

# The potential for a new relationship with our river

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [Environment](#), [Pedestrian bridge](#), [Walkability and Bikeability](#) January 27, 2020

🌿 *Latest in a series of posts on Walkability and Bikeability* 🌿

*“I think of no natural feature which is a greater ornament and treasure to this town than the river. . . . yet the town, as a corporation, has never turned any but the most purely utilitarian eyes upon it — and has done nothing to preserve its natural beauty.”*  
*Henry David Thoreau, “Huckleberries” (c. 1861)*



x-posted from Councilwoman Paige Van Wirt’s Facebook page:

Thanks to County Executive Lamont McClure who presented the city with \$60,000 for the Bethlehem Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study. Thanks to Mayor Bob Donchez for his support. For over a century, Bethlehem’s relationship to the river has been dominated by industry. Just as Bethlehem is reinventing itself, a potential pedestrian bridge could create a new relationship with our river. Pedestrian bridges drive development and can create a vigorous link between North and South Bethlehem. Many citizens of Bethlehem, including Breana Holland and Mary Foltz with the Southside Initiative, Doug Roysdon and Don Miles with the Sierra Club, and Tony Viscardi with Lehigh University’s Department of Art, Architecture and Design, have done

much work toward the idea of the bridge, and this is a strong step towards exploring that vision. Thank you- and let's go get some data! — with Lamont McClure Jr.

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That said, not everybody is cozy with the bridge idea. These comments on the City Facebook page have been heard around the Gadfly water-cooler.

- If the quality of ice removal/prevention on the sidewalks of the current bridges is any indication of how a new pedestrian bridge will be maintained, save the money.
- We have three bridges in town that you can walk across. Why we need to flush money down the toilet when we need so many other things is beyond me.

Gadfly invites you to browse back through the [Walkability and Bikeability](#) thread for past discussion on the matter of the bridge.