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PLACEMAKING

COMMUNITY BUILDING : GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS

This Worksheet has taken information and sampled text directly from

City Repair's : Placemaking Guidebook
Creative Community Building in the Public Right of Way
www.cityrepair.org

Here you will find a summary primer of some information found in that wonderful text. This is not intended to be a substitute for reading it yourself, if you are inspired by what you see here, we recommend you purchase this life changing book directly from City Repair to get the full transmission.

The City Repair community facilitates the creation of public gathering places and events that invite people to connect with the people and places around them. City Repair helps people physically change their neighbourhoods to be more community-oriented, ecologically sustainable and simply more beautiful. It is an organized group action that educates and inspires communities and individuals to creatively transform the places where they live and take active, direct roles in re-inhabiting neighbourhoods. City Repair facilitates artistic and ecologically-oriented placemaking through projects that honor the interconnection of human communities and the natural world.

Placemaking is the act of creating a shared vision based on a community's needs and assets, culture and history, local climate and topography. It is as much about psychological ownership and reclamation of space as it is about physically building a place. As the process of creating a community place progresses, people develop deeper relationships and more momentum to create together because they have discovered a way to directly change the world in which they live. Placemaking is based on the belief that everyone is a designer and a good design should serve social interaction and cultural development.

Intersection repair is the citizen-led transformation of a street intersection into a public square. It takes a crossing of pathways - the historical place of gathering - and turns it back from a place to move through to a place to stay.

At the heart of Placemaking is human relationships. Opening up meaningful relationships with your neighbours and community is a deep intention of this evolving movement. Some ways this can be done is ...

- * say hello and introduce yourself to your neighbours when you see them around
- * start conversations with your neighbours about anything!
- * create public spaces to meet in and enable direct connections
- * reach out to your neighbours and offer to help them in small ways or give them extra fruits and vegetables from your garden
- * invite your neighbours to tea or a visioning walk around the neighbourhood to talk about who they are and share a bit about yourself
- * create a neighbourhood or street newsletter
- * have kids interview seniors (oral history)
- * collect pets names and make a pet map
- * set up a skill or tool sharing network, plant share system, babysitting/play group...
- * host potlucks
- * invite an organization to offer workshop in a relevant skill like bike safety, street trees, weed id, intersection repair, tool sharing....
- * do asset mapping activities to learn what everyone has to offer
- * develop a walking / biking tour for your neighbourhood
- * set up a community garden
- * knock and talk : just go up to your neighbours door and introduce yourself
- * learn more about the block by asking neighbours who they already know and what has happened in the past
- * make flier greetings and invitations to mail to neighbours you don't see around
- * build phone and email trees to enable communication between your neighbours
- * set up a community kiosk to post information and facilitate communication
- * ask neighbours what kind of community they want to live in and what they might like to see that could be built to improve the place
- * learn about what events, gatherings and classes are offered by your neighbours and in your community and attend some of them

Design : Lunaya Shekinah - www.lightscience.ca

Source Curriculum : City Repair's : Placemaking Guidebook

Gaiacraft Workbook Team : Delvin Solkinson, Lunaya Shekinah, Jacob Aman, Tamara Griffiths, Ali Ma

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- * build partnerships with schools, non-profits, government groups, businesses and individuals in the community
- * set up formal neighbourhood meetings to talk about community issues, projects and potentials
- * produce free events, celebrations, games, block parties, actions and intersection repair projects that include your neighbours

PLACEMAKING PROCESS : OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

- * do research on City Repair initiatives and read : City Repair's : Placemaking Guidebook
- * google City Repair videos
- *start documenting as much of process as possible
- *open dialogues
- *begin relationship building through socials and community meet-ups
- *form a core group to help guide the process
- *build partnerships with local people, businesses, organizations, schools, and government groups
- *make an Asset Map : an inventory of the strengths and gifts, both tangible and intangible, of the people and places that make up your community
- *deepen dialogues about possibilities and create a collective decision making process
- *observe the design space and openly brainstorm possibilities
- *involve as many people as possible from the neighbourhood into a collective visioning process
- *develop a specific vision and mission statement
- *set schedules and goals for meetings, design processes, work parties, and materials needed
- *co-create goals that are relatively easy to achieve to build

- group momentum and empower the process
- *facilitate lots of opportunities for feedback
- *include local government in the process of finalizing the design
- *be sure to note any bylaws, codes or other guidelines
- *begin fundraising if needed
- *make the magic happen
- *create publicity to share the inspiration and encourage others to do similar projects
- *celebrate the accomplishment with a block party or social
- *reflect on the process
- *steward the new community place
- *keep the momentum going with socials, events and new community initiatives

SOME PLACEMAKING FUNCTIONS

- *builds community
- *reclaims public spaces
- *turns spaces into places
- *creates ecologically sustainable, community-centered neighbourhoods
- *allows people to meet freely without having to spend more or feel they need to move on
- *greens the local neighbourhood
- *addresses social and environmental concerns
- *habitat building for animals and birds
- *creates beauty
- *slows down traffic
- *encourages other neighbourhood projects
- *is super fun
- *reduces crime
- *increases property value
- *brings neighbours together
- *re-indigenates our cities, towns and villages
- *opens up dialogues about local collective visioning the future
- *helps people get to know neighbours
- *initiates a community design process
- *promotes biking and walking
- *create connections between local schools, businesses, organizations, government and neighbours
- *supports reskilling and skill building
- *addresses social isolation
- *attracts families and conscious people to the neighbourhood

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*creates community resilience

Jan Semenza introduces two important concepts around placemaking:

*develops Community Capacity which is defined as "characteristics of communities that affect their ability to identify, mobilize and address social and public health problems"

*builds Social Capital "The norms and social relations embedded in the social structure of society that enable people to coordinate action to achieve desired goals"

SOME INTERSECTION REPAIR ARCHETYPES

public art installation
traffic circle
library
free box
cafe
tea house (mobile or fixed)
community gardens
cob oven
sitting areas + cob benches
tool lending library
mural
information kiosk / communication station
multi use space
farm gate stand
produce sharing station
sidewalk chalk dispensary
chalk board
bike rack
table
signage
lighting

water feature
waste receptacle / recycling station / compost (if properly maintained)
bulletin board
stage
pathways
mandala
block party
pocket park
food forest
nature strip

develop a walking/biking tour for the neighbourhood including sites of interest

do neighbourhood mapping including gates, pathways, defining features, signs, places, monuments, and centers

VILLAGE REPAIR

Inspired by City Repair in Portland, GaiaCraft has launched : Village Repair : Design Maquettes for Small Towns and Villages www.villagerepair.org

The Village Repair branch of GaiaCraft is a local grassroots initiative growing in the mossy cedar rainforests of Mt. Elphinstone, British Columbia. In the Heart Gardens and surrounding downtown core of our coastal village, a unique community comes together to build foundations for a regenerative future. Here we can see social permaculture vignettes intended to inspire creative placemaking in small towns and villages around the world. While City repair aims at Urban places, Village Repair focusses on creating relationships, gathering places and habitat that promotes healthy interactions between people, animals, birds, reptiles, insects, plants, fungi and all other living and non-living links in the ecological community. As an activated Social Permaculture program and Transition Initiative, Village Repair hopes to inspire communities to redesign their own neighbourhoods into thriving, abundant and diverse ecosystems which support the web of life for all living and non-living things.

The localization of culture, economy and decision making is the foundation for a sustainable future.

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