

Moving Beyond Indignation: Stakeholder Tactics, Legal Tools and Community Benefits in Large-Scale Redevelopment Projects

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Abstract

Government and accompanying business interests often favour large-scale urban projects to promote urban growth, attract revenues, and place the city on the world stage. Such projects are primarily oriented towards consumption and spectacle, serving regional, if not global, clientele. Negative impacts – from traffic to displacement – are felt most heavily in the immediately adjacent areas, and developments often contribute to increases in socio-spatial polarization. This paper examines two redevelopment projects, one in South San Francisco, one in Montréal, to assess the tactics and legal tools employed by municipal authorities and local organisations to harness development for social and environmental ends. Associated legal tools include public consultation requirements, citizen ballot

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propositions, Community Benefits Agreements and Development Agreements. The paper concludes with recommended principles to underpin future development and cautionary notes about the limitations of these tools.

Key words

Profit-led urban development; socio-spatial polarization; development agreements; Community Benefits Agreements

Resumen

Los gobiernos e intereses empresariales que los acompañan, favorecen a menudo proyectos urbanísticos de gran escala, para promover el crecimiento urbano, atraer ingresos, y poner la ciudad en el mapa. Estos proyectos están orientados principalmente hacia el consumo y el espectáculo, al servicio de una clientela regional, si no global. Los impactos negativos –desde el tráfico a los desplazamientos– se dejan sentir con más fuerza en las áreas inmediatamente adyacentes, y su desarrollo a menudo contribuye al aumento de la polarización socio-espacial. Este artículo examina dos proyectos de reurbanización, uno en el sur de San Francisco, y el otro en Montreal, para evaluar las tácticas y herramientas legales empleadas por las autoridades municipales y organizaciones locales para potenciar el desarrollo de los fines sociales y ambientales. Entre las herramientas jurídicas asociadas se incluyen los requisitos de consulta pública, propuestas electorales ciudadanas, acuerdos sobre beneficios a la comunidad y acuerdos sobre el desarrollo. El artículo concluye con recomendaciones para sustentar el desarrollo futuro y una nota de advertencia sobre las limitaciones de estas herramientas.

Palabras clave

Desarrollo urbanístico orientado a beneficios; polarización socio-espacial; acuerdos de desarrollo; Acuerdos en Beneficio de la Comunidad

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1. Introduction

Contradictions, such as those referenced in the sidebar, are daily fare in Montréal, as in many cities. Our collective expenditures appear to be on ‘window dressing’ – once-a-year events, luxury buildings, and politically-driven projects – instead of on ‘good foundations’. Such contradictions contribute to a sense of indignation, a sense that our cities are less than just, our governments not at all benign, and our private developers unregulated in their greed and venality. Given the global scope of frustrations over such contradictions, it seems an opportune moment to look at how our cities are managed, what aims are pursued through urban development, and who benefits and loses.

This paper is an exploratory one that addresses the themes of this publication: what situations make us indignant? Who benefits and who loses as a consequence? With what violations of socio-economic rights? And in what ways does ‘the law’ and ‘public policy’ bolster or challenge those situations? It also takes on, centrally, the question of alternatives: can we develop our cities in equitable and just ways? If so, how, and under what conditions?

Calls for expanded spatial justice and ‘the right to the city’ are central to such assessments. It is not simply the right to occupy the city – the reduction of interdicted spaces, privatised areas, or exclusive zones – or to live in it in an equitable manner. It is also the right to be part of the on-going process of creating the city, and thereby of translating, individually and collectively, our visions of a good society into reality. As David Harvey (2003, p. 23) notes,

the question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from the question of what kind of people we want to be, what kinds of social relations we seek, what relations to nature we cherish, what style of daily life we desire, what kinds of technologies we deem appropriate, what aesthetic values we hold. The right to the City is, therefore, far more than a right of individual access to the resources that the City embodies: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the City more after our heart’s desire.

The large-scale urban projects examined in this paper are not conducive to expanding ‘rights to the city’. As a component of the ‘city-building’ processes of the contemporary era, these ‘mega-projects’ range in function: office towers and convention centers and hotel-entertainment complexes; new cultural facilities such as a major library, heritage destination or sports arena; major infrastructure investments (e.g., a new iconic bridge); wholesale redevelopment of an older industrial or residential area; or even parklands and recreational areas. They

2013 BREAKING NEWS

“Quebec City is building a new sports stadium, at considerable taxpayer expense, for a hockey team it does not (yet) have.”

“The last mayor convinced the Grand Prix to return to the City, coughing up \$15 million in subsidies annually for the crowds packing restaurants, hotels, and the streets during a few days of smog-filled Formula One racing.”

“Bridges and highway interchanges are crumbling, a burgeoning of potholes marks the spring, and tempers simmer.”

“Thousands participated in nightly protests against a rise in college and university fees, and helped bring down the provincial government. New provincial leadership cancelled the fee hikes, but cut funding for education, health and other services in an effort to balance the budget. Meanwhile, nearly one-third of youth on the Island of Montréal do not complete high school by the time they reach 20 years of age.”

“Corruption in rampant: the Charbonneau Commission, established by the province to investigate corruption in the construction sector, hears daily testimony on a complex, pervasive and long-term set of practices that funnel monies into the electoral coffers of major political parties, and the wallets of numerous public officials, in exchange for construction contracts on public projects at inflated rates.”

typically are 'super-sized', oriented towards a global and wealthy clientele, and are highly complex, involving multiple agents and agencies in their conception and realisation. Many scholars associate these projects with increased socio-economic polarisation and social exclusion in our cities, even though they are pursued in the name of the public good, good city planning and neighbourhood improvement. They are seen as exercises in 'imagineering,' and as symbols of the dominance of neo-liberalism and the market system, in which an increasingly entrepreneurial State is complicit in the production of urban injustice, and attendant losses to equity, democracy, and diversity.

