**Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment Study for the Rehabilitation / Replacement of Ottawa Queensway Mid-town Bridges from Holland Avenue to O'Connor Street**

**(G.W.P. 4075-11-00)**

***Comments and questions from the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA)***

**Overview:**

The Civic Hospital Community Association (CHNA) reviewed the above document at the Hintonburg Community Centre on May 30, 2016. Reviewing this massive, technical document is a difficult undertaking for someone not familiar with bridge engineering, so we appreciate that the document provides many illustrations and photos to help navigate the study. However, there were still some areas/concepts that we continue to find confusing, so our submission includes both comments and questions.

CHNA is primarily interested in the 5 bridges adjacent to our community – Holland, Parkdale, Fairmont, Bayswater and the O-Train.

Finally, as this project moves forward, CHNA is offering to organize a special briefing for our community so residents get a better understanding of the scope and timing of the rehabilitation.

**Comments:**

*General*

CHNA is pleased that the design of the O-train bridge “does not preclude a future west side multi-use pathway or similar facility”. This is an improvement on the initial design which did not allow for a future west-side MUP. (Section E 8)

CHNA is pleased the Study indicates there will be “landscaping of four quadrants [surrounding the bridge] where feasible. We hope that all of the bridges adjacent to our community can be landscaped, although we recognize that the O-train bridge – with the complication of the MUP – might present additional complexities for landscaping. (Section E 9)

CHNA is pleased that the bridge underpasses will have “improved lighting (by the City of Ottawa) to improve the safety and personal security under the bridges and create a greater sense of openness for the users on the municipal street.” (Section E 9)

CHNA is pleased that adverse effects of the bridge construction on Species at Risk - in particular birds – is being considered. While we are pleased that staff are being trained to recognize such species, CHNA asks if Ottawa’s birding community will be asked to assist?

On Page VI of the summary, the study notes that “consistency along the corridor” is an objective of the bridge project. Will that mean consistency on both sides of the 417? Will that mean that enhancements associated with bridges to be rehabilitated will be identical to enhancements associated with bridges to be replaced?

*Rehabilitation or Replacement*

CHNA notes that four of the bridges bordering our community (Holland to Bayswater) - with the exception of the O-Train bridge – are being rehabilitated, while other bridges in adjacent communities are being replaced.

CHNA notes the proposal to buy out 47 Young Street (commercial property) because of its close proximity to the bridge and the complexities and increased expense this proximity would bring to the project. CHNA is pleased that the property owner has been consulted as part of this study.

Most of the bridges covered by this study are of a similar design (built in 1961 or 1962 of two bridge structures separated by a longitudinal joint) so we would assume that the necessity of replacing this bridge design would be consistent from bridge to bridge. We find it puzzling that the Rochester Street bridge (which is currently rated at fair to good condition) is proposed for rapid replacement, while the Bayswater bridge (also rated fair to good) and the Fairmont bridge (rated only as fair) are being proposed for rehabilitation. We will be posing questions about the criteria by which these decisions were taken later in this document (under Weighted Factors, Sub Factors and Rankings).

We wonder about the implications for the Civic Hospital neighbourhood bridges should they not be replaced:

* Replacement of the bridges “provides 75 year service life”. What is the service life of rehabilitated bridges? While the document indicates that the life of the bridges will be extended, there is no indication how long they will last. How soon will residents of our residential community be expected to experience a second phase of bridge work should the Holland, Parkdale, Fairmont and Bayswater bridges not be replaced at the same time as other bridges such as Rochester?
* The study indicates that “Bridge rehabilitation or replacement provides opportunity to enhance aesthetics of existing bridge sites.” Are the design opportunities greater with bridge replacement? Will bridge rehabilitation offer equal or similar opportunities to make significant changes to noise barriers, improved air quality, light mitigation from the 417, etc. - long-standing issues for residents of our community?

*Weighted Factors, Sub Factors and Rankings*

CHNA would like to understand the rationale behind the decisions as to replacement vs rehabilitation. The document indicates that the Technically Preferred Alternative (TPA) provided through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will **not** be the only “justification for selecting a particular option, but it will provide a level of confidence in the selection and the ability to assess trade-offs. This information will be considered and used in the decision-making process…” CHNA looked at the differing decisions taken in relation to Rochester and Parkdale.

For Rochester Street, the document describes the decision as follows:

“…the MATS ranked Alternative A2e, Rapid Bridge Rehabilitation, as the Technically Preferred Alternative for both directions. Taking into consideration the implementation of each alternative, the TPA for Rochester Street eastbound and westbound is Alternative C6e [rapid replacement].”

For Parkdale Avenue, the document describes the decision as follows:

“For the eastbound and westbound alternatives, the MATS ranked Alternative A2e, Rapid Bridge Rehabilitation, as the Technically Preferred Alternative for both directions. Taking into consideration the implementation of each alternative, the TPA for Parkdale Avenue eastbound and westbound remains Alternative A2e.”

Did we miss references to other selection criteria in the document used to differentiate the different outcomes re: the selected alternative for Rochester and Parkdale?

If the other selection criteria were not articulated in the document, more detail as to why bridges with similar TPAs are treated differently would be more transparent. It would also be useful for us to understand the rationale for different approaches to bridges in similar condition.

CHNA looks forward to answers to our questions before June 8th so we can have an opportunity to submit a Part II order request by that date, if required.

Prepared by: Kathy Kennedy

 Chair, Planning and Development

 CHNA

 June 2, 2016