



Hear Entendre Québec
7000 Rue Sherbrooke West/Ouest, Montréal, Québec H4B 1R3
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L'honorable Mairesse Valérie Plante
Mayor of Montreal
275 Rue Notre Dame Est,
Montréal, QC
H2Y 1C6

Chère Mairesse Plante,

My name is Abby Stonehouse, and I am a former employee of Hear Entendre Québec who now sits on a committee.

I am writing to you today as a call to action surrounding accessibility in Montreal for the hearing loss community. As someone who lives with hearing loss, accessibility is an important issue for me. In March of 2020, I attended a conference about Montreal's plans to make the city accessible to all people with disabilities. You were in attendance. During this conference, I felt encouraged by Montreal's plan, but I was still worried that the needs of people who are hard of hearing would not be addressed.

Due to the global circumstances after this conference, I have not heard the committee's plans moving forward with this work. Many of the Hear Québec members have expressed their interest in learning more about what the city is doing to make it more inclusive for them.

Hearing loss is an invisible disability. The needs of this community are often misunderstood. Those of us that live with this disability face barriers that the general population are not aware of - barriers that can be extremely isolating. These barriers have become more evident due to the use of cloth masks. Last year one of Hear Québec's Board members, Katrina Tarondo, wrote you a letter asking you to highlight the importance of masks with transparent windows. We did not hear a response.

As National Accessibility Awareness Week approaches (May 31st to June 4th), it would be a great time to spread awareness about accessibility. This can include highlighting the use of masks with transparent windows for the hearing loss community. Hear Québec and I would love an opportunity to speak with you about this and Montreal's plans for accessibility.



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Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abby Stonehouse'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Abby Stonehouse