



**Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project  
Public Advisory Group Meeting 2  
Meeting Minutes**

**March 21, 2024**

**Room 207 (Urbanism Lab), National Capital Commission, 40 Elgin Street, Ottawa**

**PARTICIPANTS**

**Project Team :**

- Jordan Lane-Beveridge, Project Director, Senior Project Manager, PSPC (Co-chair)
- Cédric Williams, Manager, Public Consultations, NCC (Moderator)
- Victoria Angel, Principal, ERA (Speaker)
- Matthieu Galland, Associate Director, Infrastructure Design, ARUP (Subject Expert)
- Nina Maher, Senior Planner, Transportation, NCC (Subject Expert)
- Lucie Bureau, Executive Leader, Bridge Planning Studies, NCC (Subject Expert)
- Julie Lefebvre, Chief, Bridges and Environmental Studies NCC (Subject Expert)
- Kim Geoffrion, Senior Advisor, Indigenous Engagement, NCC (Subject Expert)
- Paul Lebrun, Chief Engineer, NCR Bridges, PSPC (Subject Expert)
- Michael Hanifi, Urban Planner, Dillon (Minutes)
- Bruno Fabien, Director, Engineering Assets, NCC (Observer)
- Aaliyah Agil, Program Coordinator, NCC (Observer)
- Ryan Kleineu, Public Affairs Advisor, NCC (Observer)
- Erin Pietersma, Conservation Landscape Architect Advisor, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Mark Van Buren, Special Advisor, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Kristin Lillyman, Associate, Dillon (Observer) (online)
- Rebecca Sciarra, Partner, ASI Heritage (Observer) (online)
- Manuela Senese, Architect, ERA (Observer) (online)

**Public Advisory Group (PAG) members – present:**

- Claude Royer, Association des résidents de l'île-de-Hull
- Josiah Firth, Lowertown Community Association
- Jacques Drouin, Marina de Hull
- Philippe Deschamps, Vision Centre-Ville (alternate)
- Florence Lehmann, Bike Ottawa
- Kelly Haussler, Ottawa Tourism
- Jerry Fiori, Ottawa Disability Coalition
- Julie Kinnear, Tourisme Outaouais
- David Jeanes, Transport Action Canada
- Patrick Robert-Meunier, MOBI-O (online) (alternate)

**PAG members – regrets/absent:**

- Zach Dayler, ByWard Market District Authority
- Glenn Crawford, The Village Legacy Project
- Katherine Spencer-Ross, Heritage Ottawa
- Robert Taillefer, Ekeau



## DETAILED AGENDA AND PRESENTATION ITEMS

In the second Public Advisory Group (PAG) meeting for the Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project, the PAG members were provided with a project update and were engaged on the approach to the Heritage Impact Analysis. The meeting was facilitated by the National Capital Commission (NCC) and co-chaired by Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and Ottawa Tourism. The Heritage Impact Analysis approach was presented by Victoria Angel of ERA Architects (ERA). Discussion periods were held throughout the presentation to generate and gather feedback on the process and Heritage Impact Analysis, as noted in the agenda items below.

#	Member	Item
<b>Part 1: Introduction</b>		
	PSPC and NCC	Welcome and introductions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Land acknowledgement</li> <li>b. Health and safety instructions (bathrooms, emergency exits)</li> <li>c. Agenda</li> </ol>
<b>Part 2: Project Update</b>		
	PSPC and NCC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. General project update:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Project schedule</li> <li>ii. IRP and role of RAIC</li> <li>iii. Environmental studies</li> <li>iv. Indigenous engagement</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Update on options analysis + pre-design steps</li> <li>c. Discussion period</li> </ol>
<b>Part 3: Introduction to the Heritage Impact Analysis (HIA)</b>		
	ERA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Overview</li> <li>b. Scope of work / objectives</li> <li>c. Update on HIA engagement to date (e.g., information sharing)</li> <li>d. Three pillars: Rail-scape landscape, Indigenous landscape, Capital landscape</li> <li>e. Early conclusions</li> <li>f. Discussion period</li> </ol>
<b>Part 4: Discussion</b>		
	NCC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Gather feedback on how the role of the bridge is perceived and understood within the local/community context (historically and today)</li> </ol>
<b>Part 5: Next Steps</b>		



