



2023 ACTION PLAN

CONCERNING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



VILLE DE | CITY OF
WESTMOUNT



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

I am pleased to share with you our 2023 Action Plan Concerning Persons with Disabilities. The purpose of this plan is to eliminate barriers that prevent the full inclusion of people with disabilities in educational, professional and community life.

I am proud of the services and policies that Westmount has implemented over the years to provide an inclusive environment and ensure social integration for all members of our community. However, there is always room for new ideas and means of advancing universal accessibility.

I invite you to read the 2022 report and the goals for 2023, as well as the ongoing services listed in the appendix, and to share your opinions and your needs with us.

We want to hear from you about what works and what can be improved to make our City even more accessible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina M. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "S" at the end.

Christina M. Smith
Mayor of Westmount

INTRODUCTION

The City of Westmount fully supports the mission of the *Office des personnes handicapées du Québec (OPHQ)* to advance the principles and rules set forth in the *Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration (the Act)*.

The City is committed to collaborating with residents, the OPHQ, and other organizations to improve its services and programmes for persons with disabilities, and reduce barriers that prevent their participation in society. In accordance with subsection 61.1 of the Act, the City of Westmount hereby submits its 2023 Action Plan.

Internal working group on accessibility in Westmount:

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2022 REPORT

The City of Westmount continues to integrate accessibility into its programmes and services, albeit in some cases more slowly than desired. Some projects identified in the 2022 Action Plan will be carried out or

completed in 2023. Please note also that some items that were deferred from 2021 to 2022 appear below for the purpose of following up on both action plans.

OBSTACLE	PROPOSED MESURES	DEPARTMENT	FAVOURABLE OUTCOMES	STATUS
Some businesses remain inaccessible and not all merchants are aware of the experiences of persons with disabilities.	Disseminate information to merchants regarding subsidies for renovations (PEA programme of the SHQ) and accessible customer service.	Urban Planning Communications	Increase in the number of commercial spaces in the City (as listed in the Access Westmount Guide). Feedback from clients.	Deferred from 2021. A 1 st message was sent to merchants in January 2022. Other messages were held up due to a hiatus in the PEA programme and publication delays (merchants' networks). A reprise will be possible in 2023.
Uneven availability of adapted equipment in public playgrounds (multi-year project).	Continue to install accessible and specially-adapted play equipment in public parks. Ensure sufficient benches and shaded rest areas.	Public Works	Installation of accessible play equipment and park furniture at the Sommerville Tot Lot and at Devon Park.	Sommerville Tot Lot completed in 2021 & 2022 - all play equipment & furniture was installed. Devon Park Phase 1 completed (equipment removed, pathways improved; see goals for 2023)
Some individuals with visual incapacity have difficulty with orientation in public parks.	Look at wayfinding tools that can function with smartphones.	Communications Public Works	Installation of a wayfinding system in Westmount Park.	The software was researched in 2022, but an expert advised against using it based on experience. The departments are looking at other approaches to wayfinding for persons with visual impairments.
Not all municipal employees are sensitized to the experiences of persons living with a disability.	Offer employees training opportunities and tools to help them better serve clients with various disabilities.	Human Resources Communications	Training carried out; Adaptation of buildings or services if required.	A regular <i>Accessible City</i> item was included in the weekly employee newsletter in 2022 (for ex. OPHQ videos on adapted customer service, awareness days, public consultations, etc.).

