




CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Tourism and Culture Division

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| TO: | Mayor and Members General Issues Committee |
| COMMITTEE DATE: | July 4, 2016 |
| SUBJECT/REPORT NO: | Desjardin Canal Hwy 403 Bridge Commemorative Public Art (PED16141) (Ward 1) (Outstanding Business List Item) |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | Ward 1 |
| PREPARED BY: | Ken Coit (905) 546-2424 Ext. 6281 |
| SUBMITTED BY: | Jason Thorne General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department |
| SIGNATURE: |  |

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That, pending the successful selective demolition of the existing east bound Highway 403 Bridge over the Desjardin Canal and capping of the ten remaining concrete columns by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), the City of Hamilton take ownership of the columns for a future commemorative public art project;
- (b) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute an agreement between the City of Hamilton and Ministry of Transportation (MTO) for the City of Hamilton to take ownership of the remaining bridge columns, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;
- (b) That minor surface repairs and the application of anti-graffiti coating to columns required to prepare them for public art be funded from the Public Art Reserve (108044) up to an amount of \$20,000;
- (c) That a public art project for the site be included in the Public Art Master Plan for implementation in 2018, pending completion of Ministry of Transportation (MTO) work in the area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is generated in response to the Council direction of November 18, 2015:

That staff be directed to work with the Ministry of Transportation and their engineers to determine the feasibility of selective demolition of the bridge, retaining parts of the bridge and transferring those parts to City of Hamilton ownership for future use in a commemorative display or artwork by the City and to report to the General Issues Committee by February 2016.

MTO engineering consultants have determined that it is feasible to maintain the ten concrete columns supporting the central arch of the existing concrete bridge and cap them at approximately nine feet above trail height at no cost to the City of Hamilton. Upon completion of their work MTO will transfer ownership of the columns to the City of Hamilton for use as part of a commemorative public art project by the City. The Tourism and Culture Division will undertake the work to protect the columns and prepare them for a future public art and interpretive project.

Given the location next to the popular Waterfront trail, the cultural heritage features of the bridge and the historic canal, the columns will provide an excellent location for public art and interpretive panels that add to the cultural value of the site.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: There is no cost to the City of Hamilton to retain and cap the existing columns. Funds to undertake surface repairs and graffiti protection in an amount up to \$20,000 will be taken from the Public Art Reserve (108044). Funding and scope for a future public art project will be addressed as part of the Public Art Master Plan Review. When the public art project is complete it will be maintained by Tourism and Culture as part of the Public Art and Monuments collection.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: An agreement to transfer ownership of the column elements to the City from the MTO will be required.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The MTO will be replacing the existing concrete arch bridge that carries the eastbound Highway 403 over the Desjardin Canal and Waterfront Trail between the Main Street and York Boulevard interchanges. Beginning in 2016 a new bridge will be constructed to the east of the existing and the existing bridge will then be removed.

The MTO noted in a 2014 Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report that the bridge, constructed in 1931, retains cultural heritage value through its association with the City Beautiful Movement in Hamilton and its closed spandrel concrete arch construction.

However, the bridge did not score high enough on the MTO Heritage Bridge Guidelines scoring criteria to warrant inclusion on the Ontario Heritage Bridge List, nor is it designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The bridge is therefore eligible for removal.

During consultation with City of Hamilton staff in 2015 the cultural significance of the bridge and its context was discussed. MTO indicated that although the bridge could not be retained they wanted to work with the City to commemorate the bridge's significance in some way. City staff noted that the foundations and abutments of two other former bridges remain in the immediate area and perhaps a similar approach could be taken with the removal of the bridge in question leaving some part of the bridge in place as a location for a commemorative plaque or public art project. MTO agreed to further explore this option noting that MTO did not have the ability to undertake the public art aspect of the work or ongoing maintenance and that the ownership of the remaining aspects of the bridge would have to be transferred to the City of Hamilton.

Council passed a motion on November 18, 2015 authorizing staff to review the feasibility of this proposal with the MTO.

