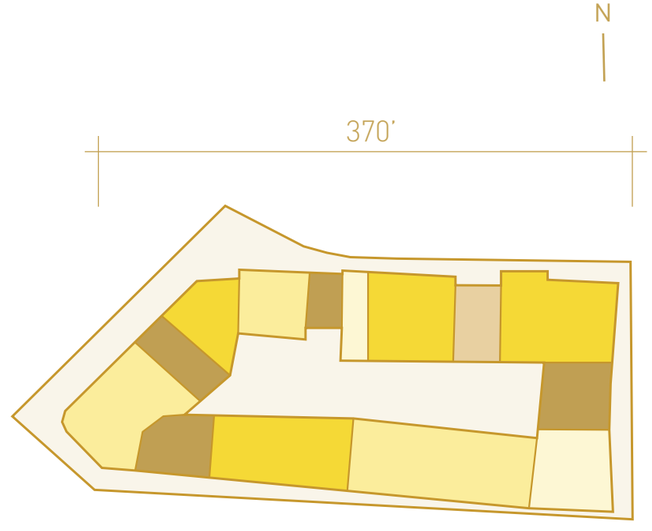
— Build diverse buildings that are made up of **smaller buildings with multiple ground-level** entrances to activate the street. This also allows for more diversity of ownership.



Downtown — Halifax, NS



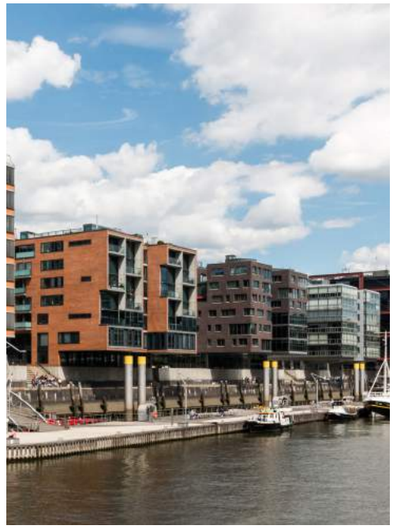
60% design — Halifax, NS



Hafen City — Hamburg, Germany





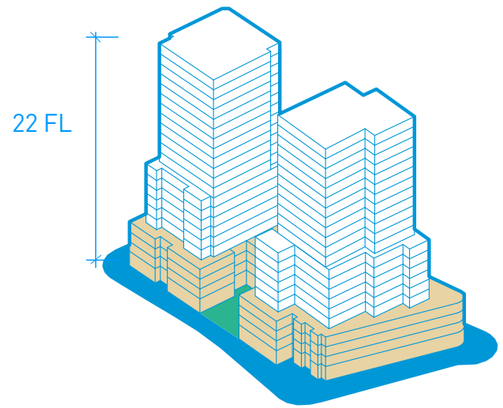


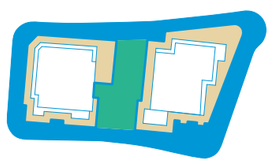
Building massing options

A variety of building typologies can lead to similar densities to podium towers. These alternative buildings create **space for residential courtyards**. Additionally, lower heights **reduce the risk of wind tunnels** and **blocked sun exposure**.

This is conceptual - more detailed analysis is needed to explore wind and sun exposure and financial feasibility.

60% design

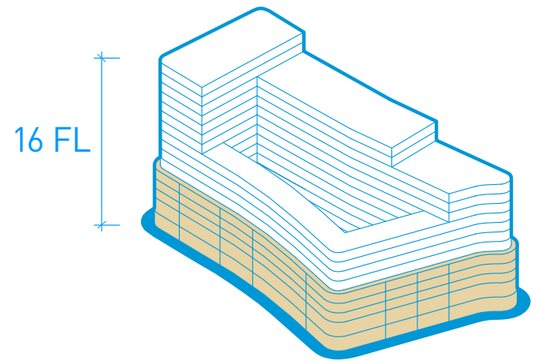


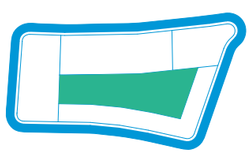


GFA = 325,056 SF

4 stories podium
18 stories tower

Alternative Study 1

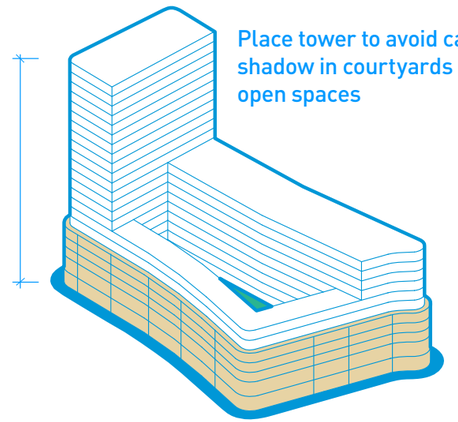




GFA = 326,900 SF

5 stories podium
11 stories tower

Alternative Study 2





GFA = 325,700 SF

5 stories podium
17 stories tower

Sidewalk
Podium
Open Space

Building footprint

Consider footprints that:

