CREATING A DESIGN CONCEPT TO ESTABLISH A GARDEN OF SPIRITUAL HEALING FOR SNAW-NAW-AS (NANOOSE) FIRST NATION

By

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Presented as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Community Planning within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Vancouver Island University

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DECLARATIONS

This Major Project is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration.

I agree that this Major Project may be available for reference and photocopying, at the discretion of Vancouver Island University

______________________________
Graham Kenneth Sakaki
We accept this Major Project as conforming to the requirement for the award of Master of Community Planning within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Vancouver Island University

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Abstract

Community gardens are widely recognized as providing many local benefits within a community. These benefits can include increased daily fruit and vegetable intake, improved mental and physical health, increased social capital, networking and organizational capacity, and enhancing neighbourhood pride and sense of safety. The purpose of this project was to prepare and facilitate a consultation and design process with Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, resulting in the design of a community garden that can be constructed adjacent to their Health Centre. We have worked together over the past year to design the “Garden of Spiritual Healing” which their community will be able to utilize and benefit from over time. Although there were many successes that can be attributed to this project, there were also minor challenges which have also been identified. This paper summarizes the design and consultation process methods used during the project, outlines the plans for construction in the years ahead, shares funding and budget information, and outlines recommendations for replication of this project or others similar in nature.
Acknowledgements

I would like to start by saying “Hych’ka” to David Bob for initially accepting to be my Advisor on this project and welcoming me so graciously into the community. You became a great friend in the short time we knew one another, and you will always be remembered for your wisdom, kindness, and compassion.

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A special thank you to my incredible team at the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute. It has been great to have such a supportive team day in and day out to work with these last couple of years. I look forward to the next year and beyond. A special thank you to Monica Shore for your continued support during this project and your always valuable, and usually free advice.

Lastly, to the entire Snaw-Naw-As community and Health Centre staff. It has been a great pleasure and honour working with you over this last year. I cannot thank you all enough for the time and energy each of you have contributed to this project. I look forward to the next couple of years as we construct the Garden of Spiritual Healing.
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<td>British Columbia</td>
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<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>REB</td>
<td>Research Ethics Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>US</td>
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Community gardens are widely recognized as providing many local benefits. These benefits can include increased daily fruit and vegetable intake, improved mental and physical health, increased social capital, networking and organizational capacity, and enhancing neighbourhood pride and sense of safety (Hale et al., 2011; D’Abundo & Carden, 2016; Allen, Alaimo, Elam & Perry, 2016). In addition, community gardens are also often praised as therapeutic places, where one can achieve a sense of healing by proving a sense of place (Pitt, 2014; Hale et al., 2011; Dewi et al., 2017). Studies show that both the young, the elderly and all those in between can benefit from community garden involvement (Allen et al., 2016; Carney et al., 2012). Youth development can be positively influenced from participation in community gardens by providing opportunities for them to contribute to the local community in a positive way (Allen et al., 2016), while elderly may benefit most from the therapeutic values of gardening, and staying active (Alaimo, Beavers, Crawford, Snyder & Litt, 2016).

There are two distinct types of community gardens. First, there are community gardens where a single garden bed is rented out to a single community member for a specific period of time. Perhaps the largest downfall of this type of community garden is that community members who are uninvolved, or unable to receive a plot due to wait listing may feel that it has a “club-like atmosphere” (Miller, 1998; Algert, Diekmann, Renvall & Gray, 2016). The second type is an open or “shared” community garden. These gardens, which often have a garden management committee in place, encourages all community members to share in the garden responsibilities and rewards. Alaimo et
al., write “community gardens are like trees, with deep roots in a particular
neighbourhood and branches that extend beyond the bounds of the garden” (2016).

At times, including pre-contact through to the 20th century, Vancouver Island
supported its inhabitants with a bounty of foods from its lands and waters. However over
the past 50-60 years there has been a drastic shift away from local food production.
Agricultural lands have been steadily diminishing across the Island due to population
growth and the accompanying increases in urban development. Food security is
currently a major area of concern as agricultural production has slowed and the Islands
capacity to be self-sufficient has declined from 85% in the mid-90s to between 5-10% in
the early 2000s (MacNair, 2004). Local municipalities are becoming more concerned
with food security on Vancouver Island and many are making it a top priority in their
long-term planning documents (Seed, Lang, Caraher & Ostry, 2014; Ostry & Morrison,
2010; Islam & Berkes, 2016). In recent years, food security has also been affected by
climate change. Droughts have resulted in lower production of global food exports.
Climate change and reduced food security both contribute to the need for Vancouver
Island to build and expand sustainable local food production (Findlay, 2011).

Snaw-Naw-As (NanOOSE) First Nation is one of nineteen Coast Salish tribes
situated on the east side of Vancouver Island, BC (Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, 2016).
Their reserve lands are located in the NanOOSE District on the south shore of NanOOSE
Harbour (Government of Canada, 2017a). The extent of Snaw-Naw-As traditional
territories expands well beyond the extents of their current reserve lands. Their current
reserve lands total an approximate 54 hectares in size, and are divided by a highway
transecting through their lands splitting their community into two sections (Snaw-Naw-
As First Nation, 2016). Snaw-Naw-As First Nation has a registered population of 251
people, 167 of who are currently living on their reserve lands. Data from the Government of Canada states 85 members of their population are between the ages of 0-19, and 75 private households are located on their reserve. The Snaw-Naw-As First Nation Governance (elected 01/13/2016) consists of Chief Brent Edwards, Councillor Christopher Bob, Councillor Gordon Edwards, Councillor Lawrence Mitchell, and Councillor Cheryl Jones (Government of Canada, 2017b).

The late Snaw-Naw-As Chief David Bob⁴, who was also the Director of the Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre, had a long-standing dream of constructing a community garden on the land adjacent to their Health Centre. Snaw-Naw-As completed the structural development of their Community Health Centre in 2013, and it has played a vital role in education, outreach and health support for their community. Before development even began on the Health Centre, David Bob was already working on plans to introduce a community garden on the site that would be inclusive to all their people. As the Health Centre was constructed and programs developed, the community garden was overlooked in the excitement. Funding, human resources, and project management has since limited the capacity, and today there are currently only two raised garden beds on the desired site location.

Snaw-Naw-As First Nation is a relatively small Nation, and is well respected on Vancouver Island. The region in which they live is part of a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated biosphere reserve; the

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¹ David Bob was the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation Chief for 10 years. After serving in this capacity he became the Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre Director. David Bob also served as the Snaw-Naw-As representative on the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region roundtable and was a co-founder of the roundtable.
Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR). Biosphere reserves are designated by UNESCO to provide a niche role as science for sustainability support sites (UNESCO, 2017). Human populations within biosphere reserves are instrumental in helping biosphere reserves achieve their desired functions, as their support and their collaborative efforts are key to healthy and respectful dialogue that leads to information sharing and mobilization, community collaboration, and shared stewardship responsibilities. Each biosphere reserve is tasked with providing three functions within its designated region: [1] the conservation of biological and cultural diversity; [2] the development of social and economic sustainability; and [3] support for research, education, monitoring, and information exchange. Although there is currently no federal funding for the MABR, it has managed to create a governance structure in the form of a roundtable, which includes representatives from local and senior levels of government, conservation and business groups, community members, the local University, and First Nations including Snaw-Naw-As (MABR, 2017). The MABR’s roundtable meets quarterly, and at one of these meetings Snaw-Naw-As First Nation’s stated their desire to restart their work towards constructing a community garden. It so happened that I was invited to this meeting to present on some local research work I have been involved with within the boundaries of the MABR. After further conversations and meetings with David Bob, I was invited to lead a design and consultation process with Snaw-Naw-As First Nations to help them move forward in an attempt to create a community garden for their community.

