



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE



Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project

Public Participation Round 3 Report

June 2025

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Context	2
Overview of Public Participation.....	2
What We Heard.....	2
Design and Aesthetic Appeal	3
Traffic Management.....	4
Active Transportation	5
Heritage and Commemoration.....	7
Safety and Accessibility	8
Seasonal Durability and Climate Resilience	9
Other	10
Next Steps	12
Appendix 1: Analysis Methodology.....	14
Comment Processing	14
Public Advisory Group Feedback.....	14
Thematic Categorization.....	14
Sentiment Analysis.....	15
Keyword Extraction and Analysis.....	15
AI-Assisted Analysis Disclosure	15

Context

In January 2025, the National Capital Commission's (NCC) Board of Directors granted an initial federal land use and design approval for the preferred concept for the replacement of the Alexandra Bridge. The preferred concept was selected following a rigorous evaluation process that considered public and stakeholder input, technical analysis, and engagement with Indigenous communities and advisory groups. Public input was gathered in October 2024 on the three proposed design concepts for the replacement of the Alexandra Bridge.

Using the feedback received from the public, stakeholders, Indigenous communities and advisory groups, the integrated project team, which includes Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), its technical advisor, and the NCC, continued to refine the preferred design concept.

Overview of Public Participation

This report summarizes the results of engagement activities with members of the public carried out under the third round of public participation activities for the project:

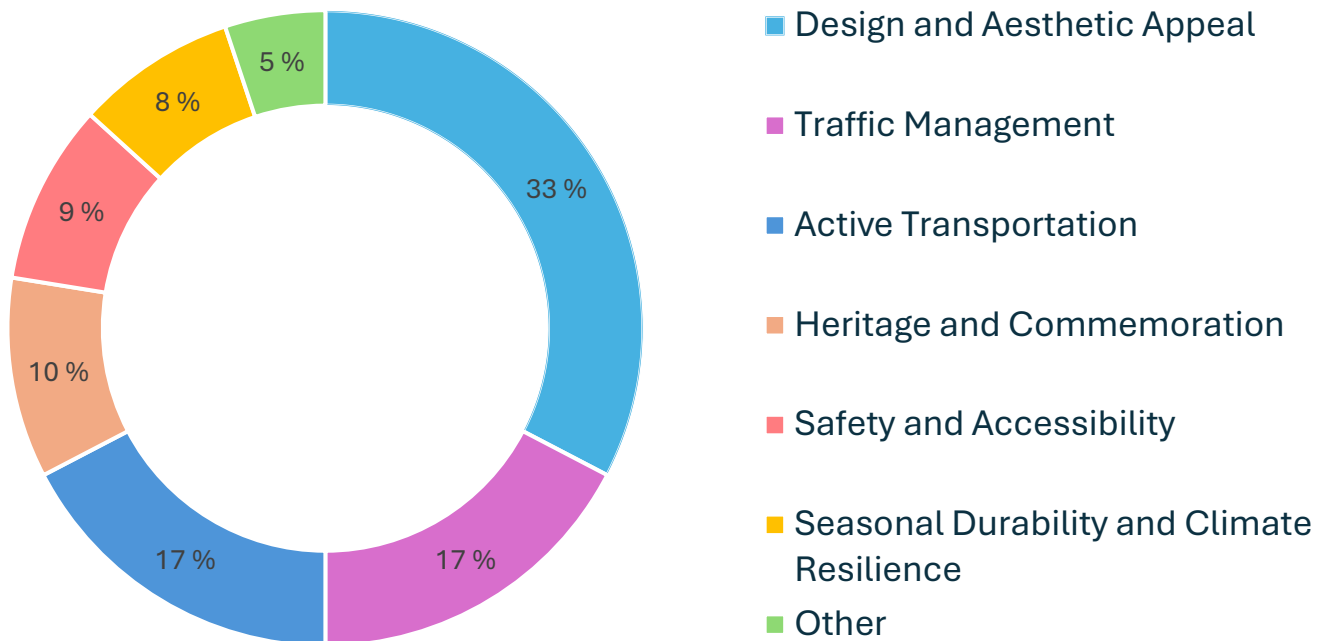
- **Comment box on the NCC's website:** Open from June 4 to June 18, 2025. Seventy-five comments were received.
- **Public advisory group (PAG) meeting:** A meeting was held with members of the PAG on June 12.