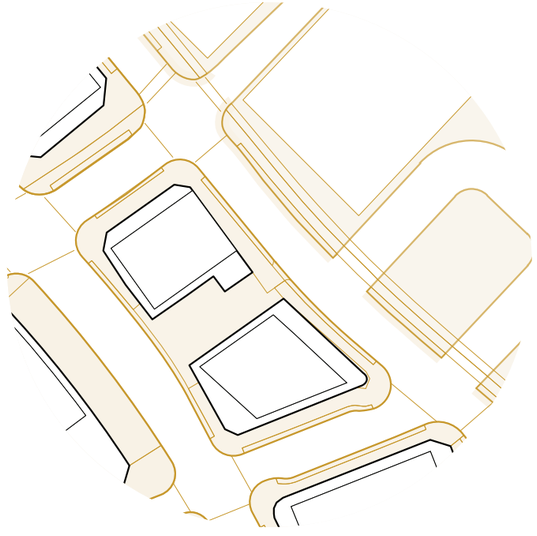
— Create opportunities for **active ground floors** with multiple entrances

— Take advantage of topographical difference to **explore putting parking below courtyards, at ground level or below ground**

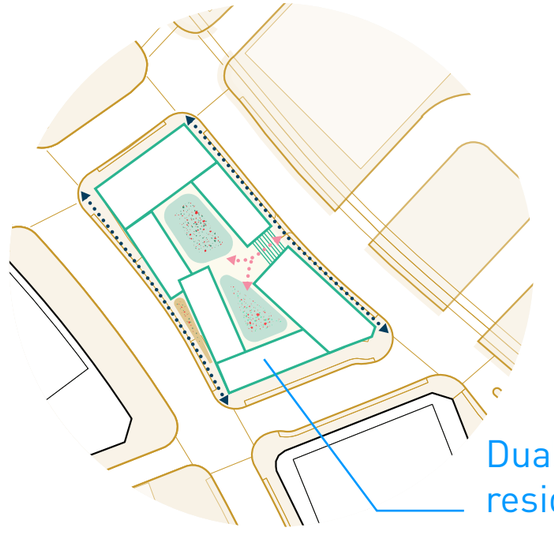
— Create variety of buildings with **compact floor plates**

More detailed analysis is needed to explore wind and sun exposure and financial feasibility.

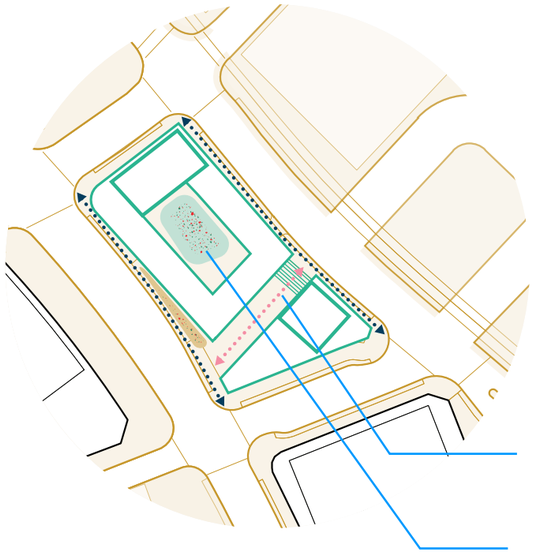
60% Design



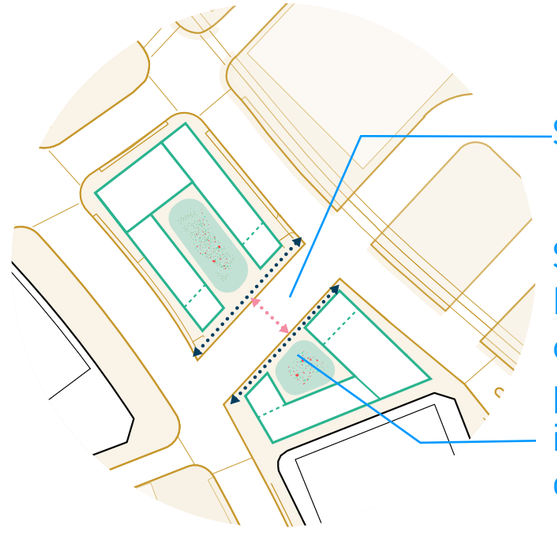
Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Example Velo development

- Redeveloped an urban brown-field site that was a vacant parking lot for 35 years
- Targeted modest priced rental housing for people working downtown
- Parking hid at-grade, behind a veneer of retail