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2 The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR) respectfully changed its designated name from "reserve" to “region” to respect First Nation views of the word “reserve".
Project Overview and Proposal

Vancouver Island University has a Research Ethics Board (REB) that ensures any projects that involve human participants follow standard guidelines and undergo an ethical review process. The process helps to ensure that the safety, health, welfare and rights of any human participants contributing to research are protected (Vancouver Island University, 2017). Snaw-Naw-As First Nations has its own traditional methods in place for working with researchers from outside their community. The late Snaw-Naw-As First Nations member and Health Center Director David Bob had agreed to be my advisor regarding ethical matters for the duration of my work with Snaw-Naw-As. Since I have followed Snaw-Naw-As First Nations protocols throughout my research, some contributing information guiding this project, that may often be included in a Major Project, has been left out due to traditional protocols, or protection of culturally sensitive or significant information³.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to design a community garden for Snaw-Naw-As First Nations that can be constructed adjacent to their Health Centre. The design and consultation process will require multiple community meetings to ensure that the final design is representative of the community’s goals for the garden. Although I will lead discussions, and disseminate ideas based on my research at the meetings, Snaw-Naw-As First Nation community members will be involved in all aspects of the process by approving layout, features, and functionality of the garden. It was the wishes of Snaw-

³ David Bob passed away from a heart attack on January 21st, 2017. Since David’s unfortunate passing, Donna Edwards has become the Interim Health Centre Director, and I have worked closely with her and the Nation to complete this Major Project.
Naw-As First Nation Health Centre Director David Bob that construction of the community garden begins in the spring of 2017.

A second major component of this project is to do an in-depth literature review to determine the potential benefits of community gardens for Snaw-Naw-As First Nation including: therapeutic values, education and outreach, healthy eating, and other potential values. The findings that resulted from the literature review have been shared with Snaw-Naw-As First Nation community members contributing to the design of the community garden, and used to inform the decision-making processes.

Third, I will work closely with Snaw-Naw-As First Nations to help raise funds needed to construct the community garden and operate any community programs resulting from the design. Researching potential funding partners, assisting writing grant applications, lobbying community members for in-kind or financial support, and a two-year construction and operational budget are also a longer term deliverable of this project.

**Project Significance**

This project is important to Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, as they wish to create this community garden in hopes that it will assist in minimizing physical and mental health issues, preserve traditional knowledge and language of native plants species, increase food security, be a preferred gathering place, and create a educational program for their community. Community planners may work on a variety of differing types of projects over the duration of their professional careers. As community needs and interests change, so does a planner’s focus. Many communities in British Columbia (BC), Canada currently have food security as a priority concern (Seed et al., 2014; Ostry
& Morrison, 2010; Islam & Berkes, 2016), and as such, I am excited to be working to help mitigate this concern within a local community.

**Anticipated Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this project will be helpful for planning professionals, ethnobonomists, community groups, and local governments that are working on similar community gardens, or food security and health initiatives with First Nations, in particular Coast Salish First Nations communities. It should be noted that each First Nation has different traditions, histories, and protocols, so the methodologies should be adjusted as per their community desires, and results may differ when working with other First Nations communities.
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The intent of this research is to fully explore the potential benefits to human populations that can result from community garden initiatives. Through this exploration of relevant literature the aim is to determine how community gardens are designed and outreach and education programs are implemented to produce these desired positive results. The findings will help to inform the design and implementation strategy created for the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation community garden, while highlighting past challenges and successes that should be considered regarding each of the components included in my project proposal.

Food Security

The 100 mile diet concept’s birthplace is BC, where the idea is that to be food secure, dietary needs should be obtained year round from within a 100 mile radius of home (Ostry & Morrison, 2010). Although the concept has merit in terms of reduced emissions from travel, and boosting local food security, there are many locations that are unable to produce all the foods needed for a healthy diet. At the World Food Summit of 1996 the Canadian Government recognized the definition for food security as: “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle” (Power, 2008). Despite national and local attention however, a growing concern regarding food security has spread across BC communities over the past many decades. A study concerning the agricultural changes in BC from
1986-2006 illustrates that food self-sufficiency has changed for the worse within the following crops (see Table 1 below).

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Total Fruits</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field vegetables</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal (human consumption)</td>
<td>276%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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Table 1: Crop Production and % Self-Sufficiency (Ostry & Morrison, 2010)

While the aforementioned crops have been in steady decline, the agricultural industry in BC has moved forward increasing production of animal fat, and live-stock feeds in the forms of hay and grain (Ostry & Morrison, 2010).

In 2011, 12% of Canadians were identified as food insecure, while Aboriginal households were more than double the Canadian average at 27% food insecure (Islam & Berkes, 2016). The definition of food security (above) states that people need to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, which may be threatened for Aboriginal people as their traditional food preferences and needs are being lost due to decreased access of traditional lands, decreased fishing and hunting, changing big game migration patterns, and loss of traditional knowledge regarding edible species (Power, 2008; Stroink & Nelson, 2009).

“Feasting for Change” is an initiative that took place within Coast Salish communities across Vancouver Island to help combat the loss of traditional knowledge pertaining to traditional food sources. The program led 51 feasts within these communities, where stories were shared, and nature walks were held to share plant
knowledge and to harvest native species (Bagelman, Devereaux & Hartley, 2016). A case study performed in the Canadian northern Cree community of Norway House looked specifically at fish as a driver of food security in the community. Fish contribute protein, vitamins, and nutrients such as zinc, iron, and calcium to the peoples’ daily diet. The Norway House community generally fish for 11 weeks during the fishery and though much of the fish is sold, they share a large portion among the community, which is stored for the remainder of the year, and the authors conclude that it plays a major role in food security for the community (Islam & Berkes, 2016).

Community Gardens

There appears to be endless values associated with community gardens. Some of these include: increased access and consumption of local fruit and vegetables, therapeutic benefits, physical health benefits, increased education and outreach, sense of belonging and strengthening of community, and preserving local environmental knowledge (Dewi et al., 2017, Hale et al., 2011; Alaimo et al, 2016; Gloria, 2006; Algert et al., 2016; D’Abundo & Carden, 2016; Allen et al., 2016; Carney et al., 2012; Pitt, 2014). Although the definition of community garden is rather vague, and some suggest that it may be too inclusive and even misleading (Pudup, 2008), the idea remains consistent for all forms; a garden that is shared by the community, no matter what its desired outcomes or benefits may be. With this in mind I explored five aspects of community gardens relevant to my project: sustenance values, therapeutic values, physical values, educational values, and community building initiatives.
**Sustenance Values.** Increased fruit and vegetable intake is consistently considered to be one of the most beneficial outcomes of most community gardens. In San Jose, California a researcher interviewed over 130 participants and concluded that the average gardener’s daily intake of fruit and vegetables increased from 2.0 cups per day up to 4.0 cups per day during the peak growing season (Algert et al., 2016). Another study done in the US found that through home gardening and community education and support, vegetable intake for children increased three-fold, while adults experienced a four-fold increase. In this same study population it revealed that 31% of the families participating had food security concerns, while only 3% had concerns after the installation of their garden plots (Carney et al., 2013). The benefits of involvement in community gardens can positively affect an entire family. Residents with only one member participating in a community garden effort can help to increase their entire family’s fruit and vegetable intake by 1.4 times per day (Alaimo et al., 2016).

The western world has created a culture of cheap food. This culture has added to disconnecting people from the lands which once sustained them. Not only can community gardens help reconnect people to their lands, it can also influence the way in which people think about food, and the local environment (Hale et al., 2011).

**Therapeutic Values.** Studies have shown that community gardens are often associated as being places of therapeutic qualities (Hale et al., 2011; Pitt, 2014; Detweiler et al., 2012). Donnelly (2006) states: “they are increasingly viewed as centers for health promotion where stress is replaced with peace” (page 261). They have been described as therapeutic places for elderly populations, those suffering from mental health issues such as dementia, or elderly who suffer chronic physical pain (Pitt, 2014;
Jiang, 2014; Gloria, 2006). Natural spaces have long been considered to have therapeutic values, in the Middle ages, some hospitals had gardens located on site designed for patients to heal themselves through spiritual transformation (Detweiler et al., 2012; Jiang, 2014). A study conducted by Hannah Pitt, focuses on the concept of flow occurring at community gardens (2014). Flow can be described as positive experiences that can alleviate stress. When flow occurs a person is able to perform tasks without effort, making the tasks seem relaxing or mindless. Sometimes participants in a state of flow can forget their anxieties or stresses. Pitt describes community gardens as places that can have the ability to distance oneself from physical and mental stress. Some of the participants in her study describe community gardening activities as “therapeutic”, “a place of healthy healing”, “good for their wellbeing” and “places they feel better” (Pitt, 2014). Results from another study in Denver, Colorado find that community gardens have holistic values that are very distinct and that participants are able to connect themselves through a healthy lifestyle to the world around them. The study also stated that participants found that involvement in the community garden improved both their physical and emotional health (Hale et al., 2011).

