



**Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project
Public Advisory Group Meeting 3
Meeting Minutes**

September 25, 2024

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

PARTICIPANTS

Project Team:

- Cédric Williams, NCC (Moderator)
- Karine Delorme-Pigeon, PSPC (Co-chair)
- Matthieu Galand, ARUP (Subject Expert)
- Nicolas Demers-Stoddarts, Provencher_Roy (Subject Expert)
- Nina Maher, NCC (Observer)
- Emile-Girard Ruel, NCC (Observer)
- Isabelle Charron, PSPC (Observer)
- Michelle Prevost-Bisson, NCC (Observer)
- Betsabe Wences, NCC (Observer)
- Ryan Kleineu, NCC (Observer)
- Bruno Fabien, NCC (Observer)
- Paul LeBrun, PSPC (Observer)
- Sandra Cook, NCC (Observer)
- Victoria Angel, ERA Architects (Observer)
- Valerie Bedard, CIMA (Observer)
- Michael Hanifi, Dillon (Minutes)

In Person and Online Attendees:

- Josiah Firth, Lowertown Community Association
- Claude Royer, Association des résidents de l'île-de-Hull
- Philippe Deschamps, Vision Centre-Ville (alternate)
- Arto Kekikian, Heritage Ottawa
- Kelly Haussler, Ottawa Tourism
- Patrick Robert-Meunier, MOBI-O (alternate)
- Diane Harper, Bike Ottawa
- David Jeanes, Transport Action Canada
- Glenn Crawford, The Village Legacy Project



DETAILED AGENDA AND PRESENTATION ITEMS

The third meeting of the Public Advisory Group (PAG) for the Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project focused on presenting the three preliminary design concepts and gathering feedback from members. The session began with a mock open house, allowing participants to review information panels, videos, and provide input at interactive stations. The meeting was facilitated by the National Capital Commission (NCC) and co-chaired by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and Ottawa Tourism. Technical experts from ARUP, Provencher_Roy, and ERA Architects provided detailed presentations on the design concepts. Discussion periods were held throughout to collect feedback on the concepts and their alignment with project objectives.

#	Member	Item
Part 1: Mock Open House		
	PSPC and NCC	Informal session for PAG members to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> review panels view design concept videos speak with subject matter experts
Part 2: Introduction		
	PSPC and NCC	Welcome and introductions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Land acknowledgement Health and safety instructions (bathrooms, emergency exists) Agenda Project team introductions
Part 3: Project Update		
	PSPC and NCC	General project update <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Project schedule reminder Indigenous engagement update Heritage Impact Analysis update Q&A
Part 4: Presentation of Design Concepts		
	ARUP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Concept "Echo" Concept "Rendez vous" Concept "Motion"
Part 5: Discussion		
	NCC	Gather feedback on each of the design concepts and their alignment with project objectives.
Part 6: Next Steps		



MEETING MINUTES

#	Member	Question/comment	Project Team Response
Project Updates			
1.	C. Royer	Is it possible to have information about the meeting further in advance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Ideally it would be two weeks before in the future.
2.	D. Harper	In terms of the environmental studies, can we get a bigger picture of what has been heard and learned so far?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. We can put that information together and send it.
3.	C. Royer	Would it be possible to inform the members of the Public Advisory Group about the progress of the Independent Review Panel of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The independent review committee examined the design options developed by the technical advisor and provided its advice to the integrated project team. At this stage, the Integrated Project Team believes that the Independent Review Panel has fulfilled its assigned mandate.
Presentation of Design Concepts			
4.	C. Royer	The material palette for the three concepts still to be determined?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The material palette for the three concepts is very limited right now. We are not at the stage of colours and finishes yet. We decided to render the context realistically but are not implying it is a white bridge.
5.	P. Deschamps	A question was asked about the widths of each of the section, but more particularly the walking path and the larger public space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is generous room and space for cyclists and for the public. The arches descend to a public space. For instance, in the Motion concept, the feature is that it has two public spaces.
6.	D. Jeanes	The first two designs (Echo and Rendezvous) seem unbalanced while Motion is quite different as the road deck and bicycle deck are directly over the piers. Why is there that difference between designs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The functional arrangements are different. In the last concept (Motion), the light rail and cyclists are within the structural arches carrying the deck and the pedestrians are on the upstream from of the river. For Echo and Rendezvous, we have arrangement of the light-rail transit platform outside the structural members on the downstream side. The pedestrians and cyclists are within the structure. This creates a different repetition between the structural members. In the design, you will have structural repetition of materials that is uneven between the arches because the structural demand will be slightly different.



