

June 22, 2018

His Worship and Mayor and Members of Council:

Re: Municipal Class Environmental Study – Victoria Bridge

The Municipal Class Environmental Study for Victoria Bridge recommends a 2.3 Million dollar upgrade from a concrete-girder design to a through-arch design in order to address cultural heritage issues, specifically its central location and age (over 90 years). We believe that there may be more cost-effective and impactful strategies for enhancing cultural heritage based on the concrete girder design. These might include incorporating some or all of the existing trusses, adding alcoves and benches, providing more aesthetic treatments such as stone walls, and incorporating public art such as statuary, metal work or commemorative plaques.

Using the more plain looking bridge design as a canvas for public art is especially promising because of the potential scope of the artwork that could be commissioned by the savings. Dollar for dollar, much more visual and emotional impact can be obtained using art versus infrastructure as the means of conveying cultural heritage. As an example (but definitely not a suggestion), a \$300,000 budget could place 40 large tree trunk carvings on and around the bridge while also saving \$2M. People's interest in and engagement with the statues would be so strong that they would never notice that the bridge itself was unremarkable.

For these reasons we will be bringing forward the following motion with regard to the Victoria Bridge Municipal Class Environmental Study (Item 2.1 of the 10th Report of the Civic Works Committee).

“That the Victoria Bridge Municipal Class Environmental Study Report BE REFERRED to the Managing Director, Environmental & Engineering Services to report back at a future meeting of the Civic Works Committee with more cost effective alternatives for addressing cultural heritage concerns that would include an enhanced design for a concrete girder bridge which incorporates special treatments, public art and/or portions of the existing bridge, with the goal of achieving an overall Project cost savings of \$1 million dollars or greater.”

Respectfully submitted,



Michael van Holst  
Councillor, Ward 1



Phil Squire  
Councillor, Ward 6