Although community gardens can provide a therapeutic experience to those participating, it is relatively unknown how stress levels are impacted by gardening activities among adults with and without mental disabilities. A study conducted in Japan concluded that a reduction in high physical activities is crucial to minimizing physical stress among mentally disabled people, therefore suggesting that appropriate workload assignments should to be distributed to those who have mental disabilities in order to decrease stress (Dewi et al., 2017). Appearance of the garden can also affect the therapeutic values that the garden can provide for the people using it. The term
“therapeutic landscape” is often used to describe a green space which can improve physical, mental or social health (Detweiler et al., 2012). A study by Stroink & Nelson (2009) suggests that their observations revealed that “the Aboriginal view of gardens is spontaneous and naturally unfolding” (pg. 278) which could contribute to a more natural setting, and help enhance therapeutic value as nature has been associated with pain reduction, and attention improvement (Jiang, 2014). To create a more therapeutic environment the gardens should contain elements typical of the region, and should include a variety of plants to attract birds, and butterflies, and increase sounds, colours and seasonal variation (Jiang, 2014).

**Educational Values.** There are many ways that education can occur within a community garden setting. Much of the time education is simply passed on from one community member to another informally during day-to-day tending of the garden and through garden chores and responsibilities (Algert et al., 2016; Datta, 2016). Other community gardens go well beyond the self-learning approach and introduce multiple levels of learning on-site. D’Abundo & Carden (2008) state that “gardening provides opportunities for everyone involved to develop skills in leadership, community organizing, cultural competency, program planning, implementation, and evaluation” (pg. 84). Many gardens are being introduced to students at early ages. Gardens can provide the open-space necessary for play, arts, study and other youth development benefits (Datta, 2016). They can also provide cross-cultural learning experiences where species are introduced to community members from other cultures. While many community garden education programs teach the community about gardening and nutrition (Hale et al., 2011), they should also try to educate participants about
community engagement and community building (D’Abundo & Carden, 2016) in an effort to raise community capacity.

A program in San Jose, California US teaches introductory courses about soil sciences, vegetable cultivation, and garden ecology for their participants (Algert et al., 2016). In Portland, Oregon US students learn about organic produce, chemical pollution, food transportation, and fossil fuels (Burns & Miller, 2012). The use of gardens as educational tools has increased for children as it can provide an opportunity to learn about how fruits and vegetables are grown in a manner that they can relate to (Christian, Evans, Conner, Ransley & Cade, 2012).

**Physical Benefits.** Many studies suggest that participation in community gardens leads to physical health benefits (Hale et al., 2011; Lanier et al., 2015). Gardeners describe gardening tasks such as: raking, digging, weeding, planting, and bending as beneficial to their physical health, and, that the exercise is more pleasing than other types of physical activity (Hale et al., 2011). Increased fitness and reduction of pain are two benefits that can occur while fulfilling physical activity recommendations (30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity) during gardening months (Alaimo et al., 2016). A study in Salt Lake City, Utah US found that gardeners when compared to non-gardeners had a lower body mass index, and a lower risk of being obese (Alaimo et al., 2016). Youth participating in community gardens have shown reduced involvement in alcohol, drugs, sexual activity and tobacco use (Allen et al., 2016)

**Community-Building Initiatives.** Although community gardens often start with the goal of increasing food security or raising community awareness around local
growing, many other community benefits often occur. Community gardens can become focal points for communities where other community activities are organized, neighbourhood revitalization efforts are stemmed from, and community pride develops (Allen et al., 2016; Lanier et al., 2015; Hale et al., 2011). Community gardens have been described as places where people go to interact with other community members increasing their social networks, and share responsibilities and rewards (Hale et al., 2011). Social capital can be elevated by community garden efforts, and well-being, sense of place, and health are all by-products that can be advanced through the garden and its activities.

**Community Collaboration**

Local participation of community members and organizations enable community gardens to thrive. Individual’s skills and experiences brought forth from each partnership enhances the ability for the collective whole of the project and its participants to benefit (Twiss et al., 2003). Locally there are many partners that may be able to play an important role in not only building the community garden, but also helping to tend to it and deliver educational training courses. Local nurseries, local hardware stores, seed companies, garden clubs, and school groups have all been identified as potential resources when establishing a community garden (Starbuck & Olthof, 2008).

**The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region.** The MABR is one of 18 UNESCO designated biosphere reserves in Canada, and over 650 worldwide (UNESCO, 2017). The significance of the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region in relation to this project is
its roundtable governance body. The roundtable is comprised of First Nations, local and provincial government, private timber companies, community members, Vancouver Island University, and other large scale land holders and managers (MABR, 2017). The MABRs mandate is clearly defined as [1] promoting the conservation of biodiversity; [2] fostering sustainable development; and, [3] supporting research and education. Their support for research and education is facilitated by the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute, which is a VIU entity (MABRI, 2017). Partners of the roundtable have supported one another in the past (MABRI, 2017), and this initiative could be another that the group would be willing to support and contribute resources towards.

**Local Nurseries.** Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) whose mission is to promote and protect the natural values of land in the Nanaimo area has a Native Plant Nursery that they operate in south Nanaimo (NALT, 2017). NALT has an edible wild plants project that they started in 2009, and they could be a beneficial resource for local knowledge and a partner contributor for the project.

Milner Gardens and Woodland is a VIU entity located in Qualicum, BC and also has a nursery located adjacent to the reflecting pool. They are able to propagate plants from other existing plants located on site, from seed, or division (Milner Gardens & Woodlands, 2017).

Streamside Native Plants located in Bowser, BC is another local nursery that specializes in native plants. Streamside also does custom propagation and growing should Snaw-Naw-As wish for any native plants that are currently not being grown.
They are also able to facilitate planting and short term irrigation if needed (Streamside Native Plants, 2017).

**Summary**

There can be many benefits to a community that result from community garden initiatives. Increased fruit and vegetable intake, therapeutic and healing values, continual education for community members, mental and physical health benefits, and improved community capacity are only a few (Hale et al., 2011; D’Abundo & Carden, 2016; Allen et al., 2016). Each community garden can be tailored to provide specific values and functions for a community. Stroink and Nelson (2009) state that the “Aboriginal view of gardens is spontaneous and naturally unfolding” (page 268). Through an inclusive community consultation and design process, it is anticipated that we can use the findings from past studies regarding the benefits of community gardens and methods used in their development to create a solid design, and then continue to develop the design overtime as we construct the garden.
CHAPTER 3 – METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to assist Snaw-Naw-As First Nations design, and construct a community garden on their reserve lands adjacent to their Health Centre. To ensure that we (Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, and myself) had a clear and coherent vision of how I could assist them with the project we started by creating a timeline for my consultation and design process. David Bob and I discussed the level of community consultation and design input expected by Snaw-Naw-As community members during the process to ensure that the final plan would be representative of their community’s desires. Table # 2 (below) is the initial timeline with associated tasks that we developed before any design processes began.

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Sep</th>
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<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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Table 2 - Snaw-Naw-As First Nation Design and Consultation Schedule

Snaw-Naw-As Community Involvement

It was determined during my first meeting with David Bob that the Snaw-Naw-As community should be heavily involved in the design process to ensure that the final
garden plan was representative of the community. We agreed that more community members helping to design the garden would increase the likelihood that the garden will be used by the community. Therefore, we established a Community Garden Committee (CGC) consisting of 8 Snaw-Naw-As community members to help with the initial design charrette and visioning session. The purpose of the Garden Committee was to help decide what garden features they wished to be included in the garden plan. More long-term, our plan was that the CGC would be able to manage the gardens day-to-day operations, and be able to make decisions regarding purchasing and operations on the behalf of the greater Snaw-Naw-As community. We also determined that we needed a method to get further feedback and community input on the features and the design as it developed from a wider range of community members. We concluded that I should present progress and acquire further feedback during the Snaw-Naw-As Elders weekly lunches at the Heath Centre. This provided opportunities for another 15-20 community members (depending on weekly turnout) to comment and guide the design process as we moved forward.