A January 29, 2016 MTO memorandum indicated that their engineering consultants determined that it is feasible to maintain the existing ten concrete columns supporting the central arch of the existing concrete bridge at either the height of the trail or approximately nine feet above trail height. The bridge abutments could not be retained as they will limit water flow through the canal in case of extreme flooding. City staff reviewed the proposal and determined that the nine foot height column was best to provide the most surface area to mount public art, deter climbing and not require additional costs to install guardrails that would have been required by code for the lower level columns.

As of March 22, 2016 MTO staff agreed that they would accommodate, at no cost to the City of Hamilton, the selective demolition of the bridge to retain the ten columns and installation of ten sloped concrete caps as a change order to the bridge project contract, pending City Council approval to take ownership of the column elements for use as a commemorative public art work when MTO work is completed.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

These recommendations are in keeping with the following goal and recommendations of the Council approved Cultural Plan, *Transforming Hamilton Through Culture 2013*:

Goal: Quality of Life Quality of Place

Recommendation: Celebrate and preserve Hamilton's Cultural Assets

7.2 Use an integrated approach in policy development and work planning to identify, conserve, protect and enhance heritage buildings, sites, streetscapes, districts, natural cultural landscapes and environmental strategies.

7.4 Encourage and facilitate adaptive reuse of Hamilton's built heritage assets.

Recommendation: Develop and animate public spaces and places

6.4 Incorporate public art throughout the City as outlined in the Public Art Master Plan.

The Desjardins Canal, Dundas, is included on the City of Hamilton's Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (PED09314).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Project Engineer, Ministry of Transportation, Central Region, Planning and Design, Hamilton-Niagara.

Manager, Parks and Cemeteries Section, Environmental Services Division, Public Works Department

Supervisor, Landscape Architectural Services, Corporate Assets and Strategic Planning Division, Public Works Department

Heritage Planner, Development Planning Section, Planning Division, Planning and Economic Development Department

Manager, Heritage Resource Management Section, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Maintaining the columns of the bridge through a selective demolition will:

1. Ensure that the bridge's rich cultural heritage is partially retained.
2. Given the location adjacent to the popular Waterfront Trail, provide an excellent location to tell the many historic stories of not only the bridge but of the canal and its surroundings through commemorative public art and interpretive panels.
3. Reduce the amount of disturbance to the Waterfront Trail and the canal as the large footings for the columns will not need to be removed.

The existing east bound Highway 403 Bridge over the Desjardin Canal, previously known as the Lower Level or Longwood Road Bridge has a significant cultural heritage value due to its design, construction and location. Constructed in 1931, it originally carried Longwood Road across the Desjardin Canal.

It was designed and constructed as part of the North-West Entrance Design Competition initiated by Thomas Baker McQuesten in the 1920s. This competition also resulted in the construction of the High Level Bridge, Rock Garden and other features. This landscape is recognized as one of the most important of the City Beautiful Movement landscape designs in Canada.

Although constructed of reinforced concrete, the bridge's unique design recalls historic European stone bridges. It is the second concrete arch bridge to be constructed in Ontario and the only closed spandrel concrete arch bridge owned by MTO.

The bridge crosses the historic Desjardin Canal, one of the City's oldest infrastructure works completed in 1837. The canal is crossed by 5 other bridges ranging in date from the late 19th century to the 1960s and is the site for the remnant abutments and footings for 2 other bridges removed in the mid-20th century. In addition, the canal was the site of the Desjardin Rail Disaster in 1857 when 59 persons lost their lives when a bridge collapsed sending a train into the canal.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

