

SPEC ANNUAL REPORT 2016





Practical Solutions for Sustainable Cities

Founded in 1969, the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) is a charitable organization that addresses environmental issues in British Columbia through education, outreach, advocacy and research.

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ABOUT US

OUR MISSION

To provide our community with practical solutions for urban sustainability.

OUR VISION

A healthy, just and vibrant urban life that enhances local and global eco-systems.

OUR CORE VALUES

Rooted in Community, Respectful, Empowering and Purposeful.

OUR PROGRAMS

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

page 16

- ▶ Promotes energy conservation and the use of renewable energy
- ▶ Advocates for sustainable transportation

FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

page 19

- ▶ Helps build a more sustainable and resilient local food system
- ▶ Helps protect our brown, green, and blue spaces

WASTE COMMITTEE

page 26

- ▶ Promotes practices that lead to waste reduction

SUSTAINABILITY FOR BUSINESSES

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- ▶ Helps businesses and organizations engage in activities that incorporate sustainability principles

SPEC ELDERS CIRCLE

page 30

- ▶ Encouraging elders to embrace and apply "elder wisdom" to enhance the environmental movement and rebuild community



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A SPECIAL YEAR

In thinking about 2016 and the number of special things we achieved together, I came to the realization of what a special moment in time this is for us. Things are growing steadily at SPEC and the year has been great. If we take a minute to look back at the last 5 years and see the progress we've made, and another minute to look ahead and see how fast our 50th anniversary is approaching and the history that we bring with us, you can't help but feel very excited.

2016 SAW US:

- ▶ Continue to increase our revenue to double our 2011 funding
- ▶ Grow new and existing partnerships for various projects
- ▶ Run more than 15 annual projects and initiatives
- ▶ Start some powerful projects such as the Elders Circle and the Climate Change Adaptation for Small Scale Farmers initiative
- ▶ Continue to grow our team of volunteers

All of this, backed up by a steady commitment from volunteers, staff, partners, and donors, to come together to do good work in the community.

If you haven't found the time to get involved, I invite you to be part of this great organization right now. 2017 will be very exciting as we launch new projects, new fundraising initiatives, and start preparing for our 50th Anniversary that's only two years away.

Get involved by coming to our events, by talking to others about the work we do, by bringing sustainability issues in our community to our attention, by giving your time and/or your money to support our projects. All of us, in our different roles, make SPEC what it is.

I hope you enjoy reading about the fabulous work the team carried out in 2016.

OLIVER LANE
Executive Director



2016 was the year that we shifted from viewing ourselves in terms of our past glory and took up more comfortable residence in our present identity as an urban environmental organization advocating, teaching, and practicing sustainability, in ways which embrace social as well as environmental values.

In 1990, I coordinated a conference called The One Conference, one of the first gatherings to articulate the interconnection of peace, justice and ecological integrity – what has come to be called “civil society.” Over the intervening 27 years more connections have

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

been made but silos do persist, and when an environmental organization such as SPEC gets involved with peace and social justice issues, some ask, 'Why?'

The answer, I think, brings us into the realm of “intersectionality.” I’m hearing that word a lot recently to describe how racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of domination, discrimination and oppression are systemic and interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another. Its original application is human-to-human relationships, but we can extend the word to include our relationship with nature. Our habit of believing we can/should dominate and exploit nature for our own purposes is another institutional oppression. Violent conflict, injustice, and environmental degradation are a three-legged stool and when viewed from the perspective of any one of these, we find the other two are nearly always implicated as causes, consequences, or both. It’s tempting to lay this at the feet of Eurocentric culture but it seems to be a global phenomenon and better to be viewed as arising out of patterns of human

thinking and behaviour that transcend culture or geography.

SPEC has been moving towards a more fulsome expression of these interconnections in the past decade. Along with guiding our many successful programs that you’ll read about in this report, the Board undertook two special projects in 2016: The Reconciliation Project, and The SPEC Elders Circle.

THE RECONCILIATION PROJECT

Committee chairs and staff joined the board with the intention to learn about our own “settler/colonizer mentality” and to undertake to be trustworthy partners in reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. We met six times to view 'Skills for Solidarity' modules created by Leadnow and to focus on different themes of reconciliation. Each three-hour meeting included video presentations by Indigenous people, followed by a discussion and guided exercises to reinforce the theme. Our facilitator worked under the guidance of an Indigenous Elder and the experience was very highly praised by participants. We committed to continue our

learning and engagement to follow through on this theme.

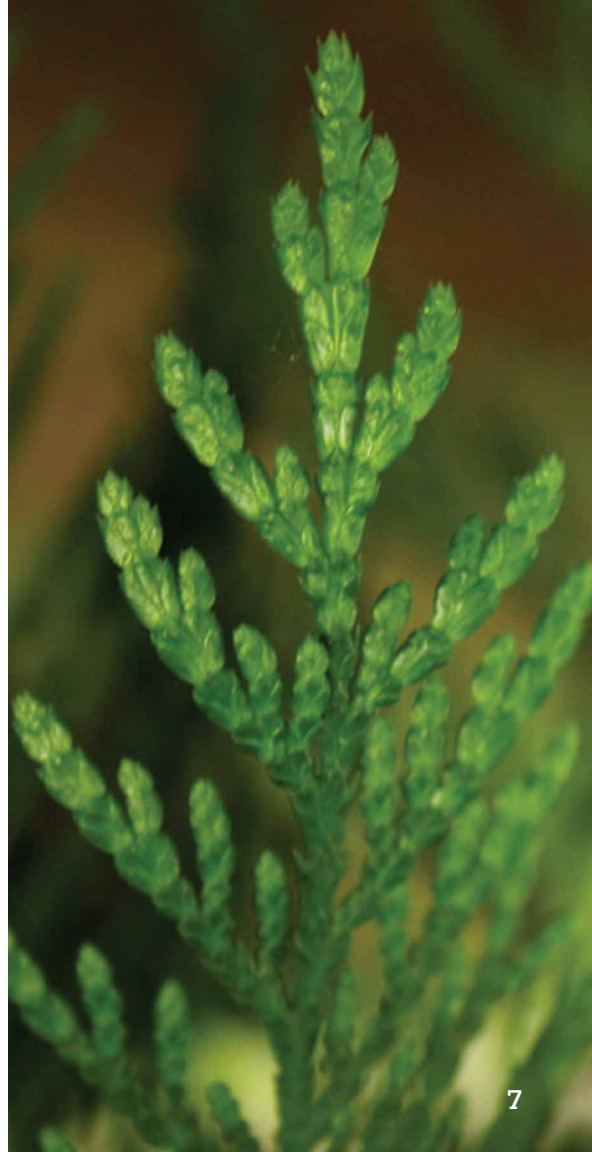
THE SPEC ELDERS CIRCLE

About a decade ago I began to notice that the major topic of conversation with retired friends was travel. Even though I love travel, it made me uneasy, first because of the carbon footprint of it but also because of the implicit message that our purpose in later life is to travel and be entertained. I wanted something more substantial as a legacy gift to younger generations. I began to speak of Reclaiming Elder Wisdom and in June 2016 we inaugurated the SPEC Elders Circle with the explicit invitation to engage in a new developmental stage of life in which we reclaim our most dignified elder role as a “wisdom elder.” It’s the tradition of every culture that elders carry knowledge of a life lived, that they’ve passed through the fires of individuation and self-preoccupation to a greater perspective. They have gathered and sifted and have something of substance to share. That and a willingness to cultivate further traits of wisdom provide a substantial legacy to younger generations that is lacking in our current cultural milieu. The project is rooted in the belief that elders and society have much to gain by elders embracing their

wisdom role. We held six salons exploring this theme and engaged with over 200 participants, many of whom have become regulars. The planning and further development of the project is now in the hands of a “core team” of nine elders who share a great deal of excitement about this phase of life and enthusiasm to share it with others. Our families and all of humankind face significant challenges. Elders guard a deep wish for the well being of future generations and have an important role to play. We are making space for them to explore this theme, make connections with each other and within the community, and grow as creative and wise mentors.

