

SPEC ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Society
Promoting
Environmental
Conservation





Practical Solutions for Sustainable Cities

Founded in 1969, the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) is a charitable organization that promotes practical solutions for urban sustainability through education, outreach, advocacy and research.

SPEC's work takes place on the traditional, unceded territory of *s̓kwx̓wú7mesh* (Squamish), *sel̓íl witulh* (Tseil-Waututh), and *x̓məθk̓əy̓əm* (Musqueam).



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Us	4	The SPEC Family	10
Letter from the Executive Director	5	Programs	18
Letter from the Board Chair	6	Events & Outreach	34
2017 SPEC Highlights	8	Financial Highlights	36
SPEC in the City	9	Get Involved	37



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 18

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

FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

page 22

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

WASTE COMMITTEE

page 30

- ▶ Promotes practices that lead to waste reduction

SPEC ELDERS CIRCLE

page 32

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

SUSTAINABILITY FOR BUSINESSES

page 33

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



Being an urban sustainability organization that works on a diverse range of topics such as sustainable food systems, waste reduction, energy conservation, greening businesses, and eldership, is powerful but not necessarily easy when it comes to deciding what issues to dedicate our limited resources to and how to do it. With so many great organizations in the Lower Mainland, we must find the spaces where we will have the highest impact possible.

The strategic planning process we recently completed, and which required input from many members of our community, is helping us on that journey. It has reassured us

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

that we are on the right path in terms of our current programming and our focus on education and capacity building. It also encourages us to keep a balance between individual behavior change for sustainability and working to impact policy. As we navigate these waters towards our 50th Anniversary (in 2019) we will be paying attention to some key priorities that we identified, namely:

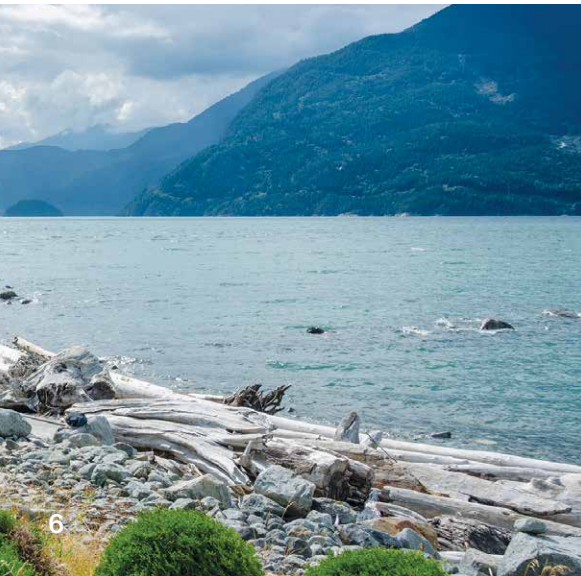
- ▶ **strengthening our fundraising, our communications and our volunteer support;**
- ▶ **implementing a strategy to better connect with key stakeholders in the local sustainability landscape;**
- ▶ **improving program quality and monitoring processes.**

It's all exciting work that can only be done with the passion, commitment and expertise of our inspiring team of volunteers, board and staff, as well as our loyal donors. A big thank you to all of you! And as we plan for the next 5 years, we are inspired by our community's increasing interest in SPEC, demonstrated by the growing number of volunteer applica-

tions, invitations to events, new partnerships, demographic diversification of our supporters and growing revenue for projects.

I invite you to dive into this report and meet our volunteers and staff without whom none of this work would be possible. Learn about who is supporting our programs, and get up to date with our projects and their impact in the community. If you are inspired, come and join us, volunteer your time, become a monthly donor, or come to our events. Let's work together to bring practical solutions for urban sustainability!

OLIVER LANE
SPEC Executive Director



LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

2017 IN REVIEW

As SPEC Directors, we have a varied portfolio. We meet regularly as the governance board and participate on various board committees concerned with: recruiting; fundraising; hiring, evaluating and supervising staff; and managing special board projects. Most of us are also on program committees. We're a 'working board' with responsibilities well beyond our governance role. Part of the attraction of SPEC is working with highly committed and talented colleagues, providing programs that set a standard of excellence and are funded by respected partners, feeling supported by the principled perspective of our supporters who understand what we do and the tremendous social benefit to our city and our region, and knowing that SPEC is held in high esteem for the values we represent. It is an experience that is not readily found.

This year one of our most challenging and rewarding tasks was overseeing a very comprehensive strategic planning process. Challenging in the time and effort required but rewarded by the contributions of so many

supporters who gave us feedback. Working with an excellent and experienced facilitator, we gathered and processed information from nearly 400 people in three types of interactions; personal interviews with "key partners"; a "world café" in which members, volunteers, staff and some interested public described their vision of SPEC's role; and an on-line survey that garnered 350 respondents. In mid-November, the Board, staff and key volunteers examined and integrated this feedback and identified "strategic pillars," that are now the core structure of our strategic plan. It will undergird our work over the next five years. And we did this even as we continued to offer our full roster of programs which you'll read about in this annual report.

Some of the feedback we received has prompted reflection on how we balance our roles in advocating for policy change at the community/societal level and in promoting behaviour change at the individual level. Dr. Joanna Macy, an Elder in the social/environmental movement, describes three ways to bring about change:

- ▶ **the work of front line activists who stand in the way of and say “NO!” to certain behaviours;**
- ▶ **the work of promoting and training the behaviours congruent with a just and sustainable future;**
- ▶ **the work of changing consciousness, out of which new behaviours grow.**

All are equally important and over the decades the balance of these modes within SPEC has shifted in response to changing conditions. SPEC has an historic reputation for strong activism and policy advocacy that has morphed into a larger role for advocacy and training in practical and sustainable behaviours over the past 15 years. The question, “are we striking the right balance?” is a perennial inquiry for the SPEC board. Perhaps a way to turn the question into a direction is to ask, how can we scale our work on behaviour change to a broader public level through appropriate policy initiatives?