N/A

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

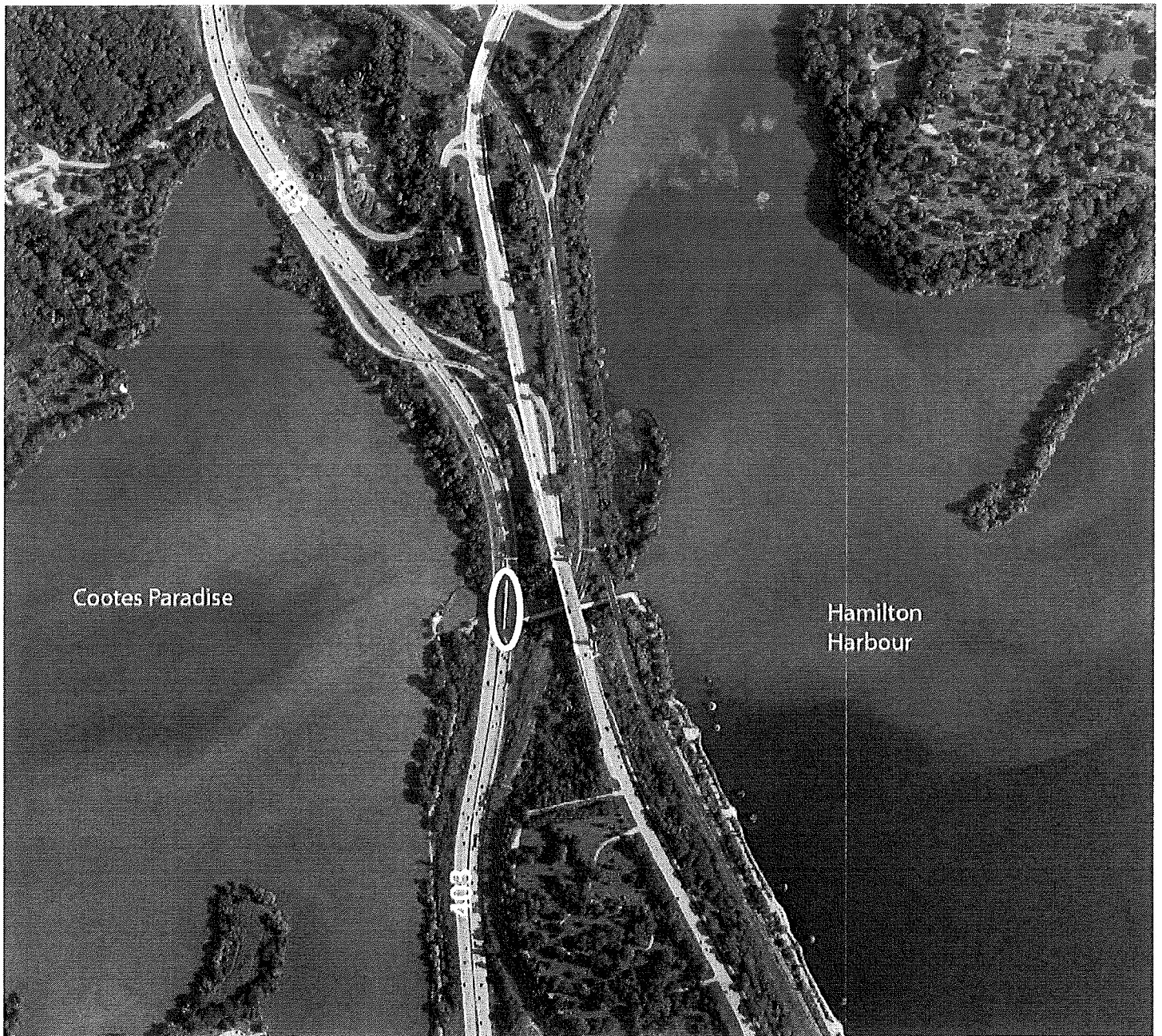
- 1.2 Continue to prioritize capital infrastructure projects to support managed growth and optimize community benefit.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report PED16141 - Desjardin Canal Hwy 403 Bridge Commemorative Public Art

