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West Quebec Post

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Pontiac Archives Hosts Kebaowek First Nation Nuclear “Coffeehouse”



Verna Polson, Cultural Coordinator for Kebaowek First Nation sings the Water Song at Pontiac Archives' Kebouak First Nations coffeehouse meeting on July 3, 2024. PHOTO: KATHRAINE FLETCHER



Katharine Fletcher

Pontiac Archives, Shawville: On July 3 Verna Polson, Cultural Coordinator for Kebaowek First Nation and Mary-Lou Chevrier presented the Kebouak First Nations opposition to the NSDF (Near Surface Disposal Facility) which has been approved for development at Chalk River.

The event saw two “coffee-house round-table” presentations in the a.m. and p.m., where these two representatives greeted about forty Pontiac residents who participated, to support and learn more about the proposed

nuclear landfill that has been approved by the federal government.

Kebouak First Nations is adamantly opposed to the storage of nuclear waste which is in a seismological zone, being only 1.2 km distance from the Ottawa River. The Chalk River site lies upstream from many Pontiac villages and cottages – as well as communities on the Ontario shore, and from Ottawa, Montreal and eventually, the Atlantic Ocean.

Chalk River is also situated on unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin peoples.

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Protest campaign “Stop Nuclear Waste” at Aylmer Marina



Taylor Clark

A series of multimedia exhibitions aimed to raise awareness about the Near Surface Disposal Facility project planned for Chalk River wrapped up at the Aylmer Marina on July 6.

Throughout May and June, Stop Nuclear Waste has organized these exhibits at various locations across the Ottawa Valley to showcase what was at stake with the January 9th approval of a licence for the controversial project by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. The decision came without free, prior, and informed consent of the Algonquin Nation, which Kebaowek First Nation argued was a clear violation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. “It’s a betrayal of a series of sacred trusts. Anishinaabe aki (land) was not created for business profit. Our Nation was not built to turn the (Kichi Sibi), our great river, into a self-storage unit for nuclear waste,” former Kebaowek First Nation councillor Verna Polson told the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission during the Near Surface Disposal Facility hearing in June 2022.

Kebaowek First Nation is among the 11 communities making up the Omamiwininiwag or the Algonquin Nation, who have spent time immemorial on the land surrounding the Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River).

The First Nation was also one of four communities involved with Stop Nuclear Waste, a community movement of Indigenous leaders, local members, and allies who wish to hold the government and the Nuclear Safety Commission accountable for years of irresponsibly disposing nuclear waste.

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Pontiac Archives Hosts Kebaowek First Nation Nuclear “Coffeehouse”

Continued from page 1

Key to the First Nations opposition of the NSDF is the federal government's implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which became law, in Canada, on June 21, 2021.

In UNDRIP, the resolution declares “States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.”

Article 32 of UNDRIP declares “States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources...”

Verna Polson, Cultural Coordinator for Kebaowek First Nation addressed both issues, where First Nations were not consulted appropriately and do not give consent to the NSDF.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Trudeau has stated he “trusts the experts” and endorses the project.

Insodoing, First Nations argues he is

betraying Canada's commitment to the UNDRIP, and is waiving aside all concerns expressed by First Nations and their Allies.

Allies are people such as Venetia Crawford, President of the Pontiac Archives, and others who were present at the coffeehouse and who attend rallies in support of the Kebouak First Nations..

The First Nations also say that Trudeau is also betraying the concept of Reconciliation, because under UNDRIP, First Nations are supposed to be informed and must give approval of the use of their land.

Crawford is delighted that Polson and Chevrier agreed to come to the Pontiac Archives to explain their opposition to the nuclear waste facility.

Crawford said, “Because I started Pontiac Anti Nuclear Action Committee (PAN-AC) in the 70's - now Pontiac Environment Protection (PEP), and because my mother worked with Dr. Gordon Edwards [president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility] in Montreal and persuaded me that I should follow her footsteps and work to prevent nuclear damage, I had no choice but to agree to do this obvious step and invite the amazing Kebaowek First Nation group to the Archives.

On July 10, Crawford and her granddaughter accompanied several other Pontiac residents to the Supreme Court in Ottawa, to Rally in opposition to the

building of the NSDF. On the 10 and 11 July, the First Nations are at court defending the Ottawa River against the development of the NSDF.

Protest campaign “Stop Nuclear Waste” at Aylmer Marina

Continued from page 1

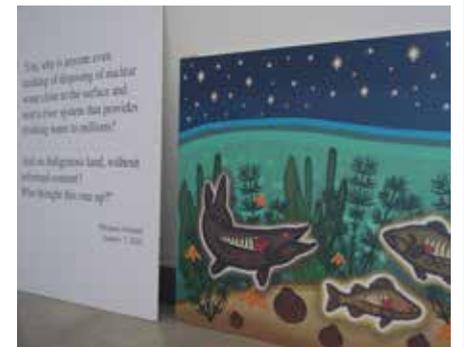
Since its establishment in 1944, the Chalk River Laboratories has been a major research and development site that led to advancements in nuclear technology. A large share of the world's supply of medical radioisotopes was produced at the site until the nuclear reactor was shut down in 2018. The site was also home to a handful of incidents over the years, the most recent being the discharge of toxic sewage. The incident came months after Canadian Nuclear Laboratories was awarded the licence for the Near Surface Disposal Facility.

The facility would allow the permanent disposal of solid radioactive and non-radioactive legacy waste but would require the removal of the mountain-side along the river to make way for the waste disposal facility. According to an Indigenous-led assessment by Kebaowek First Nation and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, storing over a million cubic metres of legacy nuclear waste would directly impact the water quality, and ability of animals and plants to live along with other species in the watershed. On top of risks to the waterway, the project would also require the clearing of 37 hectares of old growth forest where Kebaowek First Nation found active traces of wildlife.

Overlooking the Ottawa River, attendees of the exhibition came face to face with images and depictions of endangered and culturally significant species like lake sturgeon, eastern wolves, and bears that would lose their habitats to the disposal site.