As such, this paper addresses the following questions: (1) to what extent is economic, social, and spatial polarization produced as a regularized aspect of the normal functioning of urban development? (2) what tactics are municipal authorities and local residents, among others, adopting to combat pernicious and exclusionary aspects of these large-scale urban projects? (3) what legal tools – and other instruments – are being used to tame large-scale projects and with what success for whom? In exploring these questions, material is drawn from two North American cities where municipal authorities, community members, and other people have attempted to turn large-scale projects into an opportunity to reduce inequalities and redress historical abuses – the focus is on tactics and the policy and regulatory instruments used to support those tactics.

We begin with an overview of mega-project development; their role in city-building and their typical socio-spatial effects are described in relation to three regulatory processes creating 'distortions'. A framework for analysing alternative approaches is outlined. Second, an example of a redevelopment project for South San Francisco is described to illustrate tactics emerging from the 'grassroots', specifically from community, labour and environmental actors. Third, tactics of municipal authorities and planners are then explored, drawing on practices and instruments used in a recent redevelopment proposal in Montréal. In the former, a Community Benefits Agreement, citizen ballot propositions, and government-developer negotiations were employed; in the latter, consultative processes (amongst developers, community groups and city government) and a Development Agreement figured centrally. The paper concludes with discussions of potential directions – and accompanying policy, regulatory, legal and 'independent' measures – towards improving social justice outcomes from large-scale redevelopment.

2. Urban mega-projects as generators of social exclusion

City boosterism has long been a feature of municipal leadership. In recent years, however, urban entrepreneurialism has become particularly pervasive and insistent in its hold on the imagination of urban leaders (Kujawa 2006). Efforts to secure a 'place on the global stage', build a 'must see' attraction, or receive a top ranking in one of the well-publicised hierarchies of 'best cities' have become commonplace in cities throughout the world, seemingly despite any specific historical, geographic, economic, cultural or other features of the locale (Beaverstock *et al.* 1999, Taylor *et al.* 2002).

Unfortunately, the vast majority of large-scale projects do not even succeed on their own terms: they are far more costly and produce far fewer benefits than anticipated (Flyvbjerg 2012). Moreover, this hunt for global greatness has not been accompanied, at least in most places, with equal emphasis on assuring ecological integrity, a reasonable quality of life for local residents, or the quality of the city as a whole (Harvey 1989, Sassen 1991, Knox and Taylor 1995, Badcock 1997). Contemporary city-building is thought to produce inequality by deepening social-spatial polarization with the city, by prompting the twin processes of gentrification and displacement, and by favoring the construction of an urban fabric suited to spectacle, consumption, and new competitive 'creative economy' activities (Lehrer and Laidley 2008). Development opportunities have been pursued – in the form of

hotels, condos, mega-events, stadiums and conference facilities – that, while paid for, at least in part, from the public purse and pitched as undertaken for the public good, have led to few direct benefits for the majority of urban residents, greater indebtedness for the city, greater spatial and socio-economic polarisation within the city, and a culture of deceit and corruption in urban governance (Scott 2001, Flyvbjerg *et al.* 2003, Lehrer and Laidley 2008, Fainstein 2012, Siemiatycki 2013).

Contemporary city-building's ill effects on social justice – and its ties to inequality and socio-spatial polarization – can be distinguished as products of several processes or logics. Some ills occur as outcomes of a functioning *market economy and its regulation*. For example, socio-spatial differentiation of neighbourhoods can be explained, at least in part, by differences in land rents – and thus the built form – throughout the city, together with differences in the relative purchasing power and mobility of distinct groups of households (Knox and Marston 2003). The regulatory environment has its role; for example, land-use zoning may compound market-produced patterns of economic 'distortions', contributing, intentionally or not, to spatialized inequalities (Rothwell and Massey 2010). And, in our contemporary cities, both the spatial structure and households are subject to greater differentiation: groups are more finely, and perhaps more acutely, differentiated, with immigrants, single-parent households, part-time and intermittent wage earners, among others, growing in prominence in the population (Lehrer and Laidley 2008); and 'neighbourhood types' now extend from the extremes of hiding places for the homeless to gated communities, from traditional downtowns to shiny clusters of internationalized firms in newly (re-)developed urban areas.

Secondly, socio-spatial polarisation may occur as a product of the *uneven distribution of publicly created value*. Investments in infrastructure, for example, may contribute to the production of areas of disamenity – or conversely the spatial concentration of amenities – that underpin variations in land values and socio-spatial differentiation. Investment in public amenities can follow existing patterns of wealth and power, further reinforcing socio-spatial inequalities (Knox and Marston 2003). Moreover, increases in land value associated with public investments often accrue to individuals (Smolka and Amborski 2007, Sandroni 2011, Fainstein 2012), who rarely are required to 'give-back' in the form of community contributions or development charges. Mega-projects usually benefit from direct public subsidy or cost-sharing. Private partners (and nearby landowners) may also benefit from a rise in land value associated with increased accessibility of the area, environmental improvements, or a new potential clientele; real-estate speculation, displacement, and gentrification are among the potential consequences (Lehrer and Laidley 2008, Bornstein 2010).