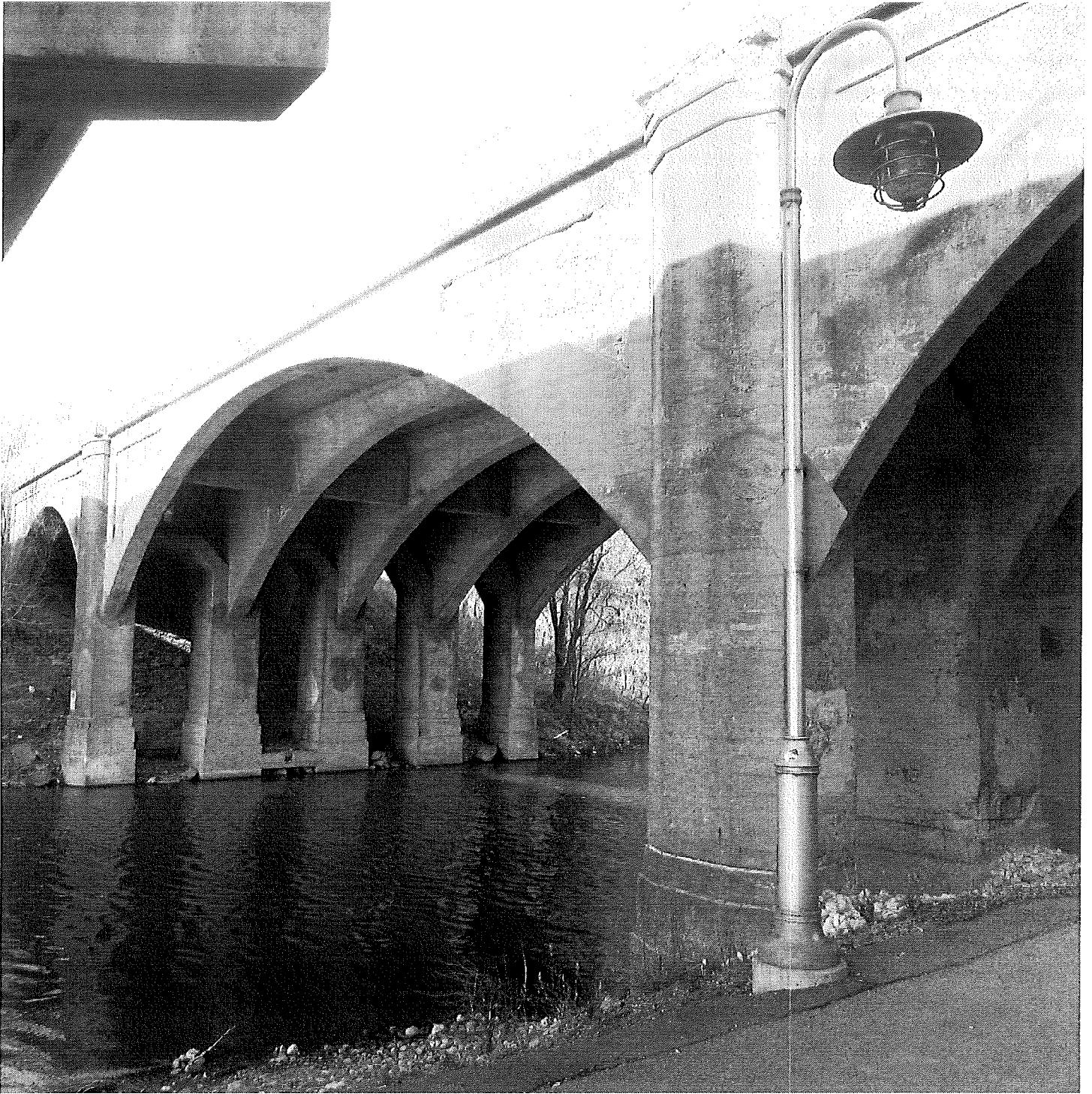
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Desjardin Canal Hwy 403 Bridge Commemorative Public Art

