Neighbourhood Planning in the Face of Megaproject Development: Parc-Extension and the New Université de Montréal Campus

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Research Objectives:
The goal of this research is to understand the dynamics and value of comprehensive neighbourhood planning in the face of megaproject development and the role of grassroots organisations like RAMPE in this process.

Context:
RAMPE is a community planning coalition of twenty different neighbourhood organisations that has been active for the past twenty years. They have recently completed their 3rd five-year participatory plan, which presents a vision for neighbourhood development and list of required interventions. This plan, like the previous two produced by RAMPE, provides collective strategic alignments for local organisations and will serve as a basis in negotiations with government and other local actors.

Methodology:

In the spring of 2010 a preliminary plan was prepared with the diverse expertise of members of RAMPE. This document was then used to animate five focus groups with residents in the summer and early fall of 2010. The results from these focus groups were then incorporated into the document. The modified plan was presented at an all-day public forum on November 13th, 2010. During the forum, four workshops were offered, based on the themes of the draft plan. Workshop participants validated, with modifications, the contents of the plan. They also selected priority actions for 2011. Changes made during the forum were then presented and adopted at the coalition’s January general assembly. A public presentation of the final plan was made to the community and elected officials on February 23rd.

Results:
The 24 page Plan d’aménagement et de développement communautaire de Parc Extension is divided into ten thematic dossiers. The themes are:

- Green spaces
- Public security
- Environment
- Transport
- Heritage
- Collective facilities
- Community development
- Housing
- Economic activity
- Sector Beaumont

Each of these dossiers is organised into three sections:

- Present state (including map)
- Main issues
- Actions

The ten thematic dossiers are followed by a mapped synthesis of priority actions for 2011 (see right).

This plan will now be sent to elected officials and used as a tool in in negotiations of a partnership agreement with the Université de Montréal.