We organized a very successful fundraising dinner in September celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the School Gardens Program

and we are emboldened to do that kind of event on a more regular basis. And speaking of big events, there is a major celebration that’s starting to loom large in our near future. In 2019, SPEC will celebrate its 50th Anniversary!! That’s a short planning horizon and we’re looking for eager supporters to help us prepare for that occasion. Volunteers are our lifeblood, we invite you to get involved to make this celebration great. Planning a big party for our 50th is just one way to contribute, but it might be your way.

The SPEC Board sends our very best wishes for a just peace and a revolutionary turn in our global action on climate change in 2018! And we wish you the very best in your personal aspirations to support these lofty goals in the new year.

DR. CAROLE CHRISTOPHER

President

On Behalf of the SPEC Board of Directors



SPEC HIGHLIGHTS 2017

The School Gardens Program celebrated its **10th** anniversary and delivered over **270** seed, garden design, planting, nutrition, composting, insect, harvesting, cooking, and other related lessons to **57** classrooms and teachers in **11** schools across Vancouver, reaching over **2,000** students, and concluded the season with **8** harvest parties to celebrate the fruit of the students' labour and love. **71** garden boxes grown, plus a fruit orchard.

The Field School, a partnership between the UBC Botanical Garden and SPEC, delivered sustainability and team building tours to **19** business and community groups, reaching **550** people.

We delivered **28 Climate Change and Renewable Energy workshops** in **12** schools reaching **712** students from grades 4 to 12. We have **26** more workshops confirmed for the Winter/Spring of 2018.

SPEC Master Recyclers volunteered over **350** outreach hours in the community.

The **Elders Circle Core Team** volunteered hundreds of hours hosting over **400** people in public salons, and otherwise cultivating strategies to promote "elder wisdom" as a neglected and much needed role in society.

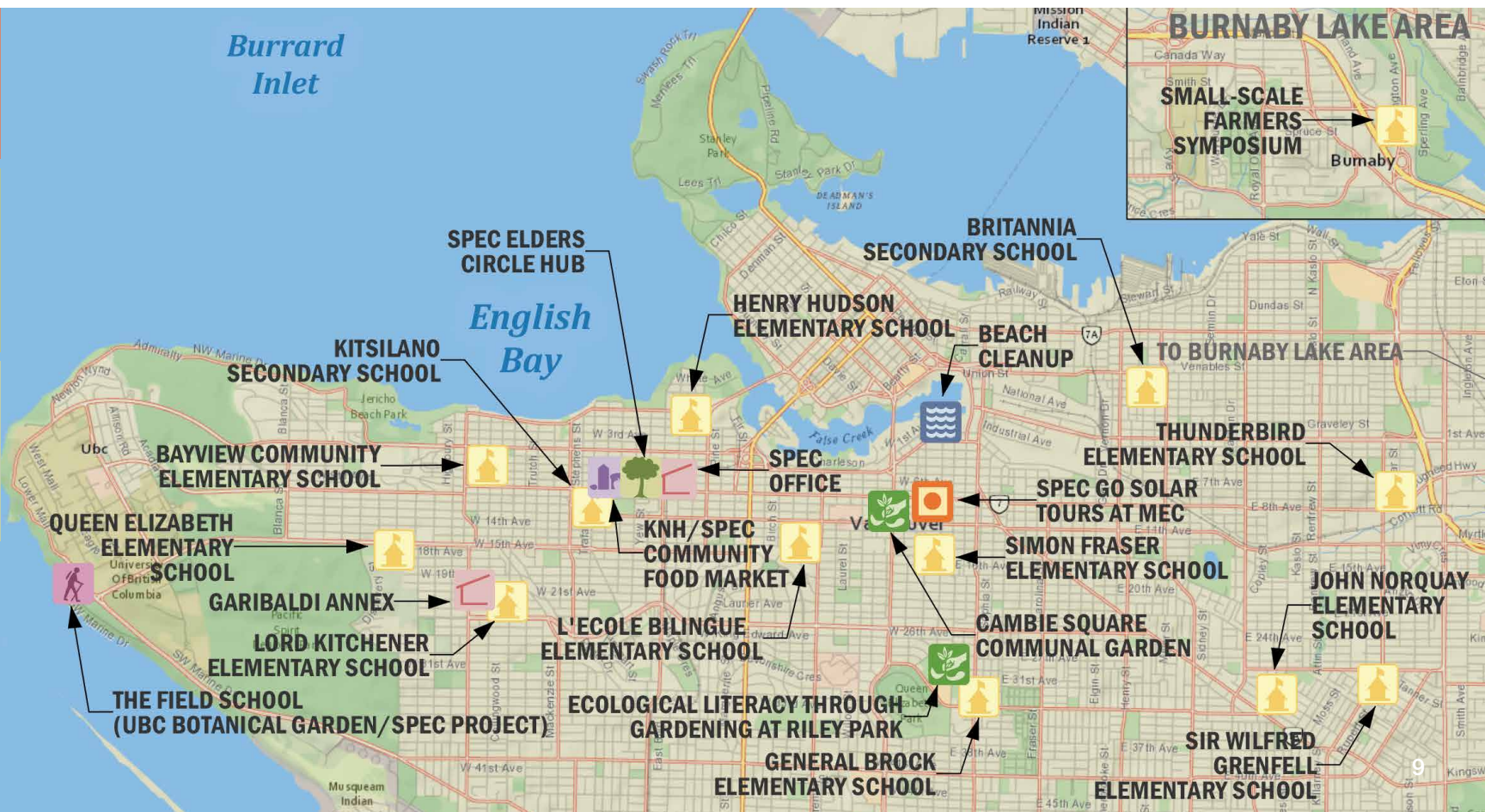
We co-hosted **13** weekly **summer food markets** and **1** large **winter market**, in partnership with Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, which connected local food growers, food makers and artisans to local consumers, and contributed over **\$25,000** to Vancouver's green economy.