We head into 2017 with plans to enhance our board orientation in preparation for a strategic planning around the build-up to our 50th anniversary in 2019. Come join our SPEC team, participate in our programs, find a place to volunteer and give leadership to our ongoing commitment to a sustainable and just city, region and world.

DR. CAROLE CHRISTOPHER
Board Chair



SPEC HIGHLIGHTS 2016

School Gardens Program delivered **252** food garden lessons to **89** classrooms in **12** schools across Vancouver, reaching over **2,000** students.

Launched the pilot version of the **Master Recycler Program** for businesses and organizations, offering a course for BC Housing building managers.

The **Sustainable Communities Field School** program, in partnership with the UBC Botanical Garden, hosted **7** tours for businesses and organizations, reaching over **200** employees.

Delivered **4 Climate Change and Renewable Energy Workshops** at schools and developed new curriculum for 2017.

Over **100** adults participated in SPEC's **Urban Farmer Field School** classes and **Go Solar** tours.

Co-hosted **13 weekly summer food markets** and **1 large winter market** in partnership with Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, which connected local food growers, food makers and artisans, to local consumers, and contributed over **\$25,000** to Vancouver's green economy.

Launched the first year of the **SPEC Elders Circle** project hosting **5** large events and multiple side events and affinity groups, engaging over **200** elders and youngers.

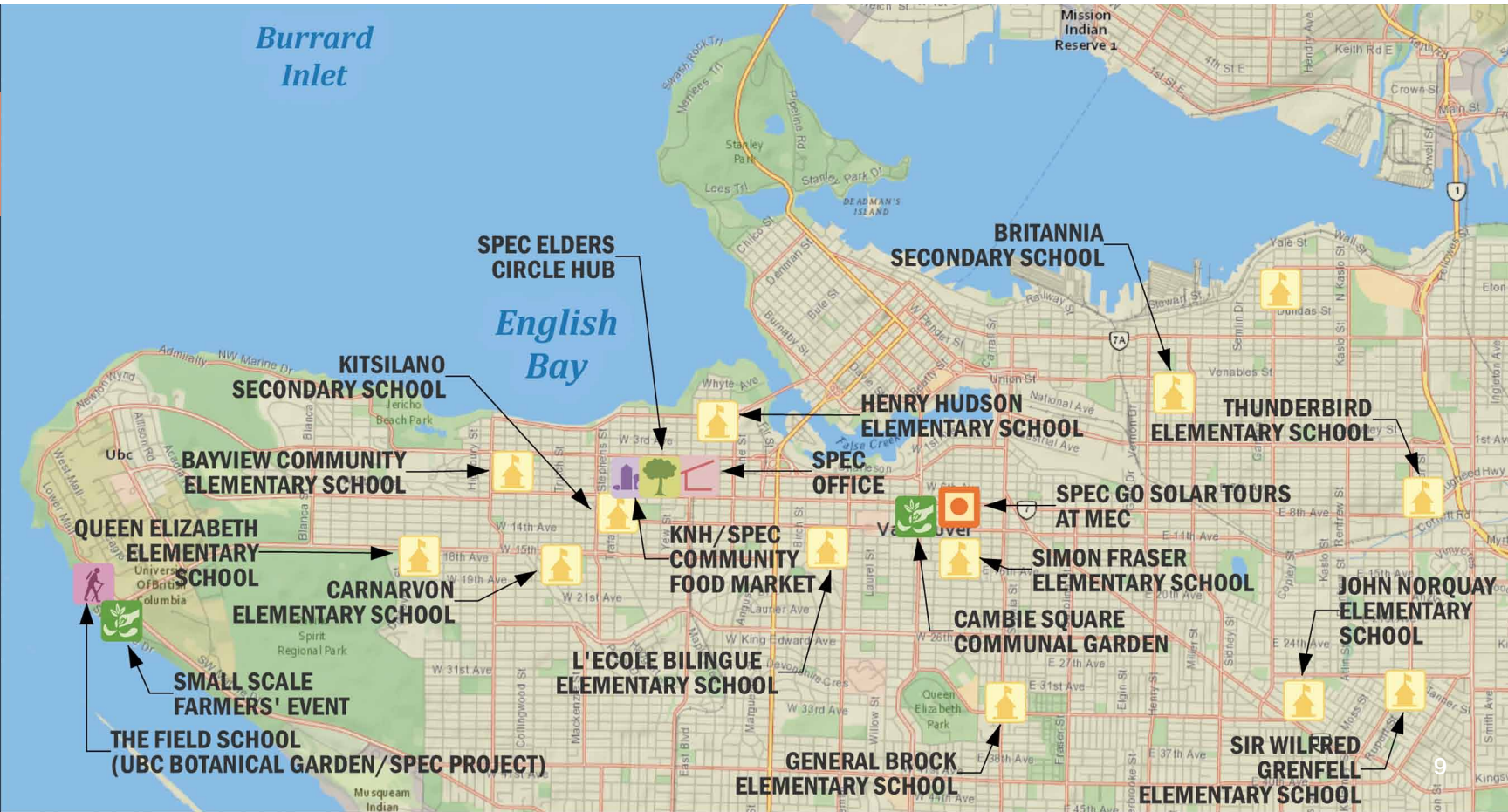
Provided on-site support to **20** local farmers, as part of the **Climate Change Adaptation for Small Scale Farmers** project and held a knowledge-sharing workshop for over **60** participants.

Ran a **5-session reconciliation awareness process** with board members, staff and volunteers.

Over **4,000** hours donated to SPEC by **volunteers**.

ONLINE HIGHLIGHTS * **2,800** people reached with SPECtrum, our monthly newsletter * **1,500** followers on Facebook and **840** on Twitter

SPEC IN THE CITY



THE SPEC FAMILY

COMMUNITY STARS OF 2016

SPEC DONORS

As the bedrock of financial security for SPEC, donor contributions allow us to plan and carry out the work we do every day in the community. Each donation, large or small means a lot to us. We especially would like to acknowledge the **Gow-Jarret/Millard family** and the **Acme Delivery Company** family who are among a small but growing number of families and individuals that make a large annual donation to SPEC. Also, like all social profit organizations, we deeply value our monthly donors, including many of our board members. We are always hopeful that others will feel inspired by our mission, our values, and our programs to become monthly donors. Thank you one and all for your contributions to SPEC.