**Methodology**

To ensure that the community engagement techniques used throughout this project directed the final garden design, I used a mixed methods research approach for my project. Qualitative data, in the form of community input was collected to inform the garden design. Because the participant input greatly varied, and some community members were more vocal than others, I also used direct observations and one-on-one discussions to help inform decision-making. The process in which data was collected resembled that of “phronetic research” where data is systematically gathered and
interpreted to address a specific concern (Tracy, 2012). In this case, the qualitative data was collected through respectful dialogue during both group and one-on-one discussions with Snaw-Naw-As community members. The bulk of the data collected was specific to a certain part of the garden design or planning process.

A minor quantitative analysis was designed and implemented to determine where to begin our focus when constructing the garden, and which of the complementary functions were most important to the community to implement first. This process was necessary because while the garden design was the main objective of this project, the next phase of constructing the garden will be done over the next two years, resulting in the staggering of features within the garden.

**Data Collection**

Qualitative data was collected during the entire design process. I needed to ensure that the final design was both representative and approved of by the entire community. We tried to avoid catering the design only to the majority of the community in an attempt to have the most possible “buy in” across all community members who participated in the design process. To ensure that all community members were able to contribute to the garden design process, I attended many meetings at the Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre. Below are a list of meetings and events where information was either disseminated or data was collected:

- September 15, 2016 (meeting with David Bob)
- September 29, 2016 (CGC initial meeting)
- October 13, 2016 (Elder Lunch & Initial Design Presentation)
- October 27, 2016 (Elder Lunch & Workshop)
• November 10, 2016 (Elder Lunch & Second Design Presentation)
• November 24, 2017 (Elder Lunch & Update)
• February 9, 2017 (Meeting with Donna Edwards)
• February 16, 2017 (Elder Lunch & Data Collection)
• February 23, 2017 (Snaw-Naw-As Health Fair Booth)
• March 9, 2017 (CGC meeting)
• April 13, 2017 (Elder Lunch, Garden Blessing & Presentation)

There is a notable gap in meetings between November 24\textsuperscript{th} and February 9\textsuperscript{th} (above). Three factors contributed to this: [1] an unexpected death in the community to a youth member caused one pre-scheduled cancellation; [2] Christmas holiday plans, and severe weather caused two pre-scheduled cancellations; and, [3] the unfortunate passing of David Bob\textsuperscript{4} resulted in two pre-scheduled cancellations. Although the gap in meetings was a minor setback to the targeted conclusion date (February 2017) for this project, when we did meet again in February the project carried on as planned with renewed energy and immense support.

\textbf{Limitations and Regrets}

There were some limitations to the community engagement and involvement processes implemented throughout the garden design process. First, the majority of the community engagement process included the Snaw-Naw-As Elders and members of the CGC. Neither of these two groups included youth except for the first CGC meeting where a young Snaw-Naw-As member attended and contributed to the first charrette.

\textsuperscript{4}A prayer service was held for David Bob on Tuesday January 24, 2017, and the funeral followed the next morning on Wednesday January 25, 2017.
session. In an attempt to gather more feedback from younger community members, I attended the Snaw-Naw-As Health Fair on February 23, 2017. I was able to show the final design concept, and ask community members to choose areas of the garden that they either thought were the most important to have built first for the community or that would utilize themselves when we build the garden. This added to the same data collected at two previous meetings on where to focus our primary efforts and financial resources when starting the construction in the spring of 2017. Fifteen new community members were introduced to the project at the Snaw-Naw-As Health Fair and added their recommendations to the construction phase of the garden.

Gaining feedback from everyone at the meetings was often challenging. Some community members attended all the meetings while others attended only one or two. This caused for a lot of repeat explanation and garden updates rather than focusing on the next task at hand. Although this seemed to slow down the process of determining the construction plan for the next two years, it did not negatively affect the actual design process of the garden in any way.

Lastly, the unfortunate passing of David Bob on January 21, 2017 caused minor changes to be made to the project. David Bob was originally a committee member on this major project, and my advisor at Snaw-Naw-As First Nation. David’s sudden and unexpected passing resulted in me looking for a new advisor to complete this project. Donna Edwards who replaced David Bob as the Interim Health Centre Director stepped up to fill the role. Donna has been a pleasure to work with, and we have become good friends in these past few months.
Design Process: Feedback and Evaluation

Right from the start it was vital to both David and I that the Snaw-Naw-As community felt as if they owned this project from the beginning of the process through to the end. I likely could have completed the community engagement portion of the project with only a few short community meetings, but having the ability to continually present development of the garden design as it occurred, and gathering feedback has been extremely valuable to the project, and in terms of moving forward into construction. Some of my presentations at the Elder’s lunches were short updates on funding and progress to the design, while others we dedicated hours to working together on design elements and gathering community input. I feel that while this is my first project of this magnitude that I have designed and implemented, I would not have changed a whole lot if I could have another chance at it from the beginning. Perhaps one regret is not being able to collect more input from youth, whom we hope will be the greatest long-term beneficiaries of this project.
CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The main purpose of this project was to design a community garden for Snaw-Naw-As First Nation that was representative of their community wants and/or needs. Secondary purposes were to explore literature regarding community gardens and their benefits to relay to Snaw-Naw-As First Nation while designing the garden, and help to apply for and secure funding, create an implementation plan, and produce a rough two year budget.

The following chapter presents the results and findings for each of the project goals. It is with great enthusiasm that I report on our work (Snaw-Naw-As and myself) as this has been one of the most exciting and rewarding projects I have worked on.

Initial Meetings with David Bob, the CGC and the Snaw-Naw-As Elders

As I mention in the introduction, David Bob and I met some time ago at the very first MABR roundtable meeting. As we spoke more, over time, this project developed from the common interest of preserving language and knowledge pertaining to traditional native plant species to something even more ambitious for the entire Snaw-Naw-As community to enjoy. Though traditional native plant species was always a primary focal point of the garden, the community has guided the design to include much more.

David Bob, Monica Shore (MABR Coordinator) and myself met on September 15, 2016 where I presented to him my proposed design and consultation schedule. It was quickly approved and I was able to begin the process of meeting with the community two weeks later. We initially met as a group of 10 people which we named the
Community Garden Committee (CGC). The original CGC included (David Bob, Debbie Bob, Sonya Kwiatkowski, Alison Drennan, Bonnie Jones, Janet Hunter, Sheila Bob, Joseph Bob, Monica Shore, and myself), David Bob has since been replaced by Donna Edwards on the committee. We started the meeting by introducing ourselves counter-clockwise starting with David Bob. As late-comers arrived we would re-introduce ourselves in the same manner. I then presented a short PowerPoint presentation of some of the literature review I had done regarding the potential benefits of community gardens, the importance and how to determine guiding principles, choosing important focal point and structural features, and how to perform a SWOT analysis. This presentation was intended to help get the creative juices flowing which it did. Much to our surprise and delight, Debbie Bob and Bonnie Jones already had a name drafted to propose for the community garden: The Garden of Spiritual Healing. It was quickly approved by all, and the two Snaw-Naw-As Elders have since been coined by the community as the “Garden Chief Executive Officers CEO’s”.

The site analysis was the first step to determine the range of possibilities that could be explored by the CGC. Because the site is well known by the Snaw-As Garden CGC, and adjacent to the Health Centre not much time was needed to walk the grounds and ensure we had a thorough understanding of the site. Moreover, the meeting room we used for our CGC sessions overlooks the area designated for the garden to be built. A SWOT analysis is defined as “an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization as a form of appraisal of its current position at a particular time and future potential” (Law, 2016). When used for a site analysis rather than a business analysis it can assist with planning for a proposed development. In this case we
conducted a SWOT analysis to start generating ideas relevant to the proposed garden development area. Below are the results from the SWOT analysis we developed during the first CGC meeting.