Finally, polarisation and uneven development may also be produced through the distortions created through *illicit or marginally legal actions*. The examples are many. Redlining by banks (e.g., to prevent investment in certain areas or the purchase of home by households in those areas) or racism in the sale or rental of property are outright illegal in most advanced industrial countries, and have been curtailed in many cities. Other illicit actions have still are common in many contemporary cities, namely: the acquisition of land about to be made accessible, decontaminated, or rezoned for development before such decisions are made public; the targeting of lands for such actions that belong to particular individuals, groups or political parties; the sale of public properties at below market value in return for political support, pay-offs, or simply to maintain wealth within a specific group; the taking of bribes for any of the above. Observers note that the opportunities for illicit activities may increase due to the reliance of many city governments on public-private partnerships and large-scale highly-complex projects as a means to pursue their city-building agenda (Flyvbjerg 2014).

Mega-projects are notorious for associated loss of transparency, both in decision-making and implementation phases (Flyvbjerg *et al.* 2003). Although public-private partnerships are argued by proponents to transfer risk to the private partner, the complexity, scale and long-timeframe of mega-project development mean that partners – and the public – ‘lock-in’ to projects that are high-risk, prone to rent-seeking behavior, and characterized by false optimism that all will go as planned; a significant level of mis-information is used to bolster that optimism (Flyvbjerg 2014, p. 9).

These three linked dynamics – our economic and regulatory system at work, the uneven capture of land value increases, and corruption and illicit behavior – contribute to socio-spatial polarisation in our cities. All may make us indignant, as resources flow away from ‘the 99%’ in a system that appears in some ways quite ordinary, but in others, inequitable, unfair, and unjust. They produce a brutal landscape in which fundamental rights to the city – equitable access to material conditions for urban life, space for political voice and belonging, and citizenship – are compromised.

Given the fascination world-wide with large-scale projects, and the concerns reviewed above as to their economic, political, social, and spatial ill-effects, are there ways in which mega-projects can be made to better contribute to our cities? Several avenues appear promising. In some cities of North America, local activists have been able to generate opposition at ‘the grassroots’ to block development unless it contributes – in clear and committed ways – to socio-economic justice (Salkin and Lavine 2007, Bornstein 2010, Wolf-Powers 2010, Ling 2014). There is a danger, however, that such efforts can be ‘captured’ by developers, or become one-off exactions for a small group (Fainstein 2009). Government could potentially take the lead in requiring that developers of large-scale projects conform with wider social, economic and spatial objectives; given the above cited literature, likely requisites would be a strong equity or environmental mandate for local government and a growth economy where developers have less leverage. These two alternatives, of grassroots versus government-led efforts, are explored below.

We sought examples where development was proposed for a place with a legacy of socio-spatial marginalisation, and where there was evidence of tactics and instruments employed to combat inequality associated with mega-project development. The selected projects, in San Francisco and Montréal, highlight the dynamics of and interplay between a case of grassroots actors, government, and private developers. In each case, the three dynamics (of the market at work, land value rises, and possible corruption) were potentially important, but not always directly addressed.

Each case is analyzed in terms of how a mega-project was redirected to promote ‘rights to the city’. The approach is one of case study analysis of urban projects (c.f., Fainstein 2009, Bornstein 2010), with specific attention to the public deliberation process (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003). The extent to which the project addresses or responds to historic and contemporary patterns of inequality in areas surrounding the mega-project is central. So too is an understanding of power dynamics and the ‘deliberation process’, understood as a means by which collective decisions are made (including, possibly, the denial of influence or voice for some actors). This collective element can be understood as an important one in realizing the ‘right to the city’ since, in Harvey’s (2003, p. 23) view, “changing the City inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization.” As such, for each case, the ‘negotiated’ physical and functional elements of the project, the tools and mechanisms employed by different actors, and the fit of the ‘approved’ project with local needs are reviewed.

3. Grassroots tactics to tame urban redevelopment: ballot initiatives and community benefits in Bayview-Hunters Point, South San Francisco

The example of Bayview/Hunters Point/Candlestick Point (BVHP) in San Francisco highlights concerted efforts by community groups to link social justice to urban development. Citizen groups and residents called for measures to address competing interests, with particular attention to long-standing community needs and concerns. They also argued fundamentally for the right to help shape the future of a site, one adjacent to a poor residential community, via a range of different citizen-developer-government encounters. In so doing, they assessed project impacts at broader temporal and geographical scales and with reference to equity, safety, integrity (historical, cultural and environmental), racial and spatial justice, and democratic practice. Local actors drew upon prevailing policy and law that underpinned possibilities for improved social justice, and also used novel tools. These tools – a ballot proposition and a Community Benefits Agreement – help to assure that benefits accrue for low-income residents from waterfront revitalization and private profit-oriented development, and that a framework guiding the pace, scale and form of development is in place.

Historically, the area had important roles in the regional economy and imagination. Hunters Point was the first dry dock on the Pacific coast (1869), remained an active port until 1940, and then was used for ship-building (and submarine testing) by, first, the US Navy and then a private ship-repair company (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2015). The legacy of these uses is extensive heavy soil contamination. In the 1980s, the *Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) placed the site on the National Priorities List for cleanup. Candlestick Point, adjacent and directly to the south, had a more visible role in the region, as it was home to Candlestick Park, San Francisco's baseball and football stadium from 1960 to 2013. Access to the park was from the south, leaving the residential neighbourhoods geographically isolated, bordered on two sides by institutional uses and to the east by a highway.