Kebaowek member Mary-Lou Chevrier believes she has already seen first-hand the effects of the site's waste on the surrounding wildlife. Upon conducting a fish study in April, Chevrier was met by what she described as a metallic odour, dead aquatic animals, and “lethargic” lake sturgeons where the Petawawa River meets with the Ottawa River. “(The sturgeons) were in about 14 inches of water and they were swimming in a circle. This is obsessive compulsive behaviour, and I was able to actually pick them up by hand out of the water,” said Chevrier.

Chevrier noted the sighting was around



A painting by Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg artist Destiny Cole highlights the speculated relationship between lake sturgeon and hickorynut mussels, which are both included as endangered in the official Species at Risk in Ontario list. PHOTO: TAYLOR CLARK

the time the public finally learned of the toxic sewage discharge that occurred months prior. Although there was no evidence connecting the sewage to the sturgeon's odd behaviour, Chevrier worried about what the discharge meant for aquatic life.

The decision by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission was challenged by Kebaowek First Nation in a judicial review in front of the Federal Court from July 10 to 11. The First Nation presented an oral argument based on both the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration Act. In the spirit of reconciliation and protecting all life, Kebaowek First Nation believed Canada was obligated to carry out free, prior, and informed consent into the consultation process as stated in Article 29.2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that was put into Canadian law by the passing of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act in 2021.

Those wanting to support the cause can add their name to a list of signatories demanding the Government of Canada to make no decision in terms of issuing a licence to the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories. Stop Nuclear Waste's petition can be found online at www.stopnuclearwaste.com/petition. Contributions can also be made to Kebaowek First Nation's legal fund by donating to <https://gofund.me/7ce16728>.



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Mega salmon farm coming to Litchfield

Pontiac to welcome innovative salmon farming facility



Sophie Demers

A salmon farm is slated for the Pontiac Industrial Park in Litchfield. Samonix will be a large facility with three main buildings to be constructed on an existing industrial site along the Ottawa River. The company hopes to become the largest producer of Atlantic salmon in land-based aquaculture facilities in Eastern Canada, providing high quality products to local and international markets.

"This is an Outaouais company, 51% will always be owned by someone in Quebec or the Outaouais. However, we are bringing in partners to help with the expertise," said Rémi Bertrand, Senior Director of Development at Samonix. The company has partnered with Smart Salmon, a Norwegian company,

for their expertise in raising salmon as well as Smögenlax, a Swedish company, who specialize in the planned water treatment system. Samonix has also partnered with Aquamaof, an Israeli company specializing in the technology needed for the operation.

Samonix aims to use innovative technology to facilitate farming salmon in large pools inside the facility as opposed to in natural bodies of water. A Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) will recirculate the water using advanced filtration and water treatment systems. The process allows for complete control of the elements, ensuring water quality is free of contaminants or bacteria. The RAS system will allow 99% of the water to be reused and recirculated.

"Our mission is to provide salmon in an eco-responsible and sustainable way," said Bertrand, noting that

the salmon will be raised without antibiotics, pesticides, hormones or microplastics. "We hope to support the local economy and employment - we are talking about 100 new jobs for the area."

In terms of sustainability, Samonix plans to use biomethanation for their rejected organic matter, which is a process that turns the organic matter into biogas or manure. Bertrand highlights that they have been transparent with regional stakeholders, namely Ottawa Riverkeeper.

"We had a chance to have a discussion with Samonix [about the project] and we're hopeful that discussions will continue," said Larissa Holman, Director of Science and Policy with Ottawa Riverkeeper, adding that their biggest concern is chloride levels in the water discharge going into the river. "We would really like to see the chlo-

ride concentration come in at a lower threshold so that it doesn't have an impact on aquatic organisms." The recommendation is based on the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines.

Currently, Samonix is in the process of obtaining permits from the Ministry of Environment. "We are not asking for any special consideration. We will operate within the parameters that are given to us," said Bertrand. Their energy requests have been submitted to Hydro Quebec. If everything goes according to plan, construction will start in the spring of 2026 and will take approximately a year to complete. The construction will include a water treatment facility and a 13-acre main building enabling Samonix to farm approximately 12,000 metric tons of salmon annually. To accommodate all buildings, the construction necessitates between 80 to 100 acres of land.

UQO's new educational initiatives foster outdoor learning and environmental awareness



Tashi Farmilo

Under the guidance of Professor Geneviève Lessard from the Department of Educational Sciences at the University of Quebec in Outaouais (UQO), the new initiative, United for Education Outside the Walls, in Nature (Unis pour l'éducation hors les murs, en nature), has successfully forged partnerships to enhance educational opportunities for children. The collaborations include the Boucher Forest Foundation, Loisir sport Outaouais, the Outaouais Education Table (TÉO), and local schools.

UQO Rector Murielle Laberge praised the initiative's positive impact on children's well-being. "These projects will enable young people to experience unique moments outside the classroom while enriching their knowledge," she stated. "The real benefits for these children will be the significant steps they will take in their lives going forward."

Professor Lessard highlighted the alignment of partner objectives. "By combining our expertise and resources, we can train critical eco-citizens who are physically active and healthy in their minds, bodies, and hearts. Education outside the classroom fosters intellectual curiosity and strengthens academic knowledge, ultimately building a more positive outlook on learning and school," she explained.

One notable project is a summer camp at Boucher Forest, facilitated by UQO, the Boucher Forest Foundation, Loisir sport Outaouais and TÉO, and supported by Desjardins. The camp, designed for 36 children from the International School of the Village who are facing academic challenges, offers several learning cycles in the forest. These sessions are developed by the Boucher Forest Activities Committee (CAF) and implemented by qualified teachers and students in initial training at UQO. The camp will culminate in a reflective walk, where children will discuss their experiences based on

their logbooks.

Mageland Yepmézoué, general director of the Boucher Forest Foundation, accentuated the importance of early environmental education. "Raising children's awareness of conservation and preservation from a young age prepares them to consider environmental factors in future decisions, ensuring the Boucher Forest is protected for generations," he said. The foundation, established in 2007, focuses on protecting the flora and fauna of the Boucher Forest through educational projects and events, aiming to preserve ecosystems and promote ecological awareness.

