

For Immediate Release
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Make and Repair Shared Places with City Commons!

(Vancouver, BC) The Vancouver Tool Library is taking do-it-yourself to a whole new level from July 11-14 with City Commons, an interactive event that will bring Vancouverites together to repair, transform, and make shared places.

By day, participants will collaborate on placemaking projects such as street murals, community gardens, cob ovens, and public benches. In the evening, everyone is invited to gather for workshops, music, and outdoor activities that celebrate the importance of placemaking in creating dynamic communities. "Our projects are small-scale, accessible, and environmentally conscious," says Travis Pawlak, one of the City Commons organizers. "We want City Commons to facilitate a feeling of shared ownership of these projects as well as an invigorated sense of civic pride. At the end of this, we can be proud of what we have all built together."

The event is open to people of all skill levels and there will be activities appropriate for every age group. A schedule with details about the placemaking projects and evening events happening across the city is available online. Participants are welcome to drop in to whichever project sites they want to, for whatever amount of time they have to give.

When participants arrive at the sites, Site Hosts (the community members who initiated the projects) will direct them as to what they can do to help. "The City Commons initiative is a brilliant experiment in grassroots placemaking" says Jonathan Bird, a Site Host running a community garden project through his organization, Planted Network. "Municipal planners may sketch the bones of a city, but the body politic comes to life when neighbours put spirit into the spaces they have in common." While the Site Hosts have been actively consulting their communities about the projects and working on designs, the Vancouver Tool Library has been providing support through resources, people power, and tools to Site Hosts in the months leading up to and during City Commons.

The Vancouver Tool Library, a co-operative tool lending library located in east Vancouver, serves those who wish to reduce their impact on our planet, learn new skills to use in their homes and communities, and contribute their time and energy to meaningful projects and initiatives. "We are one of a number of organizations in this city working to dispel the commonly held idea that Vancouverites are aloof and unapproachable," says Lauren McGuire-Wood, Events and Communications Officer at the Vancouver Tool Library. "I think there is an increasing excitement around getting involved in your neighbourhood and having diverse voices reflected through changes in our city."

City Commons was inspired by the Village Building Convergence, which happens every year in Portland, Oregon and is organized by non-profit City Repair. City Commons organizers hope that, like the Village Building Convergence, the event will continue annually.

City Commons will open with a special event on July 10 at the Safe Amplification Society (1739 Venables Street) and continue through the weekend. Find a detailed schedule and more information at www.vancouvertoolibrary.com.

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact:

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