2022 REPORT

Continued

OBSTACLE	PROPOSED MESURES	DEPARTMENT	FAVOURABLE OUTCOMES	STATUS
Some individuals have difficulty navigating the City's website and downloading documents. Also, the site is not easily accessible to persons using screen reader software.	Review the site in the context of web accessibility standards. Integrate more functions to make the reading of documents easier. Include accessible pdfs as much as possible.	Communications	Redesign of website to meet the highest possible accessibility standards. Feedback from users.	The website redesign planned in 2022 was deferred to 2023 and work is now in progress. The Communications Division's goal is to surpass the WCAG and SGQRI website standards.
In general, the public is not very aware of the daily realities for persons with disabilities.	Increase the availability and presence of information, images and culture associated with persons with disabilities in municipal publicity and in City buildings. Promote awareness days related to disabilities in the City.	Library and Community Events Communications	Prepare a calendar of awareness days and events (for ex. International Day of Persons with Disabilities) and use those days to increase general awareness of the experiences of people and other relevant information in City media. Promote those awareness days by highlighting materials already in the collection of the Public Library.	Reading lists and displays of Library documents related to persons with disabilities were done during 2022, including a bibliography specific to dyslexia. Outside information was relayed via municipal channels concerning public consultations and awareness days in 2022 (for ex. the CBC national consultation on disability).
Employees most likely to have contact with vulnerable persons are not all sensitized to the experiences of individuals living with dementia, and persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder.	Add to the training profile of Public Safety officers the VDT (Virtual Dementia Tour) training and the Giant Steps training (intervention strategies involving persons with ASD).	Public Safety	Training completed. Favorable outcomes from interventions involving persons with dementia and persons with ASD.	Deferred because due to personnel shortages, pandemic restrictions and availability. A reprise is planned for 2023. (N.B.: a new PSU project began in 2022; see immediately below.)
Some older persons in the community do not have access to electronic media and communications, making it more difficult to reach this population and understand their needs.	Continue reaching out to older citizens by phone and in person. Encourage these individuals to sign up to phone monitoring services and email, if possible. Continue to distribute print information in the community.	Public Safety Communications	Increased sign-ups to services for vulnerable persons offered by Westmount and by the Service d'incendie de Montréal (SSIM). Increased sign ups to Westmount's community emergency notification service.	Westmount's Public Safety Unity added a new team in 2022. These officers take part in activities in collaboration with a local seniors' organization and are very visible in the community.

2022 REPORT

Continued

OBSTACLE	PROPOSED MESURES	DEPARTMENT	FAVOURABLE OUTCOMES	STATUS
Persons with visual impairments have difficulty locating the pedestrian call buttons at some intersections.	Find a system to make it easier to located the call buttons.	Hydro Westmount	Installation of call buttons with auditory or tactile technologies.	Deferred due to a lack of qualified personnel (electricians). A pilot project is planned for the first quarter of 2023.

Actions favouring accessibility that were not part of the original 2022 goals.

OBSTACLE	PROPOSED MESURES	DEPARTMENT	FAVOURABLE OUTCOMES	STATUS
Fines for overdue loans from the public Library may present an economic barrier or a barrier for persons with reduced mobility (when having to pay fines in person and in cash).	Abolish overdue fines on all Library materials. This initiative has been adopted elsewhere as part of the international <i>Fine Free Library</i> movement, which aims to increase accessibility to public library spaces.	Library and Community Events	Abolition of library fines for overdue materials	Adopted in autumn 2022, and implemented January 1 st .
Not all municipal employees are sensitized to issues related to inclusivity and ways in which the work environment can favour this.	Encourage professional development, as well as a work environment favouring diversity and inclusion.	Human Resources	Provide training to human resources managers in relevant issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion and principles to apply in the workplace.	Carried out in February 2022.

2023 GOALS

A new website is scheduled to be implemented in 2023; this will allow all departments to better represent their services and programs to the public and take advantage of new functionalities. The Communications Division aims to exceed the WCAG and SGQRI web accessibility standards and provide easier

navigation for all users, including those who use adaptive technologies like screen reader applications. Otherwise, the City of Westmount will continue to develop all its programs and services with universal accessibility as a goal.