THE GOW-JARRET/MILLARD FAMILY

THE ACME DELIVERY COMPANY FAMILY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017

Carole Christopher	President
Kate Menzies	Vice President
Dan Rogers	Secretary
Ivan Cheung	Treasurer
Alison Krahn	Director
Anastasia Koutalianos	Director
Art Bomke	Director
Eyal Lebel	Director
Paula Pisciotano	Director
Shelby Kitt	Director
Tara Moreau	Director
Wendy Mendes	Director
Chris Gooderham	Director

A very warm welcome to our new board members
Alison Krahn, Anastasia Koutalianos, Chris Gooderham,
Shelby Kitt and Wendy Mendes.



2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We want to thank 2016 Directors Jessica Frank, Jimmy Zammar and Ara Koh for their valuable support during 2016. A very special thank you to our former Director, Secretary, volunteer recruiter and incredible multi tasker, Tova Plashkes for 4 years of dedication and commitment. We wish all of them the best in their new personal and professional adventures.

STAFF



OLIVER LANE
Executive Director

In 2016 Oliver completed his first year in his Executive Director role. He's been with SPEC for 5 years now.



NIKOO BOROUMAND
School Garden Coordinator

Nikoo continues to brilliantly lead and grow the program which is heading into its 10th year. Nikoo has been with SPEC for 3 years.



KARLA OLSON
Operations Assistant

Karla joined SPEC in the Fall of 2015 and provided valuable support in communications, volunteer management and outreach during 2016.



BARBARA JOUGHIN
Elders Circle Volunteer Coordinator

Barbara joined SPEC in early 2016 to help SPEC recruit volunteers for the new Elders Circle Project. Barbara ended up doing not only that but the program's website content, communications, event support and a lot more!



STAFF



ELANA EVANS

Climate Change Adaptation for
Small Scale Farmers Coordinator

Elana led and coordinated this project throughout its successful first year, utilizing her expertise in soil science and building relationships with farmers.



FRANCES ANKENMAN

Climate Change and Renewable
Energy Workshops Facilitator

Frances joined the Energy team to help us expand the workshops in schools by promoting the program, developing new activities and curriculum, and constructing energy model prototypes for children to test.



JOEY LIU

School Gardens Program Facilitator

Joey supported the expansion of the program into new schools in 2016 by delivering lessons and working with the children in the gardens.



RICHARD DRAKE

Elders Circle Project Coordinator

As we launched this exciting new project, Richard took on the challenging coordinator role to oversee events, promotions, logistics, recruitment and more. The program had a great first year.

SPEC INTERNS

A very big thank you our 2016 interns that contributed so much to SPEC's projects and spirit:

Shupa Barua, Westside Community Food Market Facilitator

Emmett Keyserlingk, Energy and Outreach Initiatives Intern

Jessica Hak Hepburn, Outreach and Urban Farmer Field School Workshop Coordinator

Paris Chen, School Gardens Program Intern

VOLUNTEERS

SPEC is largely a volunteer run organization. Thanks to the passion and commitment from our volunteers, SPEC does a lot of great work with very limited funding. Volunteers, along with members of the board, donated over 4,000 hours in 2016. Devoted volunteers contribute in a variety of ways including project leadership, outreach in the community, support with administrative and communications tasks, and fundraising.

A big thank you to all our volunteers!



ADMIN, FUND DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

Alana Tacy, Alison Krahn, Anastasia Koutalianos, Carole Christopher, Chris Gooderham, Connie Reichelsdorfer, Dan Rogers, Dawn Allen, Emelie Crumbaker, Jessica Frank, Karl Lam, Kate Menzies, Lisa Rilkoff, Michael Virlas, Mirjami “Jamie” Rantaniitty, Nicole Tennison, Pauline Morand and Shelby Kitt.

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Alison Krahn, Amelia Hohenadel, Antxon Galan, Chris Gooderham, Elizabeth Mosier, Elnaz “Ellie” Barati, Emily Chan, Joshua Krul, Rob Baxter, Roger Bryenton, Ruth Briggs, Teddy Courteaux, Tova Plashkes, Xavier Deschênes-Philion.

Leadership Team: Joshua

FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Art Bomke, Carole Christopher, Chris Gooderham, Gaik Beng Khoo, Kate Menzies, Naomi Robert and Tara Moreau.

Leadership Team: Art, Kate, and Tara

WASTE COMMITTEE

Angie Nicolás, Daniel Rotman, Derek Leung, Emily McGill, Eyal Lebel, Henry Mwandemere, Irene Fornaguera, Jacquie Rolston, Maya Tatuch, Mirjami Rantaniitty, Sitraka Ratsimanohatra and Syd Portner.

Leadership Team: Angie and Maya

ELDERS CIRCLE PROJECT TEAM

Carole Christopher, Richard Drake (staff and volunteer), Barbara Joughin (staff and volunteer), Christina Ray (consultant and volunteer), Rudi Krause, Lydia Travers and Joan Balmer.

Acknowledgement: Thank you to all the other volunteers and community members that helped at our outreach events, Westside Community Food Market, beach cleanups, AGM, and Elders Circle events!

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

SPEC works collaboratively to achieve our goals by building partnerships that bring community resources together to pursue local sustainability. To express our appreciation to our partners and financial supporters for working with us, please join us in giving a SPECTacular thank you to the following organizations:

Ace Accounting and Tax Services * Acme Delivery Company * Brock Junction After-School Care Program * BC Housing * BC Hydro * BC Hydro Rate Payers Association * Bullfrog Power * City of Vancouver * Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust * Earth Island Institute * Gaia Green * Government of British Columbia * Government of Canada * Gow-Jarrett and Millard Family * Grandview Woodland Food Network * Hamber Foundation * Hewer Home Hardware * Home Depot * HSBC Canada * Hudson Out-Of-School Care * John Norquay Elementary School parent volunteers * Kitsilano Neighbourhood House * Kiwassa Neighbourhood House * Leverage Lab and Future Strategies * Lululemon Athletica * Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics * Metro Vancouver * Mountain Equipment Coop (MEC) * Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House * Multi-Material BC * Pacific Northwest Garden Supply * Recycling Alternatives * Recycling Council of BC * Redemption Church * Simon Fraser University * Sitka Foundation * Surfrider Foundation * Suzuki Elders Circle * TD Friends of the Environment Foundation * Telus * Thunderbird After-School Care Program * UBC Botanical Garden * UBC- Centre for Sustainable Food Systems * UBC - Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability * UBC Psychology * Vancity * Vancouver Co-op Radio * Vancouver Economic Commission * Vancouver Food Policy Council * Vancouver Foundation * Vancouver National Aboriginal Day Organizing Committee (NADOC) * Vancouver School Food Network (VSFN) * Vancouver Renewable Energy Coop * Vancouver School Board * Vancouver Schools participating in our programs * Vancouver Urban Farming Society * West Coast Seeds * Whole Kids Foundation * Whole Foods Market * Young Agrarians * Zero Waste Club * Zero Waste Market

