

Proposal Report

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UBC - Land, Food and Community II

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Introduction

With this project, we aim to form a better idea of where and how community kitchens operate throughout the City of Vancouver. The significance of this project is to improve food security, specifically accessibility and utilization, in the chosen neighbourhoods. It will also give the City of Vancouver a better sense of facilities operating within its neighbourhoods. This will enable the City to distribute resources and better support the facilities as requested. This study is a continuation of LFS 350 projects that conducted similar research in other areas.

The objective of our proposed study is to develop an asset inventory of the community kitchens operating within the Shaughnessy and South Cambie neighbourhoods. The scope of Shaughnessy and South Cambie is 16th to 41st Avenue and Arbutus to Cambie Street.

Background and Significance

While there may be kitchens operating in this area, it is unknown where they are, who operates them, and if people actually make use of them. Shaughnessy is ranked as one of the richest areas in Canada with an average net worth of about \$7 million (Tam, 2013; Brown, 2013). This may contribute to the difficulty of finding community-oriented organizations as those with more personal resources tend to not rely on shared community resources such as community kitchens. This also forms the possibility in which Vancouver-area volunteers may decide to focus their assistance on other areas of Vancouver that rely more on community resources as they have less resident wealth to draw from. However, community kitchens go beyond addressing the need for food in communities. The Shaughnessy and South Cambie neighbourhoods may well benefit from the presence of community kitchens unbeknownst to the City.

Anderson (2014) states that besides meeting food security needs, community dinners and potlucks bring together community members “who did not know each other and had not previously worked together toward a common purpose” (p. 1240) and thus provide an environment where community members can be “exposed to different views, gain direct experiences in helping others, and become educated about their community’s needs” (p. 1240). Since Shaughnessy and South Cambie mostly consist of detached private family homes, architectural barriers might discourage residents from getting to know their neighbours. Therefore, making the community kitchens known and throwing community dinners would improve utilization of the kitchens. Additionally, community dinners offer the residents an opportunity to build a sense of community and foster social cohesion within the neighbourhood through networking and exchanging ideas and culture around food.

Research Questions

- What community kitchens exist in the Shaughnessy/South Cambie areas?
- What assets, programs and operations do these kitchens have?
- How can we use the assets to address food security issues in these neighbourhoods, particularly regarding to accessibility and utilization of the kitchens?

Answering these questions is essential for establishing how these kitchens positively affect our communities and in what ways; whether it is by gathering the community to donate time in helping other areas of Vancouver, having potluck dinners or cultural food celebrations. Potluck dinners can be an important element in bringing in the community and starting new friendships - allowing for face-to-face networking opportunities. Katz (2012) strongly believes that “sharing food cultivates community because the implications of the meal extend beyond the

time of eating together”. These community kitchens can also be used to educate families about the importance of healthy eating and the steps to preparing well balanced nutritious meals.

Methods

We will be collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. This will be done by finding partners in the area through online research or by word of mouth. Our first step for communication with kitchens will be via email. We have drafted a professional email to potential partners to inform them about our intentions (see appendix A). Once we find willing partners, we will arrange a visit to conduct a standardized survey (retrieved from [The University of British Columbia, 2016](#)). A research method that we will use is direct observation of the physical kitchen including equipment and the general facilities, which we will then record in the survey.

We will also meet and talk with each community partner in person. This is extremely important as most of the survey requires knowledge of the kitchen. Since we will be asking questions, we need to be able to correctly record the partner’s response on paper, or have them fill it out directly. This information from the community partners will give us an insight on the operations of each community kitchen we visit, from which we can then draw conclusions.

Throughout the project, we will incorporate principles from the asset-based community development approach (Calabash Trust, 2014) which requires us to look at what the community partners are achieving instead of focusing on what areas that are not working well. To ensure that our research project is ethical, we will ask for consent before starting the survey and keep the participants and survey data confidential within our group and our instructors as outlined in TCPS 2 tutorial on research ethics (Government of Canada, 2015). We have all completed the tutorial and have a certification of completion (see appendix B).

Ideally, we will survey six different community kitchens and from there we will collect and interpret our data. We will do this by identifying themes within the surveys that identify challenges to achieving aspects of food security, specifically accessibility and utilization issues. This will provide us with a starting point to discuss our recommendations to better support community kitchens with the City of Vancouver.

Success Factors

From the perspective of student learning and community partner expectations, success will be measured by our conclusions written in our final report. By the end of this project, we will be successful if we are able to answer our objectives outlined above by recognizing community assets and strengths, extracting some common themes and issues, and making our own recommendations on how to utilize community assets to tackle those same issues, such as organizational strategies or financial support. From our report, the City of Vancouver may be able to implement some of our recommendations by improving accessibility to community kitchens and encouraging community involvement so they can continue to foster solidarity within the community through food.

There are several steps in place for us to achieve success: First, we will make sure to have efficient team communication - within 24-hour responses. Second, we will find six kitchens and meet a knowledgeable representative who can teach us about their kitchen. Third, we will maintain full disclosure about our project and ensure the safety and privacy of their data so that our community partners are protected. Lastly, we will keep a constant communication with our community partners so we can resolve questions that might come up during the course of our project. At the end of our project, the City of Vancouver can use our report to understand and better support the benefits of community kitchens.

References

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Appendix A: Introduction Letter to Community Partners

Hi/Dear ---,

We hope you are enjoying the start of your week/your day! We are five students from UBC, in the Land and Food Systems program. We're conducting a research project for a course called Land, Food and Community II (LFS 350) and our goal is to study the types of assets provided by community kitchens in both Shaughnessy and South Cambie areas to see how they positively affect our community.

We are writing this email in request to see if we would be able to visit your kitchen and discuss/ask questions with someone who frequently works at the kitchen and is familiar with its facilities.

We look forward to hearing back from you!

Sincerely,

Nilab, Celine, Felicia, Sheyda, Jeanne

Appendix B: TCPS 2 Certification of Completion

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Celine Koppenaal

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue: **27 January, 2016**

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Sheyda Mirtaheri

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue: **1 February, 2016**

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Felicia Yuwono

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue: **31 January, 2016**

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Jeanne Currie

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue: **28 January, 2016**

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Nilab Salehi

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue: **21 January, 2016**