OBSTACLE	GOAL	DEPT. RESPONSIBLE	MEASURES AND TIMELINE	SUCCESS INDICATORS
The municipal website is not fully accessible to all users. A redesign planned for 2022 was delayed for internal and external reasons and will be carried out in 2023.	Take advantage of a planned redesign of the City website to surpass WCAG et SGQRI accessibility standards.	Communications	The redesign was underway in late 2022 and will be completed by mid to late 2023.	Easier navigation and access to the website and its documents by any user, particularly persons with visual impairments.
Uneven availability of adapted equipment in public playgrounds (multi-year project).	Continue to install accessible and specially-adapted play equipment in public parks Ensure sufficient benches and shaded rest areas.	Public Works	Devon Park: installation of accessible play structures (spring 2023) and new landscaping (fall 2023). Westmount Park: drinking fountains to be replaced by accessible ones; walking paths to be improved (summer 2023). King George Park: walking paths to be improved for accessibility (summer 2023).	Installation of equipment and landscaping completed in all 3 parks.
A number of senior residents avoid going out in public because of a lack of confidence. Some have asked for training in self-defense.	Offer workshops and other opportunities for practical skills that will enhance autonomy for seniors.	Sports & Recreation	Courses to be offered in self defense and in first aid specifically for seniors and for young persons. Planned for winter and spring 2023.	Workshops offered by the City and public response. Feedback from participants.
Hydro Westmount's online services are part of the municipal website, which does not have all of the functionalities of a utilities provider. Some customers have difficulty finding all of the information they are seeking.	Develop a client-based portal or customer space that offers quick and easy access to Hydro Westmount user accounts and forms.	Hydro Westmount	A new Hydro Westmount portal is in development and is scheduled to be launched in 2023 (date to be determined).	Implementation of the portal. Feedback from Hydro Westmount clients.

2023 GOALS

Continued

OBSTACLE	GOAL	DEPT. RESPONSIBLE	MEASURES AND TIMELINE	SUCCESS INDICATORS
The main entrance of the Library has minor accessibility issues, particularly water accumulation on the roof that may cause runoff at the door. The ramp is also in need of improvement.	Repair and refurbishment work to be carried out at the main entrance.	Library and Community Events	Work is scheduled to take place in spring 2023.	Completion of work. The entrance from the Conservatory (with ramp) will be available as an alternate accessible entrance to the Library for the brief duration of this work, while the main entrance is blocked.
Residents may not be aware of the accessibility features of the Library and Victoria Hall buildings and the equipment available.	Include in the Library and Community Events publications information about the accessibility features of these buildings, as well as any special equipment available to users (for ex., listening device).	Library and Community Events	Purchase of equipment and announcement of its availability (autumn 2023)	Purchase accessibility-related equipment, such as a listening device or hearing loop for participants in activities such as book clubs. Information to be included in the Fall 2023 brochure (Sept-Dec).
Accessible purchasing and procurement is already in practice by the City departments, but an overall policy has never been formalized.	Adoption of a general accessible purchasing and procurement policy for the City.	Finance Department	In preparation (target date to be determined)	Adoption and announcement of a general purchasing policy that outlines the City's approach to accessibility procurement.
The City's equal opportunity employment policy, accessible purchasing policies, and accessible public spaces are not always well known to the public.	Make this information more prominent on the City's website and in municipal printed materials. Publish reminders in the City's media.	Communications	Highlight the municipal employment policy, which already appears in every job posting, on the website career page and other media. Add a statement to the <i>Access Westmount Guide</i> outlining the City's policy on accessible public spaces.	Easy-to-find information about municipal accessibility policies in the City's documents and various media.

PROFILE OF THE CITY

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Westmount's population in 2022 was 19,938. The Canadian Survey on Disability (2017) estimates that one in five Canadians aged 15 and over has one or more disability that limits them in their daily activities. Of those, four of every ten persons has a severe or very severe disability. From this data, we can extrapolate that nearly 4,000 Westmounters live with some kind of disability. This excludes parents using a stroller or persons whose mobility is temporarily limited, who also benefit from universal accessibility.

CITY OF WESTMOUNT DEPARTMENTS

1. City Council and Director General's Office

The City is committed to encouraging participation in community life by adapting its services as much as possible and by constantly improving them. Members of City Council and the Director General's Office are attentive to requests from residents, particularly those that involve accessibility.