The long-term presence of the Navy on the site left the residential neighbourhood of BVHP – for much of its history, majority African-American – poorly connected to the rest of San Francisco but internally well-organized to fight for improved local conditions. The community is one of the poorest in San Francisco with high rates of unemployment, violence, and drug use (*Our History*). Basic services, such as well-stocked grocery stores, are not easily accessible. Local groups have documented high rates of such illnesses as asthma and breast cancer among the population surrounding the contaminated site (Arc Ecology, *et al.* 2006). In the face of these challenges, the BVHP community has mobilised around environmental and economic justice issues. Residents successfully fought a proposed power plant to be located in the area; Rechtschaffen (2008, p. 572) contends that this led to “a better informed and more assertive community, highly focused on tackling a range of existing community health and environmental problems.” Indeed, BVHP mobilized when plans to decommission Hunters Point and redevelop the area and adjacent Candlestick Point were announced.

With respect to the decommissioning and required decontamination, BVHP residents, rather than rely on the Navy-defined process, employed other regulatory and democratic tools. BVHP residents were concerned that the Navy's decontamination of Hunters Point would not achieve the level of cleanliness desired locally. Although the Navy involved the community in cleanup discussions and disseminated information, these did not dispel the mistrust of local residents (Da Costa 2010, Fox 2010, US Department of the Navy 2011). A local group, Arc Ecology, generated community-oriented information, hiring specialists to independently assess the Navy's decontamination approach and helping to establish locally-managed monitoring and information on the cleanup process (Arc Ecology, *et al.* 2006, Murray 2012). Arc Ecology helped put forward a ballot proposition,

Proposition P (adopted in 2001), which called for all land to be cleaned to residential use quality, the highest standard; Proposition P was the first initiative in the US to allow voters to decide the extent to which a Superfund site – an area that has experienced toxic dumping and requires cleanup – would be decontaminated (Community Window on the Hunters Point Shipyard Cleanup, s.d.).

With respect to redevelopment, a private real estate corporation, Lennar, proposed mixed-use development on a decommissioned port site and adjacent lands within Bayview/Hunters Point (BVHP). Lennar envisioned a large-scale 700-acre project, with housing, office and retail space, and a performance/football stadium. Redevelopment also constituted an opportunity for the surrounding community to access long-needed services, local jobs, green space, and improved transportation links to the rest of San Francisco.

Community groups used a variety of the tactics and instruments to negotiate the specification of both on-site and off-site components of the project, as put forward by both the private developer, Lennar, and public authorities. The redevelopment plan for Bayview/Hunters Point/Candlestick Point, as approved by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and city council, includes 12,000 new homes, 326 acres of parks and open space, 3,150,000 square feet of office space, 885,000 square feet of retail space, 100,000 square feet of community facilities and a 10,000 seat performance venue/football stadium (the last, in the end, will be located elsewhere) (San Francisco Redevelopment Agency 2012).

The approved project reflects efforts by community groups and other stakeholders to push for a proposal that met with local and regional priorities for the area as well as to assure contributions from the developer, Lennar, to the BVHP neighbourhood. After considerable negotiation, the company and a coalition of local community groups, Alliance for District 10, entered into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) around core issues related to the Hunters Point redevelopment proposal. A CBA is a legally binding agreement regarding a development, often addressing community concerns relating to local employment, unionization and wages on-site and to housing, social services, open space and parking off-site; terms are subject to monitoring and legal redress if not met (Gross 2007). The Core CBA binds Lennar to certain minimum requirements, including: 32% of housing units built must be affordable at a range of income levels; at least \$27 million in housing assistance funds must be targeted to neighborhood residents; and at least \$8.5 million in job training funds must be so targeted (*Core Community Benefits Agreement*).

The Core CBA does not, importantly, supplant any other negotiations and requirements around the site. For example, environmental components are not covered; they are instead addressed through the California Environmental Impact review process in which extensive questions were posed by community members about, for example, decontamination, impacts of a bridge, and potential heavy traffic (San Francisco Redevelopment Agency 2007). Environmental benefits, including new parklands (see Fig. 1), are handled by government agencies approving the project and not the Core CBA. Additional community benefits are, however, detailed in the Environmental Impact report and include commitments by Lennar to: the construction of over 3000 affordable units, artist replacement space, and a health and well-being centre; introduction of a workforce development program; funding for education; and adherence to green building principles. These benefits thus are integral components of subsequent project agreements with the government. Indeed, a swap of land – allowing private development on former parkland in return for private lands for coastal open space – has entailed detailed analysis by government bodies, considerable public scrutiny, and leverage with which to negotiate community benefits (see Fig. 1).

In addition to the specific tools employed (i.e. ballot propositions and a CBA), a wider set of regulations, rights and relationships facilitated the process of balancing

Redevelopment of Bayview/Hunters Point/Candlestick Point in San Francisco thus highlights systematic efforts – on the part of various actors – to consider project impacts at various spatial scales, balance competing interests, and establish long-term guidelines for development. In so doing, the agreements reached shifted development proposals from a primarily profit-orientation to one that also addressed environmental justice, economic equity and racial equity concerns of local people.