7.	D. Jeanes	The structural loads are the same, but the dynamic loads will be different because cars and trucks are heavier than pedestrians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the structural forms of those two lanes are similar despite the load they are carrying being different, but there won't be asymmetry between the actual sides themselves.
8.	P. Robert-Meunier	<p>Will the final concept be able to integrate elements of the three concepts?</p> <p>How do we ensure that we are able to integrate a tram in the future on the structure?</p> <p>The idea of a fourth concept that we had discussed has not been included. Is it possible to take the non-structural elements of the current bridge and integrate them into the new bridge?</p> <p>Lastly, it would be important that we have greater widths along the pedestrian tracks because that will determine the level of comfortability for pedestrians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is nothing that prevents the final concept from containing elements of the other two options. The final concept can have refinements, including materials, and they can be tweaked in terms of elements. We have small-scale rail criteria in the plan for the future configuration of the tramway. We also have different charges, in terms of static charge and dynamic charge. Both are considered. There is a commemorative aspect that will be included. However, there are no elements from the existing body that can be recovered from a structural point of view. We have a study on the regulation of the materials of the existing bridge, which is in progress. The three bridges respect the minimum requirements to guarantee space for pedestrians, tourists, etc.
9.	C. Royer	Which concept is more amenable to a transformation to different modes, such as a tramway?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All three options are equally future proofed to accommodate real public transit and withstand the live loads and the dead loads of a light rail tram. It also operates on the alignment. All three bridges will accommodate that future option. A good example has been the success of Champlain Bridge, which was designed with a central road for common transportation, but it was designed to also accommodate future options, such as a train.
10.	P. Robert-Meunier	A follow-up question was asked about the need to design for cars if there is foresight to transform the bridge lane to a tramway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are focusing on future proofing for tomorrow. We would keep the road durable to keep the function if there is a change in modes.
11.	D. Harper	The space for cyclists is wide enough for one person. It would be nice if we could have wider space for bicycles to be side by side. From a cyclist's perspective, I see a lot of room for pedestrians but not cyclists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has been noted. It is important to note that, in all three options, there are opportunities for cyclists to get off bike and enter into the public spaces.
12.	K. Haussler	In all three, there is space for pedestrians. I don't see dedicated running lanes. I worry if that is not included, you are going to have a lot of runners going into the cycling lanes to pass pedestrians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Thank you.



13.	C. Royer	Is there a technology first to this bridge? Are we going to have an engineering achievement that can be seen as remarkable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right now, it is an advancement in technology just by being built today. • There is innovation at every stage of the project. The three concepts create a long-term commitment to the structure that is easily maintainable. There will be specific characteristics that are special. • There are many ways to innovate that are differentiators. The bridge will have a powerful urban role between two cities in the National Capital Region. This bridge will play a complex role as it won't be built just for cars or just for rail. • The innovation will also come from its resiliency – the bridge can last 150 years.
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Discussion

Question #1: What aspects of 'Echo' design concept did you find most appealing or resonated with you? What elements of 'Echo' design concept could be improved? How well do you think 'Echo' design concept meets your needs in terms of commuting, recreation, and integrating with the local area?

14.	D. Jeanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that the bridge is of a similar height profile to the existing bridge. It preserves the view of the Parliament Buildings from Jacques Cartier Park. It does evoke the concept of a cantilever bridge in that the two halves of the bridge balance visually on their piers as the old bridge did. • It is a girder structure while the other two are cable suspended from arches. They don't evoke the historical bridge the same way.
15.	P. Robert-Meunier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I appreciate that we have made an effort to try to have a concept that is closer to what we currently have. • This concept gives the most space to pedestrians, but it is important we consider even greater pedestrian route widths. • It is long and continuous where people can stop and observe the river and the landscape. • If we can bring elements of the other concepts into this one, it would be interesting. • We are building this bridge for 150 years, so it is important to think about it in 150 years. If we want to have more people bicycle, we need a sufficient width capacity to respond to current and future needs. • On both sides of the bridge, we need to increase the cycling lane capacity. • In this concept, we still make certain compromises on active transportation in relation to the road and for cars. • I think we should be generous on all the rest of the modes rather than the cars. • We also must ensure that we think of the tram line and it is built right.
16.	K. Haussler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the three, this is the one I like the most. It has a prominence without being too imposing. • I like this bridge for the canoe link. It has a good storytelling element – the canoe would have been the original way across the river. • From tourism perspective, the animation of the bridge is good, and the lighting is good. • There is an opportunity for a bridge climb. It has some barriers from an events standpoint, and I encourage that we open it up to a bit more if we can. • It is okay to have some pillars in the way as it is an off-site event piece.



