EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE PIERRE MARCHANT BRIDGE

....surlepont.bru

1. Why is the bridge closed to motor traffic? DThe bridge has been closed to motor traffic since 2014 due to stability issues.

2. Are pedestrians and cyclists still allowed to use the bridge?

The bridge has stability issues, but it is still strong enough for pedestrians and cyclists. According to the engineers, however, the stability problems could worsen over time.

It's not clear yet. Until there are final plans,

4. What will the new bridge look like?

no building permits can be issued. In addition, political discussions about the future of the bridge are still in full swing; some people want a bridge for cars, others a bridge for bikes and pedestrians with space for people to meet..

3. Will there be a new bridge?

The Brussels Region, which owns the bridge, is considering building a new bridge. However, various procedures must first be completed, and these have not yet been finalised. For an explanation of the procedures, see question 8.

5. Did the municipality of Anderlecht recently decide that there would be a car bridge?

As this is a regionally-managed bridge, the commune cannot decide this by itself. However, it is true that a majority among the mayor and aldermen has taken a position in favour of the construction of a car bridge.

6. What type of bridge does the Brussels Region want?

The last word has not yet been said about this. Since 2018, three proposals have already been submitted and at every step in the decision-making procedure you see the different visions clashing. Even with the most recent plans that are now (March 2024) under public review, you immediately feel that things could go either way. The new bridge would initially be designed for cyclists and pedestrians. But the structure is designed in such a way that it will remain possible in the future - with simple measures - to allow cars and even trucks again.

7. What type of bridge does Surlepont want?

Surlepont is critical of the current plans. It looks good on the screen: it will be a cycling and walking bridge with lots of greenery, and room for benches, etc. Completely in line with the ideas we have been advocating for years. But NOTHING guarantees us that this will continue. That is why we continue to strive for the preservation of the Pierre Marchant Bridge as a meeting place and important axis for active mobility. Precisely because it is such a unique, quiet place in Anderlecht, a high-quality public space that people from the densely populated neighborhoods so need. That's why we say: build a new cycling and foot bridge or leave the bridge as it is now!



8. What is the procedure?

This kind of procedure is always very complicated. And it's hard to predict what might happen in the future. Here's a brief summary of what has happened so far:

Permit application for the construction of a new bridge: a procedure with many steps!

2018

The (former) Mobility Minister Pascal Smet submits an application for the construction of a new car bridge

2019

1st consultation committee on the Environmental Impact Study for the future bridge:

Surlepont successfully requests that the option of a cycle and foot bridge also be examined

2022-2023

Mobility Minister Elke Van den Brandt adjusts the plans. Supported by conclusions from the Environmental Impact Study, the decision is made to build a new cycling and foot bridge with space for people to meet

Januari-Februari 2023

This cycling and foot bridge with space for people is entering public enquiry. The Environmental Impact Study is now publicly available. Surlepont gathered 3.000 signatures supporting this plan.

16 Februari 2023

2nd consultation committee on the cycle and foot bridge. Surlepont defends the new plans. But, in the end, a "favourable" opinion is delivered by the municipality with the condition that buses and cars must also be able to cross the bridge

April 2023

State Secretary Pascal Smet, responsible for Urban Planning, gives the same "favourable" opinion: the new bridge can be built on the condition that it must also be able to accommodate public transport, cars and trucks in the future

January 2024

Minister Elke Van den Brandt, responsible for Mobility and prime contractor, presents new plans within the framework of the "conditional permit". She retains the idea of building a heavy structure, but opts for a design of the bridge only for pedestrians and cyclists.

March 2024

These most recent plans are subject to public investigation. Residents and the municipality will speak out on Thursday 28.03 during the 3rd consultation committee.

Surlepont will not support the plans, because the construction of a heavy structure risks allowing cars and trucks again in the future.

May-October 2024?

State Secretary Ans Persoons, responsible for Urban Planning, must decide whether or not a building permit will be issued. Exactly when is still unknown... just like her final verdict. In addition, it will probably be the newly elected officials who will once again have to reach an agreement on the future construction and use of the bridge...

9. How can you help Surlepont?

Surlepont is a citizens' collective made up of volunteers. We try to communicate positively about this unique meeting place and enable as many people as possible to benefit from it, by collaborating with other organisations or organising activities ourselves. We also target decision-makers and politicians. All this takes a lot of time and energy. If you'd like to give us a hand, send an e-mail to info@surlepont.brussels.

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