PROGRAMS & COMMITTEES

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
IN THE COMMUNITY,
ACTION ON THE GROUND

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

— COMMITTEE MEMBERS —

Alison Krahn, Amelia Hohenadel,
Antxon Galan, Chris Gooderham,
Elizabeth Mosier, Elnaz “Ellie”
Barati, Emily Chan, Frances
Ankenman, Ivan Cheung, Joshua
Krul, Rob Baxter, Roger Bryenton,
Ruth Briggs, Teddy Courteaux,
Tova Plashkes and
Xavier Deschênes-Philion

— COMMITTEE CHAIR —

Joshua Krul



COMMUNITY SUPPORT: A big thank you to BC Hydro, Bullfrog Power, Earth Island Institute, Hamber Foundation, HSBC Canada, MEC, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, and Vancouver Renewable Energy Cooperative for supporting our Energy & Transportation projects in 2016.



SOLAR TOURS 2016

PLANS FOR 2017: The Energy & Transportation Committee will continue to develop and deliver workshops and campaigns with energy conservation at heart. In early 2017 we will be delivering Climate Change and Renewable Energy Workshops to students throughout the Vancouver area. The committee will be working on a new Zero Fossil Fuels video to add to the previous episode which won the BC Hydro award last year. The 2017 video will focus on the Transportation sector with an idea of wealth generation from reducing fossil fuels consumption from our personal transportation methods. Goals for our committee for 2017 include growing our volunteer base, increasing public participation at our events, bringing solar tours to businesses, and reaching more schools with our workshops.

TEAM: Rob Baxter, Amelia Hohenadel, Chris Gooderham, Joshua Krul, Oliver Lane, and Ruth Briggs.

PURPOSE: Educate the public on solar energy and our local and provincial energy systems. The tours are offered in partnership with Vancouver Renewable Energy Cooperative and the support of Bullfrog Power and MEC.

HIGHLIGHTS: **5** tours, **40** members of the public participated and **1** school group took the tour.

TOPICS COVERED:

Myths and realities of solar energy in BC, identifying the different types of solar energy systems, components that make up common solar energy systems, costs and savings of these systems, making your home/building solar ready, how solar energy systems are integrated into a building, and how to move away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy.



CLIMATE CHANGE & RENEWABLE ENERGY WORKSHOPS

TEAM: Frances Ankenman, Amelia Hohenadel, Chris Gooderham, Ruth Briggs, and Ellie Barati

PURPOSE: Through activities, group challenges, and experiments, students:

- ▶ Learn about the science behind climate change
- ▶ Examine the role of renewable energy sources in reducing carbon emissions
- ▶ Participate in hands-on experiments to model sun, wind, hydro, biofuels, and wave power
- ▶ Develop critical decision-making skills through hands-on teamwork

The workshop, which is catered for grades 7 and 9, can also be paired with our free Go Solar Tour, which allows students the unique opportunity to visit the solar panel installation on top of the Mountain Equipment Co-op store in Vancouver and learn about cutting-edge developments in solar energy technology.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ Delivered 4 workshops in early 2016 at schools, as part of our pilot phase
- ▶ Hired Frances Ankenman as our key facilitator for 2016-2017 in October
- ▶ Developed new curriculum for phase 2 of the program

- ▶ Frances and team member Chris Gooderham designed renewable energy experiments and prototypes

OUTREACH:

The Energy & Transportation team has been active doing outreach in the community at public events. We are also working with a group of UBC environmental science students developing educational material on BC's energy, with a focus on electricity generation and conservation. At the same time a few members of the committee are engaged with other community organizations to educate the public on the impacts and the economics of the development of Site C dam, while looking at better alternatives for electricity generation.

FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

— COMMITTEE MEMBERS —

Art Bomke, Carole Christopher,
Chris Gooderham, Elana Evans,
Gaik Beng Khoo, Joey Liu,
Kate Menzies, Naomi Robert,
Nikoo Boroumand, Oliver Lane,
Paris Chen, Shupa Barua
and Tara Moreau

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Art Bomke, Kate Menzies and
Tara Moreau



SPEC SCHOOL GARDENS PROGRAM

STAFF: Nikoo Boroumand & Joey Liu

PURPOSE: This program connects children with their food, each other, nature, and their community, by integrating gardening and healthy food education into the regular classroom curriculum. We believe that school gardens inspire and empower the next generation to contribute to healthier and more sustainable communities.

ACTIVITIES: In its ninth year, the program brought Joey Liu on board and partnered with 12 schools across Vancouver, reaching over 2000 students. We delivered 252 lessons on seeds, garden design, planting, nutrition, composting, insects, harvesting, cooking, and other related topics to 89 classrooms, and concluded the season with 6 harvest parties to celebrate

the fruit of the students' labour and love. In addition, students were engaged in building 4 new garden boxes dedicated to native pollinator-supporting plants. Our efforts throughout the year were recognized via stories published and broadcasted by CBC, City TV, and 24 Hours.

We continue to provide garden lesson resources to the public through the SPEC website to encourage and help educators across British Columbia and beyond to incorporate school garden lessons and programming into their curriculum. In addition to the Green Thumbs at School: SPEC Food Garden Lesson Book, this year we have publicly made available cross-references between garden programming and



“ It is so wonderful to have someone from SPEC who can guide us and organize lessons/activities at appropriate times. I find myself integrating the garden into my teaching practice a lot more than I used to. Thanks to SPEC, I am more aware of what is in the garden and how I can use it as an outdoor learning space. I am constantly encouraging my kids to take care of our Earth, and the garden is one way to do that (ie. composting, growing own food, insects).

— Teacher

the new K to 7 BC Curriculum Core Competencies and Science Area of Learning.

At the end of the school year, a survey was conducted with the teachers whose classrooms obtained SPEC garden lessons to see how we are performing. Most teachers indicated that they felt the quality of the garden lessons were excellent, and all felt that the lessons met their expectations and needs. Most teachers also felt that their level of confidence to develop and support the garden program themselves had increased, and all felt that they are more able to integrate the garden into their teaching practice.

PARTNER SCHOOLS: In the 2015/16 school year, SPEC brought food and garden education to the following schools:

- ▶ Bayview Community School
- ▶ Britannia Secondary School
- ▶ Carnarvon Elementary School
- ▶ General Brock Elementary School
- ▶ Henry Hudson Elementary School
- ▶ John Norquay Elementary School
- ▶ L'Ecole Bilingue Elementary School
- ▶ Queen Elizabeth Elementary School
- ▶ Simon Fraser Elementary School
- ▶ Sir Wilfred Grenfell Community School
- ▶ Thunderbird Elementary School
- ▶ Tillicum Community Annex School



“ We love our school garden because it is beautiful and the strawberries, tomatoes, kale leaves, peas, red radish, and lettuce all grow there.