Round 3 of public consultation activities presented refinements to the preferred design concept. These included updated details related to furnishings and seasonal comfort, safety features and the separation of transportation modes, universal accessibility, and shoreline connectivity. To support public input, the integrated project team shared advanced renderings and a three-dimensional video visualization illustrating the user experience on the bridge. Members of the public were invited to share their thoughts and perspectives on the refined design.

What We Heard

The comments received were analyzed and grouped into the following key themes to better understand public priorities and inform the ongoing design process. More information on the methodology used to analyze the comments can be found in Appendix 1.

Breakdown of Public Comments by Theme



Design and Aesthetic Appeal

This theme captures public perspectives on the visual identity, architectural form, and overall aesthetic experience of the bridge.

A total of 32 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 33% of all comments received. Of these, 20 were positive, 6 were neutral, and 6 were negative.

Public comments covered a range of views on the bridge's visual and architectural qualities. Many praised its modern form and features like arches, lookouts and seating. Lighting was a common topic, with suggestions for decorative or programmable options to enhance nighttime visibility. Some proposed using natural materials or adding greenery to better integrate the design with the surrounding landscape. Others called for a more distinctive or iconic design, noting the current concept felt too plain. Overall, the feedback emphasized the need for a visually compelling structure that balances modern design with cultural and historical context.

Key Insights

- **Public enthusiasm:** Many are excited and proud of the design direction and view it as a positive step for Ottawa’s urban landscape.
- **Desire for iconic identity:** Calls for lighting, colour and ornamentation to make the bridge a visual landmark.
- **Inclusivity and functionality:** Strong support for multi-use design and public space integration.
- **Balance of modern and historic:** Some feel the design lacks character or connection to Ottawa’s architectural heritage.
- **Functionality and beauty:** Praise for the bridge’s inclusive design and aesthetic integration with its surroundings.

Quotes

“Wonderful design, especially with the inclusion of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. The lookouts and benches are a great feature for us residents and visitors from out of town.”

“It is not bad, but this is an opportunity to have a really unique bridge in a very visible spot of our skyline and views of Parliament. If there is a chance to make the colour more exciting than white it would be great (for example, the same copper colour of Parliament, Alexandra Bridge, etc.). White is also okay, just kind of meh.”

Traffic Management

This theme addresses how the bridge accommodates vehicular traffic, public transit and future transportation needs.

A total of 17 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 17% of all comments received. Of these, 7 were neutral and 10 were negative.

Public comments addressed a range of considerations related to how the bridge will support vehicle use and broader transportation needs. Several respondents raised questions about the proposed two-lane configuration, with some suggesting additional or reversible lanes to improve traffic flow and accommodate future growth. Others

emphasized the importance of integrating public transit infrastructure, such as light rail, into the design from the outset. A few comments also highlighted the need to balance active transportation priorities with practical considerations for year-round vehicle commuter use, particularly in Ottawa’s climate. Overall, the feedback reflected a desire for a flexible and forward-looking transportation strategy.

Key Insights

- **Demands for additional vehicle lanes**, especially reversible or transit-priority lanes.
- **Desire for future proofing** through light-rail integration.
- **Concerns about seasonal usability** of active transportation infrastructure.

Quotes

“This is the perfect time to include the option of a light-rail connection between Ottawa and Gatineau. Space and structural upgrades will have a cost, but an integrated NCR is important.”

“It’s a very good concept, but it doesn’t perfectly meet regional needs. I think that any replacement should at least consider the current traffic issues between the two cities—a problem that will not be solved any time soon, given the growing population and government buildings on both sides of the river.”

“In my opinion, an investment of this magnitude would be more useful if an additional car lane was added, inspired by the Champlain Bridge design: three traffic lanes, including a reversible one for traffic at rush hour (to and from work).”

Active Transportation

This theme focuses on infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized users.

A total of 17 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 17% of all comments received. Of these, 5 were positive and 12 were neutral.

