



the co-operative city conference

November 23, 2012 • SFU Woodward's

CONFERENCE OUTLINE

The City of Vancouver is engaged in an unprecedented effort to make sustainability the driving force that will define what the city aspires to and how the city operates. This vision has prompted the City to rise to the front rank of cities promoting sustainability and to declare that by the year 2020, Vancouver will be recognized as the world's Greenest City. It is a bold and inspiring vision and one that rests, in large part, on the means by which the City engages its citizenry in realizing this ambitious goal.

A key element in making this vision a reality is the adoption of social technologies that both embody and advance the social values and relationships that are implicit in the City's sustainability goals. Co-operation is chief among these.

The purpose of the Co-operative City conference is to showcase the ways in which co-operatives can make sustainability the basis for strengthening key sectors and essential services and also for improving the quality of life for citizens. The objective of the conference is to generate strategic partnerships between the co-op sector and the City to advance sustainability goals in such areas as:

- Arts and culture
- Local food systems
- Affordable housing
- Green industry
- Community energy

In recognition of 2012 as the UN International Year of Co-operatives, the Co-operative City conference is a bold attempt to place co-operation at the heart of a city's sustainability efforts. In addition to showcasing outstanding examples through the presentations and workshops, the conference will feature site visits with projects that exemplify what is possible through the strategic use of co-operative models.

Speakers include: Catherine Clement, VP of Community Engagement, Vancouver Foundation; Peter Couchman, Chief Executive of the Plunkett Foundation, UK; and Penny Ballem, City Manager for the City of Vancouver.

Conference registration is \$75 (students \$50)

To register online: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/4450423336>

For additional information, please contact Rita Farkas at ritazifarkas@gmail.com or Brad Boyce at general@bccca.coop



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CONCURRENT SESSIONS



Arts & Culture

Surviving as a cultural worker is hard in a City like Vancouver where living costs are high and public support for the arts so limited. From the creation of shared spaces for art studios, theatre performances and galleries to the sharing of equipment and the marketing & distribution of their artwork, co-ops are a key resource for artists. This session looks at how co-ops can help artists produce and sell their work, create shared benefits such as pension plans and health insurance, and provide affordable bookkeeping and accounting services geared to the unique needs of artists.



Local Food Systems

Co-ops have always played a key role in agriculture - whether selling produce for farmers or providing access to quality food products to consumers. Increasingly however, co-ops are being used to break new ground for the promotion of local food systems and the cultivation of healthy, organic food as an alternative to industrial food products. This session will examine the role of co-ops in developing local food networks, linking consumers to farmers, supporting small producers, and bringing food cultivation to urban settings.



Affordable Housing

Co-ops provide one of the most effective models for affordable housing. They make housing not only more affordable, but also support neighborhood diversity and build healthy communities. With the disappearance of public funding for housing, new models are being used to fill the gap. From community land trusts and the re-leasing and redevelopment of existing housing co-ops, to co-operative financing systems and supported living spaces, co-op models for housing are more relevant than ever. This session will explore cutting edge models for creating co-op alternatives for affordable housing in challenging times.



Green Enterprise

Vancouver is home to a burgeoning green industry sector. However, the small and medium firms that make up this vital part of Vancouver's economy remain isolated from each other; the sector as a whole remains fragmented and lacking in institutional supports and a strategy for growth. This session will explore how co-op models can provide the kinds of shared services and enterprise supports that help small firms become more productive, more competitive, and more able to sell their products to national and international markets.



Community Energy

One of the most exciting developments in the production of clean and renewable alternatives for energy is the emergence of small scale, community energy systems. This is a new, untapped area for Vancouver and this session will examine the use of co-op models for the financing and development of community-owned energy systems such as wind, solar, heat recovery, mini generators and neighborhood energy utilities (NEUs).



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PROGRAM

- 9:00am** Registration, Coffee
- 9:30am** Welcome, Opening Remarks
John Restakis, Executive Director, BCCA
- 9:45am** Connection and Community – The Role of Co-operation
Catherine Clement, VP Community Engagement, Vancouver Foundation
- 10:15am** Coffee Break
- 10:30am** Concurrent Sessions
Arts & Culture
Local Food Systems
Affordable Housing
Green Enterprise
Community Energy
- 12:30pm** Lunch
Peter Couchman, Chief Executive, Plunkett Foundation, UK
- 1:30pm** Site visits to leading examples of co-operation in action
- 4:30pm** Closing Plenary
Penny Ballem, City Manager, City of Vancouver

We wish to thank the following sponsors for helping to make this event possible