Another significant initiative involves a pairing system between UQO's special education program students and children at Notre-Dame School in Old Hull who have academic difficulties. From September to December 2024, UQO students will provide nearly 300 hours of support through place-based learning, funded by the TÉO. This project aims to enhance

children's educational success by anchoring learning in their local environment, fostering a sense of belonging and meaningful community connections.

Steve Brabant, president of TÉO, highlighted the collaboration's importance. "These initiatives, supported by the Quebec Ministry of Education and the Portages-de-l'Outaouais School Services Centre, directly support children facing academic or behavioural challenges or living in disadvantaged environments. Our region's young people and families can count on the dedication and expertise of our partners," he noted.

Loisir sport Outaouais supports these projects by providing outdoor equipment through the eX3 program, including backpacks, seats, writing boards, binoculars, measuring tapes, and magnifying glasses, all aimed at cultivating children's intellectual curiosity. The eX3 program promotes outdoor learning to counteract nature deficit and enhance educational success.

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Why stimulate Quebec's social misfits?



FRED Ryan

Premier Legault's apparent long-term historical project -- to rid Quebec of the influence her native Anglo population (especially in Montreal and in regions, like our own, with sizable English-speaking populations) -- could easily become a monster that eats its own parents.

Several populations and regions, besides our own, have a clear and positive presence in Quebec's creation and history. Hard-working Scots and Irish who felled the wilderness, creating our first post-conquest economy; these are not the old Scots and Brits who sat on boardrooms and directed the lives of others -- Legault's

targets. The targets of most separatists are these old kingpins, not really the Irish guys with shovels who dug the Lachine canal by hand, for example.

Or could it be the sound of English that drives franco-fanatics berserk? Just its sound? So now Anglos have to learn to mumble, apparently, if we wish to preserve our language here where we live (along with the separatists).

Quebec's slo-mo exclusion of Anglos and things Anglo is force-feeding a widespread sense of grievance among that minority population. This is always fertile soil for a Rightist reaction and all that comes with that. Any long-term grievance is what feeds such reaction. That means trouble for all social groups -- since radical Right-wingers can be near-criminal

in action, attacking anyone in their way. Legault's project is, thus, creating new, and not softening old social problems.

Rightist reaction comes from groups without respect for "peace & good governance"; their targets can speak any language. Economic and social benefits are what integrate populations into the mainstream. So Isn't Legault putting more obstacles in the path of Quebec's societal maturity.

Squeezing the Anglos today -- in health care, and especially in education -- from daycare to university-- could slowly backfire and create a monster. That monster may be overcome at its start by Quebec's own police, but why create the confrontation in the first place? Any confrontation easily grows out of control.

Yes, it's likely that claiming the Anglos are the source of every problem in Quebec may distract attention away from genuine political problems and also may move some support to the CAQ, away from the other sovereigntist parties, but Quebec will remain in North America, surrounded by things anglo..

Premier Legault's party is stirring up problems even if Mr Legault himself is too cautious to deliberately do such a stupid thing. There are groups (& gangs) determined to stir up passions and prejudices, groups which attack immigrants and minimize education's values, who want to roll-back women's rights -- things like that. If they're fed, these negativist social forces will cripple all of Quebec.

LETTERS

to the **Editor** *Opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by the paper*

The Importance of Local Newspapers

Thank you, Lily Ryan. In the *Bulletin de Gatineau* last week I read an editorial written by Ms. Ryan highlighting the importance of local newspapers in our communities.

Without reservation I concur with Ms. Ryan's view.

Local newspapers are essential.

Local newspapers are an opportunity for every person in the community: they are an opportunity for each citizen to speak of that which concerns them, in a manner available to each, in the language of their choice; they are an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to them.

The objective content of local newspapers, on-line or paper, rewards citizens without resorting to the subjective information available on social media, through 'hearsay', or the internet.

The objective information provided by local newspapers is essential to every citizen.

I support, without reservation, local newspapers. They are essential to every citizen in every community, be it in our province, or in our country.

Thank you, Lily, for articulating this in your editorial.

Stephen Lloyd Aylmer

To see more of the *Post*, go to
westquebecpost.com

It's holiday time!

Even your newspaper is pausing for a much-needed vacation.

We'll be on vacation from July 18 to 31

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING ADVANCED BOOKING DEADLINES:

August 16 ISSUE
Book by: August 12 at noon

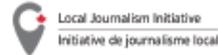
August 30 ISSUE
Book by: August 26 at noon

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Without Words



To better appreciate what is written here, it is good to actually perform the suggested simple movements.

Place your index finger across your chin with your thumb across the chin's side. With your arms slightly angled from your side, turn the palms outward-facing. Lift your shoulders. Purse your lips, throw your head back and roll your eyes. Bending your arms at the elbows, open your hands with palms upwards.

You may have concluded several things after completing the above. However, this is not for the purpose of physical exercise. It is an exercise to bring an awareness to a way in which we communicate with each other without vocalizing.

Hmmm, you were wondering, what is he writing about? Has he gone bonkers again? As you completed rolling your eyes while shrugging those shoulders, you might have concluded that this is some type of madness. Palms raised upwards? What am I offering up, or, what might this person be offering to me?

Gaze in a mirror. Smile broadly. Maintaining that smile, curl up one side of the mouth while opening your eyes wide and raising your eyebrows. The sincerity of that broad smile becomes one of cynicism. There are multiple interpretations of smiles to which any aspiring actor will attest. There's even a smile that can convey hatred.

The hands? Oh, those hands are the most visible sign of interacting with others. V for victory, index finger and thumb forming a circle indicates perfection. Thumbs up? Way to go! Thumbs down? Well, you know. There's the one with raised middle finger that's sometimes accentuated by bending the arm at the supporting elbow. This may be frequently observed by motorists interacting with each other. Add a steady horn blowing to further emphasize the message.

Shoulders stooped with head bowed, a figure shuffles along. Another's steps are sprightly, practically dancing along. They may even greet you with a wave of the hand. Observing these postures, how do you

respond? Do you return the wave? Do you acknowledge the presence of the one who appears depressed?