2. Urban Planning Department

The Urban Planning Department's responsibilities include the planning of public spaces and parks, the establishment and enforcement of construction and renovation guidelines, and the Residential Adaptation Assistance Program. The department produces the Access Westmount Guide, a directory of accessible public and commercial buildings within its territory.

LEGAL CONTEXT: The Agglomération de Montréal's *Schéma d'aménagement et de développement* (regional land use and development plan), adopted in 2015, requires the integration of universal accessibility provisions into the by-laws of its member municipalities, including Westmount. In 2016, the City incorporated provisions into its urban planning by-laws, including reducing the height difference between a public roadway and a building's ground floor, and providing safe and well-lit pathways between buildings and public roadways. The guidelines also require accessible parking spaces to be located near entrances.

3. Westmount Public Library and Community Events

The Library and Community Events personnel respond to client needs as they arise, and provide individual assistance to visitors to enable their integration and participation in activities. The Library and the Victoria Hall Community Centre, both heritage buildings, are nearly barrier-free, have been adapted to meet universal accessibility standards, and provide accessible parking.

4. Communications Division

The Communications Division is responsible for the City's website and publications. It takes into consideration the accessibility of its communication methods and seeks to reach all members of the community using different communications tools. As a bilingual-status municipality, Westmount produces and disseminates information in both official languages.

5. Hydro Westmount

Hydro Westmount is responsible for the distribution of electricity and for the maintenance of the electrical network on its territory. This includes the installation and maintenance of street and traffic lights in all public areas. Representatives from Hydro Westmount also sit on the Transportation Advisory Committee, which deals with issues related to traffic and parking.

6. Human Resources

Westmount is an equal opportunity employer committed to meeting the specific needs of the individuals that join its team. Candidates are welcome to identify a disability and specify their particular needs when applying for a position.

7. Public Safety Department

Westmount's Public Safety Department offers support and assistance to all residents in safety matters and works with the Montreal Police Service (SPVM), the Montreal Fire Department (SSIM), and the local CLSC. Residents with disabilities may request and receive additional support to access services and maintain contact. For example, Public Safety officers will pay particular attention to the health needs of vulnerable groups (seniors, persons with reduced mobility, persons with a mental illness) during extreme heat or cold weather events, and may offer advice or help getting home. The team also initiated programmes to reduce the social isolation of seniors and other vulnerable persons in the community. These include a resource guide, a daily check-in service and a registry for vulnerable persons.

8. Legal Services and City Clerk's Office

The City's Legal Services and City Clerk's Office is made up of three components: Legal Services, the office of the City Clerk, and the municipal archives. The department is responsible for all of the City's legal affairs, its corporate secretariat, and the conservation of municipal documents. The Office works in close partnership with senior management and elected officials to prepare council meetings and all council-related documents (minutes, municipal by-laws, council resolutions, and public notices). It is also responsible for managing claims and access-to-information requests.

9. Sports & Recreation Department

The Sports and Recreation Department offers a variety of programs to residents of all ages. Its objective is to foster a sense of belonging within the community and promote Westmount as a healthy environment in which to live. Using a personalized approach, the Department's team adapts its sports and recreation activities to the needs of its clientele, including individuals with special needs. Where possible, it adapts equipment and activities to accommodate specific physical and mental needs, and to accommodate companions of participants with disabilities.

10. Engineering Department

The Engineering Department is responsible for the design, planning, construction and maintenance of the City's infrastructure to ensure the comfort and safety of residents, businesses, and institutions. The accessibility of all public spaces, indoor and outdoor, is always part of engineering planning.

11. Public Works Department

The Public Works Department ensures the cleanliness and safety of the City's streets, sidewalks, and green spaces. It manages the urban forest and the municipal waste removal services, and works closely with the Engineering Department to maintain the City's buildings, as well as the water and sewer networks. Public Works is also responsible for the selection and installation of equipment in public spaces, including the furniture and other equipment used on streets, in parks and in playgrounds.