Low rise, high density

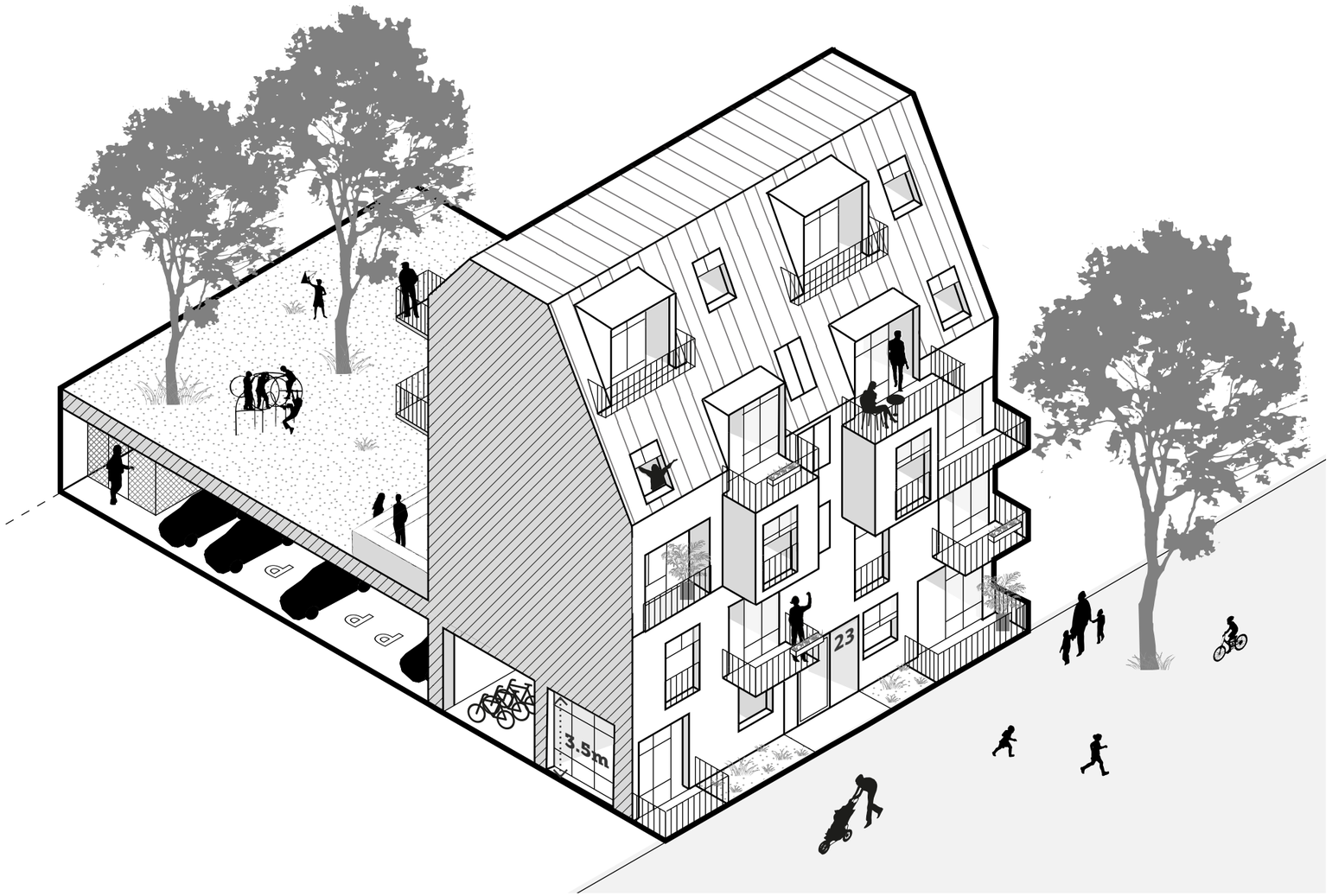
Active ground floor

Spaces with different levels of privacy

You have great examples in Halifax!

Raised courtyards

When parking can not be built below ground **consider building courtyards on top**. This model is already visible in Halifax, such as along Gottingen Street in the North End.



Example

Same development, diverse buildings

Facade variation

Stimulus for pedestrians

Facade color and texture variation

Example

Same development, diverse buildings

Protected and safe

Flexible programming

Places to be social with neighbours

Example Multiple setbacks

150 Charles Street, Manhattan.

This building achieves both density and human scale through multiple setback that helps to break down the scale of the building, and articulating the ground floor. This helps make the ground floor experience much more stimulating for the pedestrian by considering the human scale.

Broken down scale

Active ground floor

Example

Park ‘n’ Play

Parking garages can be integrated into their context. They can also add value by being programmed in creative ways.

Secondary activity on rooftop

Interesting facade detail and material

Example Parking Garage Facade

Parking garages can be integrated into their context. They can also add value by being programmed in creative ways.

Greenery as part of the facade expression

Pedestrian priority continues across driveway

Transparency and use of local materials

Example 1111 Lincoln Road

Parking garages can be integrated into their context. They can also add value by being programmed in creative ways.

Retail space

Open, unique design

Well lit

Event space

8

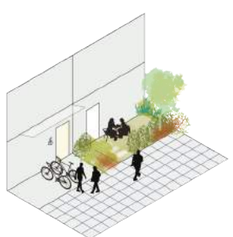
Create vibrant, defined edges

— Make life visible in the public realm with **porous and transparent buildings**

— Use entrances, stoops, balconies, terraces, and windows to **activate, articulate, and soften buildings**, providing more outdoor spaces for people

— **Foster a sense of safety** with more eyes on the street

Conditions at private edge



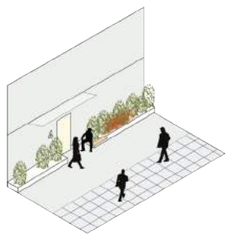
Residential edge zone – small
- An edge, which forms a private or semi-private zone for the residents of the building at entrances of apartment units or in front of ground floor apartments
- Community functions with transparent edge design