We provided on-site support to **19** local farms, as part of the **Climate Change Adaptation for Small Scale Farmers** project, and held a knowledge-sharing workshop for over **60** participants. In early 2018 we hosted a full day symposium for farmers with over **75** participants in attendance.

Over **5,000** hours donated to SPEC by **volunteers**.

ONLINE HIGHLIGHTS * **2,800** people reached with SPECtrum, our monthly newsletter * **1,650** followers on Facebook and **895** on Twitter

SPEC IN THE CITY



THE SPEC FAMILY



COMMUNITY STAR OF 2017

STEVE BORNEMANN

This year we received a very generous donation from Steve which honoured his late wife, Jess, who remains one of our most outstanding SPEC volunteers. Jess worked in the office keeping records and generally supporting wherever and however she was needed for several years. We value all of our volunteers but there are some who become beloved and remembered with great affection. That is Jess, who in her own mature and steadfast way encouraged and inspired us in our work. We have designated a fund in Jess's name ("The Jess Metter Memorial Fund") to support core operations and Steve's gift is the start to that legacy.



JESS METTER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

Carole Christopher	President
Kate Menzies	Vice President
Emily Danaher	Treasurer
Ruth Briggs	Secretary
Alison Krahn	Director
Art Bomke	Director
Chris Gooderham	Director
Emily Danaher	Director
Eyal Lebel	Director
Magali Vander Vorst	Director
Paul Crosby	Director
Shelby Kitt	Director
Tara Moreau	Director



2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A very warm welcome to our new board members Emily Danaher, Magali Vander Vorst, Paul Crosby and Ruth Briggs.

2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We want to thank 2017 Directors Paula Pisciotto, Anastasia Koutalianos, Wendy Mendes and Dan Rogers for their valuable support during 2017. We wish all of them the best in their new personal and professional adventures. A very special thank you to Dan Rogers for so many years of dedication and commitment in a variety of roles including President, Secretary, interim Treasurer, Director and Advisor.

STAFF



OLIVER LANE
Executive Director

In 2017 Oliver completed his second year in the Executive Director Role. He's been with SPEC for 6 years now.



NIKOO BOROUMAND
School Garden Coordinator

Nikoo has been in this role for 4 years now, successfully leading the program's growth and the celebration of its 10th Anniversary.



FRANCES ANKENMAN
Climate Change and Renewable Energy Workshops Facilitator

Frances joined the Energy & Transportation Committee early in 2017 to help us expand and deliver the workshops in schools.



REBEKAH PARKER
Climate Change and Renewable Energy Workshops Facilitator

Rebekah joined the Energy & Transportation Committee in the Fall to deliver workshops in schools and help develop the program.



TARA MAGHSOUDNIA
School Gardens Program Facilitator

Tara supported the expansion of the program into new schools and helped us plan for the Ecological Literacy through Gardening Project at Riley Park.



Yael Stav
Ecological Literacy through Gardening Project Coordinator

Yael joined us in the Fall to coordinate the Ecological Literacy through Gardening Project at Riley Park.

STAFF (CONTINUED)



ROBIN HADAC
Communications Assistant

Robin has been SPEC's outreach facilitator since January, helping run SPEC's social media and communication channels as well as represent SPEC at multiple community events.



EMMA HOLMES
Climate Change Adaptation for
Small Scale Farmers Project
Coordinator

Emma coordinated this project in the beginning of its second year and continues to provide support as a volunteer.

SPEC INTERNS

A big thank you to our summer interns!

Amarita Pooni

Westside Community Food Market Facilitator

As part of her internship with SPEC, Amarita successfully coordinated the market during the summer and provided support for our AGM and stakeholder engagement event in the Fall.

Vida Yuan

School Gardens Program Intern

Vida provided crucial support to the School Gardens during the dry summer months as part of her internship with SPEC.



OLGA LANSDORP
Climate Change Adaptation for
Small Scale Farmers Project
Coordinator

Olga has been coordinating this project since the summer, working with local farmers and partner organizations.



VOLUNTEERS

SPEC is largely a volunteer-driven organization. Thanks to the passion and commitment of volunteers, SPEC does a lot of great work with very limited funding. Volunteers, along with members of the board, donated over 5,000 hours of their time in 2017. They contribute in a variety of ways, including project leadership, governance, 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

Alison Krahn, Anastasia Koutalianos, Carol Cohen, Carole Christopher, Cecile Dar Santos, Chris Gooderham, Dan Rogers, Emelie Crumbaker, Karl Lam, Kate Menzies, Lisa Rilkoff, Margaret Miller, Pauline Morand and Shelby Kitt.