WESTMOUNT ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The mandate of the WAAC is to make recommendations to City Council to help each administrative department continue moving ahead to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities, ensure equal access to services, and encourage the full participation of each person in community life.

The term of the WAAC mandate was September 2020 to September 2021. The committee met monthly with department heads to discuss services and accessibility issues related to that department. A final report, including dozens of recommendations, was presented to City Council in September 2021.

More information about the committee and its work is available at westmount.org

OTHER RESOURCES

In addition to municipal services, Westmount residents have access to many resources and services that enhance their mobility and social participation.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

STM and exo

Public transit in Westmount is managed by the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) and exo (formerly the AMT). The City is well served: currently, eight bus lines go through its territory, and two metro stations are located nearby, including the Vendome intermodal station.

The STM and exo each have universal accessibility policies, which can be consulted on their respective websites. In addition, both offer adapted door-to-door public transportation services, with reservation. Users must first be registered to access this service.

STM adapted transportation

stm.info / transport.adapte@stm.info / teletype-text telephone (TTY) : 514 280-5308

exo paratransit

exo.quebec/en/accessibility / 514 287-TRAM (8726)

Nearby Metro stations

ATWATER, Line 1 – Green (Angrignon/Honoré-Beaugrand)

3015 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montréal

2322 Sainte-Catherine St. W., Montréal

VENDÔME, Line 2 – Orange (Côte-Vertu/Henri-Bourassa)

5160 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montréal

Lignes d'autobus

DAY SERVICE	24 Sherbrooke	90 Saint-Jacques
	37 Jolicoeur	104 Cavendish
	63 Girouard	124 Victoria
	66 Boulevard	138 Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
NIGHT SERVICE	356 Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue	

Suburban trains

VENDÔME intermodal station	Montréal/Blainville-St-Jerôme line
	Montréal/Delton-Candiac line
	Montréal/Dorion-Rigaud line

RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY

Contactivity Centre

**4695 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
514 932-2326**

**contactivitycentre.org
Facebook.com/contactivitycentre**

The Contactivity Centre, a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1972, offers a friendly space for active seniors and a full range of activities and programmes – shared meals, classes (tai-chi, watercolours, fitness), excursions and more. Thanks to volunteers, the Centre also has a range of home assistance services, including help with errands, accompaniment to medical appointments, cab-sharing for seniors with limited mobility, as well as a daily phone check service for people living alone. Membership is \$20 per year.

Montréal Oral School for the Deaf

**4670 Ste-Catherine St. W.
514 488-4946**

info@montrealoralschool.com

The school assesses the basic needs and capacities of deaf and hard-of-hearing children registered in various school boards in the Montreal region. It also has support groups for hard-of-hearing children aged 6 to 11, hard-of-hearing teenagers aged 12 to 18, and their parents.

YMCA Residence

**4039, rue Tupper
514 932-5353**

The Residence offers accommodations and meals to a varied client base, including refugees, asylum seekers, homeless persons, as well as Aboriginal persons from Northern Quebec visiting Montreal to receive medical care. It offers orientation and awareness workshops to facilitate social integration.

YMCA de Westmount

**4585, rue Sherbrooke O.
514 931-8046**

The Westmount YMCA is a complete health and fitness centre. It also offers specialized fitness programs, including those for seniors and for people with arthritis, enabling a smooth reintroduction to physical fitness in a safe and comfortable environment.

Zone Jeunesse / YMCA de Westmount

**4675, rue Sainte-Catherine O.
514 989-5252**

The Youth Zone is a not-for-profit centre for youth aged 12 to 17. The Youth Zone is located at the Westmount Recreation Centre and is managed in partnership with Westmount YMCA. This community organization is committed to offering fun and engaging social, recreational, cultural, and educational activities in a safe environment. Its members also have access to a homework assistance program, music classes, and cooking workshops. They are invited to show up at any time to meet new friends, have a snack, or do their homework after school. Membership is free, although certain activities may involve fees.

APPENDIX

PROJECTS AND ONGOING SERVICES RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY

The City of Westmount is committed to maintaining programs and services that encourage social participation and to continually pursue improvements in universal accessibility. The projects and programmes listed below were implemented prior to 2021, and are subject to revision and improvement.