## DISCUSSION

#	Member	Question/comment	Project Team Response
<b>Project Updates</b>			
	<b>C. Royer</b>	Can you clarify the role of the Independent Review Panel (IRP) for this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IRP is an advisory review panel comprising of independent experts with a mandate to provide recommendations to the NCC and PSPC on a preferred concept for the bridge.</li> <li>They are looking at the bridge from different points of view to ensure the design concepts are incorporating heritage, Indigenous areas of interest, environment, and design. They also consider the structure of the bridge, impacts to the alignment, and access to water.</li> </ul>
	<b>C. Royer</b>	What is ERA's involvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERA is a consulting firm that is part of the Technical Advisor team.</li> </ul>
	<b>C. Royer</b>	Does the IRP (per the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada) include an expert from the province of Quebec or someone with interprovincial interests?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a question for the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. More information on the members of the panel can be found on their website.</li> <li>There are experts from Quebec on NCC's two advisory committees: the Advisory Committee on Planning, Design, and Realty (ACPDR) and the Advisory Committee on Universal Accessibility (ACUA). The ACPDR committee ultimately makes the recommendations to the NCC Board of Directors.</li> </ul>
	<b>P. Robert-Meunier</b>	There doesn't appear to be specialists in mobility or transportation planning experts on the IRP. What elements related to transportation demand management and sustainable transportation were considered as part of the IRP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are people on the IRP who have expertise in transportation planning.</li> <li>The panel is completely independent of the project team and is intended to bring another perspective to the project.</li> </ul>



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		composition? I think it is important that all the expertise is represented within this panel.	
	<b>F. Lehmann</b>	<p>I would like to include the fourth option of preserving the bridge. The bridge is essential to active mobility and the automobile is only a minimal percentage of the modal share of the bridge. We continue to envision a bridge that is fit for automobiles, where, if we look closely, each side of the bridge does not have the capacity to provide room for automobiles. We should consider the possibility of incorporating public transportation but should exclude private automobiles.</p> <p>The bridge was not made for the automobile, and it is the automobile that brought the bridge to this state. However, I am happy to see active transportation is part of the new project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bridge will be built to accommodate public transportation and a large part will account for active transportation.</li> <li>• There will be wider cycling lanes, wider pedestrian paths, and better separation for pedestrians. There will be space for people who want to stop and for those in a hurry.</li> <li>• The bridge will be designed to accommodate transit only-buses and Tram-in the future on the two vehicle lanes.</li> </ul>
	<b>D. Jeanes</b>	When you listed the expertise on the IRP, nothing that I heard related to transportation planning expertise. Engineering and bridge design is a different discipline. Because of the importance that this bridge has, transportation planning is the most important aspect. Can this be corrected?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The panel members have been appointed. The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada has included in the Panel the requested expertise as per the mandate given to them by PSPC.</li> <li>• With our consultants, through our technical advisor team, as well as within the Integrated Project Team, we have access to transportation planning expertise.</li> </ul>
	<b>J. Fiori</b>	The bridge must consider persons with disabilities and accessibility issues. Does the expert panel have a person dealing with accessibility on it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NCC has two advisory committees, and one is on universal accessibility.</li> </ul>
	<b>F. Lehmann</b>	The High-Level Bridge in Edmonton was discussed as a good example of	