— Michelle, Grade 1 student,
Thunderbird Elementary School

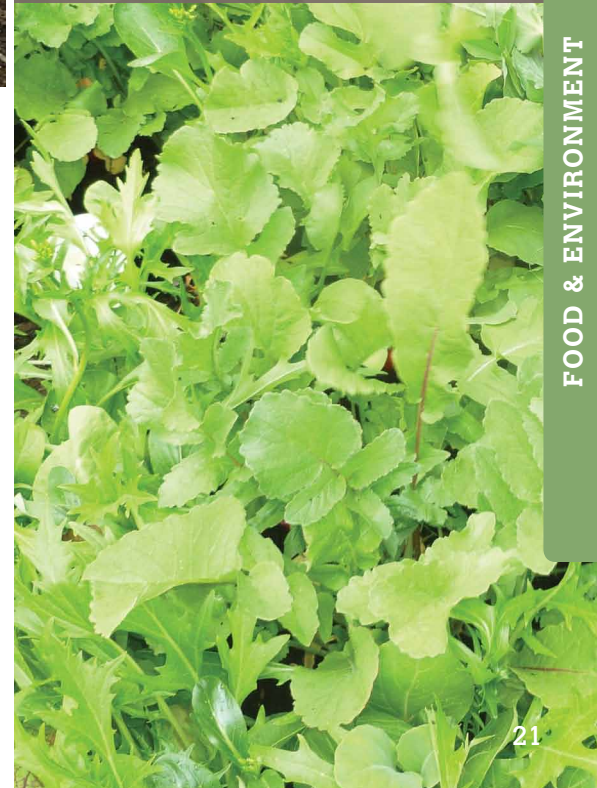
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Our program also helped school gardens remain bountiful throughout the summer months. Students from several school daycares helped in maintaining the gardens and enjoyed their bounty. This would not have been possible without the work of our summer intern, Paris Chen. Throughout the year, we also had co-op students join us from the Institute of Holistic Nutrition. Thank you Camille Texier, Suraya Clemens, and Jillian Robson

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: SPEC volunteers and staff are fortunate to work alongside an amazing community of school garden champions, including dedicated parents, support staff, teachers,

and principals at our partnering schools; the Vancouver School Food Network (VSFN); Vancouver School Board; Kiwassa Neighbourhood House; Redemption Church; Thunderbird After-School Care Program; Brock Junction After-School Care Program, and Hudson Out-Of-School Care.

FUNDING SUPPORT: We would like to thank the funders that supported SPEC's School Garden Program:

- ▶ Acme Delivery Company
- ▶ BC Gaming Community Grant
- ▶ Canada Summer Jobs Grant (Fed. Gov)
- ▶ Canadian Tire (Bentall St.)
- ▶ Gaia Green Products Ltd.
- ▶ Gow-Jarrett & Millard Family



“ It's really fun to see how our hard work growing the vegetables and plants has paid off and how we can make some yummy food for the rest of the school.

— Ella, Grade 6 student,
Henry Hudson Elementary School



- ▶ Home Depot
- ▶ Lululemon Athletica – the metta movement
- ▶ Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- ▶ School parents
- ▶ SPEC individual donors
- ▶ TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- ▶ Telus
- ▶ UBC Botanical Garden
- ▶ West Coast Seeds
- ▶ Whole Foods Market
- ▶ Whole Kids Foundation

themselves in the future. For instance, we have made tools and resources available for teachers to integrate School Garden's programming into the new BC curriculum. In 2016 we developed new programming which was developed specifically to deepen children's connection to nature. We plan to continue developing this material in 2017. This curriculum was developed by our 2015 intern, Jacqueline Craig, as part of her Keystone Paper for a masters in Public Health from SFU.

PLANS FOR 2017: SPEC is committed to continue our high-quality school garden programming at our partnering schools. We are further engaging teachers and empowering them with the tools and knowledge to deliver school garden programming

HIGHLIGHTS:

252 lessons delivered
over **2000** students engaged
89 teachers and classrooms engaged
71 garden beds grown, plus a fruit orchard



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specschoolgardensproject.blogspot.ca
[instagram.com/specschoolgardens](https://www.instagram.com/specschoolgardens)

CAMBIE SQUARE COMMUNAL GARDEN

TEAM: Gaik Beng Khoo, Hisayo Saito, Leanna Knowles, Michelle Wang, Nikoo Boroumand, Paris Chen, Viorel & Ildiko, and Derek Johnson

GARDEN COORDINATOR: Beng

ACTIVITIES: Meeting every Sunday morning, our team of volunteers put in at least 400 hours to run and maintain the garden. We were successful in receiving an infrastructure grant from the city that allowed us to get a new shed, a hose reel cart, some new trellises, and a new sign and soil. We also received a donation of soil amendments from the Pacific Northwest Garden Supply. We were also able to install an accessible bed and hosted a mushroom workshop at the garden.

The SPEC Food & Environment Committee team is helping us with soil testing, and figuring out plans for 2017 as Beng steps down as garden coordinator. A big thank you to Beng for her commitment and dedication. We hope to see her gardening at the Cambie Communal Garden again soon!

PLANS FOR 2017: Some of the key priorities for 2017 will be to:

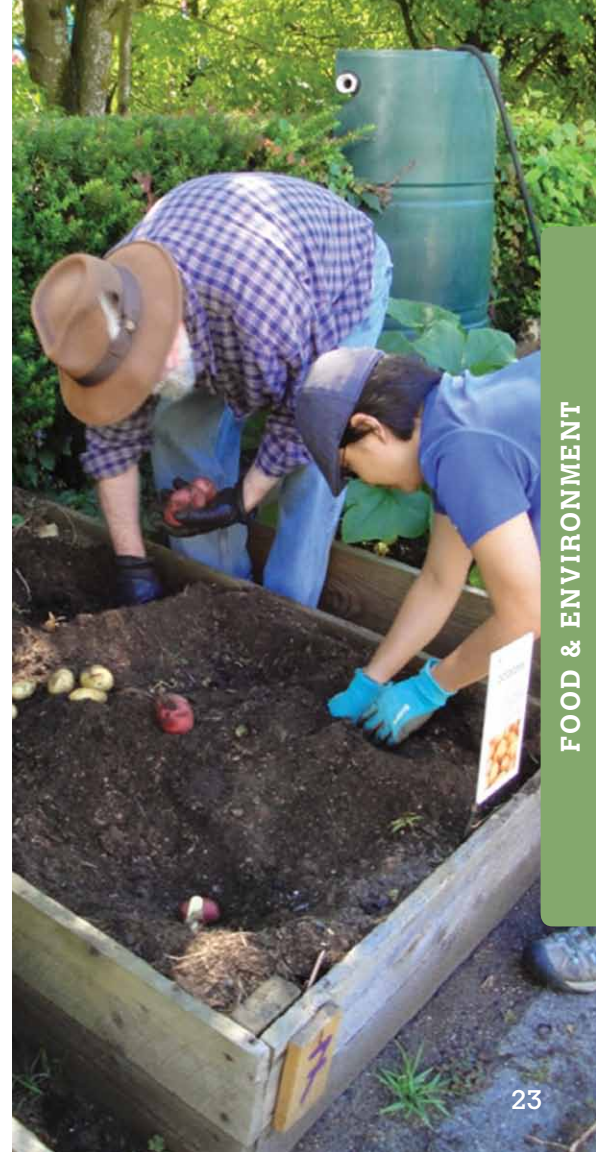
- ▶ Recruit volunteers
- ▶ Host more workshops for the Cambie Square gardeners and the public
- ▶ Continue to upgrade garden beds
- ▶ Improve communication about the shared communal model of the garden
- ▶ Improve the garden's visibility from Cambie street

A big thank you to West Coast Seeds, Pacific Northwest Garden Supply, City of Vancouver, and garden volunteers.