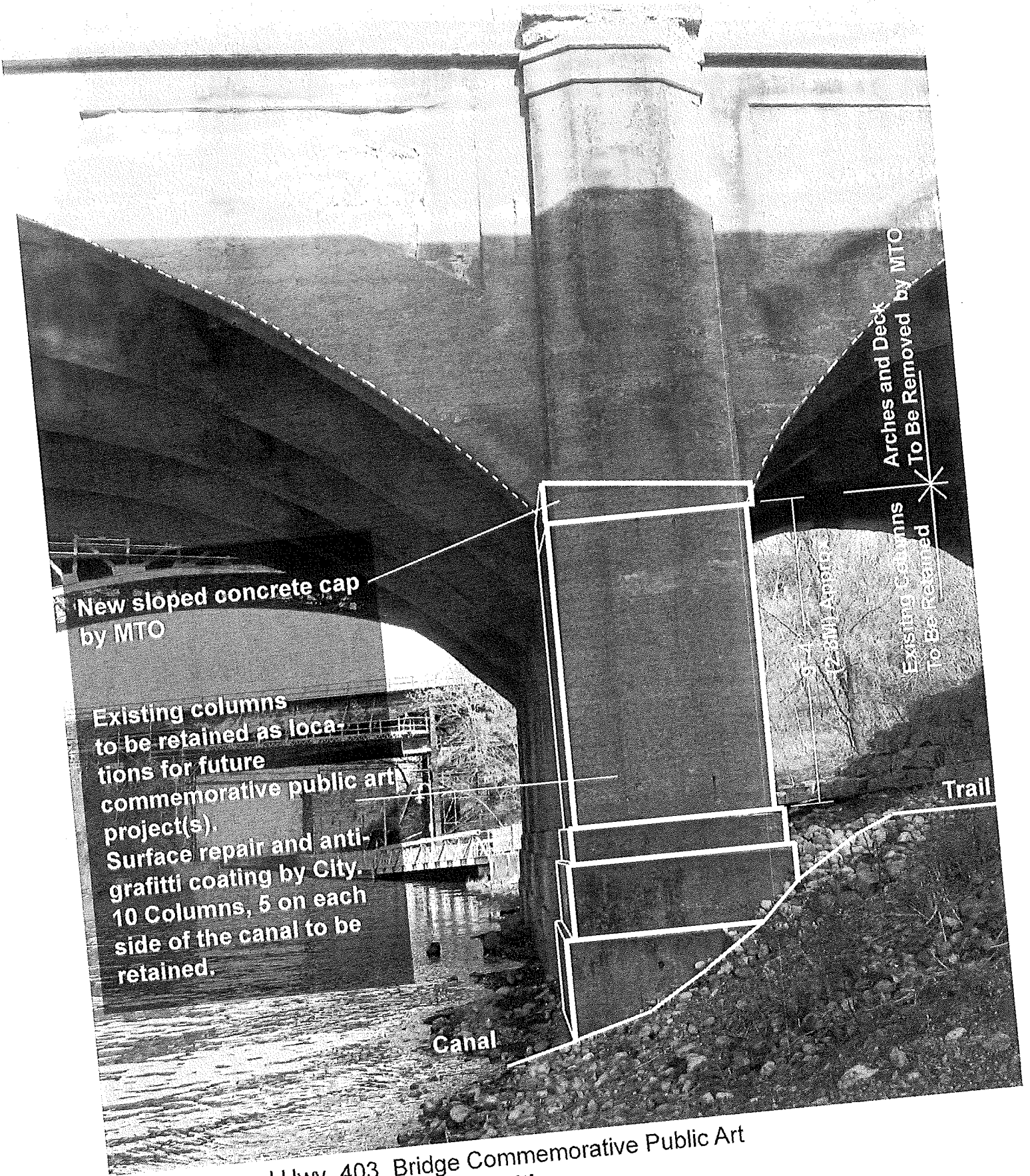


Site Plan

Desjardin Canal Hwy 403 Bridge Commemorative Public Art



View of the existing bridge looking east from the Waterfront Trail



Desjardin Canal Hwy 403 Bridge Commemorative Public Art
SKETCH Proposed Selective Demolition
City of Hamilton Planning and Economic Development Tourism and Culture