CITY COUNCIL AND DIRECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE

Transportation Advisory Committee

The Transportation Advisory Committee, which includes elected officials and employees from the Public Works, Hydro-Westmount, and Public Safety departments, receives and analyzes requests concerning accessible parking spaces, drop-off zones for paratransit buses, and changes to traffic light phases. The Committee gives priority to changes that will enhance pedestrian safety, particularly for individuals with limited mobility.

Municipal building restoration programme

Since 1992, Westmount City Council has committed to restoring its collection of public heritage buildings, calling on experts to find ways to optimize accessibility while respecting the historic architecture. All of the City's public buildings are accessible, but some additional improvements are foreseen. Interventions are subject to approval by the Urban Planning Advisory Committee, whose mandate is the preservation of Westmount's built environment.

URBAN PLANNING

Access Westmount guide

Originally an initiative of the Westmount Healthy City Project in 1992, the Access Westmount guide is a local directory of accessible buildings within the territory of the City. It is updated regularly by the Urban Planning Department.

Planning Programme

Westmount expects to revise its urban plan and add guidelines to encourage or require that universal accessibility be integral to public and private development projects. The City will also initiate a process of reflection on the regulation of private property and the need to address changing accessibility needs while maintaining the conservation of the local architectural heritage.

Westmount Traffic and Active Transportation Master Plan

In 2013, the City adopted the Westmount Traffic and Active Transportation Master Plan, a reference framework to guide future decisions for improvements to the City's road network. As part of the Planning Program, this master plan favours the development of cycling and pedestrian networks and takes into consideration the specific obstacle that sloped streets represent for persons with reduced mobility. It also puts forth principles to ensure the ongoing improvement of streets, sidewalks and intersections through the reduction of barriers to persons with disabilities.

Residential Adaptation Assistance Programme (RAAP)

The City has partnered with the *Société d'habitation du Québec* to deliver home improvement programs and the Urban Planning Department processes grant applications received under the RAAP. The program provides financial support to homeowners to adapt residences and enable persons with disabilities to remain in their homes. The City assists applications in this process with the assistance of a hired specialist

WESTMOUNT PUBLIC LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Audio books, large-print books and eBooks

Library members with vision-related difficulties have access to a collection of audio books, large-print books, and digital books, which is enhanced annually. In addition, digital reading devices allow adjustments of the screen brightness and the text size.

Books for children with dyslexia

The Library offers a collection of “super readable” books destined for children with reading difficulties, dyslexia, or visual stress.

Adoption of a digital service that provides access to films

With Kanopy, Library members can now stream films on their televisions, smartphones, and tablets.

Homework assistance programme

The Library offers a homework assistance program for elementary school students with the help of Library volunteers working one-on-one.

Caring Paws Programme

In 2013, the Library created a programme to encourage children to overcome their reading difficulties. A tranquil, certified therapy dog, with a handler, listens to children read aloud each week. Since its introduction, the programme has been very successful.

iPads pour les jeunes

The Library has two iPads available to young members to facilitate learning.

Home library service

For Westmount members who are homebound, the Library offers a home delivery service for books and audio-visual materials, with the help of volunteers. Residents can call the Library or sign up online, and based on their preferences, materials are chosen for them and delivered every three weeks.

Tales and Travels Series for individuals living with dementia

The weekly Tales and Travels series is designed to encourage the social participation of people living with Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia, and their caretakers. Marie-Pier Foucault, coordinator of activities for persons living with dementia (Alzheimer Society of Montreal), leads the sessions. The workshops stimulate participation,

conversation, and expression by participants as they explore a country through books and objects, reading aloud and listening to music. The series has continued via Zoom throughout the pandemic.

Touch Table

Certain treasures from the Library's archives (historic postcards, photos, and other rare documents) are available through an electronic multitouch table, which enables users to interact with the digital versions of the documents and to enlarge images and text by touch, much like using a giant tablet. The multitouch table also includes videos, audio files, and quizzes.