4. Government-initiated approaches to negotiating for community benefits: public consultation surrounding the Maison de Radio-Canada redevelopment, Montréal

In Canadian cities, recent efforts to expand the community benefits exacted from or associated with large-scale urban development projects have largely fallen within government defined and driven processes. A range of tools are employed, which include formal contractual agreements (e.g., Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) and Development Agreements), area-based planning, land value capture, and consultative processes. CBAs are not commonly employed. One of the only CBAs in the country is linked to the Vancouver Agreement that underpinned the bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (City of Vancouver 2002, Bornstein 2010). This agreement focused on sustainable social, economic, and community development in the South False Creek and in the Downtown Eastside, the old commercial center of the city. Yet it has only weakly fulfilled its promise (Bornstein 2010). Community involvement was not extensive. Government bodies initiated, and strongly delineated the possible scope of, the CBA negotiations. The resulting CBA, which has not been fully implemented, only weakly addressed equity issues, favouring instead environmental quality-of-life concerns. Research to date suggests that other CBAs – as adopted in Toronto and Montréal – have been focused narrowly (e.g., on local employment, affordable housing, or training programs) both sectorally and spatially, and several have foundered as projects have stalled or been downscaled in recent years (Amborski, personal communication, 5 January 2013).

It is the public sector that has taken the lead in formalising community benefits within large-scale urban development projects, taking an active role in negotiations with developers and establishing processes whereby developers and community representatives are encouraged to find common ground. Proposed redevelopment of land owned by a Canadian federal Crown corporation, the Société Radio-Canada (SRC), in Montréal illustrates well some of the tactics and outcomes of government-led community benefits processes.

The Maison de Radio-Canada is located in the Sainte-Marie neighbourhood of Montréal, near the busy Jacques-Cartier Bridge and several metro stations. The Sainte-Marie neighbourhood historically was a francophone working class area (known as “Faubourg à mélasse” or ‘the molasses neighborhood’) which, since the 1950s, has undergone de-industrialization, with high levels of unemployment and land vacancy. Like Bayview-Hunters Point, there are high levels of soil contamination. As of 2011, the area had 21,745 residents. Local concerns relate to this past and include promoting the local economy, keeping housing affordable, discouraging heavy traffic (coming from the Jacques Cartier Bridge), and facilitating greater security in the neighbourhood’s public spaces (Broadcaster Magazine 2013).

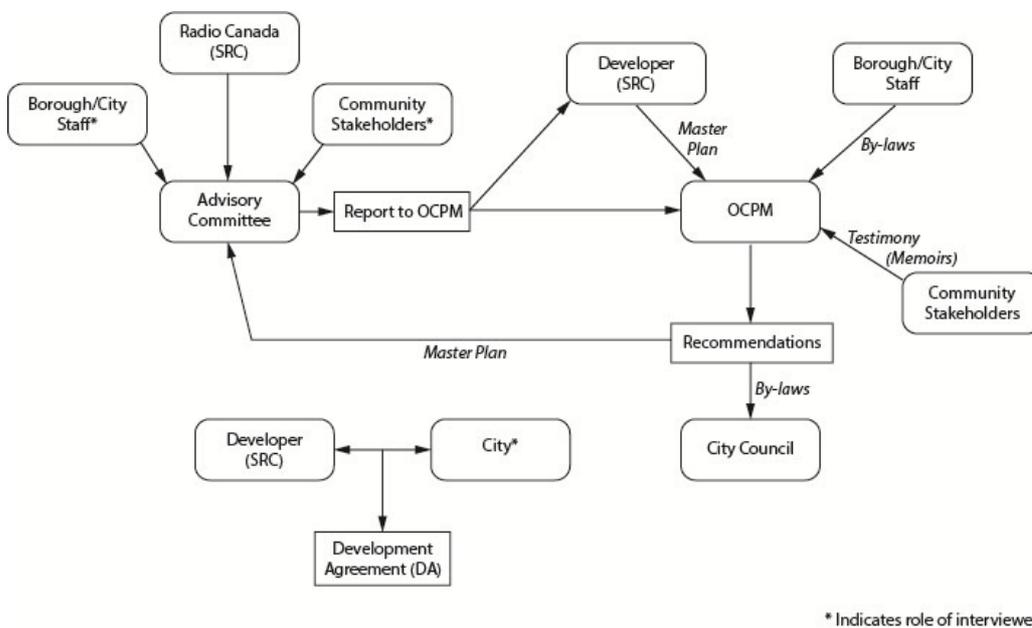
At present, the Maison Radio-Canada is a 1.3 million-square-foot building surrounded by a significant amount of empty land used predominantly for surface parking (705,000 sq.ft.); it has remained isolated and cut off from the neighbourhood since its construction in 1973 (Dewolf 2007). The management of Radio-Canada has decided to redevelop the entire site in line with plans to upgrade broadcast and production facilities. In so doing, Radio-Canada also seeks to foster closer ties with the residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods. The Maison Radio-

Canada property is seen as appropriate for mixed-use development that would include high-density residential, retail and office space. Radio-Canada's intent was to specify the overall layout of the site, to transfer ownership, construction and management of the property to a private buyer, and to remain on the land as principal tenant.

Plans to redevelop the site have been under discussion for a decade. From 2004, Radio-Canada moved towards to the creation of a master plan for the site; preliminary studies, consultations with employees, and discussion with local residents contributed to a 2007 Master Plan for site redevelopment. The Plan includes residential market units, social and affordable housing, office buildings, and commercial and retail space. It also commits the redevelopment to principles of sustainable development: pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, creating more green spaces, and facilitating active (cycling and pedestrian) transportation. A 2009 Development Agreement, signed by Radio-Canada and the Ville de Montréal, specifies housing elements of the project: 20% social housing and 10% affordable housing, a portion of which is reserved for the elderly and families. In sum, the project, as approved in 2009, contributes to the neighbourhood and generates community benefits, while also furthering the strategic objectives of RadioCanada (e.g., up-to-date media facilities) and setting out conditions for an attractive return on private investments.