**Strengths**

- Location
- View of the Ocean
- Large undeveloped area
- Potential for full sunlight

**Weaknesses**

- Potential for too much sunlight
- Strong winds
- Wildlife (deer browsing)
- High side of highway (away from waterfront)

**Opportunities**

- Potential for multiple “sections”
- Room for everything that the community will want and/or need
- Ample space to continuing expanding over time
- Could be used for patient therapy and Heath Centre activities

**Threats**

- Too large an area, making it feel “empty” and/or “underused”
- Future expansion of the Health Centre onto the proposed garden area
• Too far from home for some community members to use on a daily/weekly basis
• Deterioration over time, and potential for little continuous (annual) funding to “maintain” once built

We then started to brainstorm guiding principles for the garden. The following Guiding Principles had been chosen by the community to help guide our design:

1. Accessible to all peoples, ages, sizes, and abilities;
2. Respect the traditional culture of Snaw-Naw-As First Nation;
3. Promote health and education through design;
4. Celebrate the land and the view; and,
5. Support the Snaw-As-Health Centre Programs

Although the list of guiding principles was short, it represented the views of the CGC and provided us with principles to follow moving forward in our efforts.

Next we decided to brainstorm main garden features that should be included in the garden. This list was not meant to be exhaustive, but rather some of the more important features within the garden. The final list consisted of:

• An arched entrance;
• Pollinator hotels;
• Compost station;
• Rain water collection;
• Naturally draws people to the right after entering;
• Oval Pathway large enough for a wheelchair;
• Railings for support (where needed);
• Smoke house;
• Pit cooking area;
• Private and quiet area;
• Education and recreation area;
• Fish cleaning table;
• Berry trail; and,
• Connect to adjacent building.

At this point we felt as though we were ready to start drawing up some initial designs. The community members did not have previous experience with design charrettes, and many seemed hesitant to wish to express themselves through sketching. After some time getting everyone more comfortable we decided to split up into groups, the following designs emerged.

![Image 1: Initial Designs from the CGC Design Charrette](image1.jpg)

Although there were not many similarities from each of the groups drawings two things stood out. Each group had a gathering area, and a cooking or smoking area included in the design. With these similarities it seemed likely that a community area, or place that provided a “sense of community” would be an important part of the garden design.
moving forward. The initial CGC meeting was a success and it provided structure for the design for the weeks that would follow (see images 2 - 4 below). Immediately after the CGC meeting I presented what we had been working on to the Snaw-Naw-As Elders after their weekly lunch. I explained the project and my role for the next 8 months with the community. The results obtained from the CGC meeting were approved unanimously by the Elders which highlighted to me that the CGC was a good mix of community members whose values, desires, and inputs would be representative of the greater community.
Image 3: Sonya, David and Monica Listen Intently to Debbie

Image 4: Janet, Bonnie and Allison get their Creative Juices Flowing
Initial Garden Design Draft

After the first day of meetings with the CGC and Elder’s, David and I discussed the idea of having complementary functions that the garden could provide. I was aware of the desire for preservation of language and knowledge regarding native plant species, and after speaking with some of the Health Centre employees it was evident that they wished for the garden to provide health and wellness opportunities for patients, and community members. Through the design charrette it was made clear that a sense of community, and gathering places were important, and lastly the main function of a community garden is to increase local food production and enhance local food security (Carney et al., 2012; Alaimo et al., 2016; Lanier et al., 2015 & Algert et al., 2016).

Using the data and community input I collected from the first two meetings I created the initial design draft of the Garden of Spiritual Healing (Image 5 below). The draft was presented at the Snaw-Naw-As Elders lunch on October 13, 2016. The draft was met with great enthusiasm as I explained each of the features contained within the garden.
The community had begun feeling more comfortable with both me and the developing project, so they were very open to recommending changes to the plan and addressing any and all of their concerns with the design. Although the majority of the feedback was positive in nature, there were many great takeaways from the comments made by community members. The community members were split into three groups and asked to comment on the garden design by either writing on the photocopied drafts, or placing sticky-notes on the paper. Image 6 (below) shows the consolidated comments regarding my initial draft.
Image 6: Feedback from the Initial Design Concept

Feedback Included:

- The education area is too cluttered
- Smoke house should be moved to front
- Add greenhouse(s)
- Add fencing around perimeter to prevent deer browse
- Move toolshed closer to vegetable garden
- Add trash bins around garden seating areas
- Round pathway corners where possible
- Add bird houses and pond
- Move cooking pit near smoke house
- Add areas for art features and murals if possible
Image 7: David Bob Provides Feedback on the Initial Design
Second Garden Design Draft

In my attempt to re-create the garden design using the feedback from Snaw-Naw-As community members I first determined that the garden should be split into four core areas that would reflect the following complementary function we identified for the garden to produce or accommodate. The following were added to the next garden draft:

**Food Security**

- A place to grow local fruit and vegetables
- A greenhouse to start seedlings, and grow produce
- A trellis for vine vegetables
- Rounded pathways, and benches for resting
Sense of Community

- A pond where groundwater is naturally collected (due to slope and drainage on site)
- Picnic tables for gathering and feasting
- A large undercover area with a barbeque, food preparation tables, and seating

Health and Wellness

- A small gazebo for relaxation
- Pollinator hotels
- Native plant garden with informative signage
- Flowers to stimulate senses

Education and Outreach

- A fish table and smoke house for cleaning and preparing fish and meats
- A cooking pit and wood shed for traditional cooking
- Amphitheater style rock seating to host educational events
Image 9: Four Complementary Functions of the Garden

To ensure each of the complementary functions were representative of the communities desires, I met with the Snaw-Naw-As Elders on October 27, 2016 and presented each idea, and the potential benefits of each complementary function of the garden. The four functions were approved at the meeting and I was ready to begin the next draft of the garden design (see image 10).
Because the general feedback from the initial draft was positive there was very few large scale changes that needed to be made to the design (see image 11).
Image 11: Second Proposed Design Concept

The most notable changes to the design included:

- Removing pathways from the education and outreach areas to create a more open feeling
- Rearranging the built structures (smokehouse, toolshed) and adding a woodshed
- Adding greenhouses in the “food security” area
- Rounding pathways, and adding handrails
- Perimeter fencing around most areas of the garden to minimize animal disturbances
- Adding a pond to the community gathering area
- Placement of bird houses and garbage collection bins at key locations
- Moved the fruit trees up slope, away from the main garden area
• Ensured the garden design naturally tempts community members to move counter-clockwise through the garden

• Rearranged the garden bed designs to enable easier movement throughout

After making these changes to the garden design, it was now ready to be presented again for additional consideration.

This second garden design draft was presented to Snaw-Naw-As First Nation at the Elder’s lunch on November 10, 2016. The initial plan was for the community to comment on this draft and I would prepare a final draft from the community comments. However, the plan was extremely well received by the community and no changes were requested. We spent some time discussing the type of education and outreach events and course that the community wished to have offered at the garden in the spring and summer of 2017. The list included the following:

• Soil science course
• From seed to table (beginner gardening course)
• Locally adapted varieties of produce
• Healthy eating and cooking techniques
• Yearly rotations
• Harvesting techniques
• Insect control
• Fertilization and pesticide use and control
At this time we were ahead of our proposed schedule (Chapter 3, Table 2), so we decided to attempt to gather more detailed feedback on the type of structures that the community would like to have constructed on-site. We agreed that I would sketch a proposed garden entrance and smoke house as these were two of the key features of the garden. The following were presented to Snaw-Naw-As Elders on November 24, 2016.

Image 12: Garden of Spiritual Healing Entrance

Image 13: Smokehouse and Woodshed

At the meeting on November 24th, we also asked the community to comment and vote on other garden elements. The idea was for the CGC to gain a quick sense of structural preference moving forward. Using the dotmocracy “sticker dot voting” method, which is a community engagement technique where participants can vote on their favorite images
by placing a sticker beside or over an image (Diceman, 2017) we collected feedback on key garden elements including: community shelter and cooking areas, fish cleaning tables, center gazebo design, and raised garden beds. We also obtained comments on the smokehouse and woodshed, pollinator hotels, and the garden entrance (see appendices for images). The CGC will use the data collected moving forward when specific structural designs and purchasing takes place.