Residential edge zone – large
- Characterized by private or semi-private front gardens of green character, part of an apartment unit
- Emphasis on good transition from public to private: buffer through level change or greenery

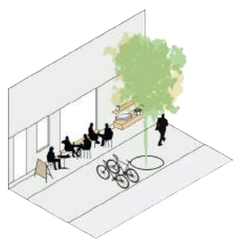




Green edge
- A vertical green wall, with openings, allowing views into the production site



Conditions at public edge



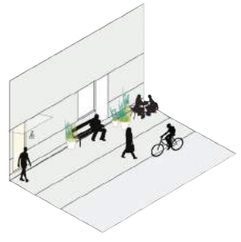
Retail edge zone
- Create possibilities to sit outside, or high level of transparency of facades
- Place delivery and trash rooms in least prominent locations
- Can also accommodate small scale, day-to-day Food & Bev functions





Event, Food & Beverage edge zone
- Generous openings
- Aligned with public space in front or terrace, so events can flow out into the spaces in front





Office edge zone
- Place more active functions on ground floor: meeting rooms, canteens, co-working, workshops – Transparent facade design for visual connections and create possibilities to work or meet outside at selected edges



Case Study
Darling Quarter, Sydney

Commonwealth Bank (CBA) as Owner and Tenant

A prime inner city development that emphasizes the importance of the public realm and ground floor in a corporate workplace.

- Cafes and restaurants are designed as meeting and social spaces for morning and afternoon meetings, lunchtime and evening socializing.

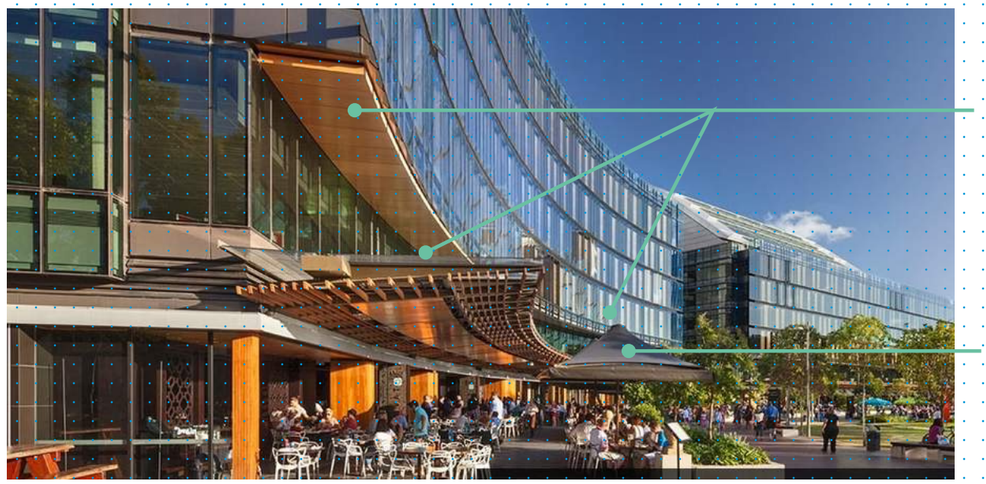
- Food and coffee to take away to the park and playground nearby.

- Flexible Edge Zone - the design allows for flexible use in different seasons and weather. Canopy awnings are important to screen from the hot sun but also space for sunny seating.

Source - Aspect Studios



Edge Zone:
Close-Up at Ground Level



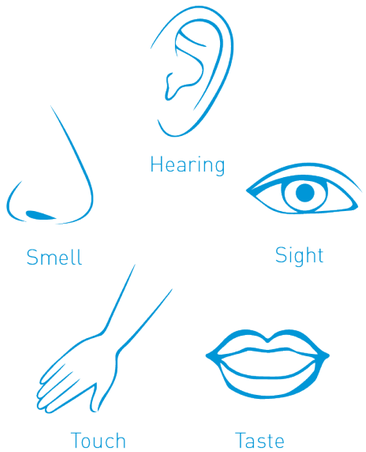
A variety of screen devices for sun and rain protection

A fixed canopy allows for more outdoor life when the weather is bad or the sun is hot. Umbrellas for sitting in sun or shade.

