

Bury the highway

CENTRAL ARTERY - THE BIG DIG: I-93 BOSTON, MA



SIMILARITIES TO I-81

- Designated as an interstate highway
- Carried through and local traffic
- Perceived as a barrier between neighborhoods

DIFFERENCES FROM I-81

- Carried twice the traffic volumes
- Located in an older and more densely populated city with greater development pressures
- Separated sections of the city from the waterfront

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

- I-93 was torn down and an expanded interstate was relocated under the same footprint
- The elevated section of the highway was replaced by public space, improving connectivity to the waterfront and North End neighborhood
- The project also focused on upgrading and expanding public transit

Lessons learned

- Cost of burying a highway were significant - final costs of the project were 5 times the original estimate
- Payoffs of burying a highway were also great:
 - Improved connectivity between neighborhoods
 - Improved traffic circulation
 - Enhanced urban environment and stimulated economic development