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Ali Krahn, Chris Gooderham, Emily Chan, Frances Ankenman, Marco Cardenas, Rebekah Parker, Rob Baxter, Ruth Briggs and Sean Smilie.

Leadership Team: Ali, Chris and Ruth

FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Art Bomke, Brad Pitchford, Chris Gooderham, Kate Menzies, Katie Neufeld, Michelle Wang, Nikoo Boroumand, Paris Chen, Ramilyn Sagun, Tara Maghsoudnia, Tara Moreau, Paula Porto, Yael Stav and Yuko Suda.

Leadership Team: Paula, Art, Kate and Tara

WASTE COMMITTEE

Angie Nicolas, Audrey Crespi, Eyal Lebel, Daniel Rotman, Emily McGill, Henry Mwandemere, Jacquie Rolston, Jinhi Ahn, Julie Bezar, Maya Tatuch and Syd Portner.

Leadership Team: Angie, Maya and Audrey

ELDERS CIRCLE PROJECT TEAM

Core Team: Carole Christopher, Don Griffiths, Gloria Levi, Hanne Jensen, Joan Balmer, Lydia Travers, Maggy Kaplan, Nan Gregory, Raylene Burke, Richard Drake, Robin Clark and Rudiger Krause.

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

“ Getting involved in community these days offers many options for us all, from playing with kids in the park to volunteering at local events. Beyond simply participating, SPEC has opened my eyes to making real change, by harnessing diverse backgrounds and cultures, differing points of view, and the discovery that comes with working together for common goals. Our climate change workshops have truly opened our youth’s eyes to the possibilities of a low carbon sustainable future and I look forward to seeing what we can all achieve together.

— Chris Gooderham, SPEC Volunteer





“ I admire the work that SPEC is doing to improve the urban environment and build a sustainable community. Volunteering and attending SPEC organized events is a way of showing my support. I enjoyed coming to the Westside Community Market every week this past summer to help out, shop, and meet the people who participated to make the market a success.

— Jinhi Ahn, SPEC Volunteer

OUR FABULOUS 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 SPEC-tacular thank you to the following organizations:

Ace Accounting and Tax Services * Acme Delivery Company * BC Association of Farmers' Markets * BC Housing * BC Hydro * BC Hydro Ratepayers Association * BC Ministry of Agriculture * Bullfrog Power * City of Vancouver * Chris Spencer Foundation * Click * Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust * E.S. Cropconsult * Gaia Green Products Ltd. * Government of British Columbia * Government of Canada * Gow-Jarrett and Millard Family * Grandview Woodland Food Connection * Growing Forward 2 * Hamber Foundation * Hewer Home Hardware * Home Depot * Hudson Out-Of-School Care * Kitsilano Neighbourhood House * KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems * Leverage Lab and Future Strategies * Little Mountain Community Fund * Lululemon Athletica * Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics * Metro Vancouver * Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House * 1 % for the Planet * Pacific Northwest Garden Supply * Recycling Alternatives * Recycle BC * Redemption Church * Riley Park Community Association * Simon Fraser University * Sitka Foundation * Surfrider Foundation * The Suzuki Elders * TD Friends of the Environment Foundation * Telus * Thunderbird After-School Care Program * UBC Botanical Garden * UBC – Centre for Sustainable Food Systems * UBC – Enviro 400 Class * UBC Farm * UBC – Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability * UBC Department of Psychology * University of the Fraser Valley * Vancity * Vancouver Co-op Radio * Vancouver Farmers Markets * Vancouver Food Policy Council * Vancouver Foundation * 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 Foods Market * Young Agrarians * Zero Waste Club * Zero Waste Canada

PROGRAMS & COMMITTEES

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
IN THE COMMUNITY,
ACTION ON THE GROUND

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Alison Krahn, Chris Gooderham
and Ruth Briggs

— MEMBERS —

Emily Chan, Frances Ankenman,
Marco Cardenas, Rebekah Parker,
Rob Baxter and Sean Smilie

PURPOSE: SPEC's Energy & Transportation Committee works to educate individuals, businesses, communities, and children about renewable energy, energy conservation and sustainable modes of transportation.

ACTIVITIES: Climate Change & Renewable Energy School Program; Go Solar Tours; Solar Energy BC; Outreach; and the Zero Fossil Fuels campaign.