Three different processes or tools have been central to the inclusion of community benefits in the final approved project: a series of government-initiated public consultations; the formation and activities of an advisory board by the developer; and the negotiation and signing of a Development Agreement (see Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Flow chart of the Maison Radio-Canada negotiation process



Source: Albinger *et al.* (2013).

In Montréal, when a project involves a major infrastructure component, the redevelopment of a public institution, or is otherwise deemed to have a significant impact on land-use planning, the Ville de Montréal can refer a project to the Office de Consultation Publique de Montréal (OCPM) (Aubin and Bornstein 2012). The OCPM, an independent body formed in 2002, is responsible for informing affected residents of major urban projects, holding public hearings, summarising concerns raised, and making recommendations as to the future course of the proposed project or plan (Office de Consultation Publique de Montréal 2012, p. 8). Throughout the process, the public is given opportunities to ask questions and

criticize the project. Background material on the project, all documents presented at the hearings, and transcripts of the meetings are made available through the OCPM website. The OCPM conducted the official public consultation process for the Maison Radio-Canada project.

The OCPM (2009) report closely echoes the views expressed by citizens in the briefs they submitted. Although there was general satisfaction with the plan as finalised, it is clear that various individuals, community groups and even the OCPM itself saw room for improvement. Some briefs indicated that the proposed site redevelopment Master Plan did not go far enough in its provision of social and affordable housing, or in the protection of the heritage of the neighbourhood (Centre St. Pierre *et al.* 2008). Another brief expressed dissatisfaction with the consultation process, stating that the City was not knowledgeable enough about the heritage of the area and implications of the development, and that visual aids used to present the Master Plan may have been misleading (Buisine 2008). The OCPM itself recommended greater involvement of the community in determining social housing provision and other benefits and even went so far as to suggest a Community Benefits Agreement would be the best way in which to give citizens a voice in the development of their neighbourhood (Office de Consultation Publique de Montréal 2009).

Prior to the OCPM consultation process, an earlier process – the work of an Advisory Committee – had been undertaken to find common ground amongst the various stakeholders in the project. The Advisory Committee was formed by Radio-Canada and included its design and development consultants, representatives from the local Borough (standing in for the central City) and community stakeholders (see Fig. 3). The Advisory Committee members worked together to link real estate, facility upgrades and community concerns into one project, as reflected in a report prepared for the OCPM's public consultations and, ultimately, in the 2007 site development plan presented for public consultation and, ultimately, City approval.

The 'community' side of the Advisory Committee was represented by the Corporation de Développement Centre-Sud (CDC) – a multi-organizational coalition – that was involved from the beginning through to the end of negotiations in 2007. The CDC representatives sought to present the interests of the various groups in the neighbourhood, though there was no collective 'bottom line' or set of demands. Indeed, a CDC representative reiterated that the negotiations were not done in an atmosphere of adversity and that the Advisory Committee's approach was less of a negotiation process than "different parties working together to find a solution to the constraints of the project" (as quoted in Albinger *et al.* 2013, p. 15). Professional facilitation and moderation, as well as technical support, were provided by outside companies. Overall, the CDC described the negotiation process between Radio-Canada and the community as a success, highlighting the capacity for the different stakeholders to work together effectively and meet each party's respective interests. The agreement ultimately signed provided certain 'wins' for the neighbourhood, and community, developer and City officials interviewed indicate that it is a positive precedent for Montréal as a whole.

The Development Agreement, the third tool employed, was a product of direct negotiations between the developer's representatives and the City. A facilitator hired by Radio-Canada was present at some of the Development Agreement negotiations, thereby making possible a link between the two sets of negotiations (i.e., the Advisory Committee and the Development Agreement) and the sharing of community views in both forums. Interestingly, the City sent different representatives to the two sets of meetings. Furthermore, the central municipal administration often did not take its seat at the Advisory Committee meetings, allowing its interests to be represented by the Borough.

Contained within the Development Agreement are the measures related to the desired community benefits discussed by the Advisory Committee, including

inclusionary housing, green building, traffic reduction, as well as other commitments made by the City and Radio-Canada. The Development Agreement is a binding contract between the developer and municipality used to formalize agreed-upon project elements not covered by city bylaws (Hayes personal communication 2011)¹. City representatives, however, expressed concerns regarding the enforceability of the Maison Radio-Canada Development Agreement. The housing clauses are the only ones that contain a monetary consequence for non-compliance. Moreover, the project's implementation as proposed reduces the likelihood of compliance; the zoning by-law (08-048) passed by the City will expire if work has not begun within five years of passage, in September 2014 (Ville de Montréal 2009); and many community benefit clauses indicate that the parties should make "best efforts", language less enforceable than that used for housing, infrastructure and standard elements of the Development Agreement.

Government-led community-benefits processes in the case of Maison Radio-Canada thus hinged on key inputs by other actors in establishing the parameters of the process and the substance of agreements. It was Radio-Canada, as a public corporation and landowner, who convened the Advisory Committee, and it was via this committee that representatives of the community made concerns known and negotiated community benefits. City staff saw this process as key to the elaboration of the Development Agreement, eventually signed in 2009: the Advisory Committee was an important way for the community to shape the development, as the City was not in direct contact with the community groups outside of these meetings; and the agreements over affordable and social housing provisions, provision of a home for the elderly, presence of daycare on the site, and health services for the community all came directly from the Advisory Committee negotiations. And it was the independent OCPM – and the public hearings that were convened – that then provided a broad forum for the voicing of stakeholder concerns and support for the project with its community-benefits components.

