

**From:** "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Nelms, Cheryl" <Cheryl.Nelms@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 12/13/2019 5:03:18 PM

**Subject:** Memo - Granville Bridge Connector Phase 3 Change of Schedule

**Attachments:** ENG - Memo to Mayor and Council - Granville Bridge Connector - Phase 3 C....pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Cheryl Nelms regarding the Granville Bridge Connector – Phase 3 Change of Schedule. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- Highlights the revised schedule for Phase 3 public engagement and the rationale for the change. A media briefing has been tentatively scheduled for January 16, with open houses on January 24, 25, and 28, and workshops on February 1 and 4. A survey will be online between January 24 and February 10.
- Provides a high level overview of the engagement process to date
- Includes an appendix with more detail on what we heard in Phase 2 in Fall 2019 including the rationale for landing on a preferred option.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cheryl Nelms at 604-873-7348 or [cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca](mailto:cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager  
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver  
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Pronouns: he, him, his



*The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.*

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## MEMORANDUM

December 10, 2019

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Lon LaClaire, Director, Transportation  
Karima Mulji, Director, Engineering Projects and Development Services  
Margaret Wittgens, Acting Deputy General Manager, Engineering Services

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FROM: Cheryl Nelms, Acting General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Granville Bridge Connector – Phase 3 Change of Schedule

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Staff have completed the first two phases of a three-stage engagement process on the *Granville Bridge Connector*, a new walking, rolling, and cycling connection across the Granville Bridge, as directed by Council in January 2019. This memo provides an update on the engagement to date and outlines next steps, including a revised timeline to allow staff additional time to refine cost estimates and consider the potential for phasing various project elements. The third phase of public engagement is now scheduled for early 2020.

This is the fourth memo updating Council on the engagement process to date, following those issued on February 22, July 22, and September 4, 2019.

### **Background**

The *Granville Bridge Connector* was identified as a priority by Council in 2002 in response to the 2001 False Creek Crossings Study, as part of the Transportation 2040 Plan released in 2012, and in the 2019-2022 Capital Plan. On January 30, 2019, Council directed staff to engage the public on the project, beginning with a discussion on goals and ideas.

In April 2019, Council endorsed several actions as part of the *Climate Emergency Response* report to increase the City's efforts to address climate change. One of the policy's transportation-related 'big moves' is that by 2030 at least two thirds of trips in the city will be by active transportation and transit – 10 years earlier than previously planned. The *Granville Bridge Connector* was an essential component to meeting the original 2040 mode share targets and

becomes even more critical to deliver these targets earlier. It addresses a major gap in the city's walking and cycling networks that would serve one of the densest parts of the city, and is important to sustainably accommodate the growing number of people living, working, and playing in the city and region.

The bridge deck has significant extra vehicle capacity and staff are confident a solution can be delivered that continues to accommodate motor vehicle traffic, maintains reliable transit service, and allows for efficient emergency services access.

### **Key Takeaways from Engagement to Date**

Staff have had completed two phases of public engagement to date, with over 2,300 people participating at six open houses and nine workshops, over 7,600 surveys completed, and over 40 personalized discussions and walkshops with key stakeholders representing a wide variety of interests.

In Phase 1 (April-May 2019), staff gave the public and stakeholders an opportunity to review the draft project goals, and provided space for people to share experiences, hopes, concerns, and ideas. Notably, staff heard:

- high levels of project interest from the public and stakeholders;
- support for the project and draft goals, with ideas for refinement; and
- many ideas for how the goals could be delivered.

Based on Phase 1 engagement, staff refined the draft goals and explored over 20 options for the Connector. A detailed Phase 1 engagement summary is available online at [vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector](http://vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector).

In Phase 2 (September 2019), staff provided space for people to review six shortlisted design options, and shared information on other options which were explored but eliminated. Notably, staff heard:

- a preference for the '**West Side +**' option from both stakeholders and the public; and
- suggestions for refining and improving the design.

Engagement highlights are included in this memo as *Appendix A*. A more detailed summary will be released prior to Phase 3 engagement in early 2020.

### **Revised Schedule**

Staff previously reported to Council that a third phase of engagement on a preferred option would take place in late 2019.

Staff have opted to delay the final round of engagement to early 2020, and a report to Council with final recommendations is anticipated at the end of March or in early April. The additional time is being used to further refine cost estimates, consider the potential for phasing various project elements, and explore additional funding opportunities and partnerships.

