

# The pedestrian bridge represents a new way of thinking about the city's future (17)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Serious Issues, Walkability and Bikeability March 26, 2019

*(17th in a series of posts on Walkability and Bikeability)*

[Sara K. Satullo, "How a pedestrian bridge over the Lehigh might change Bethlehem." lehighvalleylive.com, March 25, 2019.](#)

"The Lehigh Valley Chapter of the Sierra Club and Lehigh University's South Side Initiative started conversations about the bridge in 2016 with a public forum. That exploration has continued over the last three years and included speakers to help guide the vision and architects and trail engineers to offer practical advice."

"If all the funding comes together as expected the city will have about \$140,000 to explore how Bethlehem north of the Lehigh River and the South Side could be linked by a pedestrian bridge."

"All three offer pedestrian access on one side of the bridge, but there's no dedicated bridge in the city just for cyclists or those on foot."

"With 'a safe way of crossing the river,' Roysdon said, 'there's the possibility of creating a cityscape that is separate from cars, separate from traffic and safe. A lot of people love the idea of quiet'."

"The public forums initially focused just on the idea of a pedestrian bridge, but it's grown to represent a way of thinking about the city's future, Roysdon said. Envisioning a walkable Bethlehem that is tied back into the Lehigh River — a place where you can walk from Illick's Mill on the Monocacy Way trail all the way to the Saucon Rail Trail, a way to pass through the city's historic sites while being tied to nature, he said."

"Studies show pedestrian bridges can be a huge boon for economic development, tourism and promote walkability and recreation opportunities, said Darlene Heller, city planning director. Bethlehem's in the unique position of having two downtowns and a robust recreational trail system, she said."

"Roysdon sees the bridge as a way to create a new community gathering space where neighbors run into one another on their way to work or out to dinner

and stop to talk and connect. He credits Councilwoman Paige Van Wirt with championing the idea. ‘If we are going to overcome the car, overcome the smart phone and media dependence and all of these things technology has given us, we are going to have to reinvent the public sphere, reinvent the way we get together,’ he said.”