The feedback was as follows:

3 images for the community shelter and cooking areas were provided

1) 0 votes
2) 4 votes
3) 2 votes

4 images for the raised garden beds were provided

1) 3 votes
2) 1 vote
3) 1 vote
4) 3 votes

2 images of gazebos were provided

1) 6 votes
2) 1 vote

2 images of fish tables were provided

1) 1 vote
2) 6 votes

Smokehouse and Woodshed Comments
• Need wet (green) maple wood for smoking
• Smokehouse should be community size
• Green wood for smoking fish or meat, need fresh cut trees
• Should be rain and snow proof
• I like the woodshed and storage for the wood

_Garden Entrance_

• All good
• I like all of it

_Pollinator Hotels_

• If people are allergic to bees they should be carrying their own epi pen with them, or avoid the area
• Are these safe with kids playing?
• Good
• Be further outside and the bees will find the garden

Some clear frontrunners emerged for most of the features. The raised garden beds vote was the closest, so we can easily incorporate many styles of garden beds throughout the grounds to accommodate community preferences. Although this data collection was not necessary for my general design, the information will be valuable to the CGC moving forward as we construct the garden over the next couple of years.

**A New Snaw-Naw-As Project Advisor**

The garden design was now completed and it was time to start on the next phases of the project: securing funding, and preparing a work plan and budget. We had a couple
of meetings scheduled to discuss possible grants and community partners to help fund the project, however; a death of a young community member, and snow in December 2016 and January 2017 caused a couple of our prescheduled meetings to be cancelled. On January 22nd I got the news that David Bob had passed away the day prior from a heart attack. I attended the funeral a few days later to pay my respects to a strong, kind, and compassionate leader of the local community who will be greatly missed. I reached out to the Health Centre receptionist Vanessa Bob to pass along my condolences to the entire community, and asked her to let me know if there was anything I could do to be of assistance or if they needed any support at the Health Centre over the weeks to come.

A couple weeks later Donna Edwards the new Interim Health Centre Director e-mailed me to ask to meet with her to provide an update on the work that David, the CGC, the Elders and myself had been doing over the last few months. Monica Shore (MABR Coordinator), Mark Stephens (Snaw-Naw-As Band Manager) and myself met Donna on February 9, 2017. I gave a full overview on all the work that had taken place over the last few months. We spoke at length about the importance of the garden project for not only the entire community, but also the importance of finishing the project in David Bob’s memory. Donna agreed to continue on in David Bob’s capacity as my project advisor from Snaw-Naw-As First Nation. At this meeting we determined that we needed to start thinking about the process of expending funding related to the project, and where to focus our initial efforts when construction of the garden begins.
Raising Funds to Construct the Garden of Spiritual Healing and Provide Community Education and Outreach Events

Snaw-Naw-As First Nation is a small community of 167 members living on reserve (Government of Canada, 2017b). There has been no direct funding available through the Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre or First Nation since we began the design for the garden, so I have been heavily involved in applying for funding as a part of this project. There are three main components for which we have been attempting to secure money. First, we require funding for equipment and materials to construct the garden. Second, we need money to pay VIU student wages to build the garden, and structures. Lastly, we require funding to host education and outreach events for the community. Below are the grants that I have either helped to apply for or applied for personally and their status:

1. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation – Requested $5,000.00
   Approved for $2,000.00 (funds for equipment and supplies)

2. Vancouver Island University Research Awards – Requested $4,704.00
   Denied (funds were requested for student wages)

3. Island Health Authority – Requested $12,000.00
   Approved for $12,000.00 (funds for project overhead, and student wages)

4. BC Grow Local Program – Requested $20,000.00
   Denied (funds were requested for education and outreach events)

5. The Home Depot Canada Foundation – Requested $5000
   Approved for $4,000.00 (funds for equipment and supplies)

6. TimberWest Forest Corp – Requested $2,000.00
   Approved for $2,000.00 (funds for general purposes)
7. Island Timberlands LP – Requested (general ask, no dollar value)
   Approved for one dump truck load of sea soil for garden beds

8. Vancouver Island University Regional Initiative Fund – Requested $20,000.00
   Pending (funds requested for student wages, and education and outreach events)

The current secured funding we have available at this time for construction this spring and summer is $20,000.00 (plus one dump truck load of sea soil). We will need to apply for further funding to complete the garden construction and facilitate the community education and outreach events over the next year or two. As the Research and Community Engagement Coordinator for MABRRI, a portion of my time will be donated over the next couple of years from VIU to help coordinate construction and events at the garden.

**Creating a Two-Year Garden Budget**

During the design process I worked on creating a two-year budget that was representative of the funding needed to construct the garden, and to facilitate education and outreach events. The budget is based on the best available data I could find on what costs to expect during each phase of construction, and coordinating and facilitating events. The following images illustrate the funding approved, applied for, and total amount needed for 2017, and 2018. It should be noted that the approved, applied for and need to find columns of this budget will changing constantly due to continual applications for funding so it is most important to focus attention to the item and total columns.
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Table 3: 2017 Garden of Spiritual Healing Budget
As shown above in the 2017, and 2018 budget, we have a long way to go reach our desired goals. As stated previously we have about $20,000.00 secured as of April 2017 and will require over $110,000.00 to complete the project (further potential funding opportunities that we have identified are stated in Chapter 5).

### Choosing our Focus Areas for 2017

With the spring quickly approaching we chose a start date for the garden construction to begin on May 9, 2017. Due to the complexity of the garden and project funding limitations, construction is expected to take place over the next two years (May 2017 through August 2018). However, some of our current funding must be used within one year of acquiring it so we needed to determine which features the community

#### Table 4: 2018 Garden of Spiritual Healing Budget

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wished to have built first. We decided to ask the community where they wished to see us focus our efforts this spring at two different events: the Snaw-Naw-As Elder Lunch on February 16, 2017, and at the Snaw-Naw-As Health Fair on February 23, 2017. Again at these two events I used the Dotmocracy “sticker dot voting” method to track community preferences.

Two things were asked of the community members at these events: [1] what is the single feature you wish to see constructed first; and, [2] which of the complementary functions (sections of the garden) is most important to you.

The following single features were identified:

- Native Plant Garden – 3 votes
- Pollinator Hotels – 1 vote
- Greenhouse – 4 votes
- Fruit Trees – 1 vote
- Smokehouse – 4 votes
- Center Gazebo – 1 vote
- Pit Cooking Area – 1 vote
- Raised Garden Beds – 1 vote
- Pathway – 1 vote
The following functions (sections) of the garden were identified as being the most important to the participants:

- Sense of Community – 4 votes
- Education and Outreach – 11 votes
- Food Security – 11 votes
- Health and Wellness – 12 votes
From the data collected it was clear that the native plant garden (3 votes), greenhouse (4 votes), and smokehouse (4 votes) should to be some of the first features to be constructed this spring. As far as the single most important complementary function it was extremely close with three of the four section receiving either 11 or 12 votes. Interestingly, these three sections were also those that had the three single features that were most heavily voted on (see Image 14).

**Community Garden Committee Meeting**

We decided to have another CGC meeting on March 9, 2017 to discuss the results from the community input from the last meeting and event. Originally we had discussed completing one of the garden functions (sections) at a time rather than create the garden feature by feature, but after receiving the dotmocracy data and speaking with
many new community members at the Health Fair, we concluded that it will be vital to have the most important features to the community in place from the start to help build momentum moving forward.

The CGC also suggested that we have a formal garden blessing prior to any construction work on site. The Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre grounds were blessed, led by Auntie Anne (a Snaw-Naw-As Elder) years back. It was expressed to me that the blessing has brought good fortune to the building, and to the people of Snaw-Naw-As. We decided to choose a date and ask one of the Elders to lead a garden blessing for us.

