

Calgary Herald



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Peace Bridge - how they voted and how it was justified

By [Jason Markusoff](#) Tue, Aug 3 2010 [Hall Monitor](#)

As a supplement to today's article [framing Calatrava's helix as an election issue](#), methinks it's worth spelling out who supported the project and who didn't. This comes from a November 2008 vote to reconsider the \$25-million plan to build one downtown ped bridge and design another. A narrow majority of aldermen voted against it, but council needed a 10-5 vote, following an earlier 7-6 decision for the "pro" side with Dale Hodges and Gord Lowe away.

To reconsider the then-unnamed bridge: Dale Hodges, Gord Lowe, Jim Stevenson, Ray Jones, Joe Connelly, Andre Chabot, Ric McIver, Diane Colley-Urquhart

To reaffirming approval for the bridge: Mayor Dave Bronconnier, Bob Hawkesworth, Druh Farrell, John Mar, Joe Ceci, Brian Pincott, Linda Fox-Mellway

On the weekend as I researched the story, I dug up the city administration report from July 23, 2008. For your perusal:

Centre City is expected to double its population to 60,000 residents by 2035 and grow from 120,000 jobs today to 180,000 jobs by 2025. Intensification of surrounding inner city communities, including Eau Claire and East Village on the south side of the Bow River, and Hillhurst-Sunnyside and The Bridges on the north side, is expected to continue.

The Council approved Centre City Plan calls for "Design Excellence" with a fundamental principle to "Put Pedestrians First". The Centre City Plan features enhanced pedestrian corridors including the proposed gateway bridges, the 13 Avenue Greenway, and new pedestrian connections under the CPR tracks, all connecting to Calgary's world class Bow River Pathway system.

An analysis was undertaken to determine locations for new pedestrian and bicycle bridges over the Bow River. The analysis looked at bridge spacing, existing and future volumes and connections. The two

optimum locations, as shown in Attachment 1, are west of Prince's Island Park and at the west end of St. George's Island. A new bridge west of Prince's Island will reduce congestion on the 9A Street N.W. LRT bridge and the Prince's Island bridge, the two most heavily used pedestrian bridges over the Bow River within Centre City.

The gateway bridges will be designed as distinctive Calgary landmarks with world-class design and aesthetics as per the Centre City Plan. Creating a city where walking and cycling are viable travel options helps reduce automobile dependence and improve municipal sustainability.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE *This report has been reviewed for alignment with The City of Calgary's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework. The following implications were identified:*

SOCIAL *New bridges will provide enhanced connectivity and convenience for people choosing to walk and cycle. This supports a healthy and active living environment.*

ENVIRONMENTAL *Creating a Centre City where walking and cycling are viable travel choices will result in improved air quality and decreased greenhouse gas emissions. Walking and cycling are key long-term strategies for reducing Calgary's per capita ecological footprint.*

Construction of the bridges will not produce any long or short-term disturbance to the Bow River natural environment. The bridges will span the Bow River without intermediate supports in the river. Design and construction will be done in accordance with City of Calgary, Federal and Provincial regulations.

ECONOMIC *The bridges will become important landmarks and serve as tourist attractions. Providing transportation options will also attract people to the Centre City. This helps make Calgary a city where people want to live and invest, and keeps Calgary a competitive and international city.*

BUSINESS PLAN/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS *Funding for the Pedestrian Gateways over the Bow River was recommended as part of the Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan (TIIP) 2009-2018. The TIIP has been recommended for approval by the SPC on Land Use, Planning and Transportation. Funding for construction of the Prince's Island gateway bridge and conceptual design of the St. George's Island gateway bridge will come from the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Provincial grant. Funding partnerships with the Calgary Municipal Land Corporation will be investigated for the detailed design and construction of the St. George's Island gateway bridge. No significant risks are associated with this report.*

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