The revised dates are:

- Media launch: Week of January 13-17
- Public open houses: January 24, 25, 28

- Workshops (TBC): January 31 – February 5
- Council report: March 31, 2020

The timing will be coordinated with the Drake Street improvement project, which is essential to link the Granville Bridge Connector to the rest of the downtown.

If you have any questions in regard to the Granville Bridge Connector project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheryl Nelms". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Cheryl Nelms, P.Eng.  
Acting General Manager, Engineering Services  
604.873.7348 | [cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca](mailto:cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca)

# Appendix A

## Granville Bridge Connector – Engagement Highlights

City of Vancouver staff are conducting a three-phase engagement process on the *Granville Bridge Connector* to provide new walking, rolling, and cycling connections across the Granville Bridge, as directed by Council in January 2019.

### Overall Engagement Approach

Public and stakeholder engagement is taking place throughout 2019 and early 2020. This work complements ongoing technical work and design, and includes:

- targeted discussions, walking tours, and workshops with key user groups and stakeholders that are most directly impacted; and
- a three-phase public engagement process including open houses, workshops, walking tours, and surveys for the broader public to share their ideas and concerns.

The three phases are described below.

1. In **Phase 1 (April 2019 – completed)**, staff sought input on the draft project goals, and invited the public to share how they currently use the bridge, along with specific ideas and concerns.
2. In **Phase 2 (September 2019 – completed)**, staff reported back on Phase 1, and provided the public with an opportunity to review and comment on a range of design options at a conceptual level.
3. In **Phase 3 (early 2020)**, staff will report back on what was learned in previous phases, and provide an opportunity for the public to comment on a preferred design option in more detail.

The engagement will culminate with a report to Council on recommended design option(s) in late Q1 2020.

### High Levels of Engagement

Public and stakeholder engagement levels have been high to date, with:

- over **2,300** participants at 15 public events including open houses, workshops, and walking tours;
- over **7,600** survey responses received online and at public events;
- over **600** intercept surveys conducted on the bridge; and
- over **40** personalized discussions and workshops with specific stakeholder groups representing local businesses and residents, Granville Island, transportation, public space, seniors, persons with disabilities, women and children, tourism, public health, and emergency services, as well as with other levels of government including First Nations.

## Key Takeaways So Far

In Phase 1 (April-May 2019), staff gave the public and stakeholders an opportunity to review the draft project goals, and provided space for people to share experiences, hopes, concerns, and ideas. Notably, staff heard:

- high levels of project interest from the public and stakeholders;
- support for the project and draft goals, with ideas for refinement; and
- many ideas for how the goals could be delivered.

Based on Phase 1 engagement, staff refined the draft goals and explored over 20 options for the Connector. A detailed Phase 1 engagement summary is available online at [vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector](http://vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector).

In Phase 2 (September 2019), staff provided space for people to review six shortlisted design options, and shared information on other options which were explored but eliminated. Notably, staff heard:

- a preference for the '**West Side +**' option from both stakeholders and the public; and
- suggestions for refining and improving the design.

A high level summary of Phase 2 is included on the following pages. A more detailed summary will be made available prior to Phase 3 engagement in early 2020.

## Phase 2 Engagement Highlights

### Six shortlisted options were shared for detailed review

In the lead up to Phase 2, staff explored dozens of options for the Granville Bridge Connector, with approaches informed by staff expertise, public and stakeholder feedback, and consultant input. The long list was shortlisted to six options based on overall feasibility and their ability to meet core project objectives.

In Phase 2, six options were shared with stakeholders and the public for detailed comment and review:

1. **West Side:** featuring a wide sidewalk and two-way cycling lane on the west side of the bridge, and no changes to the east sidewalk;
2. **West Side +:** similar to the West Side option, with additional sidewalk improvements on the east side of the bridge and Hemlock on-ramp, plus an additional two-way cycling connection on the Fir off-ramp to 10th Avenue
3. **East Side:** featuring a wide sidewalk and two-way cycling lane on the east side of the bridge, and no changes to the west sidewalk
4. **East Side +:** similar to the East Side option, with additional sidewalk improvements on the west side of the bridge and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave off-ramp, plus an additional two-way cycling connection on the Hemlock on-ramp to 7th Avenue
5. **Raised Centre:** featuring a wide sidewalk and two-way cycling lane down the centre of the bridge, with the path elevated about 1m above the bridge deck; and
6. **Both Sides:** similar to the Burrard Bridge design, slightly widening the existing sidewalks on both sides of the bridge, with one-way bike lanes on each side between the widened sidewalk and the general traffic lane.