As toddlers in the early stages of our lives, our vocabulary was limited. There were those times when we desperately wanted to convey a message. Nobody was listening to what we wanted to say. No one loved us. Abandoned and frustrated, we lay on the floor, kicked our legs out, pounded our fists on the floor while howling out our woes to the ceiling and walls. In essence, we were 'throwing a tantrum.'

These moments of fury may not have been limited within the confines of our homes. To the embarrassment of our parents, they might have occurred in a church or other public setting.

As adults now, we may simply pound the stairs as we ascend them, or slam a door. We are, after all, more sophisticated. Heck, we might even revert to that silent treatment. 'I've said all that I'm going to say; I don't care about anything else that you have to say.'

Today, as you go about your daily life, you encounter others who are now in the roles that you yourself once were. There you are in a line-up out at the grocery store where, to the caregiver's chagrin, their child bellows a forlorn woe to all present. Do you cover your ears? Do you cover your face instead to play peek-a-boo to bring a smile to that child's face?

There is one certain act that you can do that will engage a child's attention in the throes of a tantrum. I do not know if this is a recommended manner of averting a tantrum. It's been over twenty years since I last attempted such an intervention. I guarantee that it is effective.

As the child kicks out while pounding fists on the floor, lay down beside him/her and do the same. Children adapt their behaviours to those surrounding them. Seeing an adult emulating childish behaviour almost always will bring laughter to their face. Then you can sit on the floor beside them to discover the reason for their acting out.

It is my hope that what I've written today will bring to your consciousness the fact that we all convey messages to others through our body language as well as through our words.



Neither Unique nor Irreplaceable

by Gwynne DYER

AUTHOR, HISTORIAN & INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST

Almost everybody who feels obliged to comment about the attempted assassination of Donald Trump is currently insisting that 'violence has no place in American politics,' but of course it has. Four US presidents have been assassinated while in office, and three others (now including Trump) have been injured in assassination attempts.

Seven presidents out of forty-five have been killed or wounded by a would-be assassin's bullet. That's a higher casualty rate than American soldiers suffered in any war of the past century. Violence plays a considerably larger role in American politics than it does in other developed countries, but it's not clear why.

It can't just be that the murder rate is much higher in America than in other fully developed countries (six times higher than Germany or Britain). The US murder rate is similar to the murder rate in semi-developed countries like Chile, Thailand or Russia, but none of those countries has a similar rate of political assassinations.

So we're left with the default answer. All those American presidents were shot by guns, which are universally available in the United States but rare elsewhere. The US has at least the same share of fanatics and nut-cases as other countries, so what did you expect?

The more interesting question is whether assassinations really change the course of history all that much. Intuition says yes, but historical experience says probably not.

Intuition says that the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865, just after his victory in the American Civil War, delayed the genuine emancipation of American blacks by at least a century.

Realism says the 'reconstruction' of race-based attitudes and institutions, especially in the South, was bound to take three or four generations no matter who was president. Indeed, the job is still not finished.

Intuition says that the Second World War would not have happened if any of the nine alleged assassination plots against Adolf Hitler during the 1930s (mostly by Germans) had succeeded.

Realism says the extreme character of the peace treaty imposed on the losing powers after the First World War made the Second World War inevitable. If not Hitler, then Himmler or Goebbels or Goering. If not the Nazis, then some other far-right German group seeking revenge for the 'unfairness' of history.

Intuition says the assassination of Robert

F. Kennedy in 1968, just when he was looking likely to win the Democratic presidential nomination, was a tragedy that prolonged the Vietnam war and opened the road to power for the criminal Richard Nixon.

Realism says that Kennedy might not have won the nomination, that if he did he might not have won the election – and if he had become president it would probably have taken him just as long to find a face-saving way out of the Vietnam mess as it actually took Nixon. True, there would have been no Watergate scandal, but so what?

And what if Saturday's bullet had hit Donald Trump about two fingers' width to the right and blown his brains out? Half the US population would be enraged and the other half would be secretly relieved, but how much would really be changed?

The Republican Party in the US would still be much farther to the right than it was ten years ago, and it's sheer nonsense to believe that Donald Trump was the sole cause for that slide into crude nationalism and populism.

Boris Johnson in Britain, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Marine Le Pen in France, Narendra Modi in India and half a dozen other populist leaders have been peddling similar falsehoods to similar demographic groups in deniable partnership with the same neo-liberal financial interests for years: Donald Trump is not unique, nor is he irreplaceable.

We are at what may be peak neo-liberalism right now. It began its rise with the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the United States in 1980, and for the next four-and-a-half decades the gulf between the very rich and the rest grew steadily wider almost everywhere.

There was nobody to put the brakes on before this process triggered a big political backlash, because the global rich are not that well organised. The victims were always free to vote against it, but mostly did not until the damage became too obvious to ignore. That is starting to happen now.

At this late stage in the cycle, the tactics of subtle misdirection must give way to the cruder distractions of nationalism and populism, and the Trumps and Johnsons of the world get their time on the stage. But they are stereotypes filling roles, not original thinkers with real plans.

As a number of people have pointed out, the graveyards are full of indispensable men.

Québec réagit à la levée de boucliers contre l'injustice

Prime étendue aux techniciens en imagerie médicale de Shawville, Wakefield et Mansfield



Tashi Farmilo

Dans le cadre d'un geste stratégique visant à stopper l'exode des techniciens en imagerie médicale

en milieu rural vers les hôpitaux de Gatineau et de l'Ontario, le Québec a annoncé l'élargissement des primes incitatives à tous les établissements de santé de l'Outaouais, y compris les hôpitaux de Wakefield et de Pontiac et le CLSC Mansfield.

L'annonce, qui a été partagée sur les médias sociaux jeudi par le député de Gatineau, Robert Bussière, survient à un moment critique pour la région. Malgré l'engouement suscité par la nouvelle, l'Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS) a précisé que l'entente est toujours en cours de négociation et n'a pas encore été finalisée. Le syndicat s'est abstenu de tout autre commentaire pour le moment.