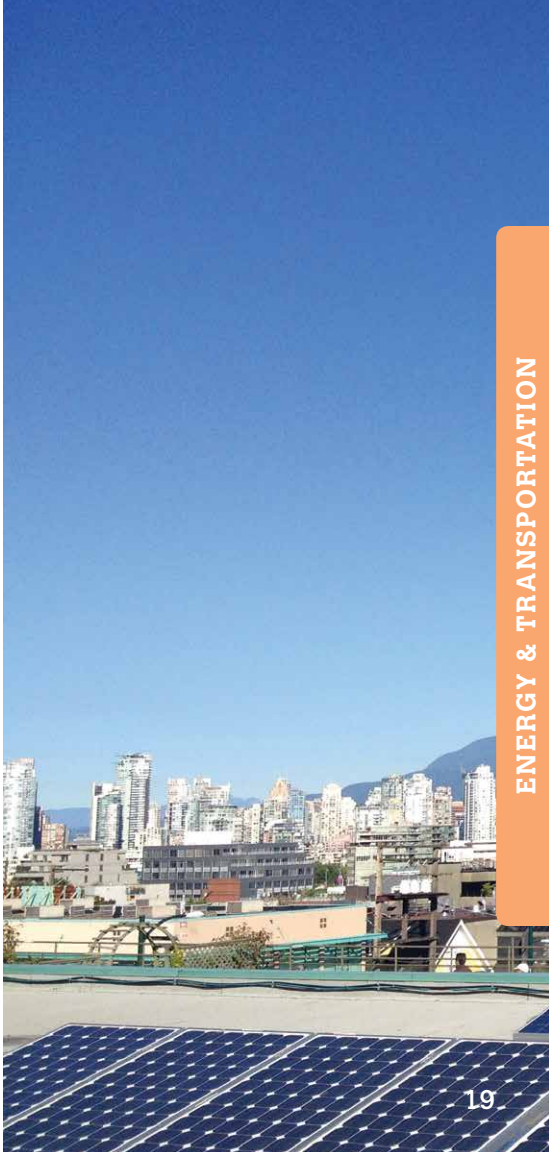
SOLAR TOURS

Guided tours of SPEC's solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on top of Mountain Equipment Co-op's Vancouver location were established in 2014. Since then, participants have taken the tour to learn about solar systems, cost savings, and how to integrate solar power into their own homes and buildings. Great for kids, adults and the curious. The tours are offered in partnership with Vancouver Renewable Energy Cooperative.

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.

Four School tours were piloted this school year by Chris Gooderham, Frances Ankenman, Rebekah Parker and Rob Baxter to complement the Climate Change and Renewable Energy workshops delivered at schools.

FUNDING SUPPORT: We would like to thank the funders that supported our workshops in schools and solar tours in 2017: **BC Hydro** and **Vancouver Renewable Energy Coop.**





CLIMATE CHANGE & RENEWABLE ENERGY WORKSHOPS



The program operates with the following objectives:

- ▶ Provide students with credible, science-based information relating to the causes and impacts of climate change
- ▶ Explore the role of renewable energy sources in reducing carbon emissions, and promote understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of various types of renewable energy sources
- ▶ Inspire students to learn about and make behaviour changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

To meet these objectives, the workshop was designed as a 1 to 2 hour-long program delivered in classrooms throughout Greater Vancouver. In 2017, the workshops were delivered by Frances Ankenman, and Rebekah Parker, and supported by Chris Gooderham.

Following student feedback from the 2015-2016 season, the workshop was designed to be interactive and hands-on, with several delivery methods (slides, videos, team challenges, demonstrations, trivia questions and group experiments).

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ **28** workshops
- ▶ **712** students, grades 4-12
- ▶ **12** schools

SCHOOLS:

- ▶ Lord Kitchener (7 workshops)
- ▶ John Norquay (4 workshops)
- ▶ General Brock Elementary (4 workshops)
- ▶ Kitsilano Secondary (3 workshops)
- ▶ Sir Matthew Begbie Elementary (2 workshops)
- ▶ University Hill Secondary (2 workshop)
- ▶ Kingsford-Smith (1 workshop)
- ▶ Edith Cavell (1 workshop)
- ▶ David Lloyd George (1 workshop)
- ▶ Madrona Elementary (1 workshop)
- ▶ Southridge School (1 workshops)
- ▶ Sir Guy Carleton (1 workshop)

What we heard from Climate Change & Renewable Energy Workshop participants:

“ We need to start using renewable sources for energy instead of burning coal and fossil fuels and releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

“ We have to be informed about climate change and that our next step is to do work ourselves.

“ Climate change is a serious situation so we should try to solve the problem by walking instead of using cars and we should recycle.

“ I think the most important message in the workshop is that humans should try and reduce carbon dioxide to help with climate change.

“ I think the most important message in the workshop is to stop climate change and to work and learn together.



FOOD & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Art Bomke, Kate Menzies, Paula
Porto and Tara Moreau

— COMMITTEE MEMBERS —

Brad Pitchford, Chris Gooderham,
Katie Neufeld, Michelle Wang,
Nikoo Boroumand, Olga Lansdorp,
Paris Chen, Ramilyn Sagun,
Tara Maghsoudnia, Yael Stav
and Yuko Suda



PURPOSE: Building a just, sustainable and resilient food system by engaging children, teachers, communities, NGOs, local businesses, and government officials in learning about and supporting sustainable food systems.

ACTIVITIES:

- ▶ **Cambie Square Communal Garden**
- ▶ **Climate Change Adaptation for Small Scale Farmers Project**
- ▶ **Ecological Literacy through Gardening – Riley Park**
- ▶ **School Gardens Program**
- ▶ **Westside Community Food Market**



SPEC SCHOOL GARDENS PROGRAM

STAFF: Nikoo Boroumand (Coordinator) and Tara Maghsoudnia

PURPOSE: The 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: Now in its 10th year, the Program partnered with 11 schools across Vancouver during the 2016/17 school year, reaching over 2000 students. We delivered over 270 seed, garden design, planting, nutrition, composting, insect, harvesting, cooking, and other related lessons to 57 classrooms, and concluded the season with 8 harvest parties to celebrate the

“ 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.

— Teacher

fruit of the students' labour and love. In addition, students were engaged in building 2 new garden boxes to replace old boxes that were breaking down and the assembling, installing, and signage for four insect hotels to promote beneficial insects and pollinators at our school gardens.

We continue to provide garden lesson resources to the public through the SPEC website in order to encourage and help educators across British Columbia and beyond to incorporate school garden lessons and programming into their curriculum. These resources include the Green Thumbs at School: SPEC Food Garden Lesson Book, cross-references between garden programming and the new K to 7 BC Curriculum Core Competencies and

Science Area of Learning, and a year-round school garden activities calendar.

