

# HOW TO BE VISIONARY:

*Lessons From a Participatory Design Process*

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## ABSTRACT

This practicum is an exploration of the role of the “visionary community designer” described by Randolph Hester in his recommended participatory design process “a refrain with a view.” The question of this practicum is simply this: what lessons can be learned about *how* to function as Hester’s visionary community designer while conducting a participatory design process as a service learning project?

This practicum is both pragmatic and transformative in philosophy. It uses a subjectivist research strategy in which research outcomes are qualitative and the knowledge generated is subjective.

This practicum includes a case study comparison of seminal approaches to the participatory design of public spaces in the United

States; records a brief participatory design process conducted as a service learning research project in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia; and culminates with lessons learned during the participatory design process with regard to acting as Hester’s visionary community designer.

*Note:* For optimal PDF viewing experience, please use the ‘two page scrolling’ or ‘two page view’ display.

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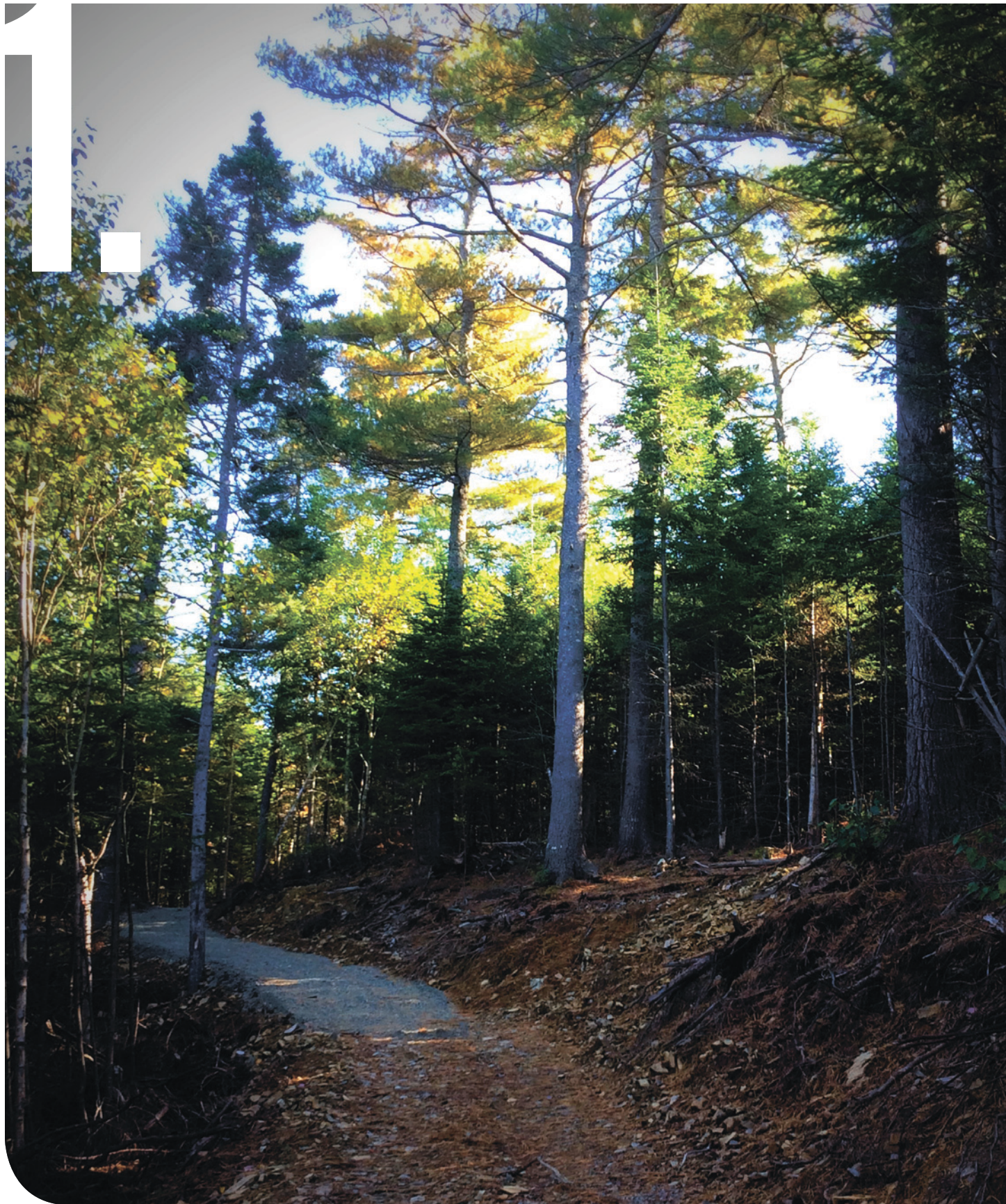
My darling wife Emily for her loving (and longsuffering) support.

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## INTRODUCTION

The participatory design process is one in which the end users of a space or product are involved in its design. Does such a process limit the creativity of the designer due to the involvement of participants with little or no design education? While this is a recurring criticism (Halprin, 1975 and Hester, 1999; 2001; 2012), some practitioners and researchers (such as Lawrence Halprin and Randolph Hester) have argued that this need not be the case. Halprin dubbed the participatory design process developed and used by his firm “Collective Creativity” and claimed that working as a group could lead to more creative results than working individually (Halprin, 1974). Hester also argued that the participatory design process could lead to a collective vision that is greater than the sum of its individual

parts (including the part of the designer). Hester stated:

“To achieve a refrain with a view requires a visionary synthesis that takes into account various vested interests, their content, personality and power. This synthesis must reveal opportunities that most people have not recognized, extract broad civic vision from community participants and culminate in the creation of places that touch the heart. This can be done by [various leaders, citizens, or organizations]. But in many cases, multi - insightful participation depends on the community designer. This is a vital role, often abdicated in favor of facilitation or mediation.” (Hester, 1999, p. 21)

As suggested by the end of this statement, Hester is critical of what may pass as nominal participatory design but favours facilitation or mediation in place of visionary synthesis. Hester’s article goes on to provide suggested characteristics for an improved participatory design process to achieve a refrain with

a view but provides little practical guidance for designers who wish to be able to help create the visionary synthesis he states is necessary.

Which leads to the central question of this practicum: what lessons can be learned about *how* to function as Hester’s visionary community designer while conducting a participatory design process as a service learning project?

To answer this question, this practicum is structured with two interrelated parts. The first is a case study comparison of seminal approaches to the participatory design of public spaces in the United States to determine which are most amenable to the role of a visionary community designer. The second is an application of these approaches to a service learning research project based on a community trails system located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia.

It is expected that this practicum will be of practical value to the researcher, the community in which the service learning project will be conducted, and the disciplines of landscape architecture and community design. Specifically, this practicum is expected to be of value to these disciplines in three ways. First, it includes a case study comparison of seminal approaches to the participatory design of public spaces in the United States that explores their suitability for use by a community designer to produce a common vision. Second, it yields a structured example of a condensed participatory design process suitable for use as a service learning research project (generating knowledge through serving a community or group). Third, and most importantly to this practicum, it yields lessons learned about how to function as Hester’s visionary community designer.

*Which box(es) does this practicum fit into?*

This practicum is primarily undertaken with a pragmatic world-view as it is intended to inform professional practice and produce a site-specific design intervention through a service learning research project. It is secondarily undertaken with a transformative world-view. The practicum involves members of the public and relies on their cooperation to produce a design that may be of practical use to them. While the project does not place the same emphasis on political activism and marginalized groups that a transformative world-view typically does, the participatory design of public space intends to empower residents by involving them in the design and improvement of their community. This practicum, therefore, is both pragmatic and transformative in philosophy.

This practicum is structured around a subjectivist research strategy in which research outcomes are qualitative and the knowledge generated is subjective. The researcher acknowledges that his childhood, world-view, and education all play an integral role in his identity and interests. His history, pragmatic view of design, education in both Community Design and Landscape Architecture, and desire for practical experience are all contributing factors to the topic and structure of this practicum. The researcher also holds the opinion that people are an integral component of landscape architecture and that each person is deeply influenced by their own history. By participating in a research project such as this one, both the researcher and the participants in the service learning research project are taking an active and integral role in the generation of new knowledge.

This practicum affirms and celebrates the subjectivity of human experience.

The body text of this practicum is therefore written in the first person.



# 2.



## CASE STUDY COMPARISON

The first component of this practicum is a descriptive case study comparison of early approaches to the participatory design of public spaces in the United States. The approaches will be those identified by Hester in a 2012 article as occurring in the period between 1960 and 1980 and will be compared in the same order they appear in that article. The comparison explores the relative suitability of the approaches for use by a visionary community designer to produce Hester's "refrain with a view." The following questions are used as the basis for the comparison:

1. *Why are participants involved?*
2. *How are participants involved?*
3. *What is the role of a community designer?*
4. *How is a design vision generated?*

## 1. ADVOCACY (DAVIDOFF)

### *Why are participants involved?*

“Appropriate policy in a democracy is determined through a process of political debate. The right course of action is always a matter of choice, never of fact. In the bureaucratic age great care must be taken that choices remain in the area of public view and participation.” (Davidoff, 1965, p. 332)

Davidoff argues from the perspective of democracy. His argument is essentially for the application of the political party system to the planning process in such a way that different groups (or parties) advocate (or campaign) for different plans. As demonstrated in the above quotation, participants are involved for the same reasons of equity and responsibility that they are involved in political democracy.

### *How are participants involved?*

In Davidoff’s approach, it is

expected that participants will educate themselves about different plans and join with the group or organization whose plan he or she favours in actively lobbying for its adoption. It is unclear what role (if any) the participants would play in designing the actual details of the plan.

