



PRESS RELEASE

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Pente à Neige at Ignace-Bourget Park

Three years of success fall under the ax of the South-West Borough

Montreal, June 17, 2020 - After 3 years of investment in Ignace-Bourget Park and an undeniable popular success, the social economy non-profit Pente à Neige has learned, against all expectations, that the South-West Borough will not renew its agreement with the organization. Despite the efforts of the last few days to obtain details to this effect from elected officials and the administration, the ax fell on the only urban ski resort accessible by metro in North America.

According to what has been learned in the past few days, the South-West Borough should announce in the coming hours the holding of a public consultation surrounding the future of the Ignace-Bourget Park without including Pente à Neige among the options, or even inviting the team to express their views on the issue.

Since 2017, Pente à Neige has always had the mission of democratizing winter sports for all Montrealers, both in terms of cost and the ease of getting there by public transit. In total, nearly \$ 2.9 million has been invested (including \$ 1.2 million in independent revenue and \$ 312,000 in donations) by many public and private partners to transform a park that was little used in winter into an innovative place that helps get parents and children moving. Not to mention that the annual economic benefits are estimated at \$ 1.85 million for merchants in the neighborhood.

Among the 55,000 visitors welcomed last year, more than half of them said that they would not have had the chance to discover winter sports without Pente à Neige, according to the organization's recent satisfaction survey. "Indeed, not everyone has the possibility of going out of town with his or her family to practice winter sports. We are convinced that Montrealers need access to outdoor activities, even more so in a context where the City of Montreal intends to bet on the importance of being a tourist in its own city," specifies Estéban Dravet, founder of Pente à Neige.

According to the same survey, 95% of visitors say they are satisfied or very satisfied with their experience, and 91% plan to return next year. "We are surprised and disappointed with the Borough's decision after these three years of working hand in hand. A line has been drawn without giving us the opportunity to say anything before the decision was rendered," continues Mr. Dravet.

Crowd success

Developed for citizens of the Southwest, Pente à Neige has conquered other Montrealers over the years. In 2019-2020, 90% of visitors came from other parts of the city. The service offered by Pente à



Neige therefore remains to this day the only winter event for the general public that lasts the entire season, from December to March.

In addition to offering ski lessons and snowtubing at competitive prices, Pente à neige is helping to bring Montrealers out during the winter by offering free snowmaking and grooming services for the City's free sliding areas. Throughout the winter season, the organization offers skill games (snowball target, treasure hunt, tree throwing, volleyball, etc.), as well as free musical and cultural events, introductions to cross-country skiing, free film screenings, exhibitions, and of course, hot spots for the chilliest!

Thanks to its financial accessibility policy, Pente à Neige has enabled nearly 400 families to learn ski or enjoy snowtubing for free or at reduced prices. About 3,000 children from schools, daycares and community organizations visit us each year, bringing the slopes to life every day of the week. Pente à Neige is also proud to employ more than 60 people during the season.

Positive petition

In this context, the Pente à Neige team invites the population to sign [a Change.org positive petition in their favor](#) in addition to participating massively in the upcoming public consultation to ensure the maintenance of the facilities, for the benefit of all Montrealers.

About Pente à Neige

Pente à Neige is a winter sports village accessible by metro and offering a host of fun, festive and cultural activities for all ages. The organization aims for the appropriation of winter by the population and wishes to promote the sustainable integration of healthy lifestyles in the city and social cohesion in the neighborhoods.

Source:

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