

November 27, 2012

Members of the Commission on *Montréal Physiquement Active*
City of Montréal
commissions@ville.montreal.qc.ca

Dear Members of the Commission:

Please find enclosed our *avis* on improving the physical fitness of Montrealers. As we are an agency which provides services to seniors, our focus is on making improvements for older adults.

We will not be presenting this *avis* at the public forum; however, should you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Benita Goldin
Coordinator of Community Relations

Avis for Montréal, Physiquement Active

Cummings Centre

The Cummings Centre is a non-profit community agency with over 50 years experience providing social services as well as recreational, leisure, educational, wellness, and adapted exercise programs for Montreal adults aged 50 and over. We provide programs and services to over 6,000 older adults. Over the years, we have developed expertise in Wellness and Adapted Exercise programs for healthy seniors as well as those contending with chronic diseases and illnesses such as MS, Parkinson's Disease; hip and knee replacements; and strokes. Our colleagues in health and social service establishments, especially hospitals and rehab centres, routinely refer discharged patients to our exercise programs. Thus, it is in the context of our experience in developing and implementing exercise and wellness programs for older adults that we offer our comments to keep Montrealers active.

Suggestions to Improve Opportunities for Physical Fitness

The following is a list of our suggestions of how to make city buildings and spaces more senior friendly. They are not in order of priority.

City sports facilities and arenas:

- Accessibility outside of the buildings needs to be improved, e.g., there should be easy access to the front doors; there should be ample parking near the front doors as well as handicapped parking
- Accessibility inside the buildings needs to be improved, e.g., swimming pools should have working lifts to help physically challenged adults enter and exit a pool; changing facilities should be easily accessible from the pool and barrier free; exercise rooms should have bars for those with stability issues
- Signage should be improved inside and outside
- Facilities should be well lit

- Communication should be improved to make it easier for seniors to get information about programs being held at city facilities
- Exercise programming should be inclusive of programs which would be of interest to seniors with varying degrees of physical fitness

City parks:

- Safe walking and exercise paths should be available in city parks. Paths should be marked for walking and other paths should be marked for exercising. Exercise paths should also include instructions for a variety of exercises at different points along the path.
- Walking, exercise, and biking paths should have even surfaces
- Bathrooms should be kept open and well maintained throughout the year. This is of particular importance to those with chronic and progressive illnesses.
- There should be more comfortable and welcoming spaces to sit in shaded areas.
- Increase intergenerational play space, e.g., chess tables near a playground.

City housing should have senior friendly physically active programming.

- Recreational programs in city housing buildings should include an emphasis on wellness and physical activity.
- There should be a variety of fitness programs

November 27, 2012