

The Honourable Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Minister of Transportation  
Good afternoon Minister

We wish to thank you for your reply. It has taken some time to gather the interests and concerns among all the various communities of Ottawa that would be directly impacted by the proposed construction plan for the 417 Rideau Canal Bridge replacement project.

Unfortunately, we found that you did not directly reply to nor clarify the current situation but repeated discussion points that we had already heard last November, 2022. These points, both at that time and now again in your October, 2023 response, do not deal with concerns raised by our Community Association and also now by our neighbouring associations in the downtown core, including Centretown Community Association, the Glebe Community Association and Ottawa South Community Association.

As part of the ongoing Environmental Assessment process, we had been awaiting a call for community engagement and consultation on the Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR) phase but none has been forthcoming; and, the announced time for the release of that report is now already stale-dated.

Certainly, key to our concerns was the change in the construction strategy in November of 2022 that had not been part of the ongoing and very detailed consultation process to that date. This change would see a serious disruption to two main downtown routes, Colonel By Drive and Queen Elizabeth Driveway, for a period of ninety weeks (or more). It would also seriously impact on existing active transportation routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The diversion and detour routing required for this proposed plan would also throw active transportation into already-identified hazard zones, as mapped out in Ottawa's Transportation Master Plan.

All of this was shared with your predecessor, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney. We appreciate your interest in this matter, but also ask that you directly intervene to halt the TESR work and have the Environmental Assessment process reopened to more meaningful consultation with those communities most impacted by this proposal; and also, to more openly engage other orders of government and their departments in discussions of options and impacts.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Cheers  
Tom Scott  
Old Ottawa East Community Association  
Transportation and Infrastructure