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Sherbrooke struggles with bridge bike lane

By Gordon Lambie

The fate of the bicycle lane pilot project on Sherbrooke's Jacques Cartier Bridge will be decided today. Originally meant to last one month in order to test the impact of installing a bicycle lane on the busy causeway, the resulting traffic problems have been so significant that the city's urban infrastructure department will shut the experiment down if a solution is not found by the end of the day today.

"What I ask is that you give us until Wednesday night," said Caroline Gravel, Director of the city's Urban Infrastructure Department, speaking to the city council on Monday night. "If by Wednesday night the situation does not improve then we will stop the pilot project."

Gravel explained that the reduced roadway has seen a much higher volume of traffic than expected in the period of just under one week since the project came into effect.

"We did five counts at five different times in the last year," the director said, "the five counts all produced the same report of six to seven hundred vehicles an hour. Right now we're looking at three hundred and fifty vehicles in fifteen minutes, which is roughly twice that number, at rush hour."

Though the exact reasons for the differences in traffic flow are not known, Gravel floated a few different theories tied mainly to the fact that the area around the bridge is filled with construction detours.

Despite the criticism the project has faced during its short existence, the council agreed to let the project see out the rest of the week. Several council members, in fact, congratulated Gravel

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

Forest Friday at Mansonville Elementary



COURTESY OF MANSONVILLE ELEMENTARY

Each Friday for the rest of the school year, Forest Friday students will spend their day learning and adventuring outdoors

Mansonville Elementary School is a special place for many of reasons. Its physical space, for one, is tough to beat. The views from this 1950s red brick building are some of the best in the townships. Nestled in a valley between the Sutton Mountain range and Owl's Head mountain with Jay Peak and the Green Mountains of Vermont looming in the distance, it's steps away from the mighty Mississquoi river and surrounded by forests and fields.

Students at Mansonville Elementary are also fortunate to attend a school with small class sizes, lots of space, and resources. Each class has a Smartboard

and all the students either have or have access to an iPad. There is an active Robotics and Computer Programming Club that runs six months of the year. When weather permits, the Bike Club is at the local pump track daily at lunch hour. The school boasts both basketball and soccer teams, and a Cooking Club that prepares hot and cold lunches twice weekly. There's also dedicated space for a dance studio, a full size gymnasium that doubles as a theater or Dining Hall, and a cafeteria that opens out to a large school yard with soccer fields, a ball hockey/basketball surface and plenty of outdoor space for kids to ex-

plore whilst still safely within school grounds.

And, new this year, Mansonville Elementary is introducing the Forest Friday program. Led by Mr. Dan (Dan Aucoin, cycle 1 teacher who has been with the school for 5 years), kids in the youngest groups, kindergarten and grade 1, are embarking on a yearlong project that will pair curriculum requirements with outdoor adventure. Mansonville Elementary's unique setting and Mr. Dan's similarly unique approach will have kids a, b, c-ing and 1,

CONT'D ON PAGE 5

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