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		an industrial era bridge.	
<b>Introduction to Heritage Impact Analysis – Q&amp;A</b>			
	<b>C. Royer</b>	There are elements in the Heritage Impact Analysis Terms of Reference (ToR) that are identified in the study area but some items are missing that are impacted by the replacement of the bridge. For instance, Tourisme Outaouais has an office just at the corner of rue Laurier and boulevard des Allumettières.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The elements mentioned are in the study area and part of the impact analysis. Even if they are not in the framework, they are part of the study area.</li> <li>• If there are additional elements that you would like to discuss with the study team, please let us know after the meeting.</li> </ul>
	<b>D. Jeanes</b>	<p>The national significance of the railscape is missing. The Alexandra Bridge was a transcontinental bridge and far more passengers crossed on transcontinental trains than local trains, so there is a national aspect of importance. Very little freight used the bridge.</p> <p>The other element missing is the bridge as an engineering work and the significance and size of the cantilever design. It is a national historic civil engineering site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Heritage Impact Analysis Report addresses the significance of the bridge itself.</li> <li>• If we haven't reflected the national significance in the report, it will be.</li> </ul>
	<b>P. Robert-Meunier</b>	How are we going to compensate for the loss of the bridge? This is a large culturally historic loss. Will we be asked seriously about the heritage impact of removing this bridge, and will it be possible that one of the recommendations says that there is no possibility of compensating from the point of view of the heritage monument, if we are going to completely remove the bridge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The studies on the structure of the bridge clearly demonstrated that the Bridge is at the end of its life and must be replaced. With this in mind, this heritage impact analysis is not typical. The decision has already been made to replace the bridge.</li> <li>• The objective of this analysis is to understand the role the bridge played in a cultural and experiential context, identify heritage conservation approach and develop commemoration and</li> </ul>



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			interpretation recommendations .
	<b>P. Robert-Meunier</b>	I think that even if the decision is taken to replace the bridge, the impacts should be made transparent to the public. It needs to be stated that, knowing that we have documented all the impacts from removing the bridge, we are fully assuming the consequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a section of the report where the analysis starts with the heritage value and the elements of the current landscape and then discusses the impact of dismantling the historical sources. So, it will document what you are suggesting, which will inform recommendations for the new bridge.</li> </ul>
	<b>K. Haussler</b>	I love to hear that you're looking at the bridge not only from a daily usage perspective, but also a major events perspective. You mentioned time and usage patterns but what about the elements across day and nighttime experiences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are very interested in hearing exactly that in the discussion section of the presentation.</li> </ul>
	<b>J. Kinnear</b>	I have a concern with economic impact of the closure of the bridge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic impacts are, and will continue to be, a focus of ongoing discussion with the Project Team, Tourisme Outaouais and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>
	<b>C. Royer</b>	Is there consideration for keeping some elements and reusing material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reusing of material is something we are studying as part of broader studies.</li> </ul>
	<b>C. Royer</b>	The ToR references the Alexandra Bridge pre-disposal heritage reporting report 2021-2023. Can this be shared?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The status of the document will be checked to see if it is shareable.</li> </ul>
	<b>P. Deschamps</b>	Is there a plan for notice of detours to other bridges?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be once we are closer to the deconstruction of the bridge.</li> </ul>
	<b>J. Firth</b>	We talk about a signature bridge, but how much more of a signature bridge can you get than the existing bridge? There are environmental and heritage issues, and we are at a loss to see how the project is doable on budget without disrupting the natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a fair point. The concept design process is not without a lot of study or consideration. The concept design for the replacement bridge will be evaluated against a multi-criteria assessment tool based on the NCC Performance</li> </ul>



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		environment and lived community.	<p>Criteria that were developed for the bridge. This tool includes criteria related to bridge expression, as well as sustainability and the environment, among others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The team also has a rigorous impact assessment process in place to identify and mitigate any potential impacts on the social, economic and natural environments.</li> </ul>
	<b>J. Firth</b>	Further, will you present a proposal that encompasses the original bridge in its standing so they [the public] can vote on it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NCC Performance criteria calls for the development of a range of concepts from a reinterpretation of the historic bridge design to a totally contemporary structure.</li> <li>The project team is working with a technical advisor to produce design concepts for the replacement bridge that will meet the performance criteria.</li> <li>The project schedule provides for engagement with partners, stakeholders and the public, as the design evolves.</li> <li>The objective of the next round of public consultations is to present a shortlist of design options and gather comments on what people appreciate about each design option. It will not be a voting exercise on the design of the bridge.</li> </ul>
	<b>C. Royer</b>	What does a signature bridge mean? A special vision was established in 2017. Can you speak to that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It means a bridge that is not an ordinary bridge.</li> <li>There was a call for proposals in 2017 that had been developed on the idea of a signature bridge and the development of options. Design options of a signature bridge are being developed and will be part of the public consultation planned for</li> </ul>



