

Roakes, Raymond A. - PDR

From: Janet Woodka <jlwoodka@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 1:02 PM
To: Roakes, Raymond A. - PDR
Cc: Spencer Grice; Manchester Alliance
Subject: Manchester Canal/Hull Street Canal bridge replacement project

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Hi Ray -

We recently learned that the Manchester Canal/Hull Street Canal bridge replacement project is slated for consideration at the Urban Design Committee at their meeting on June 12. We would like to respectfully request that this project be moved to a later date, possibly September. At present, both of our organizations, Manchester Alliance and Shockoe Partnership, are opposed to this project as it currently designed and we would like to have informed discussions with various city departments and impacted community partners before this proceeds further.

Our concerns are centered around the following:

1. This project has had little to no recent community input or discussion. We have no record of when the last community conversation may have taken place. We firmly believe that there should be additional discussions with the community prior to UDC proceeding.
2. The project has not changed in design since Mayor Avula directed that the new Mayo Bridge be designed with one lane of traffic going northbound and one lane going southbound, with robust bike, pedestrian, and non-vehicular uses. The design of this replacement bridge is identical to what was presented over a year ago. We think significant modifications to reflect the new traffic patterns are warranted.
3. This project should be coordinated on a timeline that reduces the impact on businesses and residents that are nearby. The Mayo Bridge replacement will result in street closures - and it would seem to make more sense to do this replacement in closer proximity or at the same time to minimize the disruptions.
4. The arguments for why this bridge should be 4 lanes wide do not take into account the traffic reductions proposed for the Mayo Bridge - or the fact that Mayo Island park will be opening in the Fall of 2026. We would argue that rather than designing for the current situation, this bridge should be designed for the future needs and uses. Waiting to do that will only result in additional expense later. Additionally, potentially reducing the size of the this bridge could result in cost savings, which could be used to fill the gap in the Mayo Bridge funding.
5. Noting again that Mayo Island Park will open in the Fall of 2026, we actually believe that the city should be considering traffic calming and traffic reductions on the Mayo Bridge prior to that time. This would habitualize the new traffic patterns for the public and allow for safe access to this new park when it opens. Consideration should be given to reducing the travel lanes on the Mayo Bridge and establishing temporary bike lanes or wider non-vehicular access now - or at least in conjunction with the park opening.
6. This project also impacts the Hull Street Streetscape project - and we are awaiting an update on that project and how this integrates with that.

7. The Fall Line Trail is planned to travel down Commerce Road. However, an important connection and spur will be getting to Mayo Island and across the river to get to the Capital Trail and Shockoe. The current iteration of this bridge does not even consider that connectivity and we think it should.

These are a few of our concerns and objections. We hope that postponing this important and interconnected project will allow for inclusive community input and consideration to the future of Manchester and Shockoe.

Thank you for all that you do and for always being such a good partner to us!

Janet Woodka
President, Manchester Alliance

Spencer Grice
President, Shockoe Partnership