NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project – Public Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023
Ottawa EST
Room 323, National Capital Commission, 40 Elgin Street, Ottawa

PARTICIPANTS

Project Team:

- Jordan Lane-Beveridge (JL), Project Director, Senior Project Manager, PSPC (Co-chair)
- Ariane Larocque (AL), Public Affairs Advisor, NCC (Moderator)
- Matt Carter (MC), Lead Bridge Engineer, ARUP (Speaker)
- Matthieu Galland (MG), Associate Director, Infrastructure Design, ARUP (Speaker)
- Michael Hanifi (MH), Urban Planner, Dillon (Minutes)
- Émilie Girard-Ruel (EG), Director, Public and Corporate Affairs, NCC (Observer)
- Lucie Bureau (LB), Executive Lead, Bridge Planning, NCC (Observer) (online)
- Keri-Lee Doré (KLD), Senior Director, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Alanna Jorgensen (AJ), Senior Director, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Thierry Tremblay (TT), Senior Bridge Engineer, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Mark Van Buren (MVB), Special Advisor, PSPC (Observer) (online)
- Cédric Williams (CW), Manager, Public Consultations, NCC (Observer) (online)

In Person and Online Attendees:

- Claude Royer (CR), Association des résidants de l'île-de-Hull
- Josiah Firth (JoF), Lowertown Community Association
- Zach Dayler (ZD), Byward Market District Authority
- Glenn Crawford (GC), The Village Legacy Project
- Jacques Drouin (JD), Marina de Hull
- Philippe Deschamps (PD), Vision Centre-Ville (alternate)
- Diane Harper (DH), Bike Ottawa (alternate)
- Florence Lehmann (FL), Bike Ottawa (observer)
- Julie Kinnear (JK), Tourisme Outaouais (online)
- Olivier Viger-Beaudin (OV), MOBI-O (online)
- David Jeanes (DJ), Transport Action Canada (online)
- Robert Taillefer (RT), Ekeau (online)
- Kelly Haussler (KH), Ottawa Tourism (did not attend)
- Jerry Fiori (JeF), Ottawa Disability Coalition (did not attend)
- Katherine Spencer-Ross (KSR), Heritage Ottawa (did not attend)

DETAILED AGENDA AND PRESENTATION ITEMS

In the inaugural Public Advisory Group (PAG) meeting for the Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project, the PAG members were introduced to the project by Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC), as well as the design framework and options, and design objectives by the technical experts at ARUP. An overview of the role of the PAG, the engagement plan and outreach methods were also presented. The meeting was facilitated by the National Capital Commission (NCC) and co-chaired by PSPC. Discussion periods were held throughout the presentation to generate and gather feedback on the concept design objectives, as noted in the agenda items below. The NCC sent follow-up questions after the fact as the meeting ran over time.

#	Member	Item
	JL	Welcome
Part 1: PAG overview and Project Update Presentations		
1	AL	Housekeeping and Introductions
2	AL	Introduction to the PAG • Overview • Responsibilities • Membership • Guidelines • Calendar of meetings • Q&A

3	JL/MG	Introduction to the project and design framework
		• Overview of the project
		• Introduction to the design framework:
		  ○ Project timeline
		  ○ Concept development phases
		  ○ Key considerations
		  ○ Heritage Impact Analysis
		  ○ Environmental Studies
		  ○ Indigenous reflections and design integration
		• Q&A

Part 2: Engagement, Options Analysis and Next Steps		
1	AL	Engagement program • Indigenous engagement • Public and stakeholder engagement • Engagement milestones for public and stakeholder engagement
2	MC/MG	Introduction to options analysis • Planning and design principles • Design strategies • Preliminary alignment options

