



Council Asks Community to Help Choose Design of New Johnson Street Bridge

Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2009

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Citizens of Victoria will have an unprecedented opportunity to inform the selection of a new bridge to replace the deteriorating Johnson Street Bridge. Today, Victoria City Council was presented with three new bridge designs, designed through a collaborative process including world-renowned Wilkinson Eyre Architects, a committee of eight respected citizen advisors, City of Victoria engineering staff and contracted engineers. Through extensive input and consultation regarding the long term and diverse needs of the community, and lengthy discussions about aesthetic considerations, the architects and landscape designers have conceptualized three bridge designs consistent in transportation features but varying in mechanics and aesthetic. The new bridge will provide improved road approaches, on-road bike lanes, a sidewalk, a rail bridge, a multi-use path and three traffic lanes.

“The new bridge will be a landmark for the next century in Victoria,” noted Mayor Fortin. “Now we’re asking residents of the region to help create that landmark through a unique and thorough consultation process.”

The three designs include a Cable-Stayed Bascule, a Rolling Leaf Bascule and a Reverse Bascule. Although significantly different in appearance, all are “single-leaf bascule” bridges, similar to the one leaf workings of the current Johnson Street Bridge. The *Cable-Stayed Bascule* shares characteristics to the Erasmus Bridge, also known as the Swan, in Rotterdam, Netherlands, the *Rolling-Leaf Bascule* builds on a variation of the Canary Wharf Bridge in London, and the Reverse Bascule draws on inspiration from the Vincent Van Gogh painting “Drawbridge with Carriage.”

After looking at a number of other options, including double-leaf, swing and retractable-type bridges, the Citizens Advisory Committee and project engineers concluded that keeping the same type of single-leaf bascule system most closely meets the criteria set out for the bridge replacement project yet allows for improved features such as a lower pedestrian deck, on-street bike lanes and a multi-use path.

The public will have many opportunities to learn more about the bridge designs and provide feedback to Council on their preferred option. Mayor Fortin, City Councillors, staff, and engineers will be attending community events, public meetings, and in the media, seeking input on the preferred design. There will also be regular updates, background information and important links available through on JohnsonStreetBridge.com a dedicated website set up for the bridge replacement project. For another opportunity to view regular updates and discussion about the bridge replacement, visit www.facebook.com and search “City of Victoria”. Three open houses are planned on September 12, 15, and 21 at Victoria City Hall and the three designs will appear on the front page of the City’s household newsletter to be delivered to over nearly 35,000 households next week.

Once City Council has collected and reviewed feedback from the public, the choice of a new design will be made at a special Council meeting on Thursday, September 24.

In late April, after receiving a comprehensive engineering assessment conducted over the last year, City Council voted to replace the 85-year old Johnson Street Bridge instead of repairing and significantly altering the appearance and subsequent heritage value.

The City has applied for infrastructure stimulus funding to share the estimated cost of \$63 million with the federal and provincial governments. The replacement project is expected to create 800 jobs, will be environmentally-sensitive and all efforts will be made to minimize construction impacts.

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For More Information:

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