Accessible book display

The Library's display case for new releases is under four feet high and books are accessible to persons in wheelchairs.

Use of electronic applications

Library members may download a large selection of electronic books, audio books, magazines, and newspapers from around the world for use on computer, tablet or smartphone.

Work stations for the public

The Library took advantage of a planned redesign in 2017 to increase the number of computer stations for the public and adjust their height for wheelchair access.

Virtual programming and events

Since 2020, residents have been able to access programming and events offerings directly from their homes. A wide array of events geared to all ages, including lectures, concerts, workshops, book clubs, and more are available via online platforms such as Facebook and YouTube.

Guide Library, Cultural and Community Events Guide

The Library and Community Events Department publishes a semi-annual guide to services and activities offered at the Library and the Victoria Hall Community Centre. The guide includes information about volunteering, community resources and local community groups. Available online and in print, the guide is a valuable source of information and an invitation to become involved in the community.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ongoing enhancement of electronic media and communications

The City uses a diversity of communications tools in an effort to reach as many residents as possible and encourage dialogue between residents, administrators and elected officials as well as participation in social and democratic life.

HYDRO WESTMOUNT

Registry for residents using oxygen therapy and other essential medical devices

Hydro Westmount maintains a priority list of residents with specific medical needs that depend on a constant supply of electricity, such as oxygen therapy. The list is always consulted prior to planned service interruptions, and those residents are advised in advance of any upcoming interventions in their sector. Hydro Westmount uses every measure

possible to ensure continuous service for those homes. Those residents are also registered automatically in the Public Safety vulnerable persons list.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Equal opportunity hiring and workplace adaptation policies

The City of Westmount is an equal opportunity employer and therefore invites women, aboriginal people, members of visible and ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities to submit their candidacy for any advertised positions. The City commits to making adaptations to meet the specific needs of its hirees.

Municipal polity on respect for human rights

The City published the guide *Respecting individuals concerns everyone!* in 2011, following the adoption of its policy. Distributed to all employees, the guide clearly defines workplace harassment and outlines procedures for reporting an incident or requesting an intervention. The City regularly organizes training sessions for its personnel on preventing psychological harassment in the workplace.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Enforcement of parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities

Public safety officers actively enforce the by-law concerning parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities.

Safety and accessibility of all public spaces

Public Safety officers ensure the safety and accessibility of roads, sidewalks, and parks at all times and to eliminate barriers where possible. Patrollers report maintenance issues to the Public Works Department (potholes, cracks, hindrances on sidewalks, etc.). Officers also intervene to manage traffic, as needed, and ensure safety around construction sites.

Mental health interventions and collaboration with the local police service

Westmount Public Safety officers are aware of the social challenges faced by persons experiencing mental health and homelessness and are trained to use resources that favour social interventions over fines. The team works in close collaboration with officers from Neighbourhood Station 12 (PDQ12) of the Montreal Police Department (SPVM), as well as with local social service agencies.

Public education and monitoring programme for seniors

The Public Safety administration has enhanced its communication activities, particularly those targeting seniors living alone. The Department works with the community organization Contactivity, which offers multiple services, including daily phone checks for seniors living alone. Where possible, officers visit certain seniors to help reduce their social isolation.

Security and Aging brochure

In 2013, the Public Safety Department collaborated with the City's Communications Division to produce a brochure titled *Security and Aging*. Aimed at local seniors and their caregivers, the document discusses safety in the home, preventing senior abuse and other topics, as well as contact information for social, health, and listening support services. The booklet is available in public buildings and distributed by public safety officers to residents.

Special assistance for persons with disabilities during emergency situations

To enhance the safety of vulnerable individuals in the case of an evacuation or other emergency, Montreal's Fire department (Service de sécurité incendie de Montréal or SSIM) offers an Emergency Evacuation Assistance Programme and invites seniors and persons with disabilities to register. Using this database, firefighters can quickly locate and assist persons with reduced mobility or other vulnerabilities in an emergency. Residents and their helpers can find a link on the City website to register, and get assistance from municipal personnel to complete the form.

