

## FEDERAL GAS TAX FUND PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### THE HALIFAX TRANSIT LACEWOOD TERMINAL PROJECT - DRAFT

#### **Halifax (legally known as Halifax Regional Municipality)**

**Incorporated:** The regional municipality was formed in 1996 when four former municipalities were amalgamated (Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford and the Municipality of the County of Halifax).

**Population:** 414,400 (Census 2014); with 297,943 in the urban area centered around Halifax Harbour

**Project:** The Halifax Transit Lacewood Terminal Project

**National objective:** Cleaner environment

**Project outcomes:** With an increase in public transit ridership and improved integration with Halifax's active transportation network, this project reduces local greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to a healthier, sustainable environment.

**Federal Gas Tax Fund contribution to project:** \$4,970,966

**Total project cost:** \$7,593,105

#### **Other Gas Tax Fund projects completed by Halifax:**

- New transit technology to provide accurate data to allow for more flexibility with routing and scheduling of transit services
- Ragged Lake Transit Centre expansion

## HALIFAX

Halifax is the provincial capital of Nova Scotia and a major economic centre for Atlantic Canada. Its residents make up close to 44 percent of the Province's population, with just over 70 percent residing in its urban core. Steeped in rich maritime history, Halifax Harbour is lined with historic warehouses that once served as trading hubs for privateers and an entry point for the many immigrants that travelled from far and wide to settle in Canada.



Today, Halifax's diverse economy is supported by a significant concentration of government services and the private sector. Its largest employment sectors include trade, health care and social assistance, professional services, education and public administration. Halifax is also well known for its concentration of universities, which serves as a major employer and attracts close to 37,000 local, national and international students annually.

In addition to its urban centres, Halifax has significant suburban and rural regions, which support thriving fishing, agriculture, forestry and mining industries. Many small communities are nestled among abundant expanses of wilderness and productive agricultural land. They also dot Halifax's meandering coastline, which stretches 400 kilometres and provides numerous opportunities for recreation, transportation and economic development.

## THE HALIFAX TRANSIT LACEWOOD TERMINAL PROJECT

Halifax's newest public transit terminal was four years in the planning but well worth the investment in time and effort. Putting its previous transit-building experience to good use, the Municipality designed the Lacewood Terminal to improve service, comfort, accessibility and safety. With great attention to detail, the terminal was created to:

- Enhance customer service and experience;
- Be well integrated into the local community and Halifax's active transportation network; and
- Be sustainable and accessible.



Through these design elements, Halifax succeeded in building a multi-modal transit facility that serves as an important public transit hub for the region. With the capacity to accommodate more than 4,000 passengers and 500 buses per day, the terminal not only serves today's passenger and operational requirements, but is also designed to accommodate growth well into the future.

### **ENHANCED CUSTOMER SERVICE & EXPERIENCE**

Recognizing the former terminal had exceeded its capacity and lacked adequate amenities, Halifax Transit designed a replacement that would not only accommodate future growth, but would also significantly improve the experience for passengers and operators using the facility. With support from the federal Gas Tax Fund, the Municipality built a 14-bay platform with carefully planned indoor and outdoor waiting areas.

The 3400-square foot terminal building is equipped with washrooms, comfortable seating, a phone charging station and a fountain that doubles as a water bottle refilling station. State-of-the-art electronic departure boards, mounted in the building and at each bus bay, provide passengers with current travel information by displaying real-time route departures and arrivals.

Halifax applied principles from *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* to create a safer physical environment. The terminal's layout incorporates clear sightlines from the main building to the outdoor waiting areas and ample lighting is strategically placed to deter potential offenders. A high-quality video surveillance system, which can be monitored remotely, was also installed.

## **INTEGRATED INTO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

Halifax recognized the importance of ensuring the Lacewood Terminal was well incorporated into the adjacent community. The site of the terminal was chosen due to its proximity to several key facilities, including the Canada Games Centre, the Keshen Goodman Public Library, the BMO Soccer Centre, Halifax West High School and adjacent sports fields.

A diverse team of Halifax staff collaborated on the design - including those with expertise in planning, transit operations, communications, accessibility and active transportation - to successfully integrate the terminal. Well-placed wayfinding signs link passengers to existing trails and other pedestrian connections, including the *Kiss 'n' Ride* site at the neighbouring Canada Games Centre.



## **BUILT & OPERATED TO BE SUSTAINABLE & ACCESSIBLE**

The Lacewood Terminal's design incorporates a number of features to make it both environmentally-friendly and accessible for a variety of users. By achieving a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) *Silver* certification, the facility is resource and energy efficient, accessible and durable. It also has lower operating and maintenance costs due to its efficiency. The main building's LEED features include energy-efficient windows and building envelope, LED motion sensor lighting, radiant in-floor heating and the use of durable, local materials.

The terminal's outdoor area was designed to conserve green space and enhance the existing site. More than 60 native trees were planted in landscaped pockets to provide shade and make outdoor seating areas more comfortable. To restore a disturbed area where a ravine once existed, Halifax planted a meadow of clover, a native groundcover that requires little maintenance. Finally, a stormwater management system was engineered to effectively manage on-site water, and allow for proper and sustainable drainage.



To increase connectivity, the terminal links to existing recreational and active transportation infrastructure. It also has a covered bicycle parking and maintenance facility, which allows riders to park and service their bikes before hopping on a bus to complete their trip, as well as a practice rack to help riders become comfortable with mounting their bikes on the front of buses. These features work together to encourage multi-modal transportation, enhancing the sustainability of the terminal and the adjacent community.



Several accessibility features provide improved access for passengers with mobility challenges. These include barrier-free washrooms, braille bay number signs, tactile strips, and cane channels to assist the visually impaired. By designing and constructing the facility to achieve LEED certification, Halifax has not only addressed a number accessibility issues, but has succeeded in developing a terminal that will provide many social, environmental and cost-saving benefits.

“Not only is the Lacewood Terminal designed for growth, but it incorporates well-thought out features to improve reliability, accessibility and safety for its riders”, says Councillor Richard Zurawski, representing District 12 (Timberlea – Beechville – Clayton Park – Wedgewood). “It’s a state-of-the art transportation centre designed to efficiently connect people to where they need to be - so they can easily sit back and enjoy the ride.”

When the terminal was delivered both on time and budget, there was much to celebrate at its grand opening in August of 2016. It serves as an excellent example of what is possible in public transit when the facility design focuses on customer experience, sustainability, accessibility and connectivity. The Halifax

Transit Laceywood Terminal is a vital transportation hub and will remain an important community asset long into the future!