

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *VUD | the Vancouver Upcycle Design Project*

- **Year Complete:** 2017
- **Local Government:** City of Vancouver, BC
- **Local Foundation:** Vancouver Foundation

Project Purpose

To catalyze a shift toward a more circular economy in Vancouver's design, production, construction, and demolition sectors. This will be done through promoting businesses that are integrating upcycling into their business models and demonstrating, through public exhibits, the breadth of what can be done with recovered materials.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

- It was important to build a social movement around the work that was done and invite widespread participation. Although it would have been simpler to move forward with a project with a limited number of partners, engaging a wide cross-section of stakeholders was important to revealing hidden opportunities and challenges.
- Aim to engage businesses and non-profits under a common direction and mission. Some of the most powerful partnerships that were formed from this project were between non-profit community organizations and for-profit businesses that have common goals or complementary missions.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

Although it is important to have senior project buy-in (Director level for instance), projects will see delays and hiccups if they are not also on the to-do lists of more mid-level staff. This ensures that the partners can communicate often and effectively and dedicate the necessary time to the project.

Additional Information and Resources

Drawing on insights gleaned from this project, the city of Vancouver developed their [2040 Zero Waste strategy](#).