PARTNER SCHOOLS: During the 2016/17 school year, SPEC brought food and garden education to the following schools:

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





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 dedicated work of our volunteer summer intern, Vida Yuan. Also, we are grateful to Jaime Hurd and Trevor Storm for the invaluable help in building the insect hotels.

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), and the Vancouver School Board. A special thank you this year to our superstar parent, Valeria Kao for her extraordinary support at Norquay Elementary.

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

- ▶ Acme Delivery Company
- ▶ BC Gaming Community Grant
- ▶ Gaia Green Products Ltd.
- ▶ Home Depot
- ▶ Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- ▶ School parents
- ▶ SPEC individual donors
- ▶ TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- ▶ Telus Community Board

“Thank you for arranging for the SPEC program with Nikoo this year. I think outdoor education is one of the greatest things we can do for children, and this program was so meaningful to Jasper. To get the students outdoors in all weather, to let them get their hands dirty and learn the practical aspects of gardening while also learning the science of the plant's life cycle, and to give them the satisfaction of eating the things they grew all adds up to a remarkable learning experience. Jasper talked excitedly about Nikoo every time she came to class, and we were all excited to wait for the plants to grow. We even planted radishes in our own garden, now that Jasper knows he likes them!

— Jessica, parent at Bayview Elementary School



- ▶ UBC Botanical Garden
- ▶ UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems: Think & Eat Green @ School
- ▶ West Coast Seeds
- ▶ Whole Foods Market

PLANS FOR 2018: 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 themselves in the future. In the coming year, we will be 'graduating' the schools that we have partnered with for many years, as they are ready to continue their school garden program on their own. In their place, we will be adopting new schools that have reached out to us for help to get

their school gardens programs up and running. In addition, we will be helping design, build, and engage students in programming around an Indigenous foodscape at Thunderbird Elementary School. Finally, we will be developing and distributing 'Math in the Garden' lesson plans.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- +270** lessons delivered
- +2000** students engaged
- 57** teachers and classrooms engaged
- 71** garden beds grown, plus a fruit orchard

FOLLOW US!

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

“ 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 at Henry Hudson Elementary School



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION FOR SMALL SCALE FARMERS PROJECT

STAFF: Olga Lansdorp (and Emma Holmes for the first part of 2017)

VOLUNTEERS: Art Bomke, Kate Menzies, Tara Moreau, Paula Porto

PURPOSE: There are many challenges that small scale farmers face, and climate change may exacerbate some of these challenges. Given that farmers are typically short on time and have limited financial resources, there is a need for extension (support) services which connect farmers with the advice they need 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 19 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 early 2018, the culmination of all the efforts of this project was incorporated into a full day workshop including presentations, farmer case studies, demonstrations, expert discussions, presentation of data and analysis, and discussion around solutions to some of farming's most relevant and important challenges.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ **19** Farms reached
- ▶ **10** soil tests conducted
- ▶ **17** farms implemented a new cover crop mix
- ▶ **1** full day workshop delivered in early 2018



FUNDING & PROJECT SUPPORT:

A huge thank you to our funders and partners that have made this pilot phase possible: Vancouver Foundation, Vancity EnviroFund, 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.



“ There is support available for new and young farmers and it's always great to know you are not alone in your struggles and visions for a better food system!

– Workshop Participant

“ Thanks for having us present and for filling in a major gap/ niche in this community – technical knowledge and networking among small scale farmers is so valuable. I hope it continues!

– Kimi Hendess, Workshop Participant and Presenter



CAMBIE SQUARE COMMUNAL GARDEN

LEADERSHIP TEAM: Paris Chen, Michelle Wang, Katie Neufeld, Greg Mountain

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS: Karen, Idliko, Kate, Marlene, Wilson, Sarah, and others

ACTIVITIES: The team met every Sunday morning and grew over 25 crops which were distributed to enthusiastic garden volunteers! The leadership team worked on rebuilding the core gardening capacity of the garden members, and used a Neighborhood Small Grant to buy a new sandwich board and materials to rebuild the aging garden beds. The team also rejuvenated the blog and made several blog posts about the garden, the team's accomplishments and harvests.

PLANS FOR 2018: Some ideas for next year include:

- ▶ Increasing engagement, workshops
- ▶ Increased social media presence
- ▶ Creating a long-term sustainability plan
- ▶ Securing leadership for the foreseeable future.

CONNECT WITH US!

specgardens.blogspot.ca

cambiesqvol@gmail.com

KITSILANO NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE & SPEC WESTSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD MARKET

VOLUNTEERS: Sean Joe, Greg Jung, Jinhi Ahn, Harkeerit Pooni, Sally Speers, Charlie Zhu, Aimie Lee, Tom Oullette, Wei Zhang, Ramilyn Sagun, Sophie Wang, Robin Hadac, Cecile Dar Santos and Sojung Lee

STAFF: Amarita Pooni (SPEC Summer Intern), Oliver Lane (SPEC), Tamara Ling (Kits House) and Sarah Lone (Kits House)

ACTIVITIES: For seven 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 opportunities for small and new vendors who are committed to sustainability and have recently launched their own businesses.



ECOLOGICAL LITERACY THROUGH GARDENING AT RILEY PARK

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2017:

- ▶ Weekly customers contributed **\$14,350** dollars to the local community
- ▶ **14** volunteers committed over 300 hours
- ▶ **17** vendors participated of which 13 were in their first year of business
- ▶ **\$400** dollars of coupons were allocated to community members in need

A big thank you to the City of Vancouver and the Westside Food Collaborative for supporting this project. Also, thank you to all our vendors, who worked hard to offer their best products to our community, to Kitsilano Neighbourhood House for partnering with us to run this great project and to all our great volunteers, without whom none of this would be possible.

