



Westmount vote 2021:
Matt Aronson – District 7

Description

WestmountMag.ca invites Westmount City Council candidates to present their platform

WestmountMag.ca extended an invitation to all eleven Westmount council candidates and those acclaimed, to provide an article about themselves and their platform on a first supplied, first published basis. Here we present **Matt Aronson, candidate for District 7.**

The articles are reproduced verbatim without corrections.

My name is Matt Aronson, and I want your support to become the next Councillor for Westmount's District 7.

I was born and raised right here in Montreal's west end. I have deep roots in Westmount, where my wife Jenny and our daughters, Abby and Nelly, have made our home for the last six years. Our family also includes Jolene and Melvin, our awesome rescue dogs.

My parents owned a small business in NDG, and I went to school here, made lifelong friends here and settled here to raise my own family. I'm ready to serve District 7, the community we all call home.

I graduated from McGill Law, and I'm a lawyer at Westmount-based Adessky Attorneys. The focus of my work is on immigration, small enterprises, family businesses and non-profit organizations.

I have more than 25 years of experience serving as a leader and volunteer with many of the great organizations that have helped shape our community. Notre-Dame-des-Arts, the NDG-Westmount Federal Liberal Association, the YMCA Kanawana Alumni Awards committee, YES Montreal, PME Montreal, and Ometz are just a few. I'm currently on the Board of the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), the leading Quebec advocacy group for official minority language communities.

Our district has challenges ahead and with your support, I'll bring that spirit of service and dedication to Westmount City Council.



I have a plan – and here are some of the key points:

First and foremost, I believe that we need to invest in our infrastructure – not just by rebuilding roads, sidewalks, lanes and sound barriers, in our sewers, utilities and transportation options too. Westmount has a plan and a priority list to handle all the required work – we need to make that plan accessible and transparent, and we need to be sure it also addresses the carbon footprint for which we're collectively responsible.

We also need to not only preserve Westmount Park's character, but also address long neglected infrastructure with a plan to rebuild with new techniques and greener materials. We need to make sure the work we do now plans for the City we'll have in a generation – and that it is built to last.

These are items my opponent and I agree on, but while this is the totality of his platform, its only the start of mine.

Here's what I want to see done if I am elected:

1. We need to increase transparency and responsive communication:

- City Hall needs to hear more from our residents. We can **have more opportunities for consultation and town hall meetings**. This is crucial on plans for big City projects like Westmount Park's renovation and changes to by-laws and policies that affect our lives.
- Let's **expand our online office hours** to make it easier to meet City Council and key City administrators.
- The City's **website can be streamlined** to make it easier for all to use. It can also deploy more online tools for ease of access to information, and **create a convenient one-stop shop for payment of City services and permits**.

2. We must revitalize our commercial districts:

- Our commercial districts have been the place we meet and help take care of each other and they need our support. We can create **walkable 'village' zones with more flexible commercial zoning options** for essential daily shopping and services.
- We can help **build community-funded delivery services** that will help us shop locally without the necessity of driving.
- We can **mandate commercial landlords to publicly disclose asking rent** on vacant commercial spaces, and **tax accordingly**.
- We want all our businesses to thrive. Let's **create an advisory group to offer mentorship and resources to new businesses**.

3. We should prioritize community sustainability and resilience:

- We must continue to **support evidence-based public health policies** to quickly end the COVID pandemic
- We need to **revise and communicate our community emergency response plan** to be ready for any future disaster.



- We must **ensure long-term sustainability**. That could include shifting the plans for Westmount Park and other public green spaces. Let's **help promote permaculture by using native and edible species** and encourage public engagement.
- We can **incentivize green and white roofs on large footprint buildings** and **expand the use of sustainable materials and greenhouse gas emission-reduction techniques**.
- We should **revitalize Hydro-Westmount** starting with **decentralizing the energy grid**, and **better access to public and private charging and power storage** options.

We have a community to be proud of, but we need to work together for it to survive and thrive for the next generation of Westmounters. With your support, I will lead that effort. Please come out and vote for me November 7th to be District 7's next City Councillor.

If you have any questions, please contact me through my website at aronson.ca or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mattaronson).

Thank you for your support!
Matt

Image: courtesy of Matt Aronson

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