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			next fall 2024.
<b>Discussion #1: Who are the users of the Alexandra Bridge and how/why do they use the bridge?</b>			
	<b>D. Jeanes</b>	<p>I use the bridge as a destination and not just to cross. With the redevelopment of Kiwekì Point, it will become a major destination for people again.</p> <p>It is also an important active transportation link in the pathway network with a circuit around the Chief William Commanda Bridge.</p> <p>As far as uses for trucks and automobiles, that is much less important as only nine percent of cross river traffic is automobile traffic.</p>	
	<b>J. Firth</b>	<p>For our community, it is mostly for active use. A large portion of the Lowertown and ByWard Market community are retired. There is a lot of cycling and walking over the bridge.</p> <p>Nobody likes to drive on the bridge during rush hour. It creates traffic jams.</p> <p>It is inexcusable that we consider any type of bridge that would bring more automobile traffic.</p>	
	<b>P. Robert-Meunier</b>	<p>It is the main link of active transportation with the Chief William Commanda Bridge over the river.</p> <p>In my opinion, it's important to keep in mind the economic impacts on the</p>	



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		area that are linked with the loss of mobility over the river here during construction.	
	<b>P. Deschamps</b>	Many people use it for active transportation or are tourists.	
	<b>K. Haussler</b>	<p>Looking at it from a tourism lens, it is an important connector for both sides of the river because of its location. It probably gets the most visitor traffic of the bridges because of the variety of options, destinations, and the vistas along the way that feature iconic Canadian scenes.</p> <p>There are guided walking tours, guided bicycle tours, self-guided bicycle tours, and sightseeing buses that use the bridge. You also have boat tours and kayakers who use the water.</p>	
	<b>C. Royer</b>	<p>The people in my community prefer to cross at the Alexandra Bridge when compared to the Portage Bridge, which is very noisy.</p> <p>If we think about a future concept, it should consider not having pedestrians on the same level with automobiles. We should also consider allowing pedestrians to have views of the river downstream.</p>	
	<b>P. Deschamps</b>	Active transportation links in the winter are important. The Alexandra Bridge is a link that is open for all four seasons of the year and doesn't close in the snow and that is important. A two-storey bridge is a good option for snow coverage.	

**Discussion #2: Which ceremonies and events does the Alexandra Bridge play a role in?**



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	<b>D. Jeanes</b>	<p>I host walking tours through heritage Ottawa's heritage program.</p> <p>It is also significant for fireworks. It is very present during the fireworks displays. There are boat tours, bus tours across the bridge, and walking tours of it.</p> <p>There are events during Canada Day with the link from downtown Ottawa to Jacques-Cartier Park.</p> <p>There are many events throughout the year where the bridge is used to get there, or is a part of it, or is seen as part of it.</p>	
	<b>K. Haussler</b>	<p>From a sporting perspective, the sporting events side of things is important (like Ottawa Race Weekend).</p> <p>On a smaller scale, the business side of things is important. We have off-site events that occur where you have thousands of delegates who are at the Museum of History, in their hotel or the main conferences at the Shaw Center. They navigate both sides of the bridge often.</p>	
	<b>C. Royer</b>	<p>The spirit of the bridge is an interprovincial bridge. We saw the Mayor of Ottawa and the Mayor of Gatineau having a picnic in the middle of the bridge on the pedestrian route. It is of important symbolic value.</p>	
	<b>J. Firth</b>	<p>It is far more enjoyable for any celebration when it is closed for all sorts of celebrations. Having it as a park and pedestrian space to connect</p>	