LEADERSHIP TEAM: Art Bomke and Nikoo Boroumand, Norm Dooley (Little Mountain Community Fund), Joanne MacKinnon (Riley Park Community Garden)

STAFF: Coordinator: Yael Stav
Past Volunteer: Tara Maghsoudnia

ACTIVITIES:

The Riley Park education project “Ecological Literacy Through Gardening” is a pilot project that involves the SPEC School Gardens Program, Charles Tupper Secondary School and the Riley Park Community Garden. This project is designed to promote ecological literacy among high school aged students, and enhance their access to healthy and wholesome food. An additional purpose of the project is to encourage

youth to develop critical thinking about the land, its history and the protocols of community relations and responsibilities.

The Fall of 2017 was the planning phase. Sessions including the following topics will be delivered in the Winter and Spring of 2018:

- ▶ Sustainable Agriculture
- ▶ Edaphic properties of the garden
- ▶ Soil chemistry
- ▶ Food and Nutrition
- ▶ Introduction to native plants
- ▶ Pollination
- ▶ Teaching for the Commons

FUNDERS: A big thank you to Little Mountain Community Fund and Vancity for supporting this pilot project.

WASTE COMMITTEE

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Angie Nicolás and Maya Tatuch

— COMMITTEE MEMBERS —

Audrey Crespi, Eyal Lebel,

Henry Mwandemere,

Jacquie Rolston, Jinhi Ahn,

Julie Bezard and Syd Portner



PURPOSE: The Waste Committee is a diverse group of people interested in reducing solid waste. The group functions as a power house where individuals can find resources, expertise and volunteer support to turn their zero waste ideas into tangible projects.

ACTIVITIES:

1. RESEARCH:

Currently we are collaborating with UBC sustainability students to update and expand our Green 2Go Project. Green2Go contrasts the environmental impact of take-out food containers in Vancouver and aims to educate restaurant managers about the alternatives available.



2. EDUCATION:

The Master Recycler program is a free course organized by former and current Waste Committee members (Daniel Rotman, Eyal Lebel, Emily McGill and Angie Nicolas), where Vancouverites learn what happens to their waste after it leaves their homes. Through a combination of 8 weeks of classes and field trips to waste management facilities, Master Recyclers experience the complexities of our local waste systems. Training is followed by a 30-hour outreach component required before certification. During this stage Master Recyclers bring their knowledge to their own communities and engage others in zero waste initiatives, thus amplifying the effect of the program. This year Master Recyclers volunteered over 350 outreach hours in the community!

masterrecyclervancouver.ca

Learn
more



3. COMMUNITY BUILDING:

The Vancouver Zero Waste Club, organized by Jackie Rolston, longtime committee member, offers workshops where participants dive into the specifics of zero waste living, meet like-minded people and support each other in their individual zero waste journeys.

4. PUBLIC OUTREACH:

► Special events:

We engaged the general public in conversations about zero waste living by participating in events such as Earth Day and Car Free Day.

► Talkin' Trash Radio Show.

A bi-weekly show about garbage at Vancouver Co-Op Radio 100.5 FM. The show was organized by Master Recycler graduates and facilitators: Anastasia Koutalianos, Celine Lopez, Tina Stockport, Henry Mwandemere, Daniel Rotman and Angie Nicolas. Episodes are available at soundcloud.com/talkintrashradio

FRIENDS OF THE WASTE COMMITTEE

We would also like to acknowledge the 'Friends of the Waste Committee' group, which includes collaborators and supporters: Karina Villada, Robin Hadac, Oliver Lane, Chris Gooderham, Emilie Ralston, Anastasia Koutalianos, Tina Stockport, Emily McGill and Daniel Rotman.



soundcloud.com/talkintrashradio

Listen
here

SPEC ELDERS CIRCLE

— CORE TEAM —

Carole Christopher, Don Griffiths,
Gloria Levi, Hanne Jensen,
Joan Balmer, Lydia Travers,
Maggy Kaplan, Nan Gregory,
Raylene Burke, Richard Drake,
Robin Clark and Rudiger Krause



The SPEC Elders Circle encourages elders to reflect on their legacy and commit to Reclaiming Elder Wisdom as a dignified and supportive role in society. An aspect of aging is self-reflection and a desire to encourage younger generations towards important passages in life. One such passage is clarity about the catastrophic consequences of the dominant culture's lost relationship with nature. SPEC elders want to cultivate characteristics of wisdom as an expression of respect and support for younger generations.

The SPEC Elders Circle explicitly acknowledges that nature is our most profound wisdom elder and that Indigenous cultures are our wisest teachers in this respect. Since June of 2016, we have hosted approximately 400 people in

eight Elder Salons and we are working on developing “wisdom courses,” including a much appreciated Life Review Course, to engage other elders in cultivating and harvesting their own wisdom resources.