Special assistance for persons with disabilities in the event of a disaster

In collaboration with the City of Montreal's *Centre de sécurité civile*, Westmount regularly updates its emergency measures policies and procedures (*Plan d'urgence, de relève et de mission*). It includes planning for adapted services to accommodate persons with reduced mobility or other specific needs during an emergency.

Trips reduced with the availability of online services

Thanks to available technology, permits (parking, dogs, etc.) may be obtained or renewed online or by phone, thus eliminating the need travel for those services.

LEGAL SERVICES AND CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Assistance with access to information requests

According to Section 10 of *An Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (chapter A-2.1), if the applicant is a person with a disability, the employee responsible for document access and the protection of personal information must provide reasonable accommodation to enable the applicant to exercise their right of access.

Access to electronic council documents online

The public may access numerous official documents on the municipal website, including:

- minutes and audio recordings of all regular and special council meetings;
- minutes from council committee meetings;
- all municipal by-laws via a searchable database.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Recreational activities adapted to specific needs

All activities offered by the Sports and Recreation Department take into account the particular needs of participants, including those requiring a specific adaptation. The Sports and Recreation Department makes every effort to ensure access to everyone, and companions of persons with disabilities attend classes at no cost. In 2017, the department began offering training to lifeguards interested in teaching adapted swimming classes.

Partnership with AlterGo

The Sports and Recreation Department is a partner of AlterGo, the largest Montreal coalition of organizations involved in making recreation, sports, and culture accessible to persons with disabilities. The service is used primarily by day camp participants.

Westmount Recreation Centre

Westmount's municipal sports complex, inaugurated in 2013, was designed for universal access. The centre is equipped with automatic doors, Braille signage, elevator, an outdoor pool with an access ramp, as well as fully-accessible washrooms, drinking fountains, showers and locker rooms. In 2015, the department acquired a waterproof wheelchair appropriate for use in the showers and the swimming pool.

PUBLIC WORKS

Safe and accessible pedestrian crosswalks

As crosswalks on arterial and commercial streets are reconstructed, a raised and leveled design is used to improve access for persons with reduced mobility and pedestrians' visibility to drivers, particularly in commercial districts and school zones. These areas are given priority for reconstruction. Certain intersections feature illuminated bollards to make navigation easier for persons with reduced vision.

Accessible and barrier-free sidewalks

Sidewalks are widened during reconstruction, where possible, and are designed using universal accessibility guidelines (free of obstacles, and with appropriate public furniture and signage).

Priority snow removal for corner curb ramps

During snow removal operations, arterial and collector streets, streets with institutions (schools colleges, nursing homes), and street corners are prioritized to facilitate access to curb ramps.

Street and sidewalk maintenance

During spring, summer and fall operations, the streets and sidewalks are kept unencumbered. The temporary occupation of sidewalks and streets by residents and private contractors is controlled through public occupation permits, which ensure proper access for pedestrians via detour routes, as needed.

Accessible and inclusive playground equipment

The Public Works Department replaced wood chips in all of its public playgrounds with an engineered wood fibre mulch that reduces the risks of injuries and meets ADA guidelines (Americans with Disabilities Act) for wheelchair accessibility. Also, adapted swings will be installed in all of the City's playgrounds as the structures are replaced.

New playground equipment is selected to respond not only to children's physical needs, but also to encourage social and cognitive development. The City seeks to promote inclusive activities and to provide accessible play spaces. It is understood, however, that each playground may not necessarily respond to every specific need.

Accessible splash pads

Two of Westmount's parks have accessible splash pads - Prince Albert Park and Stayner Park. The play areas are fully accessible by wheelchair, and water jets can be activated by placing a foot on or rolling over a sensor.

Adapted outdoor ping pong and chess tables

In 2016, wheelchair-accessible chess and ping pong tables were installed on cement surfaces in King George Park and in Westmount Park.