Staff also shared material on options that were considered but did not make the shortlist due to critical flaws, including an 'underside option' and design options that used the on-/off-ramps in different ways.

More detail on both shortlisted and eliminated options is available online in the Phase 2 Supplemental Design Guide at [vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector](http://vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector).

### 'West Side +' emerged as the consensus preferred option

The 'West Side +' emerged as the consensus preferred option at public open houses and workshops, and in the public survey.

This preference is reflected in survey responses captured in Figures 1 and 2 below, which ask (a) 'what do you think of each option' and (b) 'what is your favourite option' respectively. The West Side + option was the top-ranked option for each question. The general rationale expressed behind these preferences is summarized in Figure 3.

A number of stakeholders have also expressed their preference for this option, including the Downtown Business Improvement Association, the South Granville Business Improvement Association, HUB, and Vancouver Public Space Network.

Appendix A: Granville Bridge Connector - Phase 2 Engagement Highlights

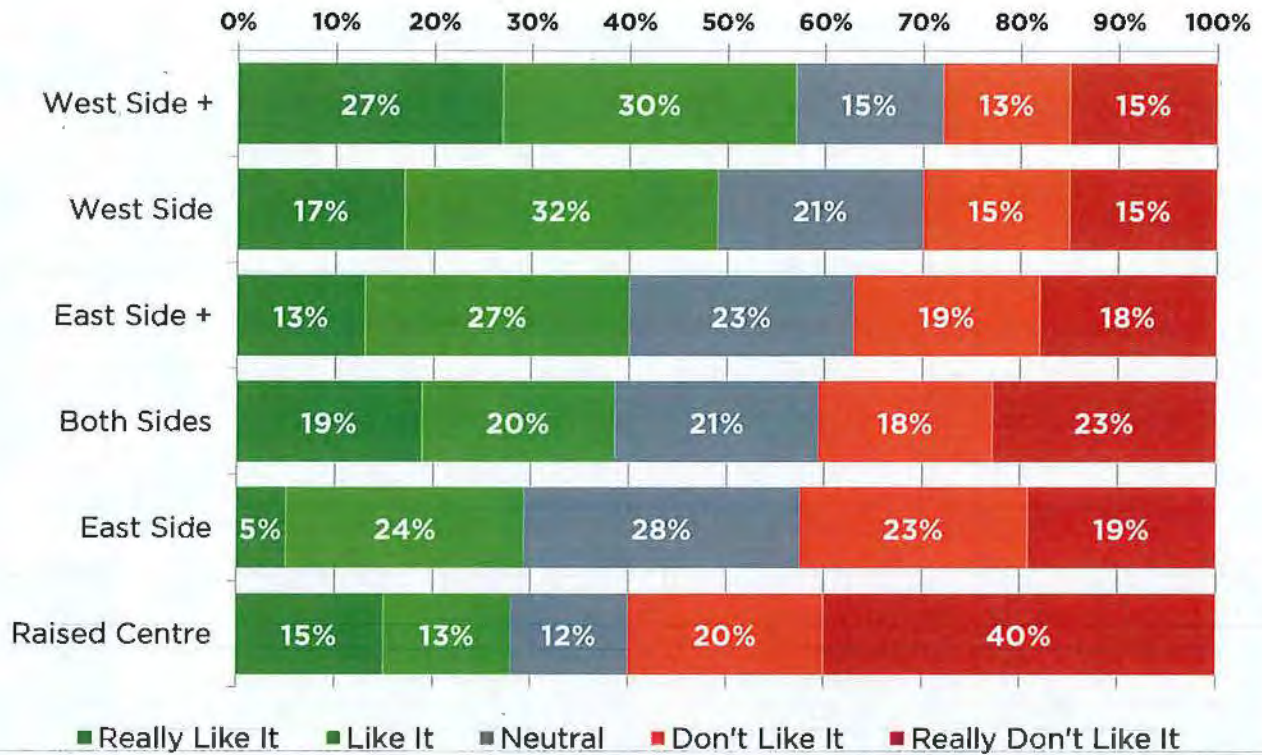


Figure 1. Overall, what do you think of each option? Based on 2602 survey responses.