The City alone would have been a poor spokesperson for local neighbourhood priorities. For example, according to the City representatives on the Advisory Committee, the community's main concern with this project was to ensure that social and affordable housing needs were met in the development. City representatives did not support the community groups within the Advisory Committee on the social housing issue. Community demands were for 25 percent of the units to be social housing, both to meet current need and to compensate for the historical destruction of housing in the area. City representatives recommended a lower percentage of social housing on the site based on: concerns over the distribution of social housing within the borough and across Montréal; overall numbers of residents versus units (household size in social housing units tends to be greater than in market rate units); limited municipal budgets for building social housing; and city inclusionary housing policy guidelines targeting 15 percent social housing units in large residential developments (Habiter Montréal 2006). However, with community representatives on the Advisory Committee, and community briefs to the OCPM advocating for social housing, a higher level of social housing was obtained; the project now includes 20 percent social housing, above the 15 percent specified as desirable in the City's inclusionary housing policy and lower than the community sector's initial demands.

Yet the role of the City in securing community benefits was critical. The City supported the formation of the Advisory Committee and suggested likely parties to be present. The City referred the project to the OCPM for consultation. Most importantly, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the OCPM have no legal standing: they could only take concrete form through the site redevelopment master plan, inclusion in the City's by-law amendments and the

¹ Sophie Hayes, 2011. *City of Montreal Development Agreements*. Presentation at the Workshop of Community Benefits Agreements, School of Urban Planning, McGill University, 17 February.

Development Agreement, which is what occurred. The City-led process, in which forums for multi-stakeholder consultations were pursued in parallel with negotiations between the developer and City, secured important community benefits.

5. Comparisons

While American cities have used a variety of approaches to negotiate with private developers to secure community benefits, including Community Benefits Agreements, environmental legislation, citizen ballot initiatives and Development Agreements, Montréal relies primarily on 'soft tools' – advisory boards and community consultation – to incorporate citizen interests. Master plans and Development Agreements, negotiated between the city government and the developer, together with accompanying by-law amendments, are the primary legal tools. Because community organizations are not directly involved in the negotiations, there is a risk that the community benefits that are secured may not respond optimally to the needs of the community and may fail to tackle the truly difficult issues associated with unequal and uneven development of space. To what extent can the municipal government act in the interests of the '99%' and tame large-scale development by demanding wider community contributions, whether in terms of equity, environmental or social bonuses?

The two case studies suggest that both community-led and government-led processes can harness large-scale development towards social ends. In both cases, the developer – a private one in South San Francisco and a public corporation in Montréal – agreed to the construction of affordable housing as well as a range of other project elements related to environmental standards, urban fit and other social benefits. Nonetheless, as the case of Maison Radio-Canada in Montréal suggests, there are numerous limitations associated with the government-led processes.

The community had input into the elaboration of the Master Plan and Development Agreement for the Radio-Canada site. However, as the City's perspective on a well-negotiated plan differs in important ways from what local residents prioritise, there is no guarantee the residents' priorities will come out on top (Abelson and Gauvin 2006). The City has its own 'bottom line' and its own calculation of what is in the public's best interest. The calculus may be to seek equitable outcomes at a larger spatial scale, as occurred with the push to distribute social housing units across the city despite a local demand for greater numbers within the project. It may also be to assure that development can go ahead, and to include many community 'demands' in the form of 'good faith' effort language, without clear commitments, unamenable to monitoring and ultimately unenforceable. Indeed, from the community side of the negotiations, outputs are 'soft' – the conclusions of an advisory board or a consultative process in the project are not mandatorily included in the project; recommendations, not outcomes, are generated. Moreover, the resulting Development Agreement may not be truly public – we had great difficulty accessing the documents – contributing to a lack of transparency around developer-government negotiations, especially in a city such as Montréal, where corruption and collusion around construction, sale of public lands, and development approvals are high-profile problems. Overall, the quality and impact of public participation through varying mechanisms remains understudied, particularly concerning criteria for judging 'effective' participation of the public (Rowe and Frewer 2000, Aubin and Bornstein 2012).

The contrast between community-led and government-led development also throws into relief questions of developers' willingness to invest when negotiation is required, the enforceability of benefit commitments, and longer-term implications for city-building in service of residents rather than profits. In Montréal, municipal negotiation of development projects is part of policy. For instance, the municipal

inclusionary housing policy – which has provisions for negotiated components – allows greater flexibility than a mandatory percentage of units, meaning that the City can secure benefits appropriate to the unique circumstances of a particular development (Habiter Montréal 2006, Leclerc-André *et al.* 2011). In general, where there are large increases in density, expected increases in land values accruing from public investments, and limited available lands, negotiation is imperative. Some argue that flexibility impedes development, reducing the certainty sought by developers when taking on the risk of a new development (City of Vancouver 2002). Others observe that while developers often state that they desire greater certainty, they are quite willing to negotiate when there is an opportunity to secure a smaller contribution (Price, personal communication, 27 Dec 2012). Where equity measures cannot be implemented and enforced on a municipal-wide level, negotiation may provide a partial solution. Montréal officials note that a compulsory level would be more effective in generating the equity and family-friendly outcomes targeted by the inclusionary housing policy, if only because borough-to-borough variations in commitment to the policy framework would be eliminated; however, the policy does provide a clear set of expectations around which negotiations occur. Such debates reflect the challenge of ensuring that development is sufficiently profitable to attract investment while also meeting the needs of surrounding communities and priorities of the City.

