

Conseil municipal
Hôtel de ville
4333, rue Sherbrooke O.
Westmount, QC H3Z 1E2



Municipal Council
City Hall
4333 Sherbrooke Street W.
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For immediate release

Houses of Worship By-laws for a sustainable future

Westmount, May 6, 2019—Three draft by-laws were tabled at City Council this Monday, May 6th to protect and help secure a viable future for Westmount's twelve heritage houses of worship.

Draft by-laws to protect Westmont's Houses of Worship and facilitate their financial stability

- By-law to amend the zoning by-law: this regulation will create new zones around existing places of worship to preserve their cultural functions. The recognition of the heritage value of places of worship in urban areas is also a directive from the Agglomeration Council of Montreal.
[More information on draft by-law 1539](#)
- By-law authorizing additional uses within houses of worship: this regulation will allow houses of worship to rent their vacant spaces for community, cultural or office uses that are unrelated to their worship activities. It will help congregations diversify their sources of income while maintaining religious and community activities.
[More information on draft by-law 1540 on additional uses](#)
- By-law on conditional uses within houses of worship: this regulation will give the Council the power to authorize, under certain conditions, the use of specific spaces in houses of worship for commercial purposes.
[More information on draft by-law 1541 on conditional uses](#)

These draft regulations will be the subject of public consultation at City Hall on Thursday, May 23rd, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Westmount's Houses of Worship Project

The implementation of these regulations is part of the execution phase of the Houses of Worship Project launched in the fall of 2018 by the City's Urban Planning Department. The objective of the project is to enable houses of worship to adapt to the decline in attendance and the rise in building maintenance costs.

A Project *for and with* the Community

The various meetings and discussion groups with representatives from various religious communities and houses of worship management contributed to the publication of twelve value statements, one for each of Westmount's houses of worship. These value statements are available on the City's website.

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An online consultation carried out in November 2018 indicated that a majority of respondents were in favour of amending municipal regulations to authorize other uses within houses of worship. City Council members are confident that the adoption of these by-laws will contribute to the sustainability of houses of worship in Westmount.

Following the adoption of the by-laws, City Council will propose, in the fall of 2019, the adoption of another by-law amending the Planning Programme and the S.C.A.O.P.I by-law (Specific construction, alteration or occupancy proposals for an immovable) to provide a framework for the possible conversion of houses of worship buildings as a last resort.

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Source:

Anne Renaud
Executive Assistant, Mayor's Office
arenaud@westmount.org
514 989-5240