#	Member	Item
		• Concept design objectives
3	AL	Next steps • Discussion questions sent by email • Web update and project newsletter • Final meeting minutes • Upcoming PAG meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Part 1: PAG Overview and Identifications of a Co-Chair			
#	**Member**	**Comment**	**Response**
1	AL	If there is any interest in being co-chair of the PAG from the members, please let Ariane know by email.	None
2	CR	A question was asked about if the project team has consulted with the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau.	AL and EG noted that there is ongoing engagement with both cities. The project team is involved in separate and more technical discussions with both municipalities.
Part 2: Project Update			
#	**Member**	**Comment**	**Response**
1	CR	A question was asked about the approval process, engagement process, and the involvement of Public Works in that process.	JL noted that this is the role of the NCC Federal Approvals team (FLUDTA). The NCC is responsible for the overall look, feel, and design of the bridge. PSPC/Public Works are responsible for the procurement and implementation (construction). PSPC/Public Works work as an integrated project team with the NCC. EG noted that this project requires federal approval from the NCC, under the *National Capital Act*. This federal approval role is coordinated through a specific team at the NCC, separate from the integrated project team. Their role is to review the project submission and recommend its approval to the NCC Board of Directors. The approval process requires submissions to the Board as the

			project is developed, and include land use, concept, detailed design and real estate transactions. There is also another layer of independent experts who will provide advice to the integrated project team (PSPC and NCC), such as the Independent Review Panel managed by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada The NCC's federal approvals team will also consult its Advisory Committee on Planning, Design, and Realty (ACPDR). EG also noted that there are aspects that have public and Indigenous consultation throughout the project, as noted in the presentation slides. NCC to send a link to the FLUDTA process: https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/business/federal-land-use-design-and-transaction-approvals.
2	FL	A question was asked about how this project fits within the context of the Capital Core Area Plan (i.e., how does it fit in with Confederation Boulevard and interconnectedness of public transit?). How are the two pieces working together?	EG said that the Approval Process will ensure that the Bridge replacement project complies to the Renewed Core Area Plan, including the Confederation Boulevard guidelines.
3	CR	A question was asked about the process for contract selection, materials, and costs.	JL said bid packages to determine the current market cost estimates for the bridge will be prepared. ARUP is working to determine actual costs. Consultation with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat will also be conducted.
4	CR	A follow-up question was asked about how much this project is going to cost.	EG said information that can be shared (and not privy to the competitive process) will be shared with the public when available. JL said the costs won't be a surprise when shared. Privy Council, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, etc. will be updated at every step.

5	OVB	A question was asked about consultation with OC Transpo and STO. Have they been consulted as part of this?	JL said that while transit agencies do not currently use the bridge, they will be consulted, so we can ensure that the bridge will be designed to address future transit needs, including a tram.
Part 3: Options Analysis / Design Strategies			
#	**Member**	**Comment**	**Response**
1	CR	A question was asked about the 10-metre-deep section of logs previously left from the lumber industry on the Gatineau side of the Ottawa River. It likely has contaminants. If, as part of this work, it is collected, the area will be disturbed. What will be done to remediate it?	JL said discussions have started regarding what can be done. It is a talking point to study further. MC said the intent is for the design to be restorative to the environment, as restorative design is a key component of the sustainability goals of this project.
2	ZD	A question was asked about coordination of construction projects with the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau. It was noted that the traffic impacts from closing the bridge will impact small businesses and residents in Lowertown and the ByWard Market. However, mitigation measures can be implemented when construction plans are integrated with other works or better known in advance. It was also noted that 2027 is the ByWard Market's 200th anniversary. There is concern that the customer base from Gatineau could be lost during this important time, if the bridge is closed in 2027.	JL said the consultants at Parsons have an overlay of all the projects the City of Ottawa and Gatineau, provinces, NCC and Public Works have on the go in the area from a transportation perspective. This tool will be utilized to ensure appropriate timing of closures. He also noted that they do not anticipate deconstruction of the bridge until 2028. JL also noted that this is why we have stakeholder engagement. To get this feedback. A reason to replace rather than rehabilitate is because unplanned closures hurt the businesses there.

		It was also noted that there is another key project in the City of Ottawa for the Rideau-Sussex intersection and if these two projects happen at the same time, the ByWard Market will be very inaccessible.	
3	DH	A question was asked about how long the existing bridge will stay up to provide access.	JL said an ongoing topic of conversation is: How long can we keep the old bridge up while we build the new bridge? The priority is the safety of people, but if we can't keep access open safely, we won't. EG said that, through our ongoing discussions with municipal and transit partners, we are ensuring that decisions about interprovincial mobility for all modes consider very short-term closures as well as long-term solutions to improve mobility for all users.
Part 4: Engagement			
#	**Member**	**Comment**	**Response**
1	None	No questions were asked on engagement during this portion of the meeting.	None
Part 5: Options Analysis / Preliminary Alignments and Concept Design Objectives			
#	**Member**	**Comment**	**Response**
1	PD	A question was asked to confirm there would be no visible structure above the roadway along the Gatineau land side.	MC said the structure would mainly be over the navigation channel.
2	JoF	A question was asked whether the idea is to connect to the Ottawa River Pathway, on both sides of the bridge, looking downstream from Sussex to the canal. Would it be possible to move the pier on the Ottawa side?	MC said they will make sure the bridge design is integrated with the Rideau River and neighbouring pathways, which would include a review of the supports (pillars) in the water.
3	CR	A question was asked about what road standards are being used for the bridge.	MC said the standards for the bridge are for roadway or future tram/light-rail transit.

4	CR	A follow-up question was asked about how the bridge standards are consistent with road access to the market?	MC said the alignment/curvature of the bridge has to respect a future tram/light rail, so the bridge has to be designed relatively high above the water. There are certain safety standards, such as barriers, that are necessary to protect cars from falling off the bridge. Those standards will be respected and implemented. Further, the intent is to create a boulevard and low speed road. There are things that can be done to calm traffic and create slow road speeds to respect safety standards. It is essentially a street-type road to connect two neighbourhoods.
5	CF	A question was asked about load standard requirements and if they will be the same for the roadway standards.	MC said they will. The primary design standard will be the *Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code*. However, just because the highway design code is being used, does not mean we are designing the bridge to look and feel like a highway.
6	JoF	A question was asked if you were not to consider vehicles on the bridge, but a tram and active use bridge instead, would it have to meet the same standards?	MC said if it is a tram, it would be the same. The design mandate for this project, based on the planning and design principles, is to design to street standards. If we are designing a street that is spanning over water, there is a bridge design code that has the word “highway” in it. But we use the *Highway Bridge Design Code* to also design pedestrian bridges.
7	JoF	A question was asked about if, for the alignment and access on and off the bridge, traffic modes can be put in different directions (i.e., pedestrians off with pedestrians, cars off with cars, etc.).	MC said there are buffer and separation requirements for different modes of travel, for example, the boardwalk structure has separation requirements. They also need to consider the availability of space and capacity at the bridge entrances. For example, there are not many options on Ottawa side as the roadway and

			boardwalk narrow at the bridge entrance. However, on the Gatineau side there is more flexibility and improving the connectivity to the Voyageur Pathway will be considered.
8	JD	A question was asked about the impacts of the wharf in the concave width option.	MC said that with the concave option, the bridge would be above the wharf. However, there are different ways that this can be achieved. The project team will consider impacts to Jacques-Cartier Park.
9	ZS	A question was asked about the lifecycle of a modern bridge.	MC said it is typically 125 years. However, as part of this project, the intent is to increase the lifespan to 150 years using more durable materials, as per the Seventh Generation Principle.
10	FL	A question was asked about the impacts on the durability of the bridge with private vehicles using it and the durability the bridge surface (the road) from a maintenance perspective.	MC said he the bridge will be designed with a drainage system to capture de-icing salts and will feature a durable deck so that the roadway can last as long as the rest of the bridge. This way, no matter what is on the bridge, it has the same foundation and supporting parts. MG said that the materials used will be designed to resist material fatigue. MC said that the bridge would still need to be maintained regularly to last 150 years. MC said there are also things we don't know about. If in the future, cars and trucks are no longer used as frequently, and private vehicular access is removed from the bridge, it may last longer.
11	GC	A question was asked about climate change issues with rising rivers.	EG said that the NCC is considering climate impacts on all of their assets, including the potential impact on flooding.
12	ZD	A question was asked about if Environmental Impact Assessments now include climate change and	JL said yes, in addition to a specific study PSPC completes as well.

		adaptation in the reviews and if these are factored in.	
13	ZD	A question was asked about if there is a similar bridge replacement project that we should look at for inspiration.	JL said, in terms of a replacement project, no. In terms of a new project, the project recently completed in Kingston, Ontario is a good example. It used an integrated project delivery model. It was a collaborative model to find creative and flexible solutions. The Samuel De Champlain Bridge in Montreal is another good example, as success can be defined by sticking close to the schedule and budget and realizing the benefits that were promised. EG said many project members have worked on these actual projects, so we are gaining from that experience. Further, the Alexandra Bridge is a cherished and well used bridge and there are commemorative aspects that can be integrated into it. MC said this is a very special site. One of the technical constraints is that you have to build a new bridge in the footprint of an old bridge. Samuel De Champlain Bridge is a different bridge in terms of scale but some of the processes are relevant, especially in the architectural quality. He also noted Pont de l'île d'Orléans in Québec was a heritage bridge replacement that can be looked at as an example. There is also the Queensferry crossing in Scotland, which wasn't a replacement project but was a new bridge in a UNESCO World Heritage Site, that can be considered.
14	DJ	DJ said he is also the board member representing Heritage Ottawa. He will be reporting back to Heritage Ottawa Executive and Board.	This was noted in the minutes.

Part 6: Discussion Period

Questions asked:

1. What are your hopes for the design of the new bridge? What are some of your concerns?
2. From your perspective, which of the seven design objectives are most important to consider? Why?
3. When it comes to public involvement, how can we best engage and communicate with the public, your members or the community you represent?
4. What is one thought or one idea you want the project team to take back with them tonight?

#	Member Initial	Comment
1	AL	Due to time constraints, the Discussion Period questions will be submitted via email. Please send responses to the following: consultations@ncc-ccn.ca.

You will find below a presentation of the aggregated comments received as of January 15, 2024.

Please note that similar comments were grouped together, where appropriate, and summarized. Contributors are noted in the summary.

1. What are your hopes for the design of the new bridge? What are some of your concerns?

The aspirations and concerns are summarized in the five following themes:

- Maintaining an iconic structure that is functional and honours the past and heritage of the bridge and surrounding area, including the history as pertains to the 2SLGBTQ+ community, while providing great viewpoints and integrating with the surrounding cultural and natural landscape. (GC, DH, ZD, KH)
- Preserving, including the restoration and/or repurposing of old infrastructure in the design of the replacement bridge (e.g., pillars). (CR, JoF)
- Consideration for impacts of climate change, especially how abnormal weather patterns and rising water levels along the Ottawa River will impact the bridge in the years to come. (GC)
- Consideration and mitigation measures for construction impacts on the neighbouring sectors and environment, including traffic, noise, dust pollution, recreational activities, animation, daily commuting and business operations, maintaining an active transportation link, etc. (CR, DH, RT, GC, PD
- Importance of ensuring that the bridge is built sustainably with as little impact to the surrounding natural environment, as well as designed with a focus on promoting active mobility and public transportation modes, including separated structures for walking and cycling. (GC, PD, OVB)
- Creating a destination experience and visual landmark that is welcoming to all – a model implementation of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility goals – and considers improved connectivity with the cycling and multi-use pathways. (JF, KH, PD)

Part 6: Discussion Period

2. From your perspective, which of the seven design objectives are most important to consider? Why? (Note: For a description of each draft design objectives, please go to page 17)
   - Most comments received spoke to the importance of Objective #3 (Public Space and User Experience), noting that the design must be people oriented at the outset (consideration for users and uses). (CR, DH, JF, KH, GC, PD, OVB)
   - Comments spoke to the close tie between Objective #3 and Objective #5 (Sustainability and the Environment), including the need to emphasize the integration of a sustainable transportation infrastructure and the role it plays in creating public spaces and tourism destinations. Objective #5 was the second most raised objective, noting the need to consider the impacts of climate change and limiting disruptions to the surrounding natural environment. (CR, DH, ZD, KH, PD, OVB)
   - Other objectives mentioned in order of importance: Objective #4 (Views and Visual Experience) (DH, KH), Objective #1 (Bridge Expression) (CR, GC), Objective #2 (Capital Realm Integration) (DH), and Objective #7 (Operation and Maintenance) (GC).
   - Comments were not received highlighting the importance of Objective #6 (Construction Cost and Schedule).
   - Other comments received highlighted potential improvements to the language and/or noted other elements to be considered, including a consideration for the design to be integrated to a long-term vision for the National Capital Region (i.e., capital and transportation planning), as well as emphasizing the importance of designing the bridge for public and active transportation modes, and reflecting the identities of both cities within the cultural landscape considerations. (CR, RT, PD, OVB, JoF)

3. When it comes to public involvement, how can we best engage and communicate with the public, your members, or the community you represent?
   - An emphasis was placed on starting the public engagement process early to ensure parties are provided with ample time to provide feedback, as well as providing advanced notice.(DH, JF, RT)
   - It was also noted that it is important to obtain a diverse representation of community input through the outreach program. (DH, GC)
   - Clear and easy to understand material, as well as prompt and proactive communications were highlighted as ways to increase transparency. (ZD, DH, JF, RT, PD)
   - Some engagement methods noted that should be considered include social media outreach (DH), prepared summaries/content for sharing (KH), newsletters (KH), workshops/facilitated dialogues/open houses/forums (CR, OVB), surveys (OVB), having a project office near the site (ZD), direct outreach to organizations (as a conduit to the community) and partnerships (DH, KH, GC, PD, OVB).

4. What is one thought or one idea you want the project team to take back with them tonight?
   - Don’t let perfect be the enemy of good, don’t limit creativity.(ZD)
   - Acknowledgement towards the history of the bridge as it pertains to the 2SLGBTQ+ community in the design and planning. (GC)
   - Persons with disabilities come in all shapes and sizes, ages, and degrees of disability, visible and invisible. Consider intersectionality as part of the bridge design. (JF)

Part 6: Discussion Period
• Make the bridge a destination, e.g., a seasonal bridge climb experience that could be run by an operator, as well as implement mitigation measures to support the tourism sector during the construction period, like enhanced offerings and animation at other bridges and shorelines. (KH, RT, PD) • Emphasis on the role that early communications and consultation play in transparency and building trust with the public and stakeholders, as well as continuous engagement with key stakeholders to address challenges as they arise. (DH) • Considerations for regional and sustainable planning and development efforts and the need for an integrated and/or coordinated approach to the design and construction, e.g., future movement of people and goods, including active and public transportation (e.g., tram or transit loop), real estate developments, etc. (CR, PD, JoF) • Generally, the project team was encouraged to consider integrating sustainable design elements in the bridge design, e.g., solar panels to offset emissions and/or power streetlights on/near the bridge. (JF)

Reference Document: Alexandra Bridge Draft Concept Design Objectives

The following objectives have been proposed as a way to assess different concept design options for the replacement bridge. These objectives are primarily based on the *Alexandra Bridge Performance Criteria for Bridge Design*.

1.0	**Bridge Expression**
	The new bridge shall be a signature bridge that responds to its heritage and environmental context. It should be sensitively inserted into this landscape of national significance. Its architectural, structural and urban character should strongly represent the identity of "place" and the values of the country, cities and communities it serves, providing a meaningful legacy to future generations.
2.0	**Capital Realm Integration**
	The new bridge design shall build upon the existing bridge's legacy by achieving its own distinctive stature, realized in a way that is sensitive to the unique heritage context of the Ottawa River Corridor Cultural Landscape.
3.0	**Public Space and User Experience**
	The new bridge shall function as a dynamic public space in its own right. The bridge effectively accommodates a multitude of uses, both in motion and stationary, including utilitarian travel, recreation and tourist travel, sightseeing and resting. At special celebratory times, the bridge is well able to function as an urban gathering place. It should also provide space on or around the bridge for ceremonies to occur.
4.0	**Views and Visual Experience**
	The new bridge shall protect and enhance views and shall provide an appropriate spatial sequence for users of the bridge.
5.0	**Sustainability and the Environment**
	The design of the new bridge shall support sustainable development, mitigation of impacts and potential opportunities to make improvements to the environment, including quality of life, resource allocation, natural world, climate and resilience, as well as the detailed project description commitments. The bridge design approach is to be in line with Indigenous principles of stewardship of the natural environment.
6.0	**Construction Cost and Schedule**

	The cost of the new bridge shall be proportionate to the performance criteria. The construction shall be achievable within four years.
7.0	**Operation and Maintenance**
	The new bridge shall be straightforward to operate and maintain in all climatic conditions, with reasonable lifecycle ownership costs and few major maintenance activities anticipated during the design life, in line with Indigenous values. As far as is practical, maintenance activities shall not cause disruption to operations and shall be achievable with local resources.