



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Better Block Releases Wikiblock Library: A Toolkit for Creating Better Blocks

Dallas, TX —Better Block today announced the release of its Wikiblock library, an open-source toolkit of designs for benches, chairs, planters, stages, bus stops, beer garden fences, and kiosks that can be downloaded for free.

Wikiblock designs can be taken to a makerspace where a CNC router (a computer-aided machine) can cut them out of a sheet of plywood. Most products can then be assembled without glue or nails, and used instantly to make a block better.

Wikiblock is available at betterblock.org/wikiblock.

Better Block is a nonprofit organization that aims to educate, equip, and empower communities and their leaders to reshape and reactivate built environments to promote the growth of healthy and vibrant neighborhoods. Started in 2010 by Jason Roberts and neighbors, the Better Block transforms neighborhoods one block at a time.

“We’re trying to lower the barrier to entry on fabrication,” says Jason Roberts, founder of the Better Block. “We’re realizing the potential for the every man and every woman. Before, it required an architect, a carpenter, renderings, and contractors. At this point, you no longer need all that. You just need your local makerspace.”

Elements of the Wikiblock library were tested a few weeks ago at the Cuyahoga Falls Better Block in Ohio. Students in Brian Peters’ College of Architecture and Environmental Design class at Kent State University were partnered with local vendors to create kiosks for the two-day event—elevating the idea of a booth from a tent to a semi-permanent/moveable structure.

“It gave the students real-world experience,” Roberts says of the partnership. “And it allows entrepreneurs to take that next step without the level of cost associated with the brick-and-mortar business.”

The kiosks found new life after the event when several of the entrepreneurs helped disassemble them and take them to their semi-permanent home where they were reassembled.

The Wikiblock library launches today with 30 products, but more will be added as the community grows and provides its input. Many of the pieces are being tested today in Saint Paul where a pop-up outdoor theater was constructed by the community using Wikiblock elements, such as the stage, movie screen, and lighting.

Wikiblock is generously supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Thanks, also, to our other partners, including Kent State University, RSP Architects, Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation, Friendly Streets Initiative, Frogtown Neighborhood Association, and the Victoria Theater Arts Initiative.

“Wikiblock offers a fun, fast, effective path to get people involved in shaping their community and create spaces where people can connect with their city and each other,” said Benjamin de la Peña, Knight Foundation director for community and national strategy.

For more information about the Better Block or Wikiblock, contact Krista Nightengale, krista@betterblock.org.

About the Better Block.

Better Block Foundation is a nonprofit that teaches and applies placemaking principles to citizens on the neighborhood level. By creating the tools necessary to educate and equip residents, stakeholders and government leaders, the Better Block seeks to enable them to reshape their communities into vibrant, sustainable places. For more information, visit betterblock.org. To check out Wikiblock, go to betterblock.org/wikiblock.