

Berezowsky, Jim <

Jun 9, 2026, 12:58 PM

to me, Janice

Good afternoon Mr Wachniak,

On behalf of Mayor Gillingham and the Chair of Public Works Councillor Lukes, I (Jim Berezowsky-Director of Public Works) am providing a response to your questions asked in your e-mail titled The Arlington Bridge Demolition And Replacement Project.

Please let me know if you have any further questions for discussion.

I have provided the italicized responses below each critical issue statements;

Mayor Gillingham,

I am requesting a 15-minute meeting with you next week, to discuss public record facts related to administrative transparency failures, and the ongoing mismanagement of the Arlington Bridge demolition project.

Our meeting will focus on the following critical issues:

- **Budget Overruns:** In January 2025, Council approved the borrowing of \$22 million (\$17 million for full bridge decommissioning and demolition, and \$5 million for new bridge design work). Instead, the administration fast-tracked a \$10 million no competition open ended hourly rate demolition contract that will burn through \$17.7 million to take down only one third of the bridge. This leaves two thirds of the Arlington Bridge hanging ("for a year or two") over the rail yards with "To Be Determined" future costs, no funds, and no timeline for this demolition project's completion. The administration's disregard for the project spending limits set by Council in 2025, openly defies Council control over spending limits, and challenges your publicly stated conviction that "Council is supreme".

The cost to complete the demolition for the south portion of the bridge (south ramp adjacent to Logan Avenue and 5 shorter trusses located next to the ramp), as per the methodology approved by CPKC is just below \$10M. The awarded contract is in agreement with D5 of Request for Proposal No. 746-2025, where The City may grant the Construction Consultant (Kiewit Construction Services ULC was previously awarded the Construction Consultant assignment) the exclusive opportunity to bid on the construction contract (General Contractor assignment). The City's decision to proceed with this method is based on a number of requirements set out in D5 of RFP No. 746-2025, including that the Construction Consultant submit open book pricing for evaluation by the City and its Design Consultant and demonstrate its bid complies with

all project requirements set out in RFP No. 746-2025B (the City's Bid Opportunity for the construction work). The award process complies with the requirements of the various trade agreements and the City's Purchasing Policy.

- **Manufactured Urgency:** The late Friday afternoon Special Meeting agenda posted on May 22nd, successfully suppressed public awareness of the May 25th meeting, and made delegation registration impossible. Furthermore, to add to the sense of manufactured urgency, the administration's report states that the decision made by Public Works on May 25th, will be backdated to May 22, with no explanation for this alteration of public records.

The Administrative Report did not state that the award will be back dated. The Award Report explicitly stated that the intended award date was May 22, 2026. This is a typical report language in the formal process to identify the intended award date for internal process tracking. The actual award date of the contract was May 28, 2026, after the SPC Special meeting (May 25, 2026). The letter of award to Kiewit Construction Services ULC is dated as such. The urgency for the special meeting of the SPC was necessary to allow awarding the Contract in order to meet the tight construction time frame allowed by CPKC to work within the Yard, as the next regular SPC meeting isn't until June 10, 2026.

- **Administrative Deceptions:** During the May 25th meeting, the administration made three identifiable false claims:
 1. They claimed "CPKC changed their mind" about controlled explosive demolition, but CPKC has publicly stated that this statement is "not true".

During the previous engineering assessment study conducted in 2023 and 2024, CPKC conceptually approved the controlled explosive demolition, and accordingly the project schedule and cost estimate for decommissioning was prepared. During the Decommissioning Planning phase in 2025, CPKC expressed their opposition to the explosive demolition methodology indicating that it is not compatible with their operational requirements and regulatory obligations, and raised concerns for the inability to identify the full impact to the operations time (how much time is needed to clear the tracks after dropping each span using explosives).

2. They claimed they have no plan for how to take down the remaining two-thirds of the bridge, yet the 2023 Arlington Bridge engineering report outlines a flatbed rail car removal strategy that is agreeable to CPKC.

The methodology of decommissioning for the 3 long (camelback) truss spans are still under investigation and discussion with CPKC. CPKC are in general agreement with the demolition of the rest of structure spans within the yard as identified within the 2023 report.

3. They claimed the bridge is in danger of actively falling down; however, the 2023 Arlington Bridge engineering report states that the expansion joint replacements have stabilized the bridge into the foreseeable future, which is why CPKC safely operates crews and trains directly beneath it.

Arlington Bridge is in a very poor condition beyond the capacity of rehabilitation. The latest inspection and assessment observed several issues with the bridge behavior that warranted the immediate closure and load restriction on the bridge for the safety of all bridge users. The completed temporary repairs were necessary to address some of these urgent concerns for safety of CPKC operations.

- **Severe Maintenance Neglect:** The 2023 engineering report identified poor drainage from older bridge repairs as the leading cause of corrosion, and strongly recommends keeping the deck clear of seasonal snow accumulations while the bridge is closed. This administration has done the exact opposite, since 2023.

A specific snow removal procedure has been in place since the bridge closure in 2023. The Consulting Engineer's recommendations for the snow removal procedure and maximum amount of accumulated snow has been followed every winter since the closure.

- **Concealed Derailment Damage:** The 2023 engineering report also details clearly defined structural damage from a train derailment impact with the bridge. We require full transparency on why known structural damage from this incident was hidden from Council and the public, since 2023.

During the visual and hands-on inspections completed for Arlington bridge in 2019, it was determined that the underside of the Bridge was struck in connection with CPKC's ongoing rail operations, sometime between June 2018 and October 2019. The damage was initially repaired at CPKC's cost at that time. During the assessment engineering study in 2023, it was determined that the extent of the damage was greater than initially observed, and that further repairs were required. The further repairs were completed and the City and CPKC get into an agreement for the liability to cover for the cost of the repairs, where CPKC paid to the City a total amount of \$500,000 to cover the entire cost of repairs.

Taxpayers and Council members are waiting for answers on how a fully funded project like this, became a fast-tracked, partial demolition project with unknown timelines for completion, and creates the potential for unforeseen capital liabilities exposure here, that could threaten other critical municipal infrastructure projects all across the city.

Please let me know your availability for anytime next week, to discuss these urgent matters in person, or by phone.

Sincerely,

Terry Wachniak

CC All members of Winnipeg City Council