SPEC Elders Circle
Reclaiming Elder Wisdom

SUSTAINABILITY FOR BUSINESSES

— LEADERSHIP TEAM —

Oliver Lane (SPEC), Dr. Tara Moreau
(UBC Botanical Garden)
and Dr. Jiaying Zhao (UBC)

— UBC GRADUATE STUDENTS —

PhD Candidate: Ivana Zelenika
Masters Student: Rae Cramer
Masters Student: Paula Martinez
Rubio



FIELD SCHOOL

SUSTAINABILITY TEAM-BUILDING FOR BUSINESSES: Local businesses are key to the design and development of a green economy. The Field School provides fun and interactive team-building activities within UBC Botanical Garden to organizations and their employees with the goal to inspire and enable positive sustainability action with businesses. During a typical 3-hour visit to UBC Botanical Garden Field School, teams learn about local watersheds, sustainable food choices, zero waste strategies and the importance of biodiversity conservation.



HIGHLIGHTS: In 2017 we hosted 19 groups with over 550 participants in the program. Results of the research conducted in 2016 found that the Field School provides an effective education model to inform and engage participants by fostering stronger connections to nature and an increase in willingness to adopt sustainability actions.

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EDUCATION: The Field School is jointly hosted by SPEC and UBC Botanical Garden in collaboration with Faculty and Graduate students at UBC IRES (Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability) and UBC Psychology.



SPEC EVENTS AND OUTREACH

SPEC staff and volunteers are involved in numerous community events in addition to the workshops and research they provide in our core programs of renewable energy, sustainable transportation, food security, water conservation and waste reduction. Here are some of the 2017 events and workshops we either participated in or organized:

EVENTS	DATE	LOCATION
Practical Tips and Tools for Small-Scale, Diversified Farmers	January	UBC Botanical Garden
UBC Environmental Science Student Association Career Fair	February	UBC
Be My Guest for Earth Hour (SPEC members and supporters host dinners for their friends in honour of SPEC and collect donations for programs)	March and July	Individual Homes
Farm 2 School	April	Vancouver Technical Secondary School
VSBC Sustainability Conference	May	Eric Hamber Secondary School
Go Solar Tours	April, May and June	MEC Rooftop
'go, go TINY'—A Tiny House Event	May	Science World



EVENTS AND OUTREACH CONTINUED

EVENTS	DATE	LOCATION
World Oceans Day Beach Cleanup	June	Habitat Island
Car Free Day	June	Main Street
Westside Community Food Market	July to September	Kits House
Day at the Farm	September	UBC
Green Thumbs, Green Futures Celebration	September	John Norquay Elementary School
Green Open Homes Kitsilano	November	Kits House
Zero Waste Kitsilano	November	Kits House

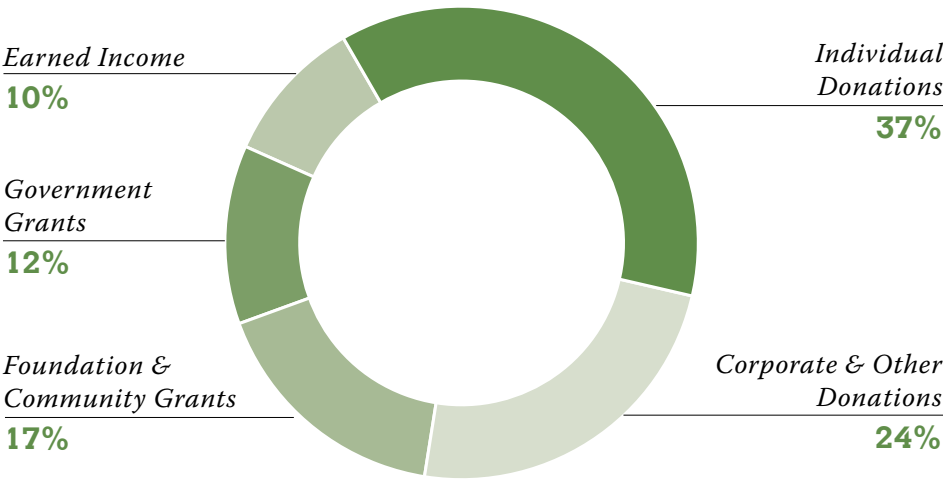


FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2017

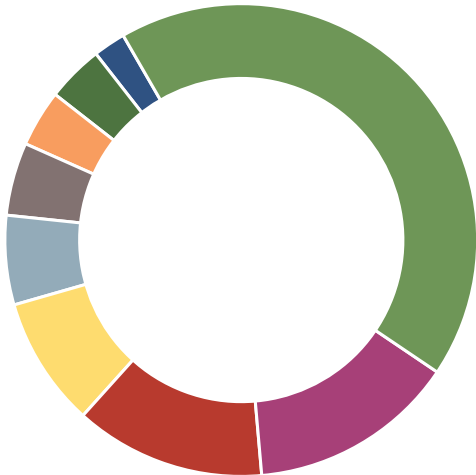
Total revenue for
Fiscal Year 2017: **\$188,507**

Total expenses for
Fiscal Year 2017: **\$171,033**

REVENUE



EXPENSES



- 43% Food & Environment
- 14% Admin
- 13% Elders Circle
- 9% Management and Program Support
- 6% Communications and Outreach
- 5% Field School
- 4% Energy & Transportation
- 4% Fundraising
- 2% Waste

Learn, Volunteer, Donate

**Support SPEC and
sustainable urban living.**

For nearly 50 years,
people in our community
have supported SPEC with
their time, friendship,
enthusiasm, and generous
financial contributions.

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. In 2017 we received a securities donation of nearly \$30,000!

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

We enjoy receiving questions and suggestions from the community, and donations are always welcome. Please contact our office at:

ADDRESS:

SPEC

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

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

PHONE: **604-736-7732**

WEBSITE: **spec.bc.ca**

SPEC acknowledges that we work 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 (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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