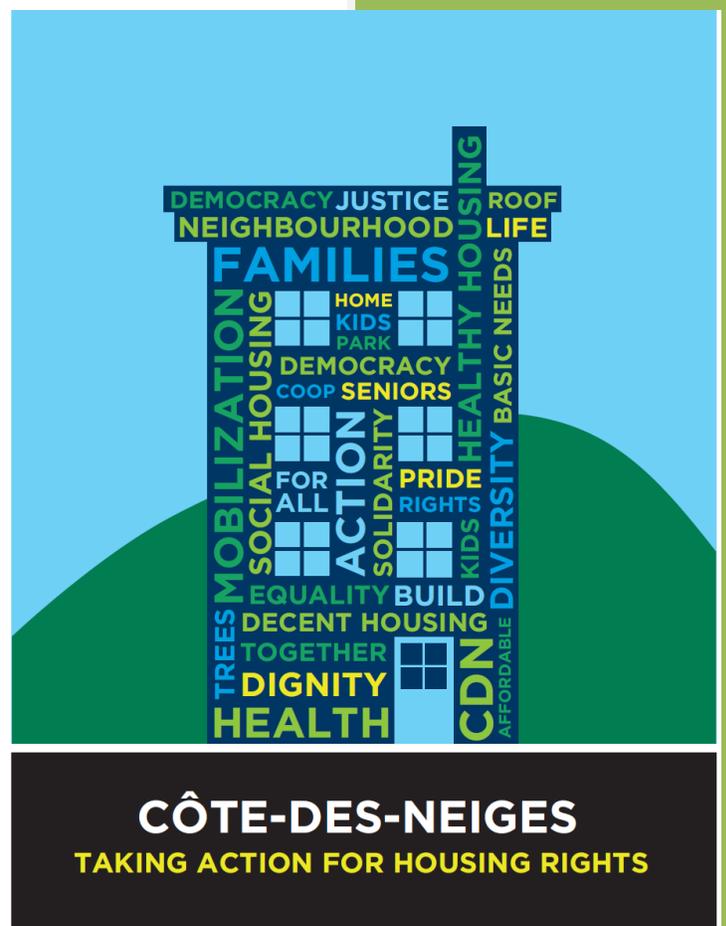


# Municipal Elections 2013

## For the right to housing in Côte-des-Neiges

**Overview of the principal housing issues in Côte-des-Neiges and proposals for their improvement**



Corporation  
de développement  
communautaire de  
Côte-des-Neiges

The CDC of CDN is a local umbrella group of nearly 50 community organizations.

## Housing and income

- According to the 2006 census, 80.7% of Côte-des-Neiges residents are tenants.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2005, 41% of residents lived under the low-income cut-off established by Statistics Canada.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2005, the income of 30.6% of Côte-des-Neiges households was less than \$20,000 and 13.7% of households had an income above \$80,000.<sup>1</sup>

## Accessing affordable housing: a major challenge

- According to the 2006 census:
  - 4,245 households (12.3% of tenant households) spent 80% or above of their income on housing
  - 7,980 tenant households (23.1%) spent 50% or more
  - 15,165 households (43.9%) spent 30% or more on housing<sup>2</sup>
- In fall 2012, the average rent in the zone including Côte-des-Neiges\* was \$771.
  - Average rent for a studio: \$531
  - For a single bedroom: \$695
  - 2 bedrooms: \$848
  - Three bedrooms or more: \$1,064
- Groups working with tenants find that often families are forced into overcrowded housing as a result of being unable to afford a larger apartment. In the area covered by the CLSC Côte-des-Neiges, when analysing families with children between six months and twelve years of age, 20.1% had more than one resident per room in their home, a figure in sharp contrast to the 10% average for the Island of Montreal.<sup>4</sup>

