

# Parkdale CLT Newsletter #1

Nov 21, 2012

## From Parkdale:

### ***Results of Community Mapping project released***

Over the summer 2012, we conducted the community mapping project to trace how Parkdale is changing spatially. What we looked at included the changes in commercial property values, changes in the number of rooming/boarded houses, vacant properties, and the use/ownership of lands in Parkdale. All of the maps are available on the [Parkdale People's Economy project](#) website. We are preparing a land use map for North Parkdale now. If you have any idea and suggestion for further community mapping, please let us know!

### ***Moving toward incorporation***

In October 11, 2012, we organized an information session for potential members who would sit on the first transitional board of directors. A CLT is a membership-based non-profit organization where board of directors are elected by members. But we are not there yet as we haven't developed memberships. Therefore, we decided to begin by a 'transitional' board of directors. We invited key community organizations representing diverse community members in Parkdale. In the next newsletter, we will announce the first board members. Now we are preparing an application of incorporation and hope to submit it by the end of the year.

### ***Democratic governance model proposed for Parkdale CLT***

To explore an appropriate democratic governance model and membership for Parkdale CLT, we have commissioned a research project to workshop course for the [University of Toronto's Planning Program](#). A group of planning students has investigated experiences and lessons from other CLTs from elsewhere as well as good practices for participatory planning. They will present their findings and recommendations for Parkdale in early January. The date and time will be announced soon. This is an open public event. Please join us if you are interested!

### ***Parkdale Food Network Community Forum on December 3rd 2012***

Since its official start, PFN has been working on three initiatives: neighbourhood-based food procurement/distribution (Bulk-buying); Community Land Trust; and Civic Engagement with Maytree Foundation's Building Blocks. What have we done? What are some of the key outcomes? What have we learned from action? Where do we want to go from here? How can each of us collaborate better? This PFN forum is set to stimulate such community conversation. Each PFN working group will share their experience and project updates, exchange ideas, and receive feedback for improvement.

Date: December 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday

Time: 10:30 am – 2 pm

Location: West End Food Coop @ 1229 Queen St W

Light lunch will be served

Please RSVP at [here!](#)

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## From Elsewhere:

### Growing interests in Community Land Trust – part 1 –

While the idea of community land trust itself has its long history, it seems that CLT is gaining growing attention from both policy makers/planners and community groups as a community-based solution for complex urban land issues. In fact, in U.S. alone, over 100 CLTs were established since 2000. There are some reasons behind this surge. First, as 'the local' is becoming a more salient scale for policy intervention and social innovation, many groups are looking into ways of advancing strategies for local issues through local ownership of assets including land. Localism in UK's Big Society agenda is a good example. Further, many cities across the world are experiencing rapid urbanization, land value speculation, and gentrification; community land trust is being proposed as a tool for ensuring affordability of land and housing. For example, as a part of *The Global Urban Economic Dialogue series*, UN-Habitat has also paid attention to the model as it recently released [a report](#) that reviews the history and concept of community land trust and its trend in the US.

In this movement, it seems there are two currents. First is the municipally-initiated CLT to manage public (open) space. Such a good example is the City of Chicago. Chicago has been well-known for a municipal program that applies a CLT model to provide affordable housing. More recently, through its [Healthy Places Chicago](#) initiative, the city leverages the CLT model to manage community gardening sites (mostly on public lands) and transfer the ownership of public lands to non-profit agencies such as [Neighbourhood Space](#). Likewise, the [City of Los Angeles](#) is looking at a CLT model as a municipal program for efficient public space management. In UK, the similar trend is happening in the context of [Localism and Big Society agenda](#).

There are a number of rationales behind this side of trend. One reason is that transferring the ownership to non-profit groups makes it easier for them to access city-owned properties than leasing the public land to them, because leasing comes with lengthy bureaucratic processes and various burdens. But a typical challenge in this model is that limited resource is transferred to non-profit groups. Owning and managing properties requires financial resources as well as technical knowledge, and these responsibilities are downloaded to non-profit groups. A recent study of CLTs in UK reports:

"[I]n an era of stringent funding cuts it is likely that CLTs will face a fight to get their 'fair share' of resources, including land and finance. The experience of Scottish CLTs in particular shows that structures providing technical and financial support can be imperative to assisting communities to acquire and manage land in a holistic and beneficial way, but without such support communities may be constrained in their efforts." ([Moore & McKee, 2012, p. 288](#))

The transfer of land ownership should not be the end but municipalities will need to provide financial and technical supports to non-profit groups in order to increase sustainability of CLTs. In the next issue, we will turn attention to the other current of CLTs: grassroots community organizing efforts to (re)claim land.