CONNECT WITH US!

specgardens.blogspot.ca

cambiesqvol@gmail.com



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION FOR SMALL SCALE FARMERS PROJECT

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Elana Evans

VOLUNTEERS: Art Bomke, Kate Menzies, Tara Moreau and Naomi Robert

PURPOSE: Farmers are typically time and cash strapped so researching solutions to complex problems, or hiring consultants to provide expert advice, is not always an option. There is a lack of extension (support) services that would support farmers with site and condition-specific advice at low or no-cost. The goal of this project is to identify priority areas of interest to farmers, bring in experts (consultants, researchers and farmer-peers) and provide much needed extension to participating farms. Issues that are, or may be, exacerbated by climate change were the focus of the project.

ACTIVITIES: The project team recruited 15 local farms to participate and surveyed them to identify main areas of concern regarding climate change. Soil health, water use/irrigation and pest management were prioritized. Farm visits were made and soil tests conducted, analyzed and



reported back to the farmers to help them identify areas for immediate improvement. Research around water monitoring is being conducted and useful practices and tools to effectively monitor soil moisture are being developed.

In October 2016, a workshop on soil health was held at Sole Food, a participating urban farm. In November 2016, our team facilitated a panel discussion at the Vancouver Urban Farming Forum to discuss the need for more extension services and begin building a network of stakeholders to develop an extension model.

In early 2017, the culmination of all the efforts of this project will be incorporated into a full day workshop including presentations, farmer case studies, demonstrations, expert discussions, presentation of data and analysis and discussion on how to scale this project up to Phase 2, which focuses on creating an effective, affordable and acces-

sible extension service for farmers, delivered by a number of stakeholders including the private sector, non-profits and research and academic institutions.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ 15 Farmers reached
- ▶ 23 soil tests conducted
- ▶ 9 farms implemented a new cover crop mix
- ▶ 1 workshop complete (11 attendees)
- ▶ 1 upcoming panel session
- ▶ 1 full day workshop planned for 2017

FUNDING & PROJECT SUPPORT: A huge thank you to our funders and partners that have made this pilot phase possible: Vancouver Foundation, Whole Foods Market, Gow Jarrett-Millard Family, UBC Botanical Garden, Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm, Young Agrarians and the Vancouver Urban Farming Society.



KITSILANO NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE & SPEC WESTSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD MARKET

VOLUNTEERS: Charlie Zhu, Chris Kay, Cole Dudley, Erik Andersen, Greg Jung, Katherine Allen, Keelih, Yu, Kimmy Sy, Pauline Helmke, Tabitha Brubacher, Sally Speers, Sarah Chu, and Sean Joe, Judith and David Williams, Alana Tacy, Gloria Koeun, Erica Kubanek, Beyhan Zor, Grace Li, Kristine Schwartz, Omar Tahmiscic

STAFF: Oliver Lane, Sarah Lone (Kits House), and Shupa Barua (summer intern)

ACTIVITIES: For six years, Kits House and SPEC have collaborated to organize the Westside Community Food Market. The goal of the market is to increase community access to local food, growers, and food makers and at the same time create op-

portunities for small and new vendors who are committed to sustainability and have recently launched their own businesses.

Every Thursday of the summer, from 3 to 7 pm, the corner of 7th and Vine offered live music, fresh produce and delicious locally made food for everyone to enjoy. This year vendors generated over \$25,000 in sales, the market allocated \$620 in coupons for community members, and volunteers invested over 300 hours to make it all happen. 2016 saw a number of new components added to the market: 1) An off-season, vendor-led, mini-market to extend the season into the spring and fall. This added an extra 19 market dates with 5 vendors taking part, while generating an additional \$5,400 dol-

lars in sales, 2) Two market tables for local artists every week of the summer, 3) on-site workshops for the public on water-wise gardening, pest management, composting and canning.

A big thank you to Vancity, Whole Foods Market (Kitsilano Store), TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, City of Vancouver, the Westside Food Collaborative, and market volunteers. Also, thank you to all our vendors, who worked hard to offer their best products to our community, and to Kitsilano Neighbourhood House for partnering with us to run this great program.

WASTE COMMITTEE

— COMMITTEE MEMBERS —

Anastasia Koutalianos, Angie Nicolás, Daniel Rotman, Derek Leung, Emily McGill, Eyal Lebel, Henry Mwandemere, Irene Fornaguera, Jacquie Rolston, Maya Tatuch, Mirjami Rantaniitty, Sitraka Ratsimanohatra & Syd Portner

FRIENDS: Addison Lanier, Carol Cohen, Brian Burke, Joanna Huang, Katrina Prescott, Patrick Wilkkie, Richard Drake & Shona Lam

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Angie Nicolás and Maya Tatuch

MASTER RECYCLER PROGRAM

TEAM: Angie Nicolas, Daniel Rotman, Emily McGill, and Eyal Lebel

PURPOSE: Master Recyclers are trained on waste prevention, recycling and composting through an extensive eight-week course featuring experts from industry and field trips to local waste processing and recycling facilities.

Despite its name, the Master Recycler Program is about the deeper issue of how to reduce waste. The course addresses garbage, recycling and organics disposal, and trains participants in community outreach, leadership and behaviour change. An additional goal of the program is to create a program that can be replicated anywhere to reach as many people as possible.

ACTIVITIES: This year we celebrated the graduation of the first cohort of Vancouver Master Recyclers. Together, Master Recyclers contributed over 850 hours of zero waste outreach in their communities this year! Graduates designed and lead innovative projects ranging from zero waste clubs to presentations in schools and public media. Their passion, creativity and enthusiasm continues long after classes are over!



masterrecyclervancouver.ca

Master Recycler for business and organizations: The team piloted its first tailored version of the program with BC Housing and expects to continue to offer this service to government and private sector organizations to help them train their staff on waste reduction and achieve their waste management goals.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Individual donors through SPEC, HSBC Canada and Vancity.

“ I am convinced more than ever that because of the course we are now better equipped to make that all important difference to reduce our waste.