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		between two cities would always be our preference.	
<b>Discussion #3: What are the elements of the bridge or its surroundings that contribute to making it a special experience?</b>			
	<b>C. Royer</b>	It is the authenticity and heritage.	
	<b>D. Jeanes</b>	The structure is right in your face when you cross this bridge. It is very much an experience just to drive across from one end to the other. It is a remarkable engineering structure. In terms of views, the view of Parliament Hill is unique from the bridge, and it has the best view of the canal locks.	
	<b>J. Firth</b>	There is a human scale to this bridge, and it is impossible to reproduce. These types of structures really stand to show what we are capable of, both in building, and in honouring and maintaining. The views are great, but the bridge is a great view itself.	
	<b>K. Haussler</b>	The views from a tourist perspective are very important. It is a unique vista of Parliament. Maybe Sydney Harbour Bridge is another good example of having a beautiful view and vantage point (of the Sydney Opera House).	
	<b>J. Firth</b>	The filter of looking at the vistas through the iron curtains of the bridge's structure is also very special.	
	<b>P. Robert-Meunier</b>	It has a unique, authentic, and historic character. The character of a bridge is impersonal when it leads to empty spaces. This bridge is different from other bridges. It is also functional. I think it is the best bridge in the city.	
	<b>P. Deschamps</b>	If we take our time when crossing the bridge, it can be a place to observe. It	



#	Member	Question/comment	Project Team Response
		is very important for tourists to be able to take pictures and see the visuals the bridge establishes.	
<b>The comments below were submitted following the PAG meeting via email:</b>			
	<b>G. Crawford</b>	<p>I represent the Village Legacy Project which documents and shares the National Capital Region’s queer history. I thought I would share some comments from our community members regarding the bridge and its connection to our community, particularly through a rash of hate crimes attacking our community in 1989. You can read more about the history here on our Web site: <a href="https://www.villagelegacy.ca/items/show/45">https://www.villagelegacy.ca/items/show/45</a></p> <p>I think the general idea at present, is that we would like to see some sort of commemoration, perhaps a public art component, for example, that both honours the memories of the individuals attacked on the bridge and in the surrounding area, and also celebrates the rich history of queer culture that spanned both sides of the bridge in Ottawa and Hull (now Gatineau). Carl Stewart, a prominent local queer artist, suggested a sculptural piece that utilizes metal salvaged from the existing bridge. I think this could be a wonderful addition to the bridge’s final design, would repurpose metal from the existing bridge and would both enhance the cultural landscape but not conflict or detract from other significant cultural and heritage considerations.</p>	
	<b>G. Crawford (feedback</b>	1. I would love to see a memorial plaque erected in the honour of	



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	received from community members)	<p>Alain Brosseau in the park before the bridge starts so that he is not forgotten. He was a great fellow and a friend. I look forward to seeing how we will remember [the victims of the murder spree] but Alain in particular.</p> <p>2. Back in the 1970s, I remember going over to Hull briefly to a place called the Texas Tavern, a lesbian bar which was above Standish Hall, which no longer exists. So, it's not just the tragic death on the bridge we should remember, but happier times when other bars in Hull provided gathering places for our community to dance, enjoy drag shows, etc. other members of our community could probably happily supply you memories and names of these places. And there should be a way for people who no longer drive or ride bicycles to get across the bridge, so I'm thinking either lighter buses or light rail.</p> <p>3. A piece of public art that commemorates and celebrates the history of the bridge for Ottawa/Gatineau queers perhaps made from, or at least incorporating, elements of the bridge itself.</p> <p>4. The Chez Henri should be mentioned. The Sunday afternoon drag show in the Salon d'or with Peaches Latour.</p>	
<b>Next Steps:</b>			
We anticipate the next meeting will align with the public consultation on shortlisted bridge design options. This will likely take place in fall 2024.			