## The quality of the housing stock: a public health issue

- According to the *Étude sur la santé respiratoire des enfants montréalais* of the Montreal Director of Public Health (2011), in 2006 **humidity and mold were present in 38.4% of homes with children aged between six months and twelve years of age** in the area covered by the CLSC Côte-des-Neiges. The study also found that cockroaches or rodents were present in 22.6% of households, compared to 9.8% of households on the island of Montreal.<sup>5</sup>
- According to the 2006 census, **13.4% of housing units are in need of major repairs**, compared to 9.6% for the City of Montreal. This figure represents a jump of 21.4% since 1996. Also, almost a third of units are in need of minor repairs, representing an increase of 23.7%.<sup>6</sup>
- Between 2009 and 2011, the borough's inspection service **conducted 5,398 inspections** under the City of Montreal's *Règlement sur la salubrité, l'entretien et la sécurité des logements*. During this period, **1,913 notices of non-compliance were issued, as well as 316 tickets**. In 2012, this service conducted 1,969 inspections, with 215 files transferred to the municipal court.<sup>8</sup>
- Between 2007 and November 2011, inspectors from the central City conducted inspections in 2,064 housing units in Côte-des-Neiges under their *Plan d'action pour l'amélioration de la salubrité des logements*. This team found 13,267 cases of non-conformity.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CSSS de la Montagne, *Portrait statistique (données du recensement 2006), Profil de la population du territoire du Conseil communautaire de Côte-des-Neiges*. <sup>2</sup> Commande spéciale du FRAPRU à Statistique Canada (Recensement 2006). <sup>3</sup> SCHL, *Rapport sur le marché locatif, RMR de Montréal*, automne 2012, p. 12. <sup>4</sup> Direction de la santé publique de Montréal, *Étude sur la santé respiratoire, Portrait CSSS de la Montagne*, (2011), p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Idem, p. 22, 21. <sup>6</sup> CSSS de la Montagne, *Portrait statistique*, p. 18. <sup>7</sup> Demandes d'accès à l'information; Comité d'arrondissement sur le logement (CDN-NDG). <sup>8</sup> Arrondissement CDN-NDG, *Salubrité des logements : L'arrondissement de CDN—NDG accroît la surveillance sur son territoire*. (Communiqué de presse, le 13 juin 2013). <sup>9</sup> Comité d'arrondissement sur le logement (CDN-NDG), décembre 2011.

\* Zone 5 of the CMHC = CDN, Mont-Royal, Outremont; limites de Westmount et voie Camilien-Houde (sud), limites de Ville Mont-Royal (nord), limites d'Outremont (est), boul. Décarie (ouest). This zone includes Mont-Royal et Outremont where rents are higher, but these sectors have fewer rental units.

# The housing stock

## The lack of social housing: there's catching up to do!!

- The CDN-NDG borough, the city's most populous and also the borough with the largest amount of households identified to be in a pressing need for housing, has only 1,562 HLM units. Of these, only 921 are in Côte-des-Neiges. To compare with other boroughs: the Southwest has 3,569 units, Mercier/Hochelaga-Maisonneuve: 2,492 units, Ville-Marie: 2,139 units, Villeray-St-Michel-Parc-Extension: 1,966 units, and Rosemont/Petite-Patrie: 1,723.<sup>10</sup>
- A table published by the *Direction de l'habitation* of the City of Montreal shows that with 4,465 units of social and community housing out of a total of 55,535 units of rental housing (i.e. 8.0% of the total), CDN-NDG finds itself in tenth position in comparison with other Montreal boroughs.<sup>11</sup>
- As of September 30<sup>th</sup> 2013, there were 2,483 households on the waiting list for a HLM in the borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.<sup>12</sup>

## An ageing housing stock

- Almost 40% of private housing units in Côte-des-Neiges are found in buildings built between 1946 and 1960, while 19.3% are in buildings built before 1946.
- Only 3% of housing units were constructed between 1991 and 2006.<sup>13</sup>

## New construction: lots of condos, few rental units.

According to the CMHC, between January 2002 and July 2013, 2,111\* units were built in Côte-des-Neiges:

- 26 units were owner-occupied,
- 85 units were rental,
- 178 units were cooperatives,
- 1,822 units were co-properties, of which 1,562 units were built between January 2009 and July 2013.<sup>14</sup>

Major development projects are currently underway in our neighbourhood: for example, Namur/Jean-Talon is currently subject to intense development, leading to the long-term construction of approximately 4,000 new units, while the former Hippodrome site will welcome 5,000 and 8,000 units. Other areas will also be developed.



<sup>10</sup> OMHM, <http://www.omhm.qc.ca/arrondissements-villes>, le 21 septembre 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Ville de Montréal, Direction de l'habitation, *Profil statistique en habitation de la Ville de Montréal* (2009), p. 28.

<sup>12</sup> OMHM, *Demandeurs par territoire de résidence*, 30 septembre 2013 (tableau obtenu par le FRAPRU).

<sup>13</sup> CSSS de la Montagne, *Portrait statistique*, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Compilation of *deux commandes* conducted by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), "Côte-des-Neiges: Mises en chantier", March 3rd 2012; August 22nd 2013. This information is reproduced and distributed "as is" with the authorisation of the CMHC

\*Error in original version: 2144 units.

# The Namur/ Jean-Talon sector

According to statistics from the Borough, the *Inclusion Strategy* has been applied in the context of the development of the Namur-Jean-Talon area: for about 1 700 units of condominiums that are completed or in construction, between 264 et 309 units of social housing have been either completed, are in construction or are in the planning stages. Contributions to the Compensation Fund by developers total about 700 000\$.

