

Many seniors use bridge on their daily trips to downtown businesses

Many of whom are seniors, who use the bridge, which is about 30 feet, daily to get access to food, fill medical prescriptions and to meet with friends for coffee.

Jillian Bishop, who lives in an apartment on Millside Drive with her father, described how using the bridge is a part of many people's everyday routine, including hers.

The 18-year-old, who was taking her 10-month-old dog Ella for a walk near the bridge last Tuesday afternoon (June 4), said she takes daily walks with her father, who has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), an illness that limits how far he can walk because the disease affects his lungs in a way where his airways narrow over time.

"It's like walking up the stairs breathing through a straw is the best way I can explain it," she said of her father's struggles to breathe.

The bridge, Bishop said, may not mean a lot to some, but to those living in the neighbourhood, it's a key access point to the downtown



Millside Drive residents Donna Stover (left) and Mary Fraser stop on the bridge to talk about its future. *Graham Paine / Canadian Champion (Follow on Twitter @halton_photog)*

core.

A CH report reveals removing the structure is estimated to cost \$10,000, while repairing it would

be \$12,500. Replacing the structure altogether with a prefabricated pedestrian structure could run between \$20,000 and \$28,000.

CH's Risk and Land Holdings Services Manager Niall Lobley said the organization is still in the early stages of making a call on the matter.

Weighing in that decision is the fact that the bridge links to private properties, which means there is no legal right of any third party to use the structure. There's a sign up near the walkway from Millside Street to the bridge that reads, "private walkway, use at own risk."

The organization's mandate, Lobley told the *Champion*, is to maintain the channel underneath the bridge as a flood defence.

"We have no mandate and therefore no funding to provide public access across this bridge..." he said.

Still, Lobley added CH does recognize the value the bridge brings to local residents.

As one possible solution to retain the bridge, he said it's looking for someone else to take ownership of the bridge.

It's contacted the Town of Milton and surrounding property owners to open a discussion.

Town of Milton Engineering Director Paul Cripps said given the bridge's close proximity to two municipal streets with sidewalks

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