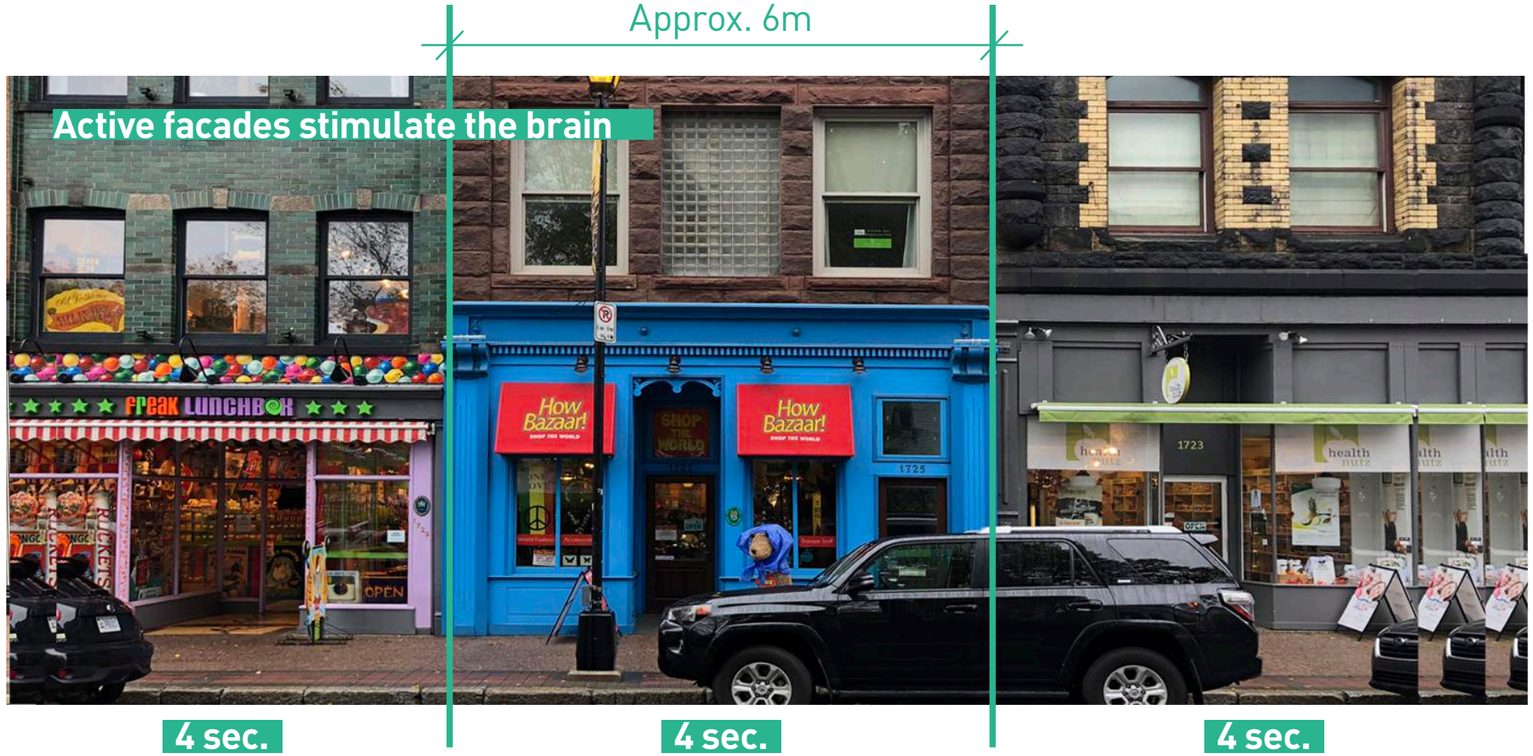


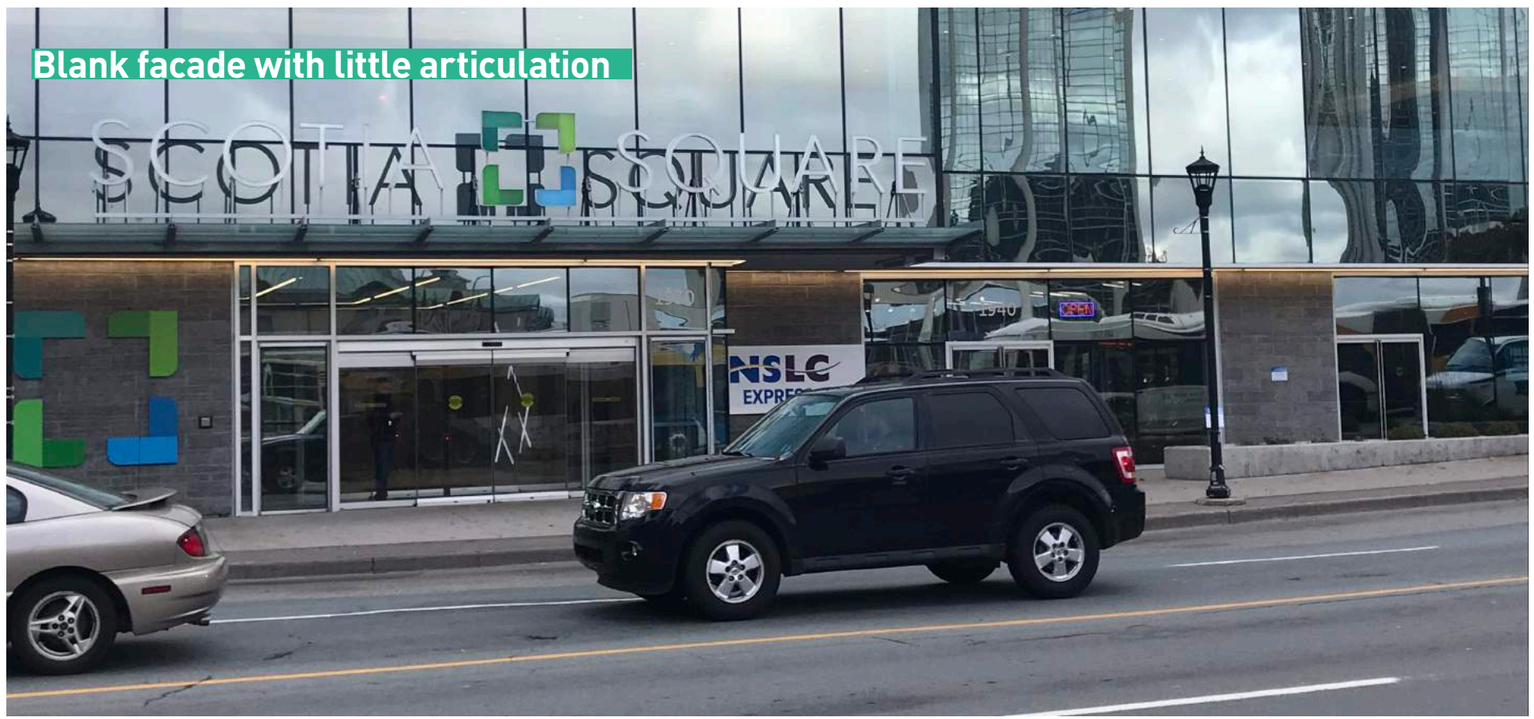
Design for stimuli

The human brain needs 1 stimulus every four seconds, or 1000 stimulus per hour to be engaged. How might the Cogswell District stimulate the five senses?



5 Senses

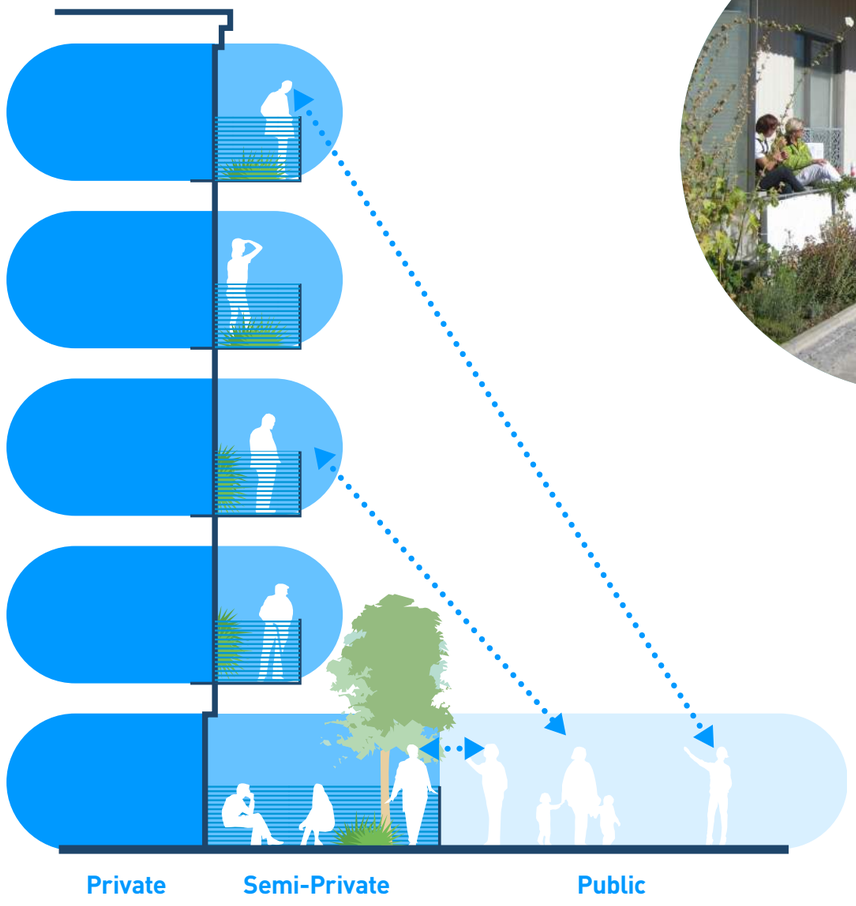




Create different privacy zones

Life starts at the edge.

In well-functioning public spaces most **human activities take place in the 'edge zone' areas**, the interface of building and public space. The ground floor level is of **particular importance due to the direct relation** of the human senses. The building edges must **ensure a stimulating, positive experience** to passers-by.





Example Active edges

Ground floor activity is about more than commercial uses. It involves greenery, seating, signage and wayfinding, and public art.