Au départ, à la fin du mois de mai, l'APTS avait conclu une entente de principe avec le gouvernement du Québec pour accorder des primes annuelles de 22 000 \$ aux technologues en imagerie médicale des hôpitaux de Gatineau et de Hull. En conséquence, de nombreux techniciens ruraux ont demandé un transfert en ville, ce qui a incité le gouvernement à étendre les primes aux techniciens de Maniwaki et de Buckingham. Les techniciens de Maniwaki n'ont eu droit qu'à 18 000 \$ en raison de leur éloignement de la ville. Les techniciens de Wakefield, Shawville et Mansfield se voient maintenant offrir la prime de 18 000 \$.

Suite à la page 7



Commission scolaire Western Québec Western Québec School Board

AVIS PUBLIC ÉTUDE DU BUDGET 2024-2025

AVIS est par la présente donné que le conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Western Québec examinera son budget pour l'année 2024-2025 lors d'une séance extraordinaire qui sera tenu le 27 août 2024 à 19h au centre administratif de la Commission scolaire Western Québec, 15 rue Katimavik, Gatineau.

Donné à Gatineau, Québec, le 4 juillet 2024
Eldon Keon, secrétaire général

PUBLIC NOTICE 2024-2025 BUDGET STUDYING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Council of Commissioners of the Western Québec School Board will be studying its 2024-2025 budget at a special meeting to be held on August 27, 2024 at 7 p.m. at the offices of the Western Québec School Board, 15 Katimavik, Gatineau.

Given at Gatineau, Québec, July 4, 2024
Eldon Keon, Secretary General

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Québec réagit à la levée de boucliers contre l'injustice Prime étendue aux techniciens en imagerie médicale de Shawville, Wakefield et Mansfield

Suite de la page 6

Jane Toller, préfète de la MRC de Pontiac, a partagé sa réaction lors d'une récente entrevue. « J'ai appris cela par l'entremise de la Conférence des préfets de l'Outaouais (CPO). J'étais ravie parce que je craignais que, parce que le gouvernement avait rompu pour l'été, nous ne voyions aucun changement jusqu'en septembre, ce qui aurait été trop tard, entraînant la perte de certains de nos techniciens. Au début, nous n'étions pas inclus [dans les primes], et je pense que toute la communauté a donné une forte réaction au gouvernement, et ils ont écouté. Se voir offrir les mêmes primes de 18 000 \$ que Maniwaki et Wakefield est une bonne nouvelle. Les plus récentes informations que j'ai reçues du ministre responsable de l'Outaouais, Mathieu Lacombe, indiquent que tout se passe bien et qu'ils s'appêtent à signer. J'espère que nos techniciens resteront dans le Pontiac et que je travaillerai très fort pour combler les disparités salariales entre le Québec et l'Ontario. »

André Fortin, député de Pontiac, a présenté un point de vue plus critique sur la décision du gouver-

nement. « Depuis des mois, je réclame une prime équivalente pour les technologues en imagerie médicale de Shawville. L'annonce du gouvernement peut sembler une bonne nouvelle, mais après avoir consulté les technologues eux-mêmes, la réalité est claire. Certains technologues de Shawville disent qu'ils vont quand même être transférés à Hull ou dans un hôpital de l'Ontario parce que le gouvernement leur offre une prime de plusieurs milliers de dollars de moins que ce qui est offert en ville. Notre peuple ne mérite rien de moins! Le gouvernement de la CAQ doit cesser d'être têtue, réparer le gâchis qu'il a créé et offrir une prime complète aux travailleurs d'ici. Sinon, les services dans le Pontiac en souffriront ».

M. Fortin a ajouté : « Déjà, au cours des dernières semaines, il y a eu des interruptions de service en imagerie à l'Hôpital du Pontiac. Si les équipes sont réduites parce que les technologues occupent des postes en ville ou en Ontario, les gens de Pontiac en feront les frais. Ils devront se rendre en ville pour obtenir des services de base, ce que personne ne devrait avoir à faire. » Trad. : PJ



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Réhabex introduces mobile support unit to aid homeless population in Outaouais



Tashi **Farmilo**

In a landmark effort to support the homeless population in the Outaouais region, Réhabex, a social rehabilitation organization, has launched an innovative initiative: the Réhabus. This mobile assistance centre, uniquely designed to provide essential services to the homeless, was unveiled on Friday during a gathering of community supporters and local dignitaries.

The Réhabus is no ordinary bus. Fitted with showers, laundry facilities, a snack area, and private spaces for confidential consultations, it aims to restore dignity and provide crucial support to the region's homeless population. Over the next three years, the Réhabus will travel to strategic locations throughout Gatineau, including the Guertin site, delivering its vital services directly to those in need.

Patrick Pilon, CEO of Réhabex, spoke passionately at the launch event, highlighting the pressing issues of homelessness and the need for basic services. "In our community, there are still individuals who lack access to fundamental necessities like showers and laundry facilities," Pilon said. "The Réhabus is our response to this urgent need, offering dignity and hope to those who are often overlooked."

The Réhabus project is ambitious, with annual operating costs estimated at \$275,000. The initial investment for the bus and its modifications amounted to approximately \$160,000. Funding and support have come from a variety of sources, including Dilawri Auto, Devcore, the City of Gatineau, CISSSO, and numerous local businesses and individuals. These contributions underscore the community's commitment to tackling homelessness.

The launch event was attended by several political figures, reflecting broad-based support for the initiative. Among them were Suzanne Tremblay, MNA for



Community leaders gathered in Gatineau to support the launch of Réhabex's Réhabus, a mobile assistance centre providing essential services to the homeless in the Outaouais region. (TF) PHOTO: TASHI FARMILO

Hull, Mathieu Lévesque, MNA for Chapleau, and Steve Moran, Councillor for the District of Hull-Wright, as well as Mario Aubé, Councillor for the District of Masson-Angers. Julie Gervais attended on behalf of Steven MacKinnon, MP for Gatineau, further signifying the project's importance.

"We are thrilled to have the backing of our political leaders," Pilon noted. "Their presence here today is a powerful endorsement of the Réhabus and its mission to provide essential services to those in need."