**The Garden Grounds Blessing**

On April 13, 2017 at 11:00am prior to the weekly Elder’s Lunch Auntie Anne led a garden blessing. Many community members were present at the blessing, where two Health Centre employees, and Snaw-Naw-As members joined Auntie Anne in walking the grounds and blessing the earth. The event was a success and everyone celebrated the event over lunch after the blessing. I followed up the lunch with a short presentation regarding where our initial funds and human resources would be spent this spring when construction starts.
Image 16: Auntie Anne Leads the Garden Blessing

Image 17: Blessing the Garden Site
Image 18: Snaw-Naw-As Community Members and VIU Students Gather for a Post Garden Blessing Photo
CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

Summary

As originally stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this major project was to lead a consultation and design process for the Snaw-Naw-As community, resulting in the design of a community garden that could be constructed adjacent to their Health Centre. I am hesitant to use the term “final” design, as the Snaw-Naw-As community participants and I have spoken at great length about the importance of flexibility in the future when constructing the garden. There are many members of the community we were unable to receive input from, and should we receive further feedback and/or recommendations in the future from any of them, it may be incorporated into the design and/or construction of the Garden. With the guidance and support of my Snaw-Naw-As advisors David Bob and Donna Edwards, we were able to include over 50 community members at various stages of the design, and construction planning process. As the Snaw-Naw-As community (living on reserve) consists of only 167 members (Government of Canada, 2017b), we were able to involve or engage nearly one third of the community to contribute ideas, feedback, and/or recommendations during the course of this project to date.

This project has been one of the most exciting, and rewarding projects I have ever been a part of. Through this work, I have gained mentors, made friends, shared laughter and tears, and been immersed in a unique and inspiring community’s traditions, culture, and protocol. I have made a personal commitment to Snaw-Naw-As First Nation to help them continue this project through to completion over the next two years in whatever capacity I can. It was the wishes of David Bob that this garden become a
“legacy project” for the youth and younger populations of the community. The idea is that through the construction of the garden, continued maintenance, and outreach and education, the Snaw-Naw-As youth should be the biggest beneficiaries of this project over time. I will continue to work alongside Snaw-Naw-As First Nation to help carry out the wishes of my late friend and mentor David Bob.

Moving Ahead

There is still lots of work to do moving ahead over the coming years. We have begun to develop a construction plan for the spring of 2017. MABRRRI undergraduate student research assistants will work alongside myself, and the community from May 2017 through August 2017 two days a week building a portion of the pathway, a smokehouse, a cooking pit, toolshed, entrance, raised garden beds, sponsor signage, and a greenhouse. The current funding we have in place, and further anticipated funding should easily cover these expenses, and the result should provide a solid mix of core structures and features to the garden by the end of summer 2017.

Future Funding. At this time we require a substantial amount of further funding to complete the garden and facilitate the education and outreach events that the community desires. The Regional District of Nanaimo has expressed an interest in supporting this project through their associate DBL green bin recycling program. We will making a more formal request to them for soil/compost in the near future. We will also be applying to the Vancouver Foundation for two years of education and outreach, and operational funding for the garden. Milner Gardens and Woodland has suggested that they will be able to propagate some native plants from seed that can then be
transferred into the garden at a later time. Unfortunately, the process can take up to two years so we will likely need to purchase some of the native plant species from a local nursery, or seek permissions from BC Parks to collect species from Crown Park Lands. The MABR roundtable has been an excellent resource and many of the partners have made financial or in-kind contributions to this project already. By partnering with the MABR and their roundtable members further on grant applications more funding can likely be generated. The First Nations Health Authority has a few grant streams that would fit this project perfectly which we will apply for during the next call for applications. There are many other sources of funding that open throughout the year, and we will continue to research them as they arise, and work towards meeting our targeted project budget in the coming year.

**Future CGC Projects.** The CGC will continue to meet monthly to discuss progress of the garden development, funding, and community feedback. There are currently 10 people on the CGC including myself. We will openly be inviting any members of community who wish to join the CGC over the next month, and others can join at any time thereafter. The long-term purpose of the CGC is to ensure proper garden management and maintenance continues. Three tasks have been planned for the upcoming months that the CGC will be working hard to achieve:

1. **Tool Drive** – We are planning to host a weekend long tool drive in mid-May when many people are purchasing new gardening tools. We hope to obtain enough tools for the garden through this event.

2. **Garden Task List at the Health Center** – The CGC would like to create a board on the side of the toolshed (once constructed) that lists tasks that need to be done.
The idea is that any community member could show up on site, read the board and then carry out a duty. Duties could range from seeding or harvesting, to painting or building.

3. Garden Newsletter – The Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre publishes a Newsletter and distributes it to all community members monthly. The CGC will aim to release a blog posting in this newsletter each month providing updates on garden development, successes and challenges, and advertising educational events.

**Recommendations for Replication**

It should be mentioned that there are over 1,500 reserves in BC (Muckle, 2014). This said, it is highly likely that changes to the approach should and will differ based on each First Nations specific culture and protocols. In the common world we live in, it is generally easy to research a specific peoples’ way of life (traditions, cultures, and protocols); however this approach can often result in non-intently grouping very different and unique cultures together. Historically, some cultural knowledge and protocol was passed on verbally through generations of a society (Shaw, 2009). Therefore, very little information regarding First Nation cultural or protocol is often available, so respectful dialogue should be had early and often with the community prior to any work or planning.

The largest contributor to making this project successful to this point has been the relationships we have built and maintained, and the respectful way we communicate together in meetings and at events. The MABR’s roundtable has been extremely influential to our project. At the MABR’s very first roundtable meeting they created a culture for engagement, and protocol for working with First Nations (see appendices).
Because David Bob and I had been attending these meetings together in the past we understood the importance of respectful dialogue when representatives from two or more separate communities, or entities are working together. Following the lead of David and the community at the very first CGC and Elder lunch, I studied their customs, and protocol as best I could to ensure I followed respectfully. During my first meeting David said something to me that I will never forget. “You’re not very good at listening are you?” though said half-jokingly, it made me notice that everyone in the room would listen carefully when someone else was talking, digest the words and think respectfully before they spoke next. Often in my academic surroundings it’s “feast or famine” meaning if you don’t speak right away it’s too late. It’s safe to say that I never made this mistake again.

Meeting constantly has been another huge benefit to the development of the garden design, and with planning for the construction phase beginning in May 2017. The ability to see the same people frequently has resulted in a very different comfort level between us than I have experienced working with other communities where we met less frequently in the past. Each time I met the community during this project more and more people would greet me right away by name and open up about the project and other things happening in their daily lives. When we first began the project there seemed to be much more hesitation to speak freely to me among the community members, and vice-versa. Having so many opportunities to meet and work together has been a key to our success.

If this project is replicated with another First Nation community, or any community of people, a larger focus should be put on acquiring input from youth. This was never something that we discussed in length during this project, as the Elders
seemed to almost speak for, and consider the younger generations when contributing ideas, designing the garden, and providing feedback. My hope is that there are enough areas that youth will find engaging in the current garden design, and that we can cater more towards them if necessary as the construction of the project moves forward. We will continue to encourage feedback from the community outside the CGC and will try to incorporate it where possible.

The formation of the CGC was vital at the beginning of the project, and will be key again moving forward. As it is often difficult to make decisions based on perceived community wishes (especially as a non-member of the community), having Snaw-Naw-As community members guiding the expenditure of funding, and assisting with matters that require quick decisions will be extremely helpful. We were lucky to have such a dynamic, and interested group of people on our committee, and any replication of this project should strive to create a similar support group made up of community members.