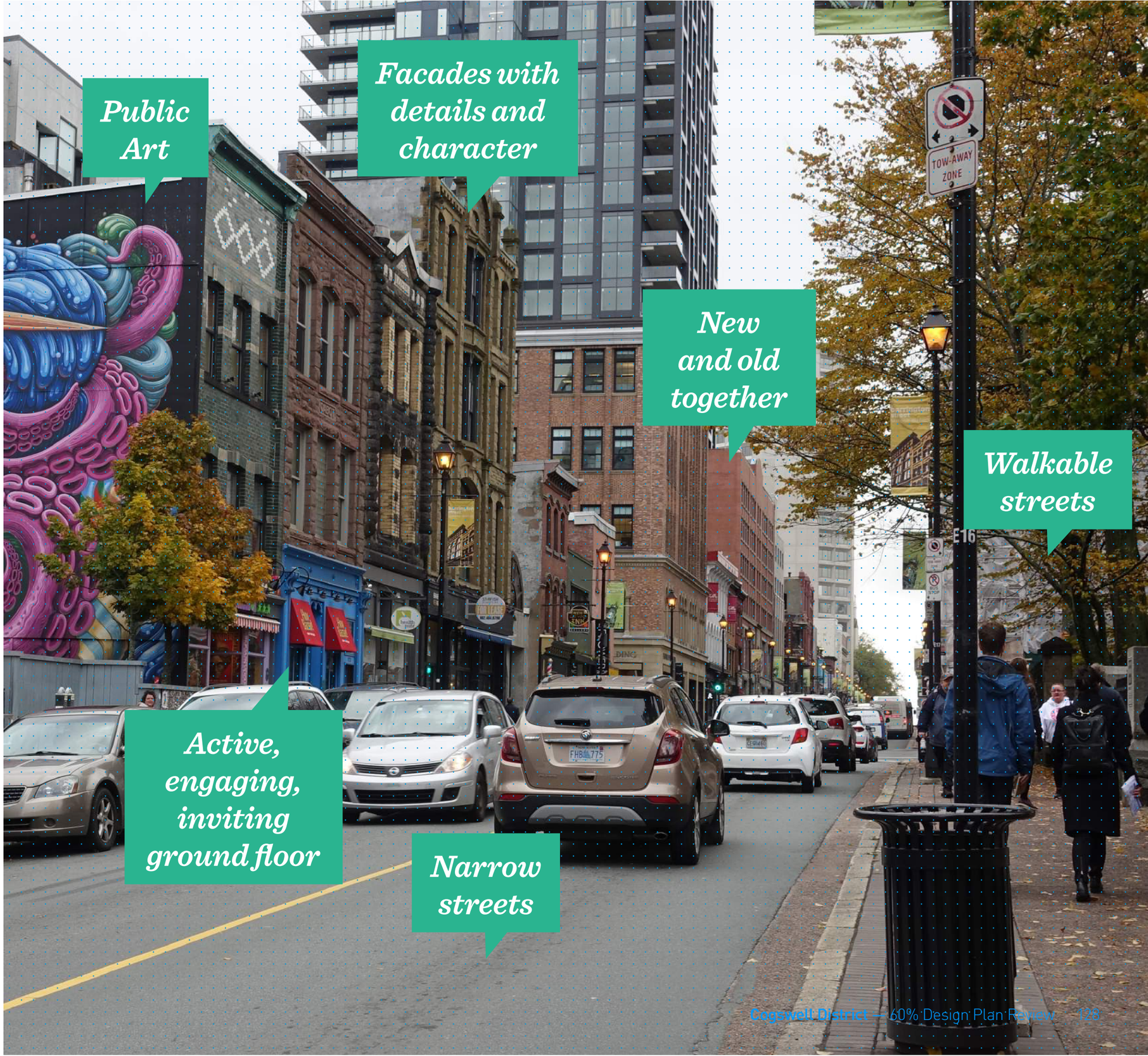
Example Active edges

Small-scale retail can create an active edge, with many opportunities to enter buildings and observe activities. So can residential buildings that have multiple entrances or provide opportunities to keep eyes on the street.

9

Reflect Halifax identity

Today, Halifax is characterized by a mix of old and new buildings. Heritage buildings are side by side with modern ones, creating a unique identity. While Cogswell district is new, bringing in this identity will connect it to the existing city fabric.