In San Francisco, negotiations were also essential. Owners of public and private lands negotiated land swaps as a means to protect environmental assets, generate quality public parks and facilities, and assure viable real estate ventures. Community coalitions and Lennar pursued the negotiations that led to the signing of the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). But other tools, used in concert, had more uncertain outcomes. For instance, the public hearings associated with the naval yard decontamination, while allowing the voicing of public concerns, were not seen as sufficient to safeguard the public interest; ballot measures were added to the mix in order to see public priorities carried through. The use of the ballot measure ensured that voters, rather than the developer or the City, could decide the extent to which the site would be decontaminated. However, while the CBA is legally binding, concerns still remain about the commitment of Lennar to the full range of benefits specified in the CBA, especially in light of a downturn in the property markets. As such, in the case of Hunters Point, while the grassroots tactics to achieve community benefits deserve much credit for harnessing redevelopment for the benefit of its members, the challenge of accountability remains, much like in Montréal.

Development Agreements can be argued to be more effective than CBAs because the threat of government enforcement of an agreement is stronger than that of non-governmental community groups. This is an argument for reliance on Development Agreements, as occurs in Montréal and also in Toronto and Vancouver, rather than CBAs. However, some commentators have noted that government enforcement of community benefits can be lax and that, instead, a blended approach is best; such a blend ensures CBA provisions are integrated into the Development Agreement, allowing either party to call for enforcement and pursue non-compliance in the courts (Gross, personal communication, 25 October 2013)². And formal policies that stipulate equity/social justice outcomes, whether through mandatory policies (e.g., for inclusionary housing, public space provisions), land value capture regulations, or other forms of community 'give back', would further strengthen the ability of municipal stakeholders to use property development to reward the public as well as private investors.

² Julian Gross, 2013. Negotiation of community benefits in urban mega-projects: Roles of public and private stakeholders. Presentation at the urbanstudies@mcgill seminar series, McGill University, October 25.

In summary, there are several ways that the South San Francisco and Montréal approaches to negotiating for community benefits could be improved, but the fundamental questions remain pertinent: whether government or citizens should be primary drivers of the process, how accountability to those affected (or marginalised) by the development can be increased, and how the overall fit of large-scale projects into publically formulated visions of the city can be improved. A high level of community involvement in the determination of benefits is critical, and could be pursued, perhaps, by encouraging that CBAs – binding agreements between the developer and community groups – are integrated into (or required as components of) the Development Agreements signed between the developer and the municipality. Monitoring should certainly be improved to help ensure benefits are actually received. And the distribution of benefits throughout the city should be assessed.

6. Concluding comments

The examples above are illustrative of challenges faced by many cities, and their residents, around the world; large scale sites are ripe for redevelopment but must address a range of challenges – perhaps significant environmental contamination, the repurposing or demolition of heritage structures, and the identification of new vocations for the area – while, at the same time, finding ways to pursue development in a manner that respects and involves the surrounding communities. Often these diverse concerns are sidelined by economic imperatives; too frequently, luxury housing/hotels, exclusive access, and weak links to the rest of the city are the results. Our research points to planning mechanisms that can be used to counter many common weaknesses in redevelopment. Potential mechanisms for just and sustainable redevelopment are summarized in Table1.

Table 1. Planning mechanisms for redevelopment

Negative aspects of many large-scale developments	Planning mechanisms for sustainable redevelopment
<i>They are isolated from or detrimental to surroundings areas</i>	Indicator systems address complexity, effects at different spatial scales, & different time frames for planning (cf. Centro de Ecologia Urbana, Barcelona) Project specifications and assessment includes the ‘ability of large-scale developments to anchor and complement surrounding areas’
<i>Conflict emerges among different interests (local, non-local, sector-specific, class, place-based, etc.)</i>	Triologue of public, private and community sectors engage in deliberations Multiple forms of public deliberation permit diverse groups to engage Multiple opportunities for engagement allow for different forms of agreement to emerge
<i>City-marketing and property-led development trump other concerns</i>	Long-term guidelines (e.g., master plan), ethical norms (e.g., social responsibility statement) or negotiated agreements (e.g., Community Benefits Agreements, Development Agreements), Forms of leverage (e.g., land trust, project approval) or formalised compensation (e.g., land value or land lift capture) Forms of control (e.g., commitments that are binding, can be monitored, and for which there are means of enforcement).

The cases studied point specifically to the importance of guiding principles and binding commitments in large-scale projects. Negotiated agreements, whether with local community groups or government, have underpinned redevelopment that has produced strong environmental, social and economic benefits for surrounding residents and the city as a whole. The use of binding agreements has provided

developers with an understanding of the parameters under which they will generate revenues, the public with an understanding of what benefits will be produced, and various parties with conditions to aid enforcement of the terms. Equally important in the cases studied is that innovative planning occurred: the process was opened to public input, there were multiple forms of negotiation as well as new forms of agreement and action. The input of multiple actors helped define the fine-grained elements of sustainable and just redevelopment, fostering areas that are economically lucrative, generative of innovative activities by individuals and larger businesses, responsive to socio-economic needs of those already in the vicinity and attractive to newcomers.

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