### *What is the role of a community designer?*

“Where plural planning is practised, advocacy becomes the means of professional support for competing claims about how the community should develop. Pluralism in support of political contention describes the process; advocacy describes the role performed by the professional in the process.” (Davidoff, 1965, p. 333)

This approach to participatory design would see the community designer primarily adopt the role of advocate. The designer would be expected to undertake the “case” of the plan he or she supports and work to further develop it, publicize it, and argue for its merits over other plans.

### *How is a design vision generated?*

Davidoff’s approach relies heavily on the technical expertise of the planner. It is expected that he or she provides the conventional technical expertise required to develop the plan as well as the advocacy expertise required to argue *for* his or her plan and *against* the plans of others. It is unclear what role participants play in writing the details of the plan.

### *Verdict*

Davidoff’s approach to participatory design would require a far more comprehensive revision of the current planning norms than what is feasible for this practicum. Feasibility aside, Davidoff’s approach is more concerned with the justice and democracy of the participatory design process than the visionary quality of the end result. For these reasons, Davidoff’s advocacy approach to participatory design will

not be useful for the service learning research project of this practicum.

## 2. COMMUNITY BUILDING (LINN)

### *Why are participants involved?*

“People need to build shared spaces that enliven their senses, express their visions, and strengthen their connection to the natural world. When neighbors participate in envisioning, building, and using a shared communal space, they simultaneously build relationships with one another. In thriving, healthy communities the visions and creativity of all community members are reflected in their immediate physical surroundings. [...] My intention is to provide a resource for anyone interested in using the physical environment to build community [...]” (Linn, 2007, p. 8)

The above quote, though lengthy, does well to explain the reason participants are involved. Linn’s approach is aptly named - as his primary goal is “using the physical environment to build community.” The more participants are involved,

the greater the potential for community building and the more people can benefit from the process. A common metaphor in Linn's work is that of barn-raising. Using this metaphor, the more participants are involved, the easier the work and the more can be accomplished.

*How are participants involved?*

“The design and building of a permanent commons cannot be carried out by outsiders who bring preconceived ideas about what residents want or ought to want. At each stage of the process in brainstorming, in designing, in barnraising, and in animating the finished space - the people who will use the commons must be involved.” (Linn, 2007, p. 198)

Linn's approach to participatory design requires (and relies) on the involvement of participants at all stages in the process. Since the primary goal is community building, it is imperative that the community be actively involved throughout the

process. Linn expressly states that all community members should be represented among the participants.

*What is the role of a community designer?*

A key role of the designer in Linn's approach is to identify needs among the communities in which he or she works. Linn also describes the role of the designer as peacemaker in situations involving interpersonal conflicts. Also notable is his insistence that the designer (or a small team) should be responsible for all aspects of a project necessary for continuity and completion (keeping contact lists, communicating information, etc.). This individual or team would be responsible for following a project through from start to finish. Linn placed importance on the designer being *present* in the spaces being designed in order to experience and observe both the space and the participants.

*How is a design vision generated?*

“[...] I'm after a richness, an intricacy, a complexity and vibrancy that can only come about through a partnership of professionals and people who inhabit the spaces being designed and built. Architects and artists and new kinds of cultural impresarios can serve as midwives and help into realization that which wants to be, but one has to give a helping hand to people as they adjust to new spaces. In order to sense that which wants to be, those professionals must be close to where people live, be able to look into their eyes and touch and smell and be witness of the nuances of their behavior, symbolic expression, and spontaneous rituals.” (Linn, 1965, p. 13)

Here Linn affirms two key aspects to the generation of a design vision in his approach to participatory design: the physical presence of the designer in the space being designed, and a vital collaboration between designers and residents. His use of the phrase “that which wants to be” in reference

to the resulting design suggests inspiration by (or perhaps even reliance on) the situation and actors involved to generate details of the resulting design. This suggests a certain level of passivity on the part of the designer to support whatever forms emerge from the process.

*Verdict*

The emphasis Linn places on the process of community building rather than the resulting design suggests that his approach to participatory design may not be the most suitable approach to use in order to create Hester's “refrain with a view.” In Linn's approach, the role of the designer is one of facilitating the emergence of “that which wants to be” rather than the more active role of a visionary designer.

### 3. COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY (HALPRIN)

#### *Why are participants involved?*

“[The status quo says that whenever] groups try to get involved in the processes of creativity (be it design or problem solving) the results are less good than if a gifted individual has been allowed to solve the problem himself. [...] This book is devoted to exploring an alternative to this ‘elitist’ approach and attitude.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 5)

“[...] [P]eople have become more and more determined to exert control over the course of their own lives. [...] But the desire to participate must be matched by a framework to allow it to happen. It is not sufficient simply to want to be involved.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 2)

Halprin’s approach to participatory design is based on the idea that people *want* to take part but often lack meaningful ways in which to take part. In addition to the idea that people ought to be able to take part if they wish, Halprin’s

approach is also based on the idea that group creativity has the potential to create superior results than individual creativity. Group creativity by definition requires multiple participants.

#### *How are participants involved?*

“Collective creativity requires only one basic commitment. That commitment is to valuing other people’s points of view, listening to them intensely to really hear what they have to say, and to [sic] willingness to work with them. Collective creativity does not mean giving up your own point of view - nor does it mean compromise in the sense of getting something less good. It does not mean taking someone else’s, or his group’s, solutions as something you must accept at the cost of your own. It simply means a commitment to accept other’s input and to strive collectively and creatively to find a solution which is the aggregate of all inputs. It is a commitment to the idea of process - or more rather than less democracy.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 12)

“The cornerstone of Take Part Processes is the RSVP Cycles - a model of creativity that organizes and makes visible methods for people to work together in groups. The model is participatory and cyclical rather than hierarchical and linear; it emphasizes ongoingness and process, not sequence and goal attainment. It focuses on people as participants, not as mechanisms, tools, or inert recipients of products.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 26)

These quotes do well to summarize Halprin’s approach to participatory design. This approach is a complex one integrating three layers. The entire approach is deemed Collective Creativity - which involves Take Part Processes - which in turn are based on RSVP Cycles. RSVP Cycles bear explanation, as they are the conceptual base on which Halprin’s approach is built. R stands for Resources (any fact or other resource that may be useful to the process. S stands

for Scores (detailed processes that are crafted to encourage creative response). V stands for “Valuation” (a combination of Valuing and Action that refers to analyzing and incorporating information). P stands for Performance (the carrying-out of the Scores). An example of an RSVP Cycle would be participants being given instructions to walk around a downtown following a set route and answering a list of questions (the Score). The carrying out of the instructions would be the Performance. The answers to the questions would become Resources that would be used to inform future design processes (the Valuation).

#### *What is the role of a community designer?*

Halprin’s approach was an intensive one that often involved “leadership teams” (Halprin, 1974). Some of the roles played by these teams were “resource collection,

process scoring, facilitation, recording, [and] media and logistics.” Halprin’s approach places particular value on the skill of writing scores (his term for the processes carried out by participants during the participatory design process).

*How is a design vision generated?*

“Commitment to the Take Part idea involves a belief that people themselves have the ability and the right to determine what they wish to have happen, and that the expert is available to help on how it can be done. The what of things becomes, in the long run, more significant than the how of things. [...] The workshop idea places the what decisions squarely in the hands of the people involved, not in the hands of professionals. [...] In our view the technician has the obligation to carry out the basic ideas and principles of the people as a group; he is trained in how to accomplish things.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 96)

Halprin’s approach to participatory design recognizes

the value of different roles for participants and designers. This is not to say, however, that participants were not involved in design. His approach allows participants to take active part in design.

*Verdict*

It would seem that Halprin’s approach to participatory design could be easily adapted for use in achieving a “refrain with a view.” His approach places an emphasis on the creativity of the resulting design and recognizes different roles for participants and designers in such a way that a designer could function as the visionary community designer described by Hester. It is expected that this approach will be adapted for use in the service learning research project of this practicum.

#### 4. TRANSACTIVE (FRIEDMANN)

*Why are participants involved?*

“Transactive planning changes knowledge into action through an unbroken sequence of interpersonal relations.” (Friedmann, 1973, p. 171)

“If the communication gap between planner and client is to be closed, a continuing series of personal and primarily verbal transactions between them is needed, through which processed information is fused with personal knowledge and both are fused with action.” (Friedmann, 1973, p. 177)

Friedmann’s approach to participatory design is based on equal, yet different types of knowledge that participants and designers can bring to the design process. In Friedmann’s approach, participants are involved because they can both teach and learn from the other participants in the process. His approach views the design process as a mutually beneficial *transaction* of knowledge between participants and designers alike.

*How are participants involved?*

“In the formal structure of a learning society, [...] the encounter of theory with practice would occur in task-oriented working groups, or learning cells. There, ‘planners’ would meet with ‘clients’ and both with the palpable reality of their environment. The dialectic of mutual learning takes place in closest possible contact with the immediate problems to be solved.” (Friedmann, 1973, p. 236)

To support the widespread application of his approach, Friedmann proposes a shift in how society is organized. The new organization would be based on the small working groups described in the above quotation.

*What is the role of a community designer?*

“In mutual learning, the processes, scientific knowledge of the planning expert is joined with the deeply personal, experiential knowledge of the client. Where mutual learning occurs, this confrontation of two quite distinct modes of knowing gives birth to new knowledge capable

of guiding the client's present actions." (Friedmann, 1975, p. xix)

As described above, Friedmann imagines a scenario in which both "expert" and "client" learn together while participating in working groups. Both bring different, yet equally valuable, types of knowledge to the process.

#### *How is a design vision generated?*

Friedmann's approach to participatory design is interested primarily in the exchange of knowledge. He makes little reference to the design process. He does, however suggest a hierarchy of working groups (individual working groups would report to a higher "working group assembly") and a diversity of roles including the organization of what he termed "technical secretariats" responsible for the generation and dissemination of technical knowledge.