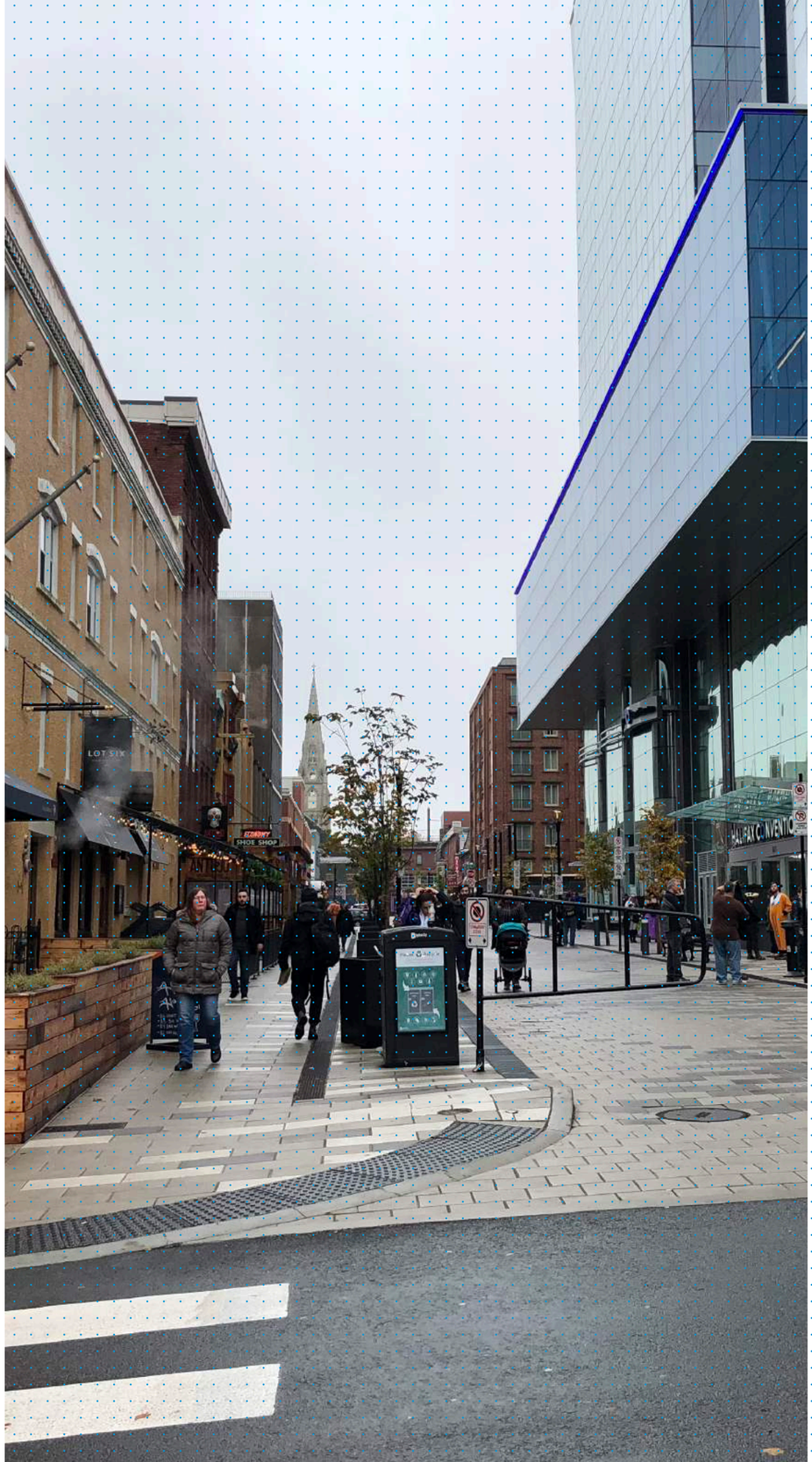
Bring Halifax character to new developments

As demand to live downtown rises, new developments do too. How can they be done in a way that celebrates the new and also responds to the existing city fabric?



Consider how new development relates to heritage buildings

How can the identity of Halifax be incorporated into new developments? How can developers be incentivized to restore heritage buildings? As new developments arise, how can older buildings be protected?







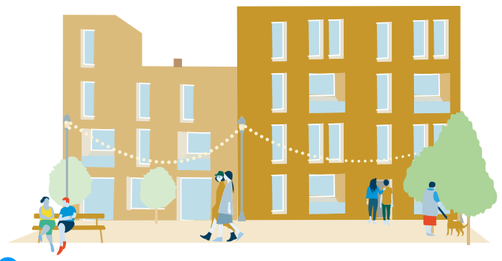
Summary | District Recommendations

Connectivity



1

Improve links within District



2

Improve quality of connective tissue



3

Create places for people to connect

Open Space



4

Provide a variety of public spaces



5

Define access level



6

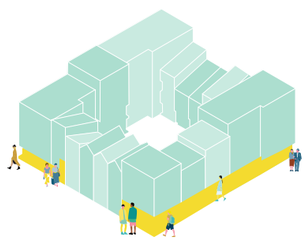
Improve human experience

Urban Block



7

Diversify building typologies



8

Create vibrant, defined edges



9

Reflect Halifax identity

Next Steps

In what kind of city do we want to live?

Next Steps

A number of actions can be taken to support the Cogswell District in becoming a great place for people. Here are some that rise to the top.



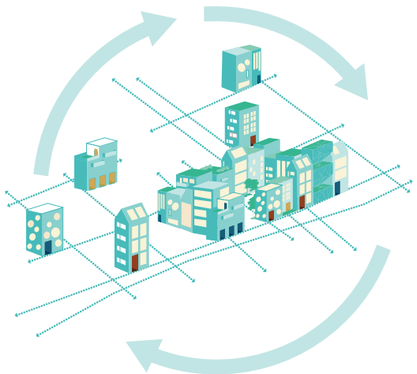
Create a shared vision for the Cogswell District

Define people first targets that can guide the 100% design and evaluate progress overtime. Encourage ongoing community participation in the development of Cogswell District overtime.



Develop urban design guidelines for the Cogswell District

This could include such things as a lighting strategy to focus on pedestrian poles and sidewalks, a study of wind and sun exposure, or how policy can support small parcel, human-scale walkable building frontages.



Ensure the Cogswell Plan is adaptable and can respond to future changes

There's no way to know what the future changes will be - they may relate to the Port, wide spread scooter use or who knows! - but the plan can be created so that responding to them is manageable.



Create an early activation strategy

The full build out of the district will take years. What types of activities or designs can activate the space in the short and medium term? What will start to plant the seed that this is no longer a car-dominated place, but is now a neighbourhood?



Create a strategic and activation plan for the waterfront

There is great opportunity to invite people farther north along the waterfront, but connections and what to do there need attention. A waterfront plan could be leveraged with the Cogswell District planning efforts to ensure connectivity and that public spaces complement each other.

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