Finding funding is usually difficult, and it was no different in the case of this project. We are very fortunate to have done so well in such a short time in terms of acquiring funds. I have spent countless hours writing grants during the course of this project, and many more are in my future. It is safe to say that the extent that the garden design developed (in terms of size, structures, and associated costs) was well beyond what I imagined from the beginning. However, at the very first meeting we discussed not letting money or any current realities stagnate our visions for what we truly desire the final garden to be. With that in mind, the community and I created a garden that expands even beyond the extent of the initial proposed site area, and up the side of the property. The community fully understands that the funding is not all currently in place, but now we will all work towards obtaining the rest of the funds needed together.
Lastly, I would recommend ensuring there is more than enough time designated to complete a project similar to this (especially if it is time sensitive, such as part of a degree). I would have loved to have a portion of the garden constructed at this point, and have more of the project to share. Unfortunately, unpredictable events happen, and in some cases they can cause minor or major delays. During this project we experienced, the death of a community youth, severe weather events, and the death of the former Chief and Health Centre Director. Each of the two deaths was a huge loss to the small community. When events like this happen in large communities, things may still continue as usual, but when it is a small, tight-knit community such as Snaw-Naw-As is, with specific cultural and traditional protocol for community member deaths it can shut down outside communications and meetings for weeks. These two deaths in a very short time were a hardship on the community, but I am extremely impressed by their resilience and their continued dedication to seeing this project through for their once leader, friend and family member: David Bob.
References


Datta, R. (2016). Community garden: A bridging program between formal and informal learning. *Cogent Education. 3*(1177154)


Appendix A: Initial Timeline

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Appendix B: Main Garden Elements

The following list of garden elements/features that should be included in the community garden was created by the garden committee on September 29, 2016 at the Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre.

1. Arched Entrance
2. Pollination Hotels
3. Composting Area
4. Rain Water Collection
5. Naturally Flows Counterclockwise
6. Hand Railings
7. Quieter Areas
8. Education Area
9. Berry Trail
10. Smoke House
11. Wide Pathways
12. Fish Cleaning Table
13. Cooking Pit
Appendix C: Initial Garden Draft
Appendix D: Final Proposed Concept Design
Appendix E: MABR Culture of Engagement

Culture of Engagement
MABR Roundtable

At the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Roundtable, we engage with one another and with the land and culture around which we gather in the following ways:

1) We acknowledge the Traditional Territories within which our meetings are held.

2) We demonstrate respect for Indigenous protocol as individuals and as a group, upholding the MABR’s Guiding Principles for Collaboration with First Nations.

3) Our communication is open, honest, transparent and unemotional, and we are comfortable and willing to discuss potentially sensitive topics.

4) Before entering the gathering place, we hang bad feelings on a nail outside the door.

5) We work together to reach common goals for the betterment of our region.

6) We leave personal wants outside.

7) We are open to new perspectives, we seek to understand where each person is coming from, and we share information and beliefs in an environment of trust.

8) We listen to each other and work together to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak.

9) We keep personal stories that are shared in confidence inside this room.

10) We arrive and depart feeling at ease, and we look forward to meeting again.
Appendix F: Guiding Principles for Collaboration with First Nations

Collaboration with First Nations

First Nations have lived on the lands that encompass the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR) since time immemorial. The First Nations of the Salish Sea have a unique relationship with the lands and waters that transcend time; it is a relationship rooted in a deep, rich cultural connection to nature; a connection and relationship that has informed their way of life.

Through its Man and Biosphere Programme, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has recognized the MABR for the outstanding qualities of the traditional territories of the First Nations.

MABR’s institutional partners, initiated by a collaboration between Vancouver Island University and the City of Parksville, want to work with First Nations in a respectful and supportive relationship that recognizes the special association that each Nation has with its traditional territory, including the MABR. As a UNESCO biosphere region, MABR should complement the interests of the First Nations; not compete with them. To that end, all institutional partners will be directed by the following Guiding Principles in their MABR-related work.

Guiding Principles

The MABR’s work will be premised upon processes, procedures and protocols that reflect a collaborative, comprehensive and collegial course of action with First Nations that is rooted in Guiding Principles that:

1. Honour the deep, rich, cultural connection to the land and the sea, a connection and relationship that informs First Nations way of life;
2. Honour the fact that First Nations have lived from time immemorial in their traditional territories and, through that special relationship as stewards of the land, have a unique association with the MABR;
3. Explore and promote ways and means of enhancing the role of the MABR within the region while being respectful of First Nation interests;
4. Continue to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with First Nations and support appropriate projects that First Nations would like to collaborate on, protecting the confidentiality of knowledge or culturally sensitive information of First Nations communities;
5. Establish respectful processes that value First Nation perspectives, methods of decision-making, cultural values and historical connections to the land;
6. Identify First Nation community engagement opportunities and associated research that relates to the mandate of the MABR;
7. Ensure that the interests and perspectives of First Nations frame future discussions about the MABR;
8. Work with First Nations to identify potential sources of funding to undertake MABR-related initiatives of interest to First Nations;
9. Promote the Mandate and Goals of the UNESCO designation in general and the MABR in particular while recognizing that First Nations have a special relationship with the MABR lands that transcends time and creates a special bond with the MABR.
Appendix G: Poster Presentation Series for Community

**Project Overview**

**Snaw-Naw-As Garden of Spiritual Healing**

Named by: Debbie and Bonnie

The original purpose of my involvement was to create a design concept for the Snaw-Naw-As Community Garden under the guidance of David Bob and the entire community. My involvement in this project has been both a pleasure and an honor, and I have made many friends along the way.

It is my hope today that I am able to receive constructive feedback to guide me in moving forward to produce a final design concept, implementation strategy and budget for the next two years.

I would like to thank everyone here, and those who could not be with us today, that have helped during this design process. I am fortunate to have been able to work on such a great project with a wonderful community as part of my education, and I am looking forward to working closely with you over the next couple of years as we construct the garden.

~Graham Sakaki

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**Concept Planning & Design Charrette**

11 people initially met at Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre to discuss design concepts and participate in a design charrette

The Main Garden Features Included:

1. Arched Entrance
2. Pollination Hotels
3. Composting Area
4. Rain Water Collection
5. Naturally Flows Counterclockwise
6. Hand Railings
7. Quieter Areas
8. Education Area
9. Berry Trail
10. Smoke House
11. Wide Pathways
12. Fish Cleaning Table
13. Cooking Pit
Garden Design Should Produce

- **Food Security**
  - plant, grow, harvest, eat

- **Sense of Community**
  - gather, socialize, eat, celebrate

- **Education & Outreach**
  - Traditional knowledge, community classes

- **Health & Wellness**
  - increase physical and mental health, therapeutic values

---

Initial Concept Design
Initial Concept Design

Community Feedback from 16 Participants

- The education area is too cluttered
- Smoke house should be moved to front
- Add greenhouses
- Add fencing around perimeter
- Move toolshed
- Add trash bins around garden seating areas
- Round pathway corners where possible
- Add bird houses and pond
- Move cooking pits near smoke house
- Areas for art features and murals

Proposed Concept Design
Proposed Concept Design

Health & Wellness
Food Security
Sense of Community
Education & Outreach

Proposed Concept Design

Garden Entrance

Smoke House and Woodshed

Comments:
Proposed Concept Design

Pollinator Hotels

1. [Image]
2. [Image]
3. [Image]

Comments?

Picnic and Cooking Shelter

Fish Cleaning Tables

1. [Image]
2. [Image]

Center Piece (Gazebo)

Prepared By: Graham Sukale
VII - MCP
Proposed Concept Design

Raised Garden Beds

2017-2018 Budget

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Prepared By:
Graham Sakaide
VIIU - MCP
Appendix H: Two-Year Budget

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**Snaw-Naw-As Garden of Spiritual Healing Budget**

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Snaw-Naw-As Garden of Spiritual Healing Budget

Budget 2018

Item

Approved | Applied For | Need to Find | Total

Student Wages $5,400.00 $16,000.00 $21,400.00
Coordinator Wages $5,000.00

Supplies and Material

Raw Logs

Soil Compost

Lumber $2,000.00 $2,000.00

Supplies $2,000.00 $2,000.00

Equipment $2,000.00 $2,000.00

Education and Outreach

Honorariums $6,000.00

Student Wages $4,100.00 $8,000.00 $12,100.00

Catering $2,000.00

Advertising $400.00

Signage $400.00 $400.00

Overhead

Printing $100.00 $100.00

Office Space $500.00 $1,200.00 $1,700.00

Maintenance $2,000.00

Total $5,000.00 $18,500.00 $27,600.00 $55,100.00