The Réhabus will not only operate within Gatineau but will also extend its services to Pontiac, Petite-Nation, and Maniwaki, starting next Monday. The bus is expected to facilitate over 3,500 interventions annually, encompassing everything from basic hygiene ser-

vices to employability and alternative justice support. This wide-ranging approach aims to address both immediate needs and long-term rehabilitation.

Pilon extended heartfelt thanks to key partners and contributors who made the Réhabus possible. Notable mentions included Karine Chatel from Gîte Ami, with special recognition given to Guy Paquet for his plumbing expertise and Impression Turbo Printing for their graphic design work.

The event's atmosphere was charged with optimism and a sense of collective purpose. Pilon acknowledged the invaluable contributions of his team and the broader community, emphasizing that the Réhabus is a project "for the community, by the community."

Police pursuit leads to Buckingham golf course before ending on foot



Taylor **Clark**

Two individuals were arrested on July 8 after leading police on a short chase that ended with the suspects' vehicle being stuck on a golf course in Buckingham.

While on evening patrol, the Service de police de la Ville de Gatineau began to pursue a vehicle that refused to stop upon request. The car had caught the attention of police earlier due to its poor general condition, along with mismatched front and rear number plates.

Throughout the pursuit, the driver was seen committing several Highway Safety Code violations, which led police to call off the chase, citing safety concerns. A few moments later, the suspect vehicle was spotted by police at the intersection of Church and Soucy streets but managed to bypass the patrol car that was trying to block its path.

Officers later obtained information that the suspect vehicle had made its way onto the Club de golf Buckingham on Bélanger Street where several people were located. The car was found stuck on the golf course with the driver no longer aboard.

Suspecting the driver fled on foot, a perimeter was

established, and police began their search. The suspect was quickly found getting into a taxi with another individual. The 46-year-old man and 44-year-old woman were arrested and transported to the police station. Upon meeting with investigators, the man was linked to a break-in that occurred earlier that day at a business on Boulevard de la Gappe in the Gatineau sector.

Both appeared before the Court of Québec on July 9. The man faced several charges including fleeing, dangerous driving, driving while disqualified, obstructing police, and breaches of conditions. The woman faced charges of breach of probation along with possession of drugs.

Chelsea Council: New School Challenge



Charles Hervé, Chelsea's City Clerk advised on the upcoming arrangements for a new school. PHOTO: REUEL S AMDUR



REUEL S. Amdur

The major concern of the Chelsea Council meeting on July 3 was the steps needed to move forward on construction of a new school. If the school is to be ready for September, 2026, land must be transferred by August 31. However, there is a sticking point. The land owner and Chelsea are not in agreement with the price. If the price gap cannot be resolved, expropriation may be necessary.

Council voted to engage the law firm of Bélanger Sauvé to act on behalf of the municipality in taking necessary steps. Voting against were Rita Jain and Enrico Valente. Valente expressed his dislike of expropriation.

This Council meeting was the first time we met Charles Hervé, the municipality's city clerk and legal advisor. At the meeting, he added his comments on some matters that came before the session.

Chelsea launches new citizen platform "Pivot"



Tashi Farmilo

The Municipality of Chelsea has proudly introduced Pivot, a state-of-the-art digital platform developed to improve communication and streamline online services for residents. This innovative tool was created through a collaboration between Quebec's Blanko digital agency and Gatineau's Orkestra design agency, in partnership with Chelsea's Communications Department.

Pivot is set to transform the way Chelsea residents engage with their local government. By centralising all online services into one user-friendly platform, Pivot aims to make communication more efficient and accessible.

To maximise resident participation, Chelsea has scheduled a second promotional launch for the fall of 2024. This effort aims to encourage more residents to register and utilise Pivot's features.

Key features of Pivot are tailored to meet the diverse needs of Chelsea's residents. It offers customizable notifications and alerts on a variety of topics, such as waste collection, water network updates, municipal events, and construction information. These notifications can be delivered via email, text message, or automated call, and are especially valuable during emergencies.

Residents can now apply for permits online and receive updates via email, streamlining the process. The platform also allows residents to report non-urgent issues, such as road conditions or collection delays, and submit requests or complaints, with



The Municipality of Chelsea has launched Pivot, a new digital platform developed with Blanko and Orkestra to enhance communication and streamline online services for residents, with additional features and improvements planned for the future. (TF) PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF CHELSEA

email updates provided on the status of their submissions. Additionally, Pivot enables residents to subscribe to the monthly municipal newsletter and access the Cocoriko public consultation platform, further enhancing municipal communications.

Chelsea's dedication to improving Pivot is evident in the planned future features, including a mobile application for Android and iOS, a reservation system for community rooms, and online payment options for permits and community room bookings. These enhancements aim to make municipal services more accessible and provide an optimal user experience for all residents.

For more information and to register on Pivot, residents are encouraged to visit the Municipality of Chelsea's official website: <https://www.chelsea.ca/en/news/launch-pivot-chelseas-new-online-citizen-portal>.

Chelsea prepares for new elementary school opening in 2026



Tashi Farmilo

In a pivotal move toward advancing Chelsea's educational landscape, the municipality has officially set the wheels in motion for the construction of a new elementary school, set to open its doors in 2026. This ambitious project, which has been eagerly anticipated by the community for years, marks a significant investment in the education and well-being of Chelsea's children.

At the regular council meeting on July 2, the municipal council adopted a crucial resolution to initiate the expropriation process under the Act respecting expropriation (RLRQ, c. E-25). This step ensures that the land transfer will occur in time for construction to commence this fall.

The school will be situated at the intersection of chemins Relais and Cecil in Chelsea, a strategic location designed to promote active travel, encouraging students to walk or bike to school. This thoughtful planning is part of a broader vision to integrate the school into the heart of the community, enhancing both educational and recreational facilities.

The project is not just about constructing a new school; it's about creating a vibrant community hub. The existing soccer fields will be preserved, and parking spaces will be designed to serve both the school and the adjacent sports fields. Nearly 300 children from Chelsea will benefit from this new primary school, which promises to offer modern facilities and a stimulating learning environment.