Public comments focused on the design and functionality of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. Respondents appreciated the clear separation between modes and the inclusion of lookouts and seating areas. Several comments emphasized the need for better access between cycling and pedestrian paths, including breaks in barriers to allow cyclists to pause and enjoy the view. Others highlighted concerns about connectivity to existing pathways, access points, and the usability of the bridge for a range of users, including those on scooters or mobility devices. Suggestions also included improving signage and ensuring the bridge supports year-round use and recreational enjoyment.

Key Insights

- **Separation of modes:** Strong support for clear, safe separation between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- **Cyclist comfort and flexibility:** Desire for freedom to stop, enjoy views and interact with pedestrian spaces.
- **Connectivity:** Need for seamless links to existing bike and walking paths.
- **Inclusive design:** Consideration for diverse users, including families, tourists and people using mobility devices.
- **Construction concerns:** Requests for interim pedestrian solutions during bridge replacement.

Quotes

“Really love the fully separated cycle path!”

“Please ensure cyclists have space to stop, take a break, lock up their bike to enjoy the pedestrian space, etc.”

“This looks great. I hope there are some plans to connect to separated (or shared) bike paths that go along the river or are off the roadways along both directions.”

Heritage and Commemoration

This theme reflects public interest in preserving the historical and cultural significance of the existing Alexandra Bridge and integrating commemorative elements into the new design.

A total of 10 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 10% of all comments received. Of these, 4 were neutral and 6 were negative.

Public comments reflected strong interest in preserving the cultural and historical significance of the Alexandra Bridge. Respondents suggested incorporating commemorative elements into the new design, such as interpretive signage, reuse of original materials, or visual references to the original bridge's form and colour. Some comments also highlighted the importance of Indigenous representation and cultural storytelling. A few respondents expressed disappointment over the decision to replace the existing structure, emphasizing its historic value and calling for its preservation or rehabilitation. Overall, the feedback underscored a desire to ensure the new bridge honours the legacy of the original and reflects the region's diverse heritage.

Key Insights

- **Heritage preservation:** Strong desire to retain or honour the existing Alexandra Bridge.
- **Design criticism:** Concerns that the new design lacks historical continuity or symbolic respect.
- **Cultural integration:** Calls for Indigenous representation and public cultural spaces.
- **Material and visual homage:** Suggestions to reuse materials and match visual elements from the old bridge.

Quotes

"I wish you can have a number of commemorative panel signs spread over the proposed lookout spaces, made from the existing Alex bridge steel."

"The bridge is supposed to try and maintain some level of connection with [the] existing Alexandra Bridge. It would be nice if the new bridge can either be painted or remain unpainted to more closely match the colouring of the current Alexandra Bridge."

“There could be cultural spaces under the bridge at both ends to hold events. It would be interesting to close the bridge occasionally and remove the division between modes of transportation so that we could have a larger surface to hold events (concerts, dance, theatre, food events, etc.)”

Safety and Accessibility

This theme encompasses physical safety, universal access, and inclusive design for all users, including those with mobility challenges.

A total of 9 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 9% of all comments received. Of these, 8 were neutral and 1 was negative.

Public comments emphasized the importance of creating a secure, inclusive and user-friendly environment for all bridge users. Respondents suggested a range of safety enhancements, including higher barriers between cyclists and vehicles, sound-dampening near seating areas, and improved lighting and security patrols. Some comments also raised the potential for preventative infrastructure to discourage unsafe behaviour.

Accessibility was a recurring theme, with calls for better access for individuals with mobility challenges, including drop-off zones and smoother transitions between pedestrian and cycling paths. Additional suggestions included the provision of public Wi-Fi, garbage facilities, and thoughtful material choices to ensure safety and comfort. Overall, the feedback underscored the need for a bridge design that prioritizes both physical safety and equitable access for all users.

Key Insights

- **Mental health and safety:** Advocacy for suicide prevention infrastructure.
- **Inclusive design:** Emphasis on accessibility for people with disabilities and diverse needs.
- **Public comfort and cleanliness:** Requests for noise control and waste management.
- **Perceived safety:** Concerns about safety for pedestrians and suggestions for measures that would improve user experience along the walkway.
- **Connectivity and convenience:** Suggestions for Wi-Fi and better access points.

