

## Urban Design Review Panel Comments

<b>Date:</b>	April 25, 2018	
<b>Time:</b>	1:45 pm	
<b>Panel Members:</b>	<b>Present:</b>	<b>Absent:</b>
	Chad Russill (chair)	Janice Liebe
	Robert LeBlond	Bruce Nelligan
	Terry Klassen	Jack Vanstone
	Chris Hardwicke	Yogeshwar Navagrah
	Eric Toker	Gary Mundy
	Glen Pardoe	
<b>Advisor:</b>	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
<b>Application number:</b>	<b>M2018-</b>	
<b>Municipal address:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge	
<b>Community:</b>	Inglewood	
<b>Project description:</b>	Replacement of the 9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge	
<b>Review:</b>	first	
<b>File Manager:</b>	Evan Fer	
<b>City Wide Urban Design:</b>	Afrah Rayes	
<b>Applicant:</b>	City of Calgary	
<b>Architect:</b>		
<b>Owner:</b>		
<b>Ranking:</b>		

### Summary

*Note: As this project is not a typical building project, the panel's primary comments are noted below in the summary section.*

The Applicant presented the current design plans and 60% roadway designs for the bridge, abutments and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue approaches on each side of the Elbow River.

Although UDRP generally supports the overall intent to improve the bridge crossing and overall experience for all modes of users, there was some concern about the design inasmuch as the retention of the character and feel of the old bridge. It was understood and recognized that the rehabilitation of the existing bridge was considered, but the Panel was not convinced that the heritage aspects of the bridge had been adequately reviewed and considered prior to moving ahead with the proposed design.

Specifically, UDRP discussed with the Applicant, the following:

- 1) Abutment Walls and Underpasses – The two bridge abutments are substantial in size and could be used as a canvass for additional art installations. There was also some suggestion from the Panel that the landscape experience that follows the bike paths from grade to under the bridge could be tied into the abutment wall areas to create more of an experience when passing through the area. The Panel suggested exploring opportunities to extend the length of the bridge structure to provide a wider passage for bicycles and pedestrians on one or perhaps both sides of the river, and to enhance the River Walk experience. It is understood the Applicant is considering this, however the current package does not reflect the approach adequately.
- 2) Context of Project – There are a number of other projects underway in the area, including River Walk. Although it is understood that the bridge project is a stand-alone exercise, the Panel suggested that the presentation was lacking context inasmuch as its relationship to other projects underway in the area. Given that the bridge is an important piece of civic infrastructure the Panel requests a range of visualizations of the bridge in context from significant viewpoints such as Fort

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Calgary, Inglewood, the confluence of the Elbow and the Bow, and the MacDonald Avenue Bridge.

- 3) Character – The existing bridge is 110 years old and has a very unique industrial “stitched together” feel to it. The Panel felt that the proposed replacement structure seemed to lack character, and the design looked a bit impersonal and needed to be a bit more visually welcoming as the gateway to the Inglewood Community, or to Downtown (depending upon which way a person is travelling).
- 4) Heritage Value – The Panel felt that despite the statements by the Applicant regarding the issues with re-habilitating the bridge (ie. it would cost the same, but would not provide anything beyond a 30 year lifespan, and would not improve safety or flood mitigation), there should be more effort made to retain the original structure, in whole or in part. There was also some suggestion that the design as proposed does not adequately represent the original structure and therefore misses the point on the heritage aspect of the program.
- 5) Bridge Deck Design – The Panel was concerned about the sidewalk areas on the bridge deck and the raised areas adjacent. The thought was that these would have the propensity to collect garbage and dirt, requiring considerable resources to maintain. The Panel encouraged the Applicant to review how best to accommodate the necessary structural elements in this area.
- 6) 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cross Sections – The Panel noted the need to ensure that the Applicant be aware of and liaise with the CMLC regarding the bike network study that is underway, as there may be changes to how bikes are accommodated on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue west of the bridge, and these changes could affect the laning and design of the roadway west of the bridge. As well, questions were raised about the adequacy of the lane widths through the curve on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue vis a vis the passage of transit vehicles (3.3 metre lanes).
- 7) Pedestrian Realm – The Panel suggested that while it applauded the scale and coverage of the pedestrian facilities in the area, there may be merit to celebrate the connection on one side (North) as opposed to trying to accommodate both sides. Given immediate context primarily at the SW quadrant and influence of 7<sup>th</sup> Street, pedestrian connectivity on this side may not be justified.

## Applicant Response

May 29, 2018

- 1) Art installations for the abutment are being considered. The new bridge will be longer to provide a wider pathway under the bridge, and it is understood that CMLC will be extending the RiverWalk in this area. The river pathway reconstruction is not within the scope of this project, and therefore not shown in this package.
- 2) The project team is coordinating with the other projects in the area, however the bridge replacement project is in the detailed design phase while the other projects in the area (Mainstreets, RiverWalk, Greenline etc.) are currently in conceptual stages and designs or visuals are not available.
- 3) At the time of construction of the original Parker Camelback bridge, the riveted gusset plate design and construction techniques utilized the most innovative technology offered in the early 1900's – a bridge that was contemporary to its era. This resulted in what UDRP has referred to as a “stitched together” feel.

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The proposed design of the new arch bridge is implementing advanced construction techniques that are reflective of today's contemporary times. While different visually, the knife plated pin connections of the hanger detailing is symbolic to the riveted gusset plate connections, but reinterpreted and celebrated in a contemporary expression.

The selection of a through superstructure for the new bridge recognizes and celebrates the importance of the crossing location. The arch symbolizes a natural "gateway" structure, thus creating an entry threshold to the adjacent Inglewood and Ramsay communities.

- 4) The condition of the old truss bridge is poor and not suitable or safe for re-use. Retaining the original structure would not improve the functional deficiencies or meet flood resiliency requirements, and the substantial initial and ongoing costs would not provide good value to Calgarians.

The proposed bridge design was not intended to copy or imitate the old bridge. The old truss was state of the art 100 years ago, however this style of bridges are now becoming obsolete. The proposed design represents a modern design for the next 100 years.

A Heritage Interpretation plan is being developed to honor the old truss and will include reuse of the old bridge where possible.

- 5) The team is reviewing options to mitigate build up of dirt or garbage in these areas.
- 6) The team is coordinating with CMLC on the bike strategy west of the new bridge.

3.3m lane widths were determined to be adequate for this corridor, even though they are slightly below the 3.5m standard. 3.3m lane widths were selected and have been used successfully in Calgary and other major City's in North America as an effective traffic calming measure, which is a key principle of the City's complete streets policy.

- 7) As the new bridge is designed for 100 years and future expansion would be difficult with this type of bridge, the team believes accommodating users on both sides of the bridge is important to allow for flexibility in the future to accommodate different demands. The plan is also consistent with the Mainstreets plan and future connectivity with the east river pathway and RiverWalk.