— Henry Mwandemere,
MR 2015 Participant



OUTREACH: Master Recyclers were busy with multiple outreach projects, including:

- ▶ A monthly Zero Waste Club to exchange zero waste lifestyle hacks.
- ▶ A Waste Reduction Education Team participating at school events in Vancouver.
- ▶ A Green Events Team that helped BC Distilled set up waste stations.
- ▶ UBC Sustainability Ambassadors, a neighbourhood group for waste reduction at a UBC strata.
- ▶ Digging deep to understand recycling in British Columbia. A Special Q&A
- ▶ Session with Green by Nature EPR and MMBC representatives.
- ▶ Talkin Trash Radio Show. Every other Monday on Vancouver Co-Op Radio 100.5 FM.

NEW PROJECTS: The Waste Committee now partners to host the Zero Waste Club and the Talkin Trash Radio Show.

PLANS FOR 2017: The second edition of the Master Recycler program will take place in the winter of 2017. With dozens of pre-registered participants, the program continues to grow and strengthen connections in the community.

EVENTS 2016: The Waste Committee was part of multiple events this year including the annual Earth Day Vancouver Celebration, Car Free Day, Open Source Circular Economy Days, the City of Vancouver's Zero Waste Workshops and Metro Vancouver's Zero Waste Conference.



SUSTAINABILITY FOR BUSINESSES

SPEC's Sustainability for Businesses projects include the Sustainable Communities Field School and the Leverage Lab



A partnership between SPEC, UBC Botanical Garden, UBC Faculty of Psychology and UBC-IRES (Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability).

LEADERSHIP TEAM: Oliver Lane (SPEC), Dr. Tara Moreau (UBC Botanical Garden), Dr. Jiaying Zhao (UBC)

UBC STUDENT RESEARCH

ASSISTANTS: Paula Martinez Rubio (Communications, Design and Marketing Assistant), Ivana Zelenika (PhD Candidate) and Rae Cramer (Masters Student).

PURPOSE: To empower and enable teams from businesses and community organizations to adopt sustainable behaviours through hands-on education and team-building in nature.

“Businesses will automatically have long-term success when they understand, assist and support a viable co-existence between people, business, precious natural resources and our ecosystem.

— Hormus Karat,
Senior Branch Manager at Vancity

FUNDERS & PARTNERS: A huge thank you to our funders, the Sitka Foundation and the Gow-Jarrett & Millard Family, for making this program possible!

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ **7** groups participated in the program in 2016
- ▶ Over **200** people participated
- ▶ Top discussion topics: biodiversity, water conservation, local food security, forests, lifecycle of a product, zero waste



LEVERAGE LAB



TEAM: Sarah Blenkhorn (Future Strategies) and Oliver Lane (SPEC)

PURPOSE: Leverage Lab helps get change unstuck. We work in the intersection between government agencies, industry associations and businesses, and we provide a methodology to bridge the gap between sustainability goals and actions towards them.

In 2016, the Leverage Lab focused on the issue of apparel waste ending up in the landfill (textiles are the fastest growing waste stream). Participants explored actions that involve textile regulation and reducing textile waste, and attempted to answer the following questions:

- ▶ What would the implications be of a textile ban on existing industry?
- ▶ If there was a ban in place tomorrow, how would it affect your business?
- ▶ What are the rebound effects?
- ▶ How could we cascade value?
- ▶ What actions can we take now to begin to change the status quo?

LAB PARTICIPANTS: Debrand, Nicole Bridger Design, Gentle Fawn, Clotho, Lululemon, KenDor Textiles, Salvation Army, Trans-Continental Textile Recycling Ltd., Our Social Fabric, Recycling Alternative, Urban Impact Recycling Ltd., Metro Vancouver, Savers, and Lunapads

PARTNERS AND FUNDERS: Vancouver Economic Commission, Vancouver Foundation, Vancity, Tourism Vancouver, Think.

SPEC ELDERS CIRCLE

— CORE TEAM —

SPEC Board President and
guiding elder, Carole Christopher,
Staff (part-time) Richard Drake,
Staff (part-time) Barbara Joughin,
Christina Ray, Lydia Travers, Rudi
Krause and Joan Balmer



SPEC Elders Circle

Reclaiming Elder Wisdom

PURPOSE: To reclaim Elder Wisdom among ourselves and within the broader community. The initiative offers a structure and process that encourages connection, reflection, and creative action to foster the emergence of elder wisdom. It creates a space for intimate dialogue and exploration, as well as specific opportunities for elders to contribute, and participate across generations.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ Public events/salons on Reclaiming Elder Wisdom
- ▶ Supporting individuals to reconnect and learn from nature
- ▶ Developing mentoring and mutual exchange of elder/youth wisdom.



ACTIVITIES:

- ▶ Outreach – connecting with other Elders organizations
- ▶ Developing leadership – collaborative visioning and planning among staff and volunteers
- ▶ Interest Groups – furthering the core purpose, connecting with SPEC's mission, and aiming at inter-generational participation:
 - ▶ Friendship Circle – hosted by a Core Team member
 - ▶ Walks in Nature – led by an experienced naturalist
 - ▶ Photography and Storytelling – facilitated by a youth member
 - ▶ Book Club – organized by a Core Team member.



“ You are friends I have been wanting to meet for a long time.

— Ginny Ayers, Elder Member

“ What struck me about the group was the willingness to share, learn and grow. And have a good laugh! I am delighted to be part of this vibrant group.

— Karen Jones, Elder Member

“ I found myself awestruck— what vivacity and beaming light shone from the elders. Our conversation kept flowing naturally into the omnipotence of change, the wisdom to embrace impermanence, and the unexpected turns that life takes us on.

— Patrick Wilkie, Youth Member



SPEC EVENTS AND OUTREACH

SPEC's staff and volunteers are continually involved in community events while continuing to carry out workshops for our programs in renewable energy, sustainable transportation, food security, water conservation and waste reduction. Here are some of the 2016 events and workshops we either participated in or organized:



EVENTS	MONTH
Elders Circle Salons and activities— 5 Salons + multiple meet-ups and activities	Throughout 2016
Reclaiming Hope performance	March
Earth Day Celebration	April
VSBC Sustainability Conference	May
Car Free Day on Main Street	June
BC National Aboriginal Day	June
Westside Community Food Market	July to November
Day at the Farm	September
Vancouver Urban Farming Forum	November
Kitsilano Winter Market	December
SPEC AGM and Year-End Party	December
Monthly Food, Energy and Waste committee meetings open to the public	