Mayor Pierre Guénard expressed his excitement about the project, and impressed its importance for the community. "The construction of a new school has been desired and awaited for several years by the municipality and the population. We are pleased to see this project to build a new school come to fruition, a direct investment in the education of our children and in the quality of life of our families. With the Meredith Centre nearby, the population of Chelsea will have the opportunity to benefit from a true community and recreational hub, all in a magnificent environment in the village centre," he said.

The Centre de services scolaire des Portages-de-l'Outaouais (CSSPO) will oversee the construction of the school. While the municipality is tasked with providing the land, the responsibility for the design, planning, and building of the school falls to CSSPO. As of June 3, 2024, the project had reached 30% completion in its conceptual phase. The planned school, known as Project: Construction – Primary School 039, will house 16 classrooms and accommodate up to 384 students from pre-school to grade 6.

To meet the construction timeline, the municipality must transfer the land to CSSPO by August 24, allowing construction to begin in December 2024. This timeline ensures that the school will be ready to welcome students by the 2026 academic year.

This new elementary school represents a significant milestone for Chelsea, promising not only to enhance the quality of education but also to strengthen the community by providing a dedicated space for learning and recreation.

How public markets in Gatineau are creating community

Public markets are not only a way to support and buy local, but also a great way to connect with people from your area. From May to October, plenty of public markets can be found in Gatineau, each offering different services and products.



Djeneba **Dosso**

When asked if shopping at public markets is a luxury, Lucie Daragon was quick to replace the word luxury with investment. The senior has been attending markets across the Outaouais for more years than she can count and in her opinion, it is clear that when paying for fresh produce, every penny is worth spending.

"It is not a luxury; it's an investment to encourage our people, our producers; and, it's important to do it," she said. "Some people are passionate about it; some people aren't interested in it; but the goal is finding those people who aren't interested and making them curious enough to come check it [public markets] out."

Over the years, Gatineau has amassed an army of markets, each located in different sectors of the city and offering various selections of vendors and products. These markets are made accessible based not only on their location but on their hours of operations as well, which often fall on weekends. Yet, Daragon notes that most markets are frequented by regulars and an older crowd rather than new and young faces.

"People don't come because they assume it's too expensive, but we pay for the quality and the freshness," she said. "Often in grocery stores, it's a long way off. They travel a long way with it; they arrive here and the next day they put it on the shelves. Here, produce is often picked in the morning and sold that same morning or early afternoon."

The question remains; besides pricing and freshness, what sets supermarkets apart from public markets? For some, it may be selection, for others, practicality, as most



Lucie Daragon has been shopping at the Vieux-Hull public markets for years now.

Used to seeing the same faces, she encourages young and curious people to come see what each market has to offer for them. (DD)

PHOTO: DJENEBA DOSSO

markets are only open once a week. For Marguerite Jarry Suarez, owner of Studio Crudo, what makes public markets unique is community. The entrepreneur has been creating vegan candles and custom tote bags since the pandemic. After refining her work, she began looking for places to possibly sell it and public markets welcomed her with open arms. Now, she displays her work at the Vieux-Hull and Outaouais Creative markets two to three times each month. She's found that the long or short exchanges with each customer make all the difference.

"I love connecting with people. I am from the Dominican Republic, and we're known to be warm-blooded," she said. "It's great being able to talk with different people and the other vendors who have become great

friends. If one day I ever need a necklace, I know who to call and I would be supporting their business."

Buying and supporting local businesses is "of paramount importance" for Daragon.

"It's important to keep an eye on the ecology, the environment and our ecological footprint," she continued. "If anything happens, we'll have no more farmers, no more market gardeners; we'll have nothing. You've got to support them and buy locally."

Each market in Gatineau and the Outaouais region will be open throughout the summer until the end of the season in October. Whether it be produce, clothing, artisanal work or local gems, a public market near you may just have what you're looking for.

FIND A PUBLIC MARKET NEAR YOU

Vieux-Hull Market (currently seeking more vendors)

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Plateau Market (currently seeking more vendors)

205 de Bruxelles Street
Every Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm

Old-Aylmer Market

117 Principale Street
Every Sunday from 9 am to 2 pm

Notre-Dame Market

330 Notre-Dame Street
Every Friday from 11 am to 3 pm

Buckingham Farmers' Market

390 Buckingham Avenue
Every Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm

Chelsea Market

23 Cecil Road
Every Thursday from 4 pm to 7 pm

L'Ange-Gardien Market

735 Pierre-Laporte
Every Friday from 11 am to 4 pm

Perkins Market

1733 du Carrefour Rte, Val-des-Monts
Every Friday from 2 pm to 7 pm

Wakefield Market

38 de la Vallée de Wakefield Road
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3 Markets

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Fermier de la Paix Market

267 Notre-Dame Street
Every Friday from 3 pm to 7 pm

Quebec Government launches public consultation for innovative mobility strategy



Tashi **Farmilo**

In a bold move to transform the province's transportation systems, the Quebec government has launched a public consultation to develop its first strategy for innovative mobility. Geneviève Guilbault, Vice Premier and Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility, announced this initiative, marking a significant step in

the province's efforts to integrate cutting-edge technologies and methods into its transportation networks.

Running until October 1, the consultation invites stakeholders and the general public to provide their input on how to enhance the fluidity, safety, and intelligence of Quebec's transportation systems. Participants can contribute by responding to an online questionnaire on the www.quebec.ca website, which aims

to identify the priorities and means of action for the development strategy. This offers a platform for a wide range of voices to influence the future of mobility in the province.

At the heart of this strategy lies the concept of innovative mobility, which seeks to leverage new technologies and novel approaches to create efficient, personalised, and sustainable transportation solutions. This includes advancements

such as electric-assisted bicycles, car-sharing services, and journey planning applications. These innovations aim to offer more options and greater convenience to users while addressing environmental concerns and reducing traffic congestion.

"Quebecers are eager for innovation, and the transport sector is fertile ground for such advancements," said Guilbault.