17.	J. Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the concept that is the most resembling of the existing bridge. It is more about the structure. The cables may seem nicer and lighter, but it is the mass and volume of the bridge that gives its feel. • One thing I do like about this one versus Motion is that it has some overhead elements, which the original bridge also has. It gives you a sense of the scale for the surrounding area. • The important thing for us as a community on the Ottawa side is that the road doesn't grow or increase in size. We want it to be exactly the same road. We don't want to see any decent car traffic through our neighbourhood. • This bridge does connect to Sussex, but it mostly connects to Murray and Saint Patrick Street. We have been enjoying a lack of rush hour traffic since the bridge has closed and we would like to see that continue or at least show some respect for the neighbourhood. • I would also second more cyclist space.
18.	G. Crawford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should incorporate banners and street furniture like the existing bridge. • The Project Team confirmed that all options would incorporate urban furniture, banners, etc. as this is part of Confederation Boulevard.
<p>Question #2: What aspects of 'Rendezvous' design concept did you find most appealing or resonated with you? What elements of 'Rendezvous' design concept could be improved? How well do you think 'Rendezvous' design concept meets your needs in terms of commuting, recreation, and integrating with the local area?</p>		
19.	C. Royer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The point of Rendezvous is that it would be a great gathering place visually. Was it determined structurally or for the most optimal views of the Parliament and other?
20.	P. Robert-Meunier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It brings more width in some places with wider spaces for pedestrians. • It functions as both a transportation link and a place to observe. • It seems like there are shadow zones because it is covered by the arches. • The separation of cyclists and pedestrians is very important – we want to avoid cohabitation issues between uses. So that design aspect is good.
21.	C. Royer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could we envision bi-directional lanes or two lanes in one direction with this bridge? • The Project Team noted that this is an operational question with traffic flow.
22.	K. Haussler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is my least favourite of the three options presented because it is quite prominent and dominating. It doesn't fit in with the landscape well. • While there is space for the events, if they are only used twice a year, it isn't the best use of space.
23.	J. Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is my least favourite. It doesn't have a reason to exist on its own. • I am curious of the plan to keep the skateboarders off the arches.
<p>Question #3: What aspects of 'Motion' design concept did you find most appealing or resonated with you? What elements of 'Motion' design concept could be improved? How well do you think 'Motion' design concept meets your needs in terms of commuting, recreation, and integrating with the local area?</p>		
24.	C. Royer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I Googled 'Motion' and have concerns about the meaning in French.



25.	G. Crawford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am curious about the barrier between the cyclists and the cars. It appears it is not a solid barrier between the cars, just based on the animations. The Project Team noted that in all options there is a jersey barrier for now between the cyclists and vehicles. They envision the bridge evolving over the years and being used as a major civic space when closed to vehicular traffic. When closed, there are moments where pedestrians can go from one side to the other. The bridge exists both in the downstream and the upstream. The Project Team also noted that urban furniture design is not complete. There is a whole thought process that needs to be applied to all three bridges around bollards, lane separations, vehicular versus cyclist safety versus how cyclists can stop their bike and get off and enjoy the view. All three options have the scenario of not having to have pedestrians climb through the jersey barriers.
26.	J. Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like this one quite a bit and mostly because of the public spaces. The structures move towards the outside, so it is more like the original bridge. I like the bump outs for the pedestrians and the tiered spaces. In earlier discussions, there was some discussion about the possibility of animating the water. I wonder if there has been any exploration about the possibility of placing a stairwell where you can move down and be at the pier. It looks like there is a lot of open space underneath where that could be another lookout point. The Project Team noted that, for all three options, the idea of connecting directly to the water has been disregarded for universal accessibility and access for all. However, an interesting element of all three options is that all three bridges will provide the opportunity to peel off the bridge as a pedestrian or cyclist and enter Jacques Cartier Park without getting off the bridge. It is important to connect to the water in a meaningful way on the Gatineau side
27.	P. Deschamps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cyclists are closest to cars in this scenario and further away from the water. The design is beautiful, however, activation on both sides of the bridge for cyclists and pedestrians is missing. You need to be able to stop and get off your bicycle.
28.	P. Robert-Meunier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being able to stop and get off your bicycle is important. For instance, when you need water of have children who need attention. On the William Commanda Bridge, for example, it is tight and not very wide. A bridge that leads to water is important and improvements to water access are important. In the Spring, you can connect to the network of pathways, but we need to have regard to active transportation for four seasons.
29.	D. Jeanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a movement point of view, the thing I like about Motion is that you can get to the gathering points, enjoy them, and go back if you don't want to go all the way across the bridge. This also applies to cyclists. This is a very exposed walkway. Whenever there is wind or bad weather, it can be uncomfortable. While Echo is a clear favourite, Motion has an advantage over Rendezvous.
<p>Question #4: When considering the use of the proposed gathering spaces for each concept, what creative ideas do you have for everyday use? What creative ideas do you have for smaller scale events and larger scale programming?</p>		
30.	J. Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyday uses like a food truck with coffee. Similar to what has been done with the NCC Bistros.
31.	D. Harper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bathrooms.
32.	K. Haussler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coffee kiosks, a bridge climb, and light shows. Put programming on the bridge beyond just twice a year. We need unique things that can sell Ottawa. Changing the colours of lighting on the bridge.



33.	G. Crawford	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Various festivals and small-scale events.• Pride with the lighting would be great.
34.	P. Deschamps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Music festivals, lights, and more closures for activities.
35.	D. Jeanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More closures to cars. We have put up with a lot of road closures on that bridge without the city coming to a standstill.• Landmarks that are visible – panels for programming and visitors and interpretation for visitors.
36.	P. Robert-Meunier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessible for everyday events.
37.	D. Harper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The draw for the fun zones with the NCC this summer was amazing and popular and simple. Programming you can create and change up pretty regularly is important.

Next Steps

38.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be two open houses for the public on October 2 and 3 as well as an online survey from October 1 to 24.• We will form work groups with experts from the NCC, PSPC, technical advisor and evaluate the three concepts.• Selection of 1 concept for NCC approval at Board of Directors (Fall 2024-Winter 2025).
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