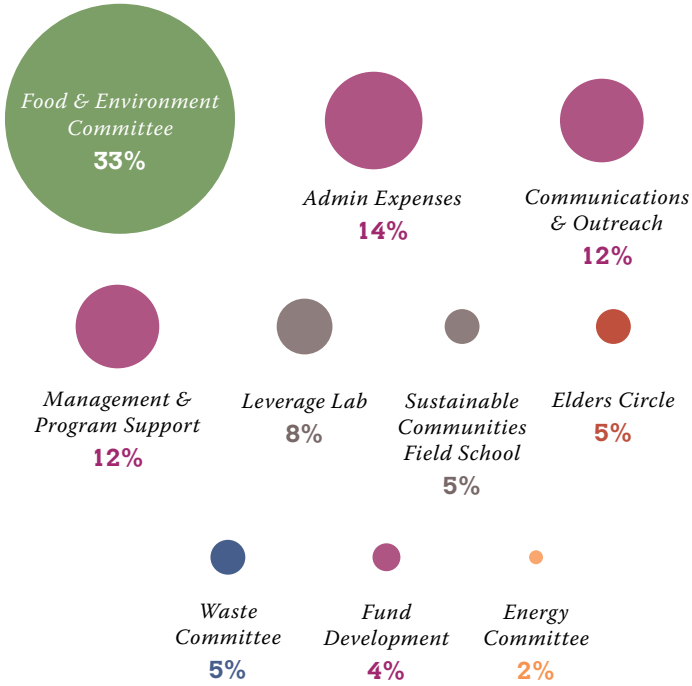
WORKSHOPS & TOURS * Water Celebration in March * Go Solar tours from April to September * Urban Farmer Field School classes from July to September * Cambie Square Communal Garden Mushroom workshop in August * School Garden Program classes during the school year * Field School for Businesses from March to November * Zero Waste Holidays workshop in December

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2016

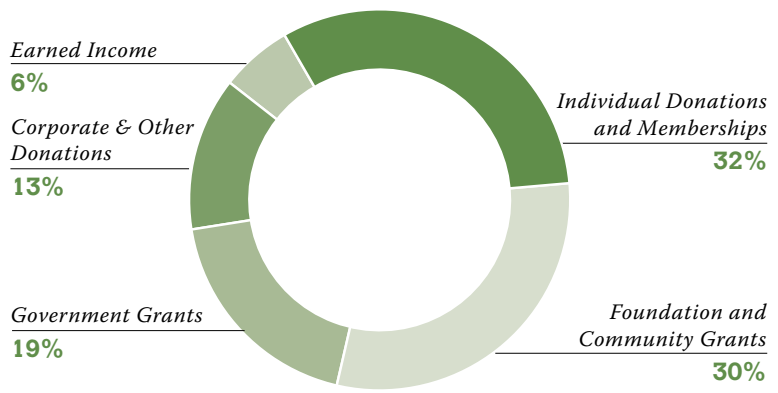
Total revenue for Fiscal Year 2016: **\$164,516**

Total expenses for Fiscal Year 2016: **\$160,237**

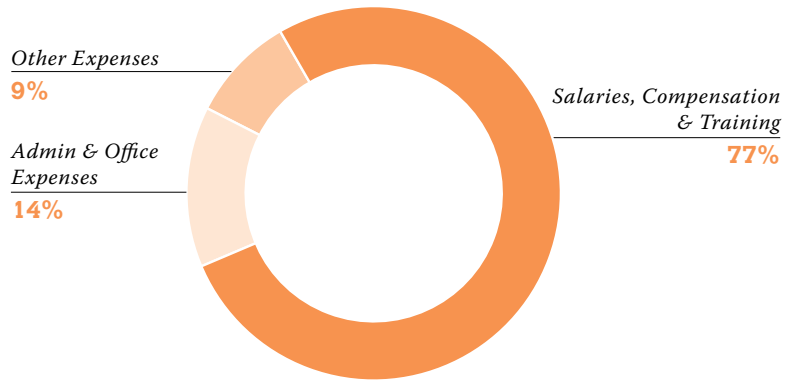
PROGRAM SPENDING



REVENUE



EXPENSES



Learn, Volunteer, Donate

**Support SPEC and
sustainable urban living**

For 48 years, people in
our community have
supported SPEC with
their time, friendship,
enthusiasm, as well as
financially.

LEARN

TAKE PART IN OUR ACTIVITIES

Engage with people who share a passion for the environment and local sustainability. Attend our workshops, participate in our activities, share your own knowledge and experience, and meet new people.

VOLUNTEER

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers play an important role in all our accomplishments and we are eager to connect with people who are motivated to make a positive impact on our urban environment.

To get started, you can meet up with others at one of our committee meetings, volunteer to help out an outreach event, or come to the office to share some of your admin, fundraising or communications skills.

DONATE

Individual donations make our activities possible and are the most sustainable way to fund our work, as they make us less vulnerable to the fluctuating availability of government and foundation Grants. Please remember, no donation is too small, and all donations above \$10 receive a tax receipt.

MONTHLY DONATIONS

The most effective way to support our projects is to become a monthly donor. As a monthly donor, you provide important ongoing support, while helping us reduce our time and costs, use less paper and put more of your money directly into supporting SPEC's core work. Your gift can be as big or small as you like to fit your budget. In addition, your gift can be set or changed for any time frame that works for you.

TAKE SPEC OUT FOR LUNCH

A monthly donation, for example, can equal the same amount as going out for lunch with your family or friends. By treating SPEC to lunch, about **\$15/month**, your generosity can help support education programs in your community or school. Too busy for lunch? Feel free to treat us to a latte instead, **\$5/month**.

DONATE (cont.)

ANNUAL DONATION

Some people prefer to give lump sums once or twice a year. These gifts provide a much needed boost to our programs.

LEAVE A LEGACY

A legacy is perhaps the easiest and most substantial way to have a lasting impact that honours your passion and commitment to your community. Past SPEC supporters have made significant contributions this way.

Any donation of \$30 or more will give you a free membership and the opportunity to vote at SPEC's Annual General Meeting.

2 NEW WAYS TO GIVE & INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1 BECOME A MATCHING DONOR

Some donors feel more connected and valued when they see their donation being matched by another person in their community. To take part, you can join our annual donation drives or you can initiate your own fundraising initiative to encourage or challenge others to match your contribution. Contact us if you would like to learn more about this opportunity.

2 DONATE SECURITIES/SHARES

Donating publicly listed securities is another option that could have added benefits related to the exemption on capital gains tax when donating securities to a charity. When you donate securities to SPEC, you will receive a tax receipt for the fair market value of the assets the day the assets were received and sold. This might prove to be a better option than donating cash. Contact us for more information on this alternative.

HOW TO GIVE

ONLINE

Donations can be made through our website:
www.spec.bc.ca/donate
(PayPal or credit card).

PHONE

Using Visa or MasterCard:
604.736.7732

CHEQUE

Payable to "SPEC"
Mail to the office:
**2305 WEST 7TH AVE
VANCOUVER, BC V6K 1Y4**

Each donation above \$10 receives a charitable tax receipt.

Please remember, no donation is too small.



CONTACT US

Whether you have a question, suggestion or a contribution, we would like to hear from members of our community. You can reach us at the SPEC office:

ADDRESS:

SPEC

**2305 West 7th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6K 1Y4**

EMAIL: **admin@spec.bc.ca**

PHONE: **604-736-7732**

WEBSITE: **spec.bc.ca**

SPEC would like to acknowledge that our office is on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x^wməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlílwətaʔ/ Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

This report was prepared by Karla Olson, Oliver Lane and Carole Christopher with contributions from members of the board, committees and other volunteers. Graphic design by Lisa Rilko.