#### *Verdict*

There appears to be little room in Friedmann's approach in which a visionary community designer could function. Friedmann emphasizes the mutual learning of participants over any sort of design outcome. Furthermore, his approach calls for the wider reform of society structure than is feasible for a practicum project. Therefore, Friedmann's approach will not be used during the service learning research project of this practicum.

### **5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (HESTER/MCNALLY)**

#### *Why are participants involved?*

"In moments of great expectation, I hope that the theories, methods, and techniques presented in this primer will provide the tools needed for planners and designers to fight environmental injustices. In moments of lesser expectation, I hope that the book will contribute to the design of more socially

suitable neighborhoods and will support deliberative democracy and local self-sufficiency. My wish is that both my great and lesser expectations be realized." (Hester, 1984, p. 195)

Hester and McNally's approach has balanced intentions regarding the involvement of participants. Their approach involves participants for numerous reasons - among them being environmental justice, the more socially suitable design of neighborhoods, improved democratic processes, and development of local ability (Hester, 1984). None of these objectives can be equitably achieved without the meaningful participation of community members.

#### *How are participants involved?*

Participants may be involved through any number of what Hester terms "user-needs techniques" (techniques for determining the needs of users). The selection of

techniques is based on numerous factors including what kind of information is required, the stage of the design process, cost, etc. Participants are also involved in the site planning process once user needs have been identified (Hester, 1984).

#### *What is the role of a community designer?*

"Although the demand for 'socially suitable design' was largely a product of citizen action, many professional planners have played a role in its advocacy and literal execution. With their vision they transform ideals into reality; with technical skill they give form to society's values. Even the most independent citizen-initiated and controlled project can usually benefit from the designer's ability to suggest and explain form alternatives to problems." (Hester, 1984, p. 20)

This approach to participatory design recognizes different (yet equally necessary) roles for designers and participants. The above quote

suggests that the key roles for the designer include transforming ideals into reality, giving form, and communicating different form options (Hester, 1984).

*How is a design vision generated?*

Preliminary aspects to the design process in Hester and McNally's approach to participatory design include considering social factors at play in the community and establishing the unique needs of users in the community. Many of the details of the design vision are addressed through a site planning process. Hester and McNally have developed a twelve step approach to site planning in which the steps include: listening; setting neighborhood goals, mapping and inventory; introducing the neighborhood to itself; getting a gestalt; drawing anticipated activity settings; letting archetypes

and idiosyncrasies inspire form; making a conceptual yardstick; developing a spectrum of design plans; evaluating costs and benefits before construction; transferring responsibility; and evaluating after construction (Hester, 1984).

*Verdict*

It seems reasonable to expect that the approach developed by Hester should be useful as a process with which to develop his concept of a "refrain with a view." Indeed, it appears to offer a logical framework in which a designer is given sufficient freedom and responsibility that he or she can conduct the visionary synthesis deemed necessary by Hester to produce a "refrain with a view." It is therefore expected that this approach will be adapted for use in the service learning research project of this practicum.

## 6. SOCIAL PATTERN (LIU)

*Why are participants involved?*

"Just as the government public housing destroyed a way of life, a regeneration of the act of building may help to renew a culture in decline. In particular, community participatory planning and design seek to generate new cultural rules by which building and spaces are created." (Liu, 1999, p. 75)

In Liu's approach to participatory design, participants are involved in the design process with the end goal of restoring a social pattern that has been degraded by socially insensitive environmental design. The desired result is not just a improved environment, but an improved social pattern. Participants (as units of society) are necessary to achieve both desired results.

*How are participants involved?*

"We had engaged the Tawo people in a participatory process of recalling, understanding,

dissecting, and transforming the Tawo dwelling. We struggled to involve old people, young people, and women in the discussions. We even went to the extent of fully involving people in the actual design of a new house." (Liu, 1999, p. 70)

Liu's approach requires the generation of social knowledge from participants about the rules of their society regarding the design of spaces. As the process unfolded, participants discovered and took responsibility for new initiatives beyond the original scope of the project.

*What is the role of a community designer?*

In light of Liu's goal of restoring degraded social patterns, he answers this question comprehensively in the quotation below:

"Were we visionaries, analysts, conveners, advocates, volunteers, or educators? At different stages of the project, we were any one or all of the above. In many instances,

each of us took on a different role, and switched roles, as the situation demanded. As such, it is the role of an 'independent expert' that is most often valued by the community, a role that combines all the different functions that may be required. Further, as community planners with an attitude, perhaps our first role is as critics to see the wrong as the community sees it, and try to right it. Here the tension of being an expert and a critic becomes apparent as the planner seeks to find a point of intersection between the inside and the outside. This role may be characterized as an empathetic expert with an attitude." (Liu, 1999, pp. 71-73)

Liu's approach, therefore, requires a designer who is able to enter the process without preconceived attitudes and later become empathetic to the attitudes of the participants.

#### *How is a design vision generated?*

Liu's approach relies heavily on participants throughout all aspects of the process. Because the desired

result is not just an improved environment but also an improved social pattern, it is imperative that participants are given responsibility throughout the process. Specifically, participants are actively involved in discussion, form-giving, choice-making, and policy decisions (Liu, 1999, p. 74)

#### *Verdict*

While Liu's approach seems to support the activity of a visionary community designer such as the one advocated by Hester, Liu's approach seems intended to operate at a much larger scale than a single site. Liu is interested in the improvement of societies - and so the scale of his approach goes beyond that which can be addressed by the service learning component of this practicum.

## **7. CONFLICT MEDIATION (SUSSKIND)**

#### *Why are participants involved?*

"We believe that the only way to avoid stalemate, reduce the need for litigation, and restore the credibility of government is to generate agreement on how to handle the problems that confront us. We argue not for political compromise, but for voluntary agreements that offer the wisest, fairest, most efficient, and most stable outcomes possible. This requires that all stakeholders have a chance to participate directly in any dispute resolution effort." (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1987, p. 13)

Susskind's approach to participatory design is one focused almost exclusively on reaching consensus among differing parties. Their approach requires that all interested parties be able to participate in the mediation process in order to resolve as much conflict as possible.

#### *How are participants involved?*

This question is answered comprehensively in the quotation below:

"Consensus building requires informal, face - to - face interaction among specially chosen representatives of all 'stakeholding' groups; a voluntary effort to seek 'all-gain' rather than 'win-lose' solutions or watered-down political compromise; and, often, the assistance of a neutral facilitator or mediator. Such approaches must be treated as supplements - and not alternatives - to conventional decision making." (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1987, p. 11)

#### *What is the role of a community designer?*

Susskind's approach places little importance on the role of the designer. It is inferred that conventional processes would carry on as normal, while the conflict mediation process would be supplementary to the conventional processes. Susskind's focus is not on a design, but on *agreement* about a design.



*How is a design vision generated?*

“The key to integrative bargaining is to avoid casting the dispute in ‘win-lose’ or ‘yes-no’ terms. The negotiators must try to invent alternatives that respond to the interests of all the parties involved. They must find items to trade. Note that this is not the same as searching for a compromise. If the parties can find and trade things they value differently, actual benefits - and not simply concessions - are possible.” (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1987, p. 87)

The closest that Susskind comes to describing the creation of a design vision is his description of a successful bargaining process. In his approach, an ideal outcome is an agreement that finds positive outcomes for all parties. While this approach could conceivably be applied to a design process, Susskind is not particularly interested in such an application.

*Verdict*

According to Hester, a “refrain with a view” requires a visionary community designer. Susskind’s approach to participatory design makes little reference to the role of a designer. In Susskind’s approach, the value of a design appears to be in its ability to offer something of value to all parties. Due to the relatively limited importance placed on the role of the designer, this approach will not be used in the service learning research project of this practicum.

# 3.



## SERVICE LEARNING

The second component of this practicum is an application of a combination of the seminal approaches to participatory design to a site-specific service learning research project based on a community trail segment located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia.

I selected Halprin's Taking Part Workshop (RSVP Cycles) approach for its conceptual structure and Hester and McNally's Neighbourhood Site Planning approach for its organizational structure. I found a suitable site and design problem in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. While living and working in the community I approached the Strait Area Trails Association about the possibility of collaborating with them on a project of their choosing. The group was enthusiastic about the opportunity

and gave me their full cooperation. I was intentionally vague about the scope of the project. While I realized that I would necessarily have some influence on the outcome of the project, I left it as open-ended as possible.

## PORT HAWKESBURY

### *Location*

The Town of Port Hawkesbury is a small community located on the Strait of Canso on the south coast of Cape Breton. The town is visible while looking east from the Canso Causeway connecting Cape Breton with mainland Nova Scotia. The causeway separates the warmer waters of the Strait of Canso from the colder waters of the Northumberland Strait - thus causing the Strait of Canso to remain ice-free year round. The town features a small working waterfront with various marine enterprises,



FIGURE 1:  
*Nova Scotia Site Context. Bing Maps imagery*

industrial wharf, and recreational marina.

### *Economy*

Port Hawkesbury has experienced periods of boom and bust due to the varying levels of success of numerous industries including a paper mill, power generating station, oil fractionation plant, heavy water plant, call centre, etc. The current financial outlook of the community is cautiously optimistic due to the recent re-opening of the paper mill and the

possibility of a future LNG terminal.

### *Regional Centre*

Port Hawkesbury serves as a regional service and commercial centre for parts of the surrounding municipalities of Inverness, Richmond, Guysborough, and Antigonish County (often referred to as the Quad Counties). The town functions as a shopping, government services, professional services centre and also acts as a cultural centre. The Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre hosts regular musical, entertainment, and sports events. The town also hosts the free Granville Green outdoor concert series during the summer.

### *Education*

Port Hawkesbury is home to the Tamarac Education Centre (grades P-8), Strait Area Education and Recreation Centre (grades 9-12), and the Strait Area Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College.

### *Strait Area Trails Association*

The Strait Area Trails Association (SATA) is composed of a diverse group of volunteer citizens and business owners working in cooperation with the Town of Port Hawkesbury. The association has received provincial funding to improve a trail segment (approximately 1.2 kilometres long) connecting a subdivision to a recently developed playground and splash pad. Another significant feature of the trail segment is its potential to connect the Tamarac Education Centre (TEC) located in Tamarac Heights to the Strait Area Education and Recreation Centre (SAERC) located near the playground and splash pad. In addition, the Town has budgeted funds to assist the project and various businesses have donated (or provided at discounted rates) equipment, materials, and manpower. SATA is currently focused on

replacing footbridges and improving the travel surface of the trail.

**PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS - STRUCTURE**

*Halprin – RSVP Cycles*

I selected Halprin’s RSVP Cycles and Taking Part workshops as the conceptual structure for the participatory design process used in this practicum. The RSVP Cycles are an effective means of understanding and organizing a participatory design process. For ease of explanation, I created process diagrams (a sample is shown in Figure 2) to illustrate the conceptual framework underpinning each meeting of the service learning research project. These process diagrams reoccur throughout the text to explain each meeting. In Figure 2, the RSVP Cycles are illustrated in green as a series of four circles. The significance of the circles is explained in more detail in the text documenting each meeting.



**FIGURE 2:**  
Sample Participatory Design Process Diagram

*Hester & McNally – Neighborhood Site Planning*

While the conceptual value of Halprin’s RSVP Cycles and Taking Part workshops are well documented (as discussed in the Case Study Comparison chapter of this practicum) their organizational structure varied widely depending

on the project. Subsequently, I selected Hester and McNally’s Neighborhood Site Planning approach to participatory design to provide the organizational structure for the project. For the purpose of this project, I condensed Hester and McNally’s twelve-step process into the four meetings of the participatory design process. The twelve steps are indicated in blue in the sample process diagram shown in Figure 2. The corresponding process diagram for each meeting indicates which of Hester and McNally’s twelve steps were condensed into that meeting. The significance of the steps is explained in more detail in the text documenting each meeting.

**PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS - MEETINGS**

*Meeting 1: November 19, 2016*

Although this meeting was the first in the participatory design

process, it was preceded by a regular meeting of the SATA I attended on November 16, 2016. At this meeting I described my practicum in greater detail and summarized the required Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board informed consent forms. The key outcome of this meeting was that I was able to communicate to the members the value of having a diverse representation of community members involved in the participatory design process. I intentionally left the invitation of volunteers up to the SATA so that from the beginning it was clear that their active participation would affect the outcome of the process. After the meeting I distributed an email invitation to the SATA members they could forward to whomever they thought should be involved. The email contained a summary of the project, my contact information and the date, time, and location of

the November 19 meeting. Some of the potential invitees discussed were middle-school and high-school teachers, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) faculty and students, different user groups, different age groups, different genders, etc. As a result of this preliminary meeting I was invited by a member of the SATA who is a teacher at SAERC to make a presentation to a class of high school students about my practicum, the SATA, what landscape architecture is, and how volunteering with the practicum could count as volunteer hours for one of the school's credit courses.

In total, there were thirteen people who signed informed consent forms to officially participate in the participatory design process. Not all of these participants were able to attend all of the meetings. Of the thirteen total, twelve participants

attended the first meeting on November 19. At this meeting I introduced the proposed overall Score of the process.

As shown in Figure 3, this meeting functioned as Step 1 (Listening) in Hester's Neighborhood Site Planning process. Accordingly, this meeting was intended to be an information-gathering session during which I could gather base information about how the trails were used and peoples' perceptions of the trails. Also shown in Figure 3, during this meeting I used the *Resources* I already had (my personal knowledge of the trails, the SATA, and the participatory design process) and used them to create a *Score* for the meeting (R->S). The score consisted of a written questionnaire that consisted of the following intentionally simple and mostly open-ended questions about the trails. The questions were

## NOVEMBER 19, 2016

- 1 *Listening*
- 2 *Setting Neighborhood Goals*
- 3 *Mapping & Inventory*
- 4 *Introducing the Neighborhood to Itself*
- 5 *Getting a Gestalt*
- 6 *Drawing Anticipated Activity Settings*
- 7 *Letting Archetypes & Idiosyncrasies Inspire Form*
- 8 *Making a Conceptual Yardstick*
- 9 *Developing a Spectrum of Design Plans*
- 10 *Evaluating Costs & Benefits Before Construction*
- 11 *Transferring Responsibility*
- 12 *Evaluating After Construction*

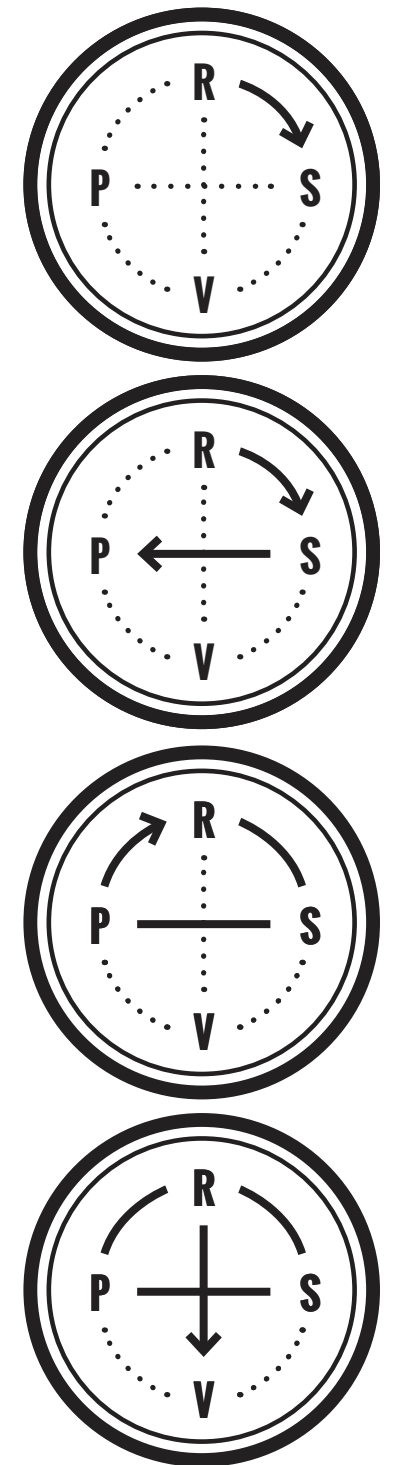


FIGURE 3:  
November 19, 2016 Process Diagram

answered personally, then as a group:

1. What do you like most about the trail system?
2. What do you dislike most about the trail system?
3. What are you most hopeful about for the trail system in the future?
4. What are you most worried about for the trail system in the future?
5. How often do you use the trail system? (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?
6. When you think of the trail system, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?
7. Where do people come from to use the trails? (roads, sidewalks, directions, etc.)?
8. Where do people live who use the trails? (neighbourhoods,

neighbouring communities, etc.)?

9. How do people get to the trail system? (automobile, bike, foot, etc.)?
10. Can you show me your favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?
11. Can you show me your least favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?
12. Who do you know is using the trail system now? (demographics, user activities, etc.)?
13. Who else would you like to see using the trail system in the future? (demographics, user activities, etc.)?

Once participants had answered the questions for themselves, we reviewed the responses as a group. The logic behind this was that answering the questions personally would cause each participant to form



**FIGURE 4:**  
*November 19, 2016 Trail Walk*  
Photo: Emily MacLeod



**FIGURE 5:**  
*November 19, 2016 Trail Walk*



**FIGURE 6:**  
*November 19, 2016 Trail Walk*  
Photo: Emily MacLeod

their own opinion while answering the questions as a group would cause each participant to consider the responses of others - simultaneously raising awareness and providing opportunity for discussion.

The score then required the group to walk a section of the Tamarac trail together and reflect on the experience through a second questionnaire. This exercise was a frequent component of Halprin's Taking Part processes:

“One of the essential ingredients of a Take Part Process is the establishment of a common language of experience. We find over and over again that groups of people are unable to interact creatively and move toward resolution of problems unless they have a common language. If they do not they communicate in parallel and never converge; or convergence results in conflict. In environmentally based workshops a ‘common language’ can be developed quickly through experience based on the

performance of environmental awareness scores [such as a group walk].” (Halprin, 1974).

The questionnaire divided the walk into sections with the same questions asked about each section with the exception of the trail entrances. As shown in Figure 3, this represented the Performance of the Score (S->P). The questions about the trail entrances were as follows:

1. Was it easy to find the trailhead (beginning of the trail system)?
2. Was it easy to find parking?
3. Was parking adequate?
4. Were you confident about the route? (where you should walk, where you were going, etc.)?
5. The questions about each subsequent section of the trail were as follows:

6. What did you like about this section?
7. What did you dislike about this section?
8. What would you like to be able to do on this section?
9. Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?
10. What was most memorable about this section?
11. Where would you take “selfies” on this section?
12. What would you take pictures of on this section?
13. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?

>V) for the following meeting.

As shown in Figure 3 the answers to the questionnaires became Resources (P->R) on which I could Valuact (R-

*Meeting 2: November 29, 2016*

As shown in Figure 7, this meeting functioned as Steps 2-5 (Setting Neighborhood Goals, Mapping & Inventory, Introducing the Neighborhood to Itself, and Getting a Gestalt) in Hester’s Neighborhood Site Planning process. Accordingly, this meeting was intended to use the resources gained during the previous meeting to present the participants with what I had learned. In essence, I would use the mapping and inventory information with the results of the first meeting to introduce the community to its trails. This would serve as our gestalt and from that we could set goals for the outcomes of the participatory design process. Also shown in Figure 7, to prepare for this meeting I Valuated on the Resources I gathered from the previous meeting (V->S) to produce a Score for the meeting. The score

consisted of summarizing what I heard while listening during the first meeting and organizing that information into objectives the participants had for the trail system. If the participants agreed with the summary and objectives I presented, they would rank the objectives using a procedure I called “If my time was money, where would you spend it?” Each participant was given a sheet with the eight objectives, a nickel, and three pennies. They were asked to put the nickel on their absolute, number one priority for the participatory design process to focus on. They could spend their remaining pennies on whatever objectives they chose (including their number one choice). Once each individual had ranked the objectives they were asked to record their results before conducting the same exercise as a group. After a group discussion of the results, participants were asked to

## NOVEMBER 29, 2016

- |    |                                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <i>Listening</i>                                            |
| 2  | <i>Setting Neighborhood Goals</i>                           |
| 3  | <i>Mapping &amp; Inventory</i>                              |
| 4  | <i>Introducing the Neighborhood to Itself</i>               |
| 5  | <i>Getting a Gestalt</i>                                    |
| 6  | <i>Drawing Anticipated Activity Settings</i>                |
| 7  | <i>Letting Archetypes &amp; Idiosyncrasies Inspire Form</i> |
| 8  | <i>Making a Conceptual Yardstick</i>                        |
| 9  | <i>Developing a Spectrum of Design Plans</i>                |
| 10 | <i>Evaluating Costs &amp; Benefits Before Construction</i>  |
| 11 | <i>Transferring Responsibility</i>                          |
| 12 | <i>Evaluating After Construction</i>                        |

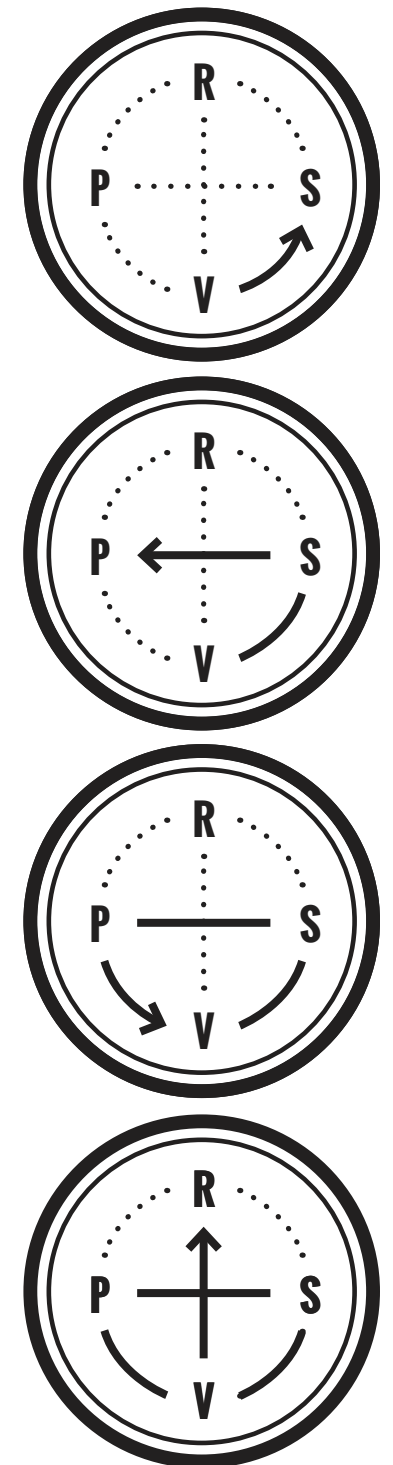


FIGURE 7:  
*November 29, 2016 Process Diagram*



provide any additional information they could about how they would like the objectives to be achieved (e.g. materials, procedures, activities, etc.) This concluded the Performance of the Score (S->P). As shown in Figure 7 the resulting ranked list of objectives became Resources (P->R) on which I could Valuact (R->V) when preparing for the following meeting.

The meeting resulted in the eight objectives being ranked accordingly:

1. Celebrating Points of Interest  
20 ¢ (Nickels: 3 / Pennies: 5)
2. Supporting New Uses  
16 ¢ (Nickels: 3 / Pennies: 1)
3. Improving Wayfinding  
14 ¢ (Nickels: 1 / Pennies: 9)
4. Completing the Trails  
11 ¢ (Nickels: 2 / Pennies: 1)
5. Improving Trail Experience  
10 ¢ (Nickels: 1 / Pennies: 5)

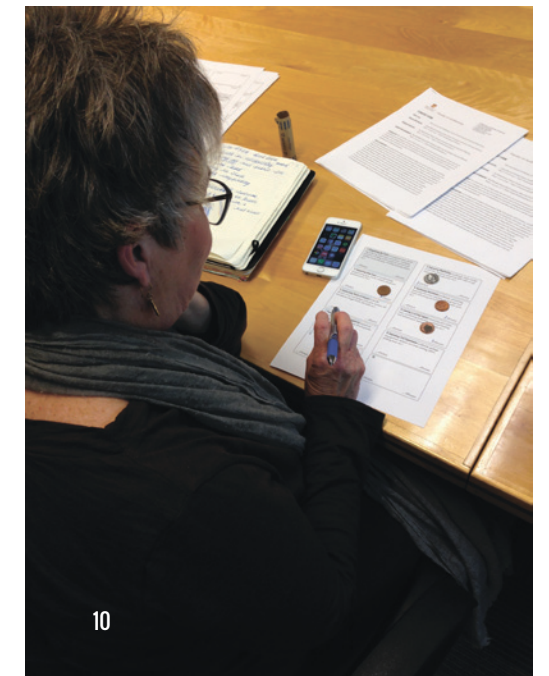
6. Leaving a Lasting Legacy  
3 ¢ (Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)
7. Planning for Possible Emergencies  
3 ¢ (Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)
8. Increasing Awareness  
3 ¢ (Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)



**FIGURE 8:**  
November 29, 2016 Ranking Exercise  
Photo: Emily MacLeod

**FIGURE 9:**  
November 29, 2016 Ranking Exercise  
Photo: Emily MacLeod

**FIGURE 10:**  
November 29, 2016 Ranking Exercise  
Photo: Emily MacLeod



*Meeting 3: January 3, 2017*

As shown in Figure 11, this meeting functioned as Steps 6-10 (Drawing Anticipated Activity Settings, Letting Archetypes & Idiosyncrasies Inspire Form, Making a Conceptual Yardstick, Developing a Spectrum of Design Plans, and Evaluating Costs & Benefits Before Construction) in Hester' and McNally's Neighborhood Site Planning process. Accordingly, this meeting was intended to use the resources gained during the previous meeting to present the participants with a variety of design plans to meet their objectives so they could evaluate and choose their favorite(s) before developing them any further. Also shown in Figure 11, to prepare for this meeting I Valuated on the Resources gathered at the previous meeting (the ranked objectives) and developed concept drawings with three different design themes based

on the outcomes of the previous meetings. I organized them into comparable graphics which I then presented to the participants for their feedback (V->S). The participants discussed the merits of the plans and selected their favorite. (S->P). Their choice and feedback became Resources (P->R) on which I could Valuaact when developing designs for following meetings.

The three top objectives for the participants were Celebrating Points of Interest, Supporting New Uses, and Improving Wayfinding. Accordingly, I presented participants with three main components I felt would be useful in meeting those objectives: a logo to be used in the wayfinding strategy and attracting new users, a sample wayfinding strategy to discuss its effectiveness, and a sampling of trail furnishings (bench, shelter, and trailhead) to be used to meet various objectives.

**JANUARY 3, 2017**

- 1 *Listening*
- 2 *Setting Neighborhood Goals*
- 3 *Mapping & Inventory*
- 4 *Introducing the Neighborhood to Itself*
- 5 *Getting a Gestalt*
- 6 *Drawing Anticipated Activity Settings*
- 7 *Letting Archetypes & Idiosyncrasies Inspire Form*
- 8 *Making a Conceptual Yardstick*
- 9 *Developing a Spectrum of Design Plans*
- 10 *Evaluating Costs & Benefits Before Construction*
- 11 *Transferring Responsibility*
- 12 *Evaluating After Construction*

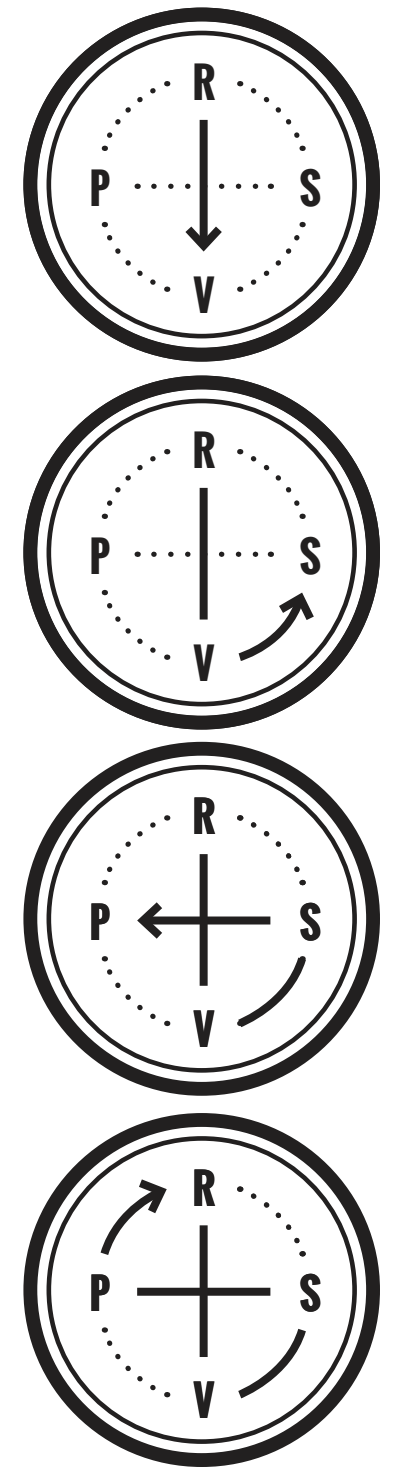


FIGURE 11:  
*January 3, 2017 Process Diagram*

### Logo designs

I presented the participants with some sample logos designed with some key concepts in mind that had been identified during the previous meetings: Escape to nature, the diamond shape used to mark trails in the past, the bridges that have been built to date, and the many streams located around the trail system. Of the designs I presented, the group overwhelmingly favored the simplest option (shown as the uppermost option in Figure 12).

### Wayfinding

The Town of Port Hawkesbury has already commissioned a wayfinding strategy for the trails system. Unfortunately, over time, people identified limitations of the wayfinding strategy. Specifically, some users found it difficult to orient themselves when looking at the trail maps. Furthermore, due to budget



FIGURE 12:  
January 3, 2017 Logo options

limitations when developing the previous strategy, it featured small signs marking each trail instead of prominent trailheads. Finally, there are limited provisions for navigation/trail identification while on the trails themselves. As a first step towards developing an improved strategy, I showed the participants a sample trailhead that would hopefully address some of the shortcomings of the original strategy. The participants provided helpful feedback regarding the amount of text as well as other features they thought should be included on each trailhead.

### Trail Furnishings

I presented the participants with three key pieces of trail furnishings: a bench, a shelter, and a trailhead. My logic was that these components could be adapted in different locations to meet different objectives. For example, a shelter

could be placed strategically in the middle of a long trail segment to support snowshoeing as a potential new use. The same shelter could also be placed by an important view to celebrate that view as a point of interest. I presented the three pieces designed using three distinct design themes developed from the outcomes of previous meetings. These themes included wood, metal, and rustic. The wood theme took inspiration from the bridges the SATA had already built. The wood theme showed the three pieces built entirely from readily available nominal lumber sizes. The metal theme took inspiration from discussion about the possibility of collaborating with the welding program at the nearby campus of the Nova Scotia Community College. The metal theme maintained the basic esthetic of the existing bridges (using nominal lumber sizes

for contact surfaces). The rustic theme took inspiration from one of the youngest participants - an elementary school student who carves chainsaw art using natural timbers. The participants had expressed interest during previous meetings in integrating his art into some part of the trails. The rustic theme was intended to make this integration as natural as possible. The rustic theme incorporated natural timbers with nominal lumber sizes. After discussion, the participants favoured the rustic theme.

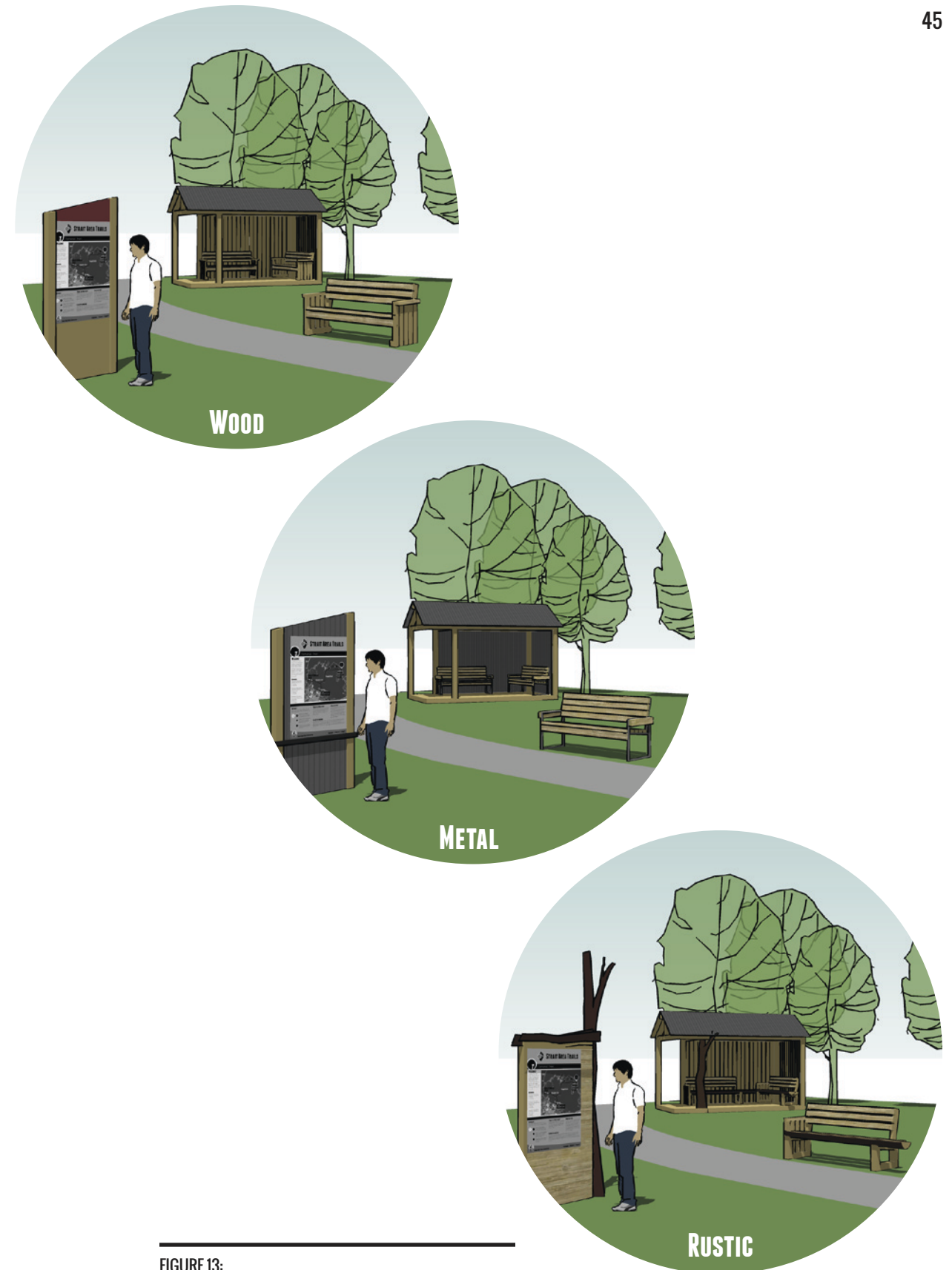


FIGURE 13:  
January 3, 2017 Design Themes

*Meeting 4: January 10, 2017*

As shown in Figure 14, this meeting functioned as Step 11 (Transferring Responsibility) in Hester’s Neighborhood Site Planning process and the last meeting of the participatory design process (at least for the purposes of this practicum). Accordingly, this meeting was intended to serve as the conclusion to the process and to transfer responsibility to the SATA for further development or implementation. Also shown in Figure 14, to prepare for this meeting I Valuated on the Resources gathered at the previous meeting feedback on the previous designs and developed more detailed drawings and a vision document I could present to the participants to summarize the process we undertook together. The Score for this meeting was limited. I presented the vision document part by part and explained

that this would conclude my work among them as a researcher. Any future work would be as a citizen volunteer - not as a researcher. (V->S). This meeting followed a very similar conceptual structure to the previous meeting (compare last meeting: R->V->S->P->R with this meeting: R->V->S->P->V). In this meeting, instead of using the Performance of the Score to generate more Resources, the participants used the Performance to result in personal Valuation as they considered the results of the process and what next steps would be required. I encouraged the participants to read over the vision document with a critical eye to determine what changes they would like made in order for the document to be of the most value to them in the future. A copy of the vision document in its entirety is included as Appendix E.

**JANUARY 10, 2017**

- 1 *Listening*

---

- 2 *Setting Neighborhood Goals*

---

- 3 *Mapping & Inventory*

---

- 4 *Introducing the Neighborhood to Itself*

---

- 5 *Getting a Gestalt*

---

- 6 *Drawing Anticipated Activity Settings*

---

- 7 *Letting Archetypes & Idiosyncrasies Inspire Form*

---

- 8 *Making a Conceptual Yardstick*

---

- 9 *Developing a Spectrum of Design Plans*

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- 10 *Evaluating Costs & Benefits Before Construction*

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- 11 *Transferring Responsibility*

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- 12 *Evaluating After Construction*

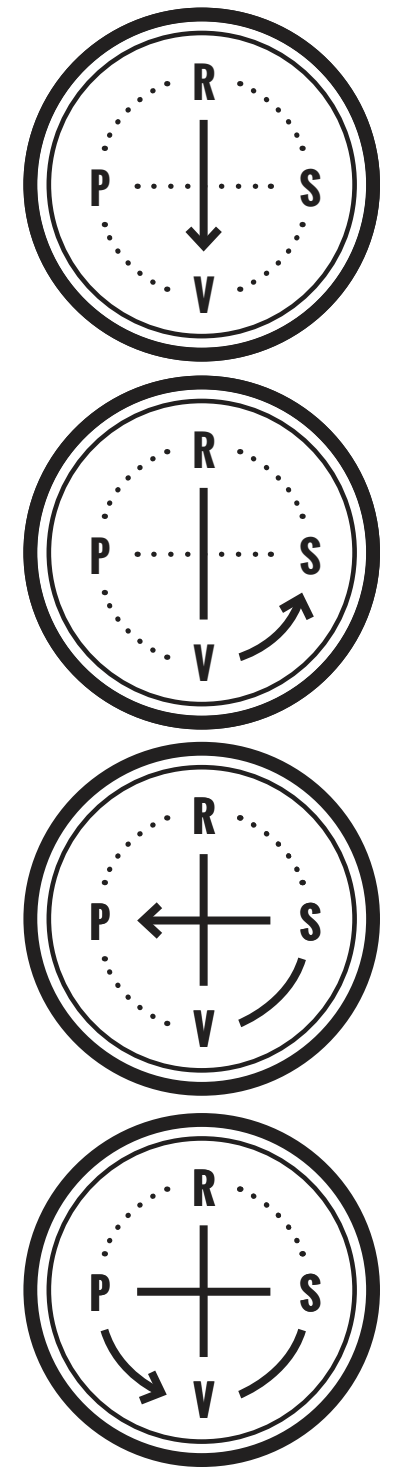


FIGURE 14:  
January 10, 2017 Process Diagram

## PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS - REFLECTIONS

The participatory design process is complex. There are endless variables that can contribute positively or negatively to its success. I have identified a few areas I would consider changing if I could repeat the process. I've also included some that I would try to keep the same.

### *Possible Improvements*

- With the exception of the first meeting where the group walked a portion of the trails together, all meetings took place in the board room of the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre. This was a visually sterile atmosphere with rolling chairs arranged around a long board table. Many participants would associate such an atmosphere

with conventional top-down corporate or government decision-making processes. If possible, I would make an effort to find a venue with more flexibility in seating and fewer connotations of conventional decision-making.

- Early during the participatory design process I was intentionally open-ended about where the process could lead. I wanted the participants to feel free to direct the process as they wished. In retrospect, during the later meetings it would have been valuable to clearly identify expected outcomes. This might have helped focus my energy and ensured the outcomes met their expectations.

- Related to the previous point, there are numerous areas in which I feel the resulting vision document could be improved. However, this could go on indefinitely unless the participants establish their desired outcomes. For example, the vision documents could be improved by including: sections about use of the logo (template letters, advertisements, etc.); sections about siting the furnishings (e.g. how benches should be sited, how to arrange an outdoor classroom, etc.); a section estimating construction costs for each item; strategies for improving parking; a section documenting the construction of mock-up furnishings; etc.

### *Definite Assets:*

- Attendance at the meetings averaged ten or fewer participants. This proved to be a good number for open discussions and efficient decision-making.
- The meetings were also attended by a good cross section of people (age, demographics, etc.)
- Due to the constraints of balancing a full-time job with completing the practicum, my relationship with the SATA extended over approximately one year. I believe the length of our relationship helped foster trust and enthusiasm.



## REFLECTIONS

In the conclusion of Hester's article introducing his concept of a refrain with a view, he makes the statement that "[a]lthough there is nothing inherent in the process of local participation that guarantees positive change, it is one of the best investments of time and energy in effecting personal and city metamorphosis" (Hester 1999). The time and energy expended to plan and conduct a local participation process for this practicum has (in my opinion) proven to be an excellent investment. In return for my time and energy it produced an excellent opportunity for personal reflection and a design vision for future trail development the SATA can proudly and truthfully refer to as their own. Reflecting on what the experience taught me about how to function as Hester's visionary community

designer, I can organize the lessons into three categories: personal knowledge, (related to the designer), process knowledge (related to participatory design), and research knowledge (related to academia).

## PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

*Be humble.*

I believe the most important lesson this practicum has taught me about being a visionary community designer is the simple imperative “be humble.”

In order for participatory design to be authentic and truly democratic, participants must have real agency to affect change. This requires the designer to share control and move from an attitude of “Tell me your problem so I can get on with the business of designing a solution” to “help me understand your problem and when I show you my solution, show me how I can improve it.” The first attitude assumes the designer knows

best. The second attitude assumes the designer can learn something from the client. Put another way, a conventional designer is a lecturer, while a participatory designer is a conversationalist. And if a lecturer *also* has the ability to have a conversation with the audience in which all parties go away enlightened, then that person is Hester’s visionary community designer. This person has the humility to try to learn something from whoever he or she is speaking with.

*Get excited about whatever the community is excited about.*

A visionary community designer will be able to recognize the value behind community excitement - even if they are do not personally share that excitement. The visionary community designer should be able to recognize the value of the idea that has sparked the community’s excitement. This is not to say the designer may not be able to suggest

improvements to the idea, but that he or she should respect the interests of the community and work to celebrate them wherever possible.

*Learn to listen well.*

One of the most important skills of the visionary community designer is to be able to listen well. By this I mean able to listen to what participants say and not only retain that information but to “hear between the lines.” A participant’s concerns may only be symptoms of a deeper issue.

*Be careful not to invest too much work too quickly.*

Related to the idea of listening well is the skill of knowing how much work to invest in an idea. Particularly in a participatory design process with considerable time between meetings, it is entirely possible for a designer to invest valuable time and effort into a

mistaken idea only to find out at the next meeting that participants disagree with the direction he or she has taken. This is much more likely if the designer has not listened well! If too much work is invested based on a mistaken idea, that work may ultimately be wasted.

*Trust and be trusted.*

Based on the participatory design process recorded in this practicum, the process is most enjoyable when participants are enthusiastic. For their enthusiasm to be sustained, they will need to see how their participation makes a difference. They will need to see how their ideas have been incorporated. In short, they will need to trust the designer. Trust is a two-way concept. Participants may also place more trust in the process and the designer if they see that the designer has trusted them (perhaps with a task,



etc.) In the case of this practicum, I was careful to entrust the responsibility of inviting participants entirely to the SATA. I believe the fact that I trusted them with that responsibility helped build their trust in the participatory design process as in myself as well.

## PROCESS KNOWLEDGE

*To participate you must attend.*

Yes, this seems obvious, but it remains a valuable lesson. The participatory design process works best with consistent, full attendance. Lawrence Halprin required a commitment from all participants to attend all workshops:

“Total involvement in the process requires participation in all the parts of the process. Since Take Part Processes are firmly based in the evolution of a common set of group experiences so that everyone can become creative from the same background, it is vital that all participants share all

experiences together. Therefore, a very big requirement of all Take Part Processes is that everyone take part in every score.” (Halprin, 1974, p. 307)

This ensures continuity and helps minimize occurrences where a participant may be upset that decisions were made without their input. The value of consistent attendance should be stressed to participants during the design process.

*Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.*

While this may be a trite, time-worn life lesson, it is an important lesson to keep in mind during the participatory design process. While the process documented in this practicum involved very few instances of disagreement - let alone conflict - it was likely the exception, not the rule. It will be of value to those involved in the participatory design process to have a procedure (or score) held in reserve for conflict

resolution. Halprin in particular, suggests several scores for just such occurrences (Halprin, 1974.)

*Respect each others' roles.*

I believe a key distinguishing feature of a participatory design process that results in a refrain with a view is one that makes efficient use of the skills and knowledge of all participants. This requires discernment between roles. In Halprin's words, “[c]ommitment to the Take Part idea involves a belief that people themselves have the ability and the right to determine *what* they wish to have happen, and that the expert is available to help on *how* it can be done. [...] The workshop idea places the *what* decisions squarely in the hands of the people involved, not in the hands of professionals” (Halprin, 1974, p. 96). In this way there is a distinction made between the roles of the community and the designer

(or other “expert”). This distinction allows the community to provide the information that it knows best, while the designer provides the information that he or she knows best.

## RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE

*It can be done.*

For students with a pragmatic worldview, a service learning research project has significant appeal. I include this lesson as affirmation to any reader who may be interested in conducting a similar project that it can be done. It should be noted, however, that engaging the public will almost certainly require more time than a more conventional project. Furthermore, a researcher must be able to accept the uncertainty that is inherent to meaningfully involving the public in a research project. Finally, it is important that a service learning research project be framed project in

such a way that it has clear research outcomes and can be situated in the body of knowledge of your discipline.

*Make time for ethics approval.*

Any research project involving human research subjects will require human ethics approval. It should be noted that this can be a time consuming process. Furthermore, depending on your university, service learning research projects may be uncommon enough that those responsible for granting approval may have difficulty categorizing a service learning research project.

5.



## CONCLUSION

“To achieve a refrain with a view requires a visionary synthesis that [...] must reveal opportunities that most people have not recognized, extract broad civic vision from community participants and culminate in the creation of places that touch the heart.” (Hester, 1999, p. 21)

The vision document produced through the service learning project described in this practicum did not “culminate in the creation of places that touch the heart.” Nothing in the plan was built at the time of writing this document. Nevertheless, the participatory design process used to produce the vision document *was* successful in revealing new opportunities to participants and extracting a broad vision from them of what their trails could be. Does this qualify as a “refrain with a view?” Perhaps. The purpose of this practicum, however, was always to

learn lessons about *how* to be the “visionary community designer” as described by Hester. Did I learn those lessons? Yes, the sort that will remain in my memory for years of professional practice. Through this practicum, I have learned numerous lessons about the role of Hester’s “visionary community designer.” These include the importance of being humble, recognizing the value of community excitement, learning to listen well, fostering trust, and more. Are there more lessons to be learned? Certainly. In particular, a few topics that occurred to me as a result of this project would be exploring methods for better involving participants in the form-giving aspects of the design process, exploring the use of new technologies (particularly social media) during the participatory design process, and exploring means of human ethics approval for on-line participatory design processes.

What of the other question posed at the beginning of this practicum? “Does [a participatory design process] limit the creativity of the designer due to the involvement of participants with little or no design education?” I would say that in the case of this practicum if my creativity was limited it was by the amount of energy required to design and carry out the participatory design process, not by the involvement of participants. Designing and conducting a meaningful process through with participants can be involved in the design process is time- and energy-consuming. My time and energy were directed towards those affected by my creative work, not my creative work itself. I believe that the energy expended to conduct a meaningful participatory design process is well invested. With more experience, resources, and time than were

available to me, I firmly believe a designer can conduct a participatory design process that will not limit his or her creativity. Furthermore, I believe that a participatory design process is a critical means of generating the necessary information to design public spaces that are not only creative, but truly functional and appropriate for the people who will use them. Using Halprin’s terms, without a means of learning *what* the people want, the expert will be misdirected in determining *how* to achieve it. (Halprin, 1974). Therefore, without a process by which participants can be involved in the design process, the unlimited creativity of a designer will very possibly be misdirected. The resulting design of public space, while creative from the expert’s viewpoint, is likely to be inappropriate from the people’s viewpoint. I believe the design of public space should be *for* the people.

So what was the most important lesson I learned about how to be visionary? Through conducting this participatory design process as a service learning project, I reaffirmed to myself the personal value of doing. I believe the practical lessons learned by actually conducting a real-world participatory design process are far more profound than those learned by reading, thinking, and typing about one. After all, you cannot sing the refrain - unless you actually sing.

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## APPENDICES

- A: Joint Faculty Research Ethics  
Board Approval Certificate
- B: Research Protocol Submission
- C: Sample Informed Consent Form
- D: November 19, 2016  
Questionnaire Results
- E: November 29, 2016  
Questionnaire Results
- F: Vision Document



**APPENDIX A:** Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board Approval Certificate



Research Ethics and Compliance  
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Human Ethics  
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APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

October 31, 2016

**TO:** Nathan MacLeod (Advisor: Richard Perron)  
Principal Investigator [REDACTED]

**FROM:** Kevin Russell, Chair [REDACTED]  
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

**Re:** Protocol #J2016:081 (HS20119)  
"Who is the Visionary? Establishing a Common Vision During the  
Participatory Design Process"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the **Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board**, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2). **This approval is valid for one year only and will expire on October 31, 2017.**

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of implementation of such changes.

**Please note:**

- If you have funds pending human ethics approval, please mail/e-mail/fax (261-0325) a copy of this Approval (identifying the related UM Project Number) to the Research Grants Officer in ORS in order to initiate fund setup. (How to find your UM Project Number: <http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/mrt-faq.html#pr0>)
- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise the account will be locked.

The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

**The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at: [http://umanitoba.ca/research/orec/ethics/human\\_ethics\\_REB\\_forms\\_guidelines.html](http://umanitoba.ca/research/orec/ethics/human_ethics_REB_forms_guidelines.html)) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.**

**APPENDIX B:** Research Protocol Submission

## 1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This practicum explores the potential role of the landscape architect in establishing a common vision during the participatory design process. Participatory design is considered the process of involving the end user in the design of a product. In the case of landscape architecture, it refers to involving community members and/or park users while designing public spaces.

The practicum will seek to explore this topic through two interrelated components. The first component will be a case study comparison of seminal approaches to the participatory design of public spaces in the United States. The public will not be involved in this component. The second component will be an application of one (or a combination) of these approaches to a site-specific service learning research project. It is for this component that this Ethics Protocol Submission has been prepared.

The service learning research project is anticipated to consist of the participatory design of site-specific outdoor furniture, wayfinding infrastructure, and interpretive elements for a community trail segment located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. The scope of the design may be broadened or limited based on the results of the participatory design process. The project will be completed with the cooperation of the Strait Area Trails Association (SATA). This organization is composed of a diverse group of volunteers working in cooperation with the Town of Port Hawkesbury. The purpose of the service learning research project will be to provide an opportunity to put education into practice, to learn through practice, and to provide an opportunity for reflections on practice to be recorded. The practicum will therefore have elements of “practitioner-research,” although the researcher will not be acting as a paid professional or in any position of authority as is typically the case in practitioner-research. The researcher will be performing the role of landscape architect and reflecting on his experience.

The service learning research project will involve working with members of SATA and any other community members that SATA members may invite to participate. The goal will be to involve a diverse group of participants who represent a spectrum of potential trail user groups. Participants will be requested to meet as a group up to a total of five times during a period of up to three months. During one or more of these meetings they will be asked to use the existing trail system and reflect on their experience. They may be asked to photograph points of interest and share and/or explain the photographs with the group. Participants may be asked questions about the existing trail system, their experience on the trail system, and what improvements they would like made to the trail system. They may be asked to look at images related to the design of public spaces and discuss their preferences and opinions regarding these images. Questions may be posed to participants in questionnaire or discussion format. Questions will be intentionally open-ended so that the participatory design process may be responsive to the goals, opinions, and preferences of participants. Copies of the resulting design(s) will be provided to SATA and may or may not be physically implemented in part or in whole.

Data collected during meetings will be limited to hand-written notes, hand-drawn sketches or diagrams (these will not identify participants by name), photographs (participants will only be photographed if they have given permission in their Consent Form), written questionnaires (questionnaires will not ask for participants’ names), and any photographs or creative work produced by participants (participants will indicate whether they release their creative work in their Consent Form). There will be no audio or video recording during meetings. Any photographs taken by participants and used in the practicum will be taken using participants’ own devices. These photographs will be collected by email sent to my University of Manitoba email account or directly transferred by USB cord or USB drive to my password-protected laptop. Photographs will only be included in the completed Masters practicum or related presentations if it can be confirmed that all people whose faces are recognizable in the photographs are participants who have given their consent to be photographed on their Consent Form.

## 2. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The service learning research project will be intentionally open-ended so that the participatory design process may be responsive to the goals, opinions, and preferences of participants. This makes it difficult to provide a definitive list of research instruments and copies of all materials to be given to participants before the participants are recruited. For example, if participants decide that the resulting design should be a master plan of how the trail system should be expanded by 2050, the research instruments will be different than if participants decide that the resulting design should be a series of site-specific benches. If definitive research instruments limit the design process before participants are recruited and consulted, the validity of the participatory design process will be compromised.

A list of the research instruments that may be used follows below. A general meeting outline (not including the preliminary information session) including lists of the questions that may potentially be asked as part of the research instruments follows below. The research instruments may include:

- Walking/using the existing trail system and reflecting on their experience;
- Sketching or photographing points of interest on the trail system and explaining them;
- Drawing or creating models of features of trails or other public spaces (benches, bridges, signage, environments, plants, etc.)
- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about personal visual preferences related to the design of trails or other public spaces;
- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about personal experiences walking/using the existing trail system;
- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about the desired scope of the participatory design process;

- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about what amenities exist or are desired in the Town of Port Hawkesbury and surrounding areas;
- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about the participant's present/desired amount of time spent using the trail system;
- Completing written questionnaires or participating in verbal discussions about the participant's present/desired ways of using the trail system;

#### *Meeting #1*

##### Preliminary Questions

The primary researcher will introduce himself, the project, and the research ethics protocol.

The group will be asked some or all of the following questions:

- What do you like most about the trail system?
- What do you dislike most about the trail system?
- What are you most hopeful about for the trail system in the future?
- What are you most worried about for the trail system in the future?
- How often do you use the trail system? (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?
- When you think of the trail system, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?
- Where do people come from to use the trails? (roads, sidewalks, directions, etc.)?
- Where do people live who use the trails? (neighbourhoods, neighbouring communities, etc.)?
- How do people get to the trail system? (automobile, bike, foot, etc.)?
- Can you show me your favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?
- Can you show me your least favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?
- Who do you know is using the trail system now? (demographics, user activities, etc.)?
- Who else would you like to see using the trail system in the future? (demographics, user activities, etc.)?

##### Group Walk

In order to consider the trail system from a different perspective, the group will walk the trail while each imagining they are a trail user of a different demographic (of their choice) than the one they identify with. The group will stop periodically to reflect on the section of trail they have walked by answering some or all of the following questions:

- Was it easy to find the trailhead (beginning of the trail system)?
- Was it easy to find parking?
- Was parking adequate?
- Were you confident about the route? (where you should walk, where you were going, etc.)?
- What did you like about this section?
- What did you dislike about this section?

- What would you like to be able to do on this section?
- Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?
- What was most memorable about this section?
- Where would you take "selfies" on this section?
- What would you take pictures of on this section?
- Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?
- After completing the walk, have you thought of anything you would like to add to your answers from the first section? Would you change any of your answers?

##### Clarification Questions

The primary researcher may follow up the specific questions above with the following general questions:

- Can you elaborate on that?
- Can you be more specific?
- Can you give an example?
- Can you rephrase that?
- Can you show me that location on a map?
- Can you describe where that location is?
- Can you think of why that is the case?
- Can you think of anything to add?

#### *Meeting #2*

The primary researcher will summarize the previous meeting and will explain how he has interpreted and utilized the information gleaned at the previous meeting (this may include verbal or written descriptions, design plans, or design ideas). Participants will be asked some or all of the following questions related to this summary and explanation:

- Do you feel this is summary and information is accurate?
- Do you feel I have interpreted your feedback correctly?
- What would you change about my findings?
- What do you like about this plan (or design idea)?
- What do you dislike about this plan (or design idea)?

##### Clarification Questions

The primary researcher may follow up the specific questions above with the following general questions:

- Can you elaborate on that?
- Can you be more specific?
- Can you give an example?

- Can you rephrase that?
- Can you show me that location on a map?
- Can you describe where that location is?
- Can you think of why that is the case?
- Can you think of anything to add?

#### *Meeting #3*

The primary researcher will summarize the previous meetings and will explain how he has interpreted and utilized the information gleaned at the previous meetings. He will present design options to the participants and participants will be asked some or all of the following questions:

- Do you feel these design options successfully address the results of the previous meetings?
- Which of these design options do you like the best?
- Which of these design options do you think other demographics would like the best?
- What would you change about your favourite design?
- What do you like about this design?
- What do you dislike about this design?
- If you could combine elements of two or more designs, which would you combine?

#### Clarification Questions

The primary researcher may follow up the specific questions above with the following general questions:

- Can you elaborate on that?
- Can you be more specific?
- Can you give an example?
- Can you rephrase that?
- Can you show me that location on a map?
- Can you describe where that location is?
- Can you think of why that is the case?
- Can you think of anything to add?

#### *Meeting #4*

The primary researcher will summarize the previous meetings and will explain how he has interpreted and utilized the information gleaned at the previous meetings. He will present a final design plan and explain how the previous meetings have informed