The construction of these social housing units is clearly a very good thing for the neighborhood. However, for us, this development raises several issues:

- The condominium projects are completed much more quickly than the social housing units.
- The proportion of social housing corresponds to the Inclusion Strategy, but in relation to the needs of the neighbourhood, the number of social housing units is low. At the same time, the number of condos has increased very quickly, and these thousands of new condo units are transforming the nature of the neighborhood.
- The so-called affordable condos are sold at prices that are too high for a very large proportion of the residents of the neighborhood (“affordable” having been defined as paying up to \$265 000 for a unit with two bedrooms, and \$310 000 for three bedrooms).<sup>15</sup>

- The majority of the condos that were constructed are small units and so do not respond to the need for large housing units for families.
- The speculation created by condo development makes the inclusion of social housing in the area extremely difficult; the goal of “a mixed development” (or socio-economic, household type diversity) within the sector becomes very difficult to achieve.
- Contributions to Compensation Fund are positive, but they often cannot be used in the short-term because the amount contributed is insufficient for the creation of new housing projects. Speculation and the resulting increase in prices mean that the fund loses value quickly.
- We are extremely concerned about the impact of this speculation on the rents of low-income tenants currently living in the sector, particularly on Mountain Sights Avenue, and about the very survival of their buildings.

In our opinion, although the Inclusion Strategy will have allowed for the construction of more than 200 social housing units in the neighbourhood, the policy as it stands does not ensure a real “mixture” in the context of the Namur-Jean-Talon development, nor does it counter the impact of speculation on the neighbourhood and its residents.

<sup>15</sup> Ville de Montréal, Mise en valeur du secteur de l’hippodrome de Montréal, Preparatory document for the Experts Forum, les 9, 10 et 11 décembre 2012, p. 31.

# Blue Bonnets

**2500**

**social housing units  
at Blue Bonnets**

## **Developing the Blue Bonnets site: an exceptional opportunity for a development that is truly inclusive**

For over twenty years, Côte-des-Neiges residents and organisations have mobilised for social housing to be built on the former Hippodrome site, a huge plot of 43.48 hectares (5 million square feet) in the western part of our neighbourhood. At its 2005 Congress, the Côte-des-Neiges Community Council (now CDC Côte-des-Neiges) formally adopted a demand for 2,500 social housing units on the site. In 2009, the CDN-CDC adopted formal guidelines for the development of the Blue Bonnets site. These guidelines address housing but also the ecologically sustainable nature of the development, economic development issues, quality of life issues and access to the site. These guidelines were updated in the fall of 2012. Successive mobilisations over the years attest to the importance of this issue, both for residents and community groups.

The current planning underway for this site is generating great interest and constitutes, in our mind, a critical juncture for our neighbourhood. We support the idea of an innovative and exemplary project, one which is ecological, based upon the quality of life of families and other residents, and we have many ideas to contribute to this process. Yet for us, one question proves critical: who will be able to live at Blue Bonnets?

For the organisations who are members of the CDN-CDC, we believe that the land of the former Hippodrome must be recognised not as a new neighbourhood, but be developed in continuity with the existing neighbourhood. For us, this development must respond to the critical housing needs of the current low and medium income households in Côte-des-Neiges. In a neighbourhood lacking vacant land and experiencing high levels of real estate speculation, we must seize the opportunity to ensure that this project actually benefits those already living in the neighbourhood. The first phase of the Angus site development, which included 40% social housing within its project of 2,587 units, is a highly pertinent example to consider.

**The fact that the Hippodrome site belongs to the city allows for control of the price of land, for a comprehensive planning of the development and for the integration of social housing units throughout the site.**

# Housing Demands

## 2013 Municipal Elections

### Better Housing Conditions:

- 1) Ensure a rigorous application of the *By-law concerning the sanitation, maintenance and safety of dwelling units*, including:
  - a. An increase in the number of inspectors and more resources allocated to the application of the Housing Code
  - b. Increased use of coercive measures (fines, repairs done at the expense of landlords)
  - c. Comprehensive training and adequate tools for inspectors to better identify and evaluate the presence of mould and its sources.

### Social housing:

*Given the neighbourhood's critical housing needs, the acute shortage of social housing units and the lack of vacant land,*

- 1) Ensure that the development of the former Montreal Hippodrome (Blue Bonnets) site includes at least 2 500 social housing units. The fact that the city owns the site makes it possible to control the price of lands and to ensure a high-quality development plan that integrates social housing across the site.
- 2) As per the recommendations of the Public Consultation Office of Montreal (the OCPM) on the Namur-Jean-Talon sector (2009), "to mobilise all resources towards the conversion of private-market housing on Mountain Sights avenue to social and community housing, as a short-term priority."
- 3) Ensure the inclusion of social housing in all condo-development projects in the neighbourhood in sufficient proportion to respond to local needs. Ensure that social housing units be included on-site and that the development of social housing units and condos occur simultaneously.

<sup>16</sup> Office de consultation publique de Montréal, *Projet de requalification du secteur Namur - Jean-Talon ouest, Rapport de consultation publique*, p.39.