Continued on page 12

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LE GRAND FEU D'AYLMER DE 1921 - Visite guidée (walking tour) avec Lynne Rodier : le mercredi 24 juillet à 18 h 30

(point de départ : Centre culturel du Vieux-Aylmer / retour au parc Commémoratif). Le paysage du Vieux-Aylmer conserve les traces du Grand feu de 1921. Il s'agit de bien l'observer. L'incendie est survenu lors d'une belle journée ensoleillée, le 10 août 1921. La rapidité avec laquelle se sont propagées les flammes marque toujours l'imaginaire de la communauté aylméroise. Cette visite revient sur les sites illustres du sinistre en plus de faire valoir les nombreuses transformations apportées au quartier historique. Profitez de l'été! Merci au Service des arts, de la culture et des lettres de la Ville de Gatineau de son appui pour cette activité gratuite.

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Quebec expands incentive bonuses for Medical Imaging Technologists in Outaouais



Tashi **Farmilo**

In a strategic move to address staffing shortages and maintain essential medical imaging services, Quebec has announced the expansion of incentive bonuses for medical imaging technologists to include all healthcare facilities in the Outaouais region, encompassing the Wakefield and Shawville hospitals.

The announcement, which was shared on social media Thursday by Gatineau provincial Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) Robert Bussière, comes at a critical time for the region. Despite the excitement generated by the news, the Alliance of Professional and Technical Staff in Health and Social Services (APTS) has clarified that the agreement is still under negotiation and has not yet been finalised. The union has refrained from making further comments at this time.

Initially, at the end of May, the APTS had reached a tentative agreement with the Quebec government to provide annual bonuses of \$22,000 to medical imaging technologists at Gatineau and Hull hospitals. This measure aimed to mitigate the risk of service disruptions due to a severe manpower shortage. However, the scope

of the initiative has now been broadened.

Robert Bussière, Member of the National Assembly for Gatineau, expressed his satisfaction with the expansion. He announced, "I am very pleased to announce that our government has agreed with the APTS union to expand medical imaging technologist premiums across Outaouais facilities, including Wakefield and Shawville hospitals. The amount of these premiums amounts to \$18,000 for the two hospital centres. I applaud the work of my colleagues from the caucus: Sonia LeBel, Member of the National Assembly for Champlain, Mathieu Lévesque, Member of the National Assembly for Chapleau, Christian Dubé, Member of the National Assembly for La Prairie, the Minister of the Treasury Council Mathieu Lacombe, Member of the National Assembly for Papineau, and the Minister of Health Suzanne Tremblay, Member of the National Assembly for Hull. With this agreement, we thus ensure the stability of the medical imaging workforce for the entire greater region of the Outaouais."

Bussière further elaborated on the government's efforts since announcing potential service disruptions last April. He highlighted the substantial financial incentives offered to full-time technologists across the region, including \$22,000 to those at the hospital

centres in Hull, Gatineau, and Papineau, and \$18,000 to those at other institutions, including Maniwaki, Wakefield, Shawville, the Mini Emergency of the Petite Nation of St-André-Avelin (CLSC Petite-Nation), and CLSC Mansfield-et-Pontefract.

Jane Toller, Warden of the MRC Pontiac, shared her reaction in a recent interview. "I learned about this through the CPO, which is the Organization of Wardens in the Outaouais. I was delighted because my concern had been knowing that the government had broken for the summer, that we would see no change until September. And I felt it would be too late and we would lose some of our technicians. Initially, we were not included, and I think the whole community gave a strong reaction to the government, and they listened. Seeing that we were also offered the same \$18,000 as Maniwak and Wakefield was good news. The most recent information I received from Mathieu Lacombe's office and confirmation from the Minister indicates that everything is proceeding well and they are getting ready to sign. I hope that our technicians will stay in the Pontiac, and I will work very hard on addressing the salary disparities between Quebec and Ontario."

André Fortin, Member of the National Assembly for Pontiac, provided a more critical perspective on the government's decision. "For months, I have been demanding an equivalent bonus for Shawville's medical imaging technologists. The government's announcement might have seemed like

good news, but after consulting with the technologists themselves, the reality is clear. Some of the technologists in Shawville say they will still transfer to Hull or an Ontario hospital because the government is offering them a bonus that is several thousand dollars less than what is provided in the city. Our people deserve no less! The CAQ government must stop being stubborn, fix the mess it created, and offer a full bonus to the workers here. Otherwise, services in the Pontiac will suffer."

Fortin continued, "Already, in recent weeks, there have been service disruptions in imaging at Pontiac Hospital. If teams are reduced because technologists take positions in the city or in Ontario, the people of Pontiac will bear the brunt. They will have to travel to the city for basic services, which no one should have to do."

The urgency of the situation was underscored when Philippe Bessette highlighted the critical condition of the region's healthcare workforce on social media. Bessette noted that out of seven medical imaging technologists, four are considering relocating to Gatineau to benefit from the \$22,000 bonus, rather than staying in Wakefield.

As the situation progresses, stakeholders throughout the Outaouais region remain optimistic that the agreement will soon be ratified, providing critical support to the healthcare system and its workers. For the latest updates on this developing story, continue to follow local news sources and official announcements from the Quebec government and APTS.

Quebec Government launches public consultation for innovative mobility strategy

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"As more sustainable mobility solutions emerge, our government is proud to support these innovations and ensure that our transport networks become safer and more efficient through new technologies. I invite all Quebecers to contribute to the development of the innovative mobility strategy."

This initiative emphasises the need for a coordinated effort between the government, municipal authorities, and transportation service providers to create innovative mobility services. The strategy will address both passenger and freight transport, aiming to optimise travel and enhance the overall user experience.

Key components of this strategy include integrating intelligent transport systems (ITS), which involve digital devices designed to improve the management and

operation of transport networks, and developing automated and connected vehicles capable of performing driving tasks partially or fully while communicating with other digital devices to ensure a seamless and safe journey.

The government also plans to implement pilot projects, such as those regulating motorised personal transport devices, as part of the broader strategy. These initiatives will provide valuable insights and help shape the regulatory framework needed to support innovative mobility solutions.

In addition to the questionnaire, stakeholders in the innovation community, including companies, organisations, university professors, or interested citizens, can send a brief by email to mobilitesinnovantes@transports.gouv.qc.ca. This process ensures that the consultation captures a diverse range of perspectives and expertise.

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