

Dear Heritage Guelph,

I was pleased to see your agenda for March 6th 2024 includes seeking feedback to Council and Staff re: Allan's Bridge.

I was dismayed however, that you only received an engineering report suggesting demolition of the bridge is the city's preferred alternative. No information was provided to put the bridge in context or give a historical or cultural evaluation.

To that end I have summarized a few notes for your perusal and attach them here. This is not an exhaustive history but even so, I would suggest that your advice to staff and council be to pursue a Part IV Designation of the bridge before it's too late. Since the bridge is on the Heritage Register, it must be designated by 2027, or the chance to do so is lost for 5 years.

The notes attached only scratch the surface of a deep and important history of this structure and this site and it retains astonishing potential for cross-river pedestrian connectivity, place making and cultural preservation.

I almost entirely agree with the evaluation attached from the Heritage Resources Centre, which shows 6 of 9 evaluation criteria being met. I disagree with them on the absence of Landmark Status. That status has certainly diminished since 1963 when the MacDonnell Street bridge was built, (a bridge some still refer to as Allan's bridge) but it is still a landmark in the city. I hope you see fit to recommend pursuing designation.

P. Brian Skerrett