Quotes

“Is there any way to include sound dampening near your seating area to reduce traffic noise?”

“The lookouts and seating areas are also good additions. I hope that there will be garbage bins and adequate garbage removal services at these lookout points as I expect that people will be bringing all sorts of food and drink to these locations.”

Seasonal Durability and Climate Resilience

This theme relates to the bridge’s performance and usability in Ottawa’s harsh winter climate, including snow management, material durability and comfort features.

A total of 8 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 8% of all comments received. Of these, 2 were positive and 6 were neutral.

Public comments focused on the bridge’s ability to withstand Ottawa’s harsh winters and evolving climate conditions. Several respondents questioned the long-term performance of materials like wood, particularly in relation to snow, ice and road salt exposure.

Suggestions included exploring alternative materials for wind barriers and panels to reduce maintenance costs and improve longevity. Others proposed climate-adaptive features such as heated decking to minimize salt use and support year-round accessibility. Snow removal logistics, protection from falling ice, and the provision of shaded areas for summer comfort were also raised. Overall, the comments emphasized the importance of designing a structure that is both resilient to seasonal extremes and cost-effective to maintain over time.

Key Insights

- **Material suitability:** Concerns about wood durability and long-term maintenance.
- **Winter operations:** Interest in heated surfaces, snow storage and efficient snow removal.
- **User comfort:** Requests for shade to enhance usability in summer.
- **Structural safety:** Questions about ice hazards and design efficiency.

- **Cost awareness:** Considerations around operational and maintenance costs over time.

Quotes

“I do wonder if the wood wind barriers are the right choice of material from a longevity viewpoint. A different alternative may hold up to our climate better with lower long-term maintenance costs.”

“Glad to see active use is given place for snow storage, allowing for all-seasons use.”

“It would be great to provide some shade (be it artificial or tree cover) for the observation areas.”

“Has any consideration been given to a heated deck such as the Pìdàban passage? It could offset the energy required of machinery snow removal and avoid the deleterious effects of salt on the environment.”

Other

This theme captured a variety of comments that did not fit neatly into the other themes but offered important perspectives.

A total of 5 comments were categorized under this theme, representing 5% of all comments received. Of these, 3 were neutral and 2 were negative.

Some respondents raised questions about the environmental impact of the bridge’s construction, particularly the number of in-river supports. Others offered creative or unconventional ideas, such as incorporating tourism-oriented features. A few comments reflected broader concerns about the consultation process itself, including calls for more inclusive language and recognition of public contributions, especially from underrepresented communities. While diverse in nature, these comments reflect a shared interest in transparency, inclusivity, and thoughtful integration of the bridge into its social and environmental context.

Key Insights

- **Innovation and tourism:** Interest in bold, attention-grabbing design ideas.

- **Equity and recognition:** Concerns about fair treatment and acknowledgment of contributors, especially from marginalized groups.
- **Inclusive language:** Emphasis on respectful and modern terminology.
- **Design-ecology balance and transparency:** Desire for environmentally sensitive design choices, paired with calls for clearer communication about ecological impacts.

Quotes

“The design looks beautiful. Can you please address the impact to the river? How many places will it be anchored in the river? If it’s three, can this be reduced to two to minimize impact?”

“I still think that a rollercoaster across this bridge would have been fun, as a tourism feature that attracts the attention of tourists, like London’s Eye Ferris wheel.”

Overall Thoughts

- The third round of public participation for the Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project revealed a wide spectrum of perspectives, reflecting both enthusiasm and thoughtful critique.
- Across all themes, participants demonstrated a strong interest in shaping a bridge that is not only functional and resilient, but also inclusive, culturally meaningful and visually compelling.
- Recurring priorities included the desire for a design that balances modern aesthetics with historical and regional identity, supports active and accessible transportation, and performs reliably across seasons.
- Comments also highlighted the importance of safety, environmental responsibility, and transparent communication throughout the project’s development.
- While some respondents expressed concerns or opposition, the overall tone of the feedback was constructive, offering practical suggestions and creative ideas that can help inform the next phase of design refinement.

Next Steps

Many of the suggestions and concerns raised have been incorporated into the current design or are under consideration for the final design.

Accessibility has been prioritized throughout the design process. The pedestrian zone includes a clear, wide passage to accommodate users with diverse needs, including those with mobility devices and visual impairments. Cyclists will benefit from a dedicated safe and separated cycling path that allows for side-by-side riding, while allowing them to dismount and access the two lookout points through a more permeable barrier at these key locations. The design also includes accessible benches and tactile walking surface indicators to enhance comfort and safety for all users. Signage and wayfinding will be refined in the final design.

The project also emphasizes environmental responsibility. The selection of the Gatineau Landing location was made with the aim of minimizing the impact on existing shoreline habitats. Restoration efforts will focus on enhancing natural habitats by removing invasive species and introducing native, flood-tolerant plants.

There is a commitment to exploring material reuse, as demonstrated by the proposed reuse of timber and stone from the existing bridge. Where practical, natural materials are being incorporated. This aligns with sustainability goals and the Confederation Boulevard Planning and Design Guidelines.

One of the key features of the proposed design is lighting that aims to showcase views of the bridge while also improving visibility along the bridge. This will allow the bridge to enhance the ambiance during celebrations and contribute to a dynamic atmosphere at the lookouts, while also supporting night-sky environmental objectives. Additionally, the design includes bird-safe, glazed parapets at the two lookouts, providing unimpeded views for all users.

The process of developing a framework for planning and designing the interpretive and commemorative elements on the new bridge and at the landings is also under way, so that the story of how Indigenous Peoples, who have been stewards of this land since time immemorial, and Canada's more recent history, including the heritage of the old bridge, can be told in a coordinated manner.

As the project advances, the design will continue to be refined based on public feedback and technical assessments. We appreciate the continued engagement. The procurement process for the design-builder is currently ongoing. The selected design-builder is expected to be onboarded in 2026.

The Project team would like to acknowledge everyone who participated in the public consultation process on the preferred concept. We appreciate the continued engagement.

Appendix 1: Analysis Methodology

The analysis focused on qualitative comments submitted through an open comment box made available during the most recent project update. A total of **75 submissions** were received and analyzed. While over 1,400 individuals visited the page and more than 2,300 interactions occurred on the NCC's official social media posts promoting the update and inviting public participation, these figures are provided for context only and were not included in the comment analysis.

Comment Processing

Each submission was reviewed in detail. When a single submission included multiple distinct points that addressed different aspects of the project, those points were separated into individual entries for analysis. This approach ensured that every unique idea or concern was captured, categorized, and assessed accurately.

Public Advisory Group Feedback

Feedback from the Public Advisory Group (PAG) meeting was reviewed and analyzed using the same thematic and sentiment approach as public submissions. Relevant comments were identified through the meeting minutes. While these insights informed the overall analysis, they were not included in the total count of public comment box submissions, which reflects public feedback only.

Thematic Categorization

Each distinct comment was reviewed and assigned to a primary theme based on its content. These themes reflect the major areas of public interest and concern, and include:

- Design and Aesthetic Appeal
- Traffic Management
- Heritage and Commemoration
- Active Transportation
- Safety and Accessibility
- Seasonal Durability and Climate Resilience
- Other

This thematic structure enabled targeted analysis within each domain of the project and helped identify recurring patterns and priorities.

Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment was assessed using a colour-coded system embedded in the original dataset:

- Green: Positive sentiment (e.g. support, appreciation, enthusiasm)
- Yellow: Neutral sentiment (e.g. suggestions, questions, observations)
- Red: Negative sentiment (e.g. criticism, concern, dissatisfaction)

This approach allowed for a high-level understanding of public attitudes and helped identify areas of approval and concern.

Keyword Extraction and Analysis

Key terms and phrases were extracted from each comment to identify frequently mentioned topics and specific concerns. These keywords were counted to determine frequency and subsequently grouped by theme to understand contextual relevance.

AI-Assisted Analysis Disclosure

Portions of the comment analysis, including keyword extraction and sentiment classification, were supported by AI tools. In accordance with Government of Canada guidelines, all outputs were reviewed and validated by project staff.