

WINDSOR STREET EXCHANGE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT: AFRICVILLE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION UPDATE

BACKGROUND: WHY IS THE MUNICIPALITY DOING THIS CONSULTATION?

The Windsor Street Exchange Redevelopment Project involves the redesign of the intersection of Bedford Highway, Windsor Street and Lady Hammond Road. The goals of this large-scale project are to add active transportation connections (e.g. walking and cycling), transit priority measures through the intersection, improve the movement of vehicles and improve the safety for all road users.

When approving the project, Regional Council, the main decision-making body for the municipality, directed staff to explore whether community benefits could be part of the final design of the Windsor Street Exchange and surrounding road network. Community benefits are a way to increase the social impact of a large-scale municipal project. Benefits potentially included as part of infrastructure projects vary based on the project's scope, impact, and opportunities identified through community consultation.

Due to the proximity of the Windsor Street Exchange Redevelopment Project to the historic Africville community, consultations are being held with the Africville community to identify opportunities associated with this project.

WHAT HAS THE MUNICIPALITY HEARD SO FAR?

As a result of previous engagement with members of the Africville community, the municipality understands that access to the Africville Museum and Africville Park is important. In Fall 2020, consultation through an online survey and virtual public meetings was held to build on previous feedback and identify further opportunities for both the Windsor Street Exchange Redevelopment Project, and the Africville community.

While the response from the community was limited, we have heard that the Africville community wants to participate in this consultation, and that access to Africville Museum and Africville Park by transit and for pedestrians and cyclists remains a high priority.

Many members of the community shared their stories and their vision for the future of Africville, and we are grateful for their input.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Because the response in Fall 2020 was limited, additional consultations with the Africville community will be held before making any decisions on potential community benefits. We are planning the next round of consultations for Summer 2021, with the hope that we can hold small, in-person gatherings. Online and virtual components of the consultations will continue as well. Details will be available in the next few months.

An Africville Visioning Process has recently been proposed to be discussed by Regional Council, and while it is separate from this consultation process, opportunities identified through this consultation may feed into the Visioning Process. Through consultation with the Africville community, we will identify potential opportunities for community benefits. Some opportunities may be addressed through the Windsor Street Exchange redevelopment project, while others may require the involvement of other municipal departments or government partners.

The municipality is beginning to hold larger public engagement on the design process for the Windsor Street Exchange Redevelopment Project, starting with gathering information from the public on how they travel through the area, and what the new design needs to consider. Phase 1 of this broader public engagement will be held in April 2021, and we welcome your feedback.