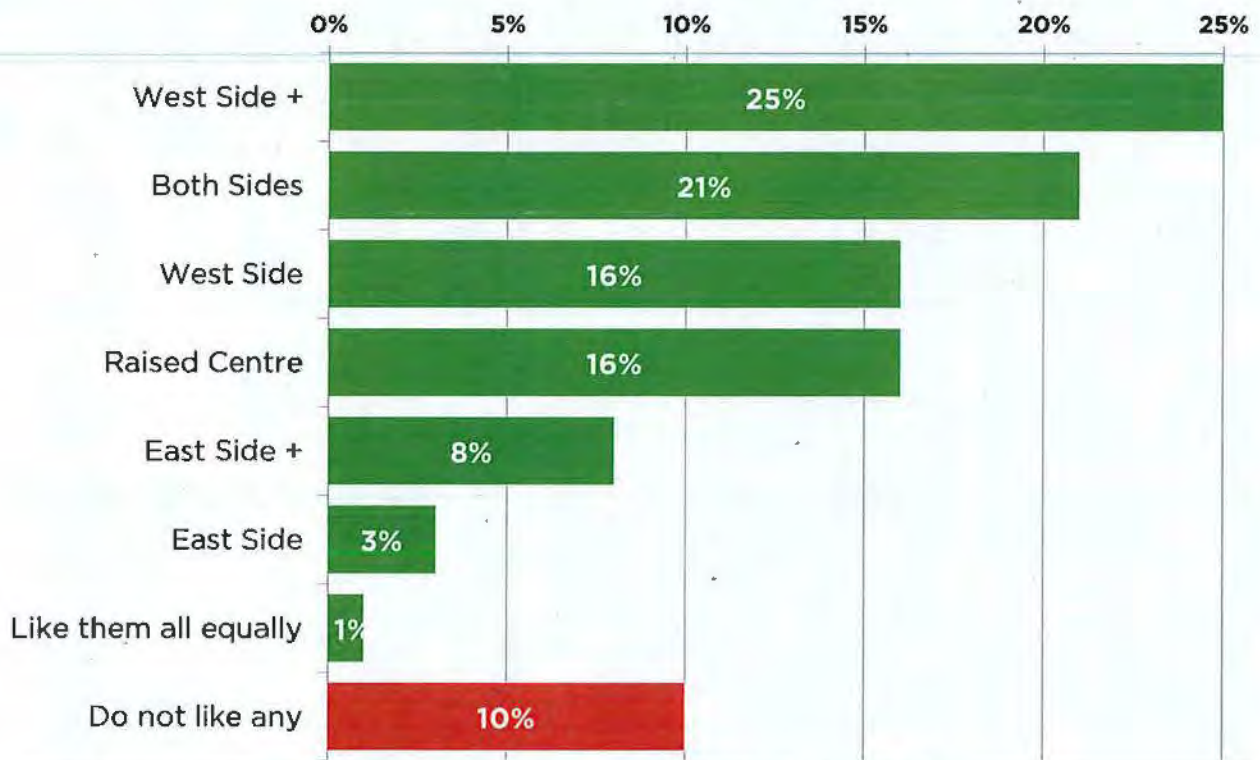


Figure 2. What is your favourite option? Based on 2602 survey responses.



Public Preference	Reasoning	West Side	West Side +	East Side	East Side +	Raised Centre	Both Sides
Side path(s) over centre path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unobstructed water views</li> <li>• Additional space from motor vehicle traffic</li> <li>• Potential to access path from ramps</li> <li>• General concern that centre path might feel uncomfortable with traffic on both sides</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
West side views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference for westerly views toward Burrard Bridge, English Bay, and mountains</li> <li>• West Side and West Side + options allow for more placemaking on west side</li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓		✓
Options that improve sidewalks on both sides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people noted sidewalks on both sides will continue to be used, because of different connections offered by south end on/off-ramps</li> </ul>		✓		✓		✓
Options with additional bike network connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional cycling connections on south end on/off-ramps provide significant benefit by providing relatively flat connections to rest of bike network</li> <li>• Fir off-ramp connection with 10<sup>th</sup> Ave generally considered more valuable than Hemlock connection</li> </ul>		✓		✓		
Options which are more adaptable to all future enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Side options more adaptable than raised centre option due to use of floating barriers rather than raised structure</li> <li>• West Side and West Side + options have highest compatibility with future transit improvements, and with enabling future ramp enhancements</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Figure 3. General public preferences expressed by stakeholders and public in Phase 2 engagement.

## **Interest in other options**

Although less popular than the West Side + option, there was considerable interest in an enhanced version of a **Both Sides** option, particularly at the public workshops. Specifically, many people were interested in pursuing this alignment further if enhanced walking and cycling connections could be added to the Fir and/or Hemlock on-/off-ramps (as featured in the West Side + and East Side + options). Those recommending pursuing the Both Sides design concept cited symmetry of the design and predictability for road users as key considerations, and postulated that one-way bike paths more easily allow for safe passing. They also noted that while the Both Sides option did not allow much space for placemaking or special 'moments', the bike lanes buffer the sidewalk from traffic on both sides of the bridge.

During and subsequent to the workshops, staff further explored the feasibility of a 'Both Sides' option with additional pedestrian and/or bike connections on the on-/off-ramps; however, it was determined this would be challenging due to:

- Adding the Fir off-ramp connection with 10<sup>th</sup> Ave (as featured in the West Side + option) to a Both Sides option would likely lead to significant wrong-way cycling on the bridge deck, unless a similar cycling connection was also added to the Hemlock on-ramp. However, adding the latter would preclude pedestrian improvements to the Hemlock Ramp, and require removing most parking from Hemlock St, converting it to one-way, and adding right-turn bays in order to manage conflicts between right-turning vehicles and people biking northbound downhill.
- The cumulative motor vehicle restrictions of cycling connections on *both* the Fir and the Hemlock ramps would likely have significant local traffic impacts.

**The raised centre option was most the most disliked option given that it does not meet the five criteria cited in Figure 3, and because it was estimated to be the most expensive of the shortlisted options.** Those with a preference for this option often cited concerns that signaling one or more on-/off-ramps on the bridge—a common element in the other options—could adversely impact traffic or pose safety concerns. Others believed it could offer a unique experience.

## **Ideas for improving and refining the preferred option**

Staff heard many ideas for refining and improving the design. These included:

- **Ensuring that two-way bike paths are wide enough to accommodate safe passing.** The rapid growth in e-bikes and other new mobility devices was often cited as a reason for needing wider paths that can better accommodate a greater speed differential. Suggestions included a wider path throughout, or a variable width path with long passing zones.
- **Balancing the need for safe, comfortable, and accessible movement with opportunities for special places.** Suggestions included focusing primarily on a comfortable, safe movement path with excellent views and places to rest along the way, with opportunities for special moments or places at key locations. Off-cited key locations on the bridge deck included the bridge apex and the potential future interface with an elevator to Granville Island. Local business improvement associations suggested

'gateways' at each end of the bridge, which could simultaneously provide wayfinding to announce both the path and the retail districts.

- **Ensuring means prevention fencing contributes to rather than detracts from the experience.** Suggestions included designs that preserve views and integrating colourful lighting to provide ambiance while improving safety.
- **Ensuring the on- and off-ramp crossings are safe while managing impacts to transit and traffic.** There was a desire to see more detail as to how signalized ramp crossings could work, to ensure they are safe for people walking, cycling, and driving.
- **Improving walking and cycling connections between the proposed Connector and Granville Island/South False Creek Seawall.** Suggestions included elevators and/or staircases at Granville Island and/or the Seawall, more direct walking and cycling paths, and improved wayfinding.
- **Addressing a cycling network gap to/from the Off-Broadway bike route in the east.** Suggestions included connecting to 7<sup>th</sup> via Granville Street or via 5<sup>th</sup> Ave/Hemlock, or shifting the Off-Broadway route from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, so that a connection could be made at the Fir off-ramp.
- **Considering how people will connect to the future Granville-Broadway SkyTrain station.**
- **Removing the centre median currently separating north- and southbound motor traffic.** It was suggested that removing the median would encourage safer motor vehicle speeds, allow more space to be allocated for walking, cycling, and public space, and improve emergency response by allowing emergency vehicles to travel in the counterflow direction when necessary.
- **Prioritizing transit over general traffic.** Some people suggested dedicated transit lanes and/or transit priority measures at either end of the bridge to ensure reliable travel times.
- **Considering how the project could adapt over time.** Suggestions included reallocating additional road space to provide additional amenities and connectivity as the city continues to become less car-dependent, adding measures to further prioritize transit, and adding additional features such as public art or staircases as the budget allows.

## Next Steps

Staff are refining the preferred option to reflect ideas heard in the engagement process.

A more detailed engagement summary will be released prior to the Phase 3 public engagement in early 2020.