

Greetings,

My name is Adam Bonnycastle, and I am providing these comments on the proposed Emma to Earl Pedestrian Bridge on behalf of the [Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation](#) (GCAT). As I'm sure you're aware, we are a local non-profit organization and represent approximately 200 community members whose Mission is to increase the quantity, quality and safety of Active Transportation in Guelph.

GCAT fully supports the construction of the proposed Emma to Earl Pedestrian Bridge.

This bridge will be **essential transportation infrastructure** for the City, serving two important purposes: 1) A safe Speed River crossing for Active Transportation users in the general vicinity of Speedvale Avenue, and 2) A vital connection in the City's Active Transportation network to promote safe and efficient east-west travel throughout our community. Projects like these are vital for the the City is to meet its 2050 carbon footprint goals, in this case by supporting modal shift towards Active Transportation.

River Crossing

As you are undoubtedly aware, this bridge will serve as an Active Transportation crossing of the Speed River in place of the much more costly infrastructure to accomplish the same at Speedvale Ave. City staff, in their recent Staff Report to Council, have confirmed that this bridge represents **essential transportation**. A safe river crossing in this area must be provided for Active Transportation users, and this bridge is less expensive and a more pleasant experience for those who walk, ride, or roll as their mode of transportation.

Network Connectivity

Much more than 'just' a river crossing, this bridge is a **key connection to Emma St. for safe Active Transportation travel parallel to busy, and dangerous, Speedvale Ave**. This project is a responsible expenditure and much less costly than further widening Speedvale Ave for AT infrastructure. Additionally, Emma St represents an alternative route to Eramosa Road, which is both busy and includes significant hills.

GCAT has included a figure that shows the proposed Emma to Earl Pedestrian Bridge overlain on the City's most up to date Bicyclefriendly Guelph map. I wish to draw your attention to the network elements that DO NOT follow busy arterial roads, namely the red lines for trails, blue lines for signed routes, and dashed light green lines for suggested routes (which GCAT understands are to become signed routes in the future).

As you can see, the Emma to Earl Pedestrian Bridge will provide a vital east-west link for our community by connecting the Emma St, Renfield St, and Meyer Dr suggested routes to the Downtown and Spurline trails. These quiet, low traffic routes are important for **Active Transportation users who wish to avoid large, busy, and dangerous arterial roads**.

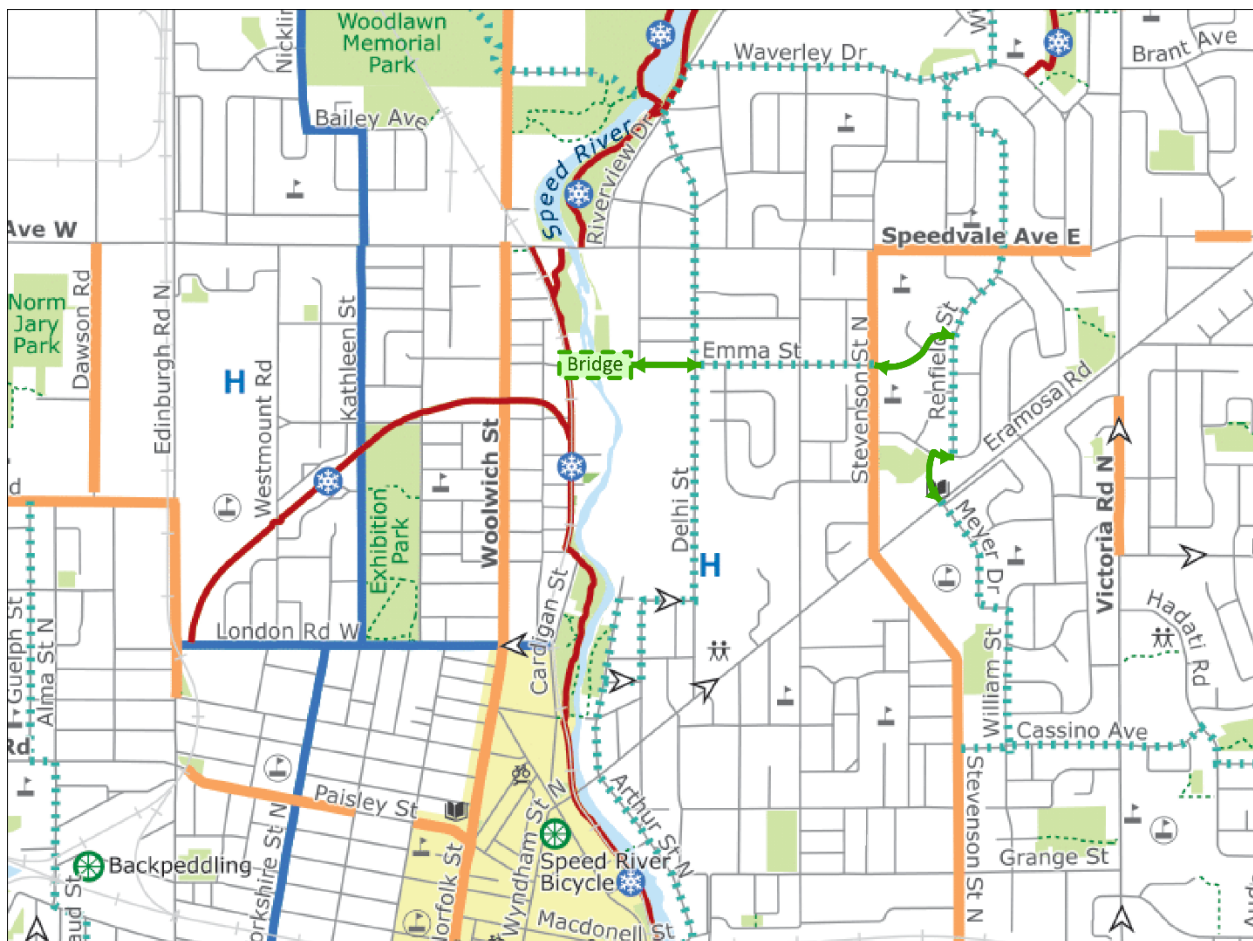
Travelling from the west of the river, the bridge will allow Active Transportation users to **bypass much of Speedvale Avenue East and also Eramosa Road** in order to access important amenities in the vicinity of both the **Speedvale Centre** and **Bullfrog Plaza**. These include large grocery stores, banks, discount stores, a drug store, an LCBO, the Bullfrog Mall branch of the Public Library, as well as other services. As you can see on the map, a number of schools and child-care centres are close to the Renfield St and

Meyer Dr suggested routes, including John F Ross CVI. This bridge will enhance access to all these facilities.

For users originating east of the river, this bridge will provide off-arterial access via the Downtown Trail to the downtown core shops and services and associated trails southward, as well as to Exhibition Park and beyond to the west via the Spurline Trail.

For North-South users, until there is an underpass/alternative road crossing at Speedvale Ave, this bridge offers an alternative route via the Delhi St. suggested route to connect downtown with Riverside Park, the Waverly neighbourhood, and Guelph Lake. Users traveling the Downtown Trail can pop over to Delhi St via the bridge, and then reconnect with the Speed River Trail at Riverside Dr.

All-in-all, compared to crossing the Speed River via Speedvale Ave, the Emma to Earl Pedestrian Bridge represents a better design, enhanced safety, and more complete network connectivity. **The Bridge is a better option, for less cost.**



Thank you for your consideration
Adam Bonnycastle
Treasurer, Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation