



Alexandra Bridge Coalition / Coalition pour le pont Alexandra



Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

22nd Floor, Place Bell

160 Elgin St. Ottawa ON K1A 0H3

Sent by email to:

RE: Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project (Reference # 83444)

The Alexandra Bridge Coalition is pleased to respond to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada request for comment with respect to the Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project (reference # 83444) that is being undertaken by Public Services & Procurement Canada in collaboration with the National Capital Commission (hereafter jointly referred to as the Project Proponents).

It is the view of the Alexandra Bridge Coalition (ABC) that the rationale for the project to demolish and replace the Alexandra Bridge is fundamentally incomplete and has not reasonably assessed the option to rehabilitate the existing bridge, which would avoid the environmental, financial, heritage and social impacts of the proposed project. The ABC's position is supported by the Project Proponent's own consultants (MMM 2018) that recommended that additional studies be completed before a final decision is made (on whether to rehabilitate or replace the existing bridge).

To date, no additional studies have been made public to support the decision to demolish and replace the existing bridge.

The Alexandra Bridge Coalition believes that the retention and rehabilitation this iconic bridge is the best option for protecting the historic, engineering, and environmental values of the bridge, best supports the Government of Canada's prioritization of sustainability, and represents the most effective use of public funds.

The Alexandra Bridge Coalition therefore recommends that a full Impact Assessment of the project take place, and additionally that :

1. the Project Proponents be required to fully assess the option to rehabilitate the existing bridge by conducting the analysis of several critical factors as identified by their own consultants – this should include a Heritage Impact Assessment, transportation planning analysis, full environmental impact assessment, and an updated lifecycle costing assessment;
2. to ensure the validity of any revised project plan, the Project Proponent engage an engineering firm with specialized expertise in heritage engineering and a proven track record of providing independent advice – this peer review should be undertaken within the framework of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*;
3. regardless of the final approach taken for this project, the Project Proponents should establish an Independent Design Review Panel for this project, following the precedents set on other heritage projects of national significance; and,

4. the IAAC should obtain heritage engineering expertise for its Impact Assessment of this project.

On behalf of the Alexandra Bridge Coalition

Cc:

Public Services & Procurement Canada

National Capital Commission

Councillor Mathieu Fleury, City of Ottawa

Councillor Catherine McKenney, City of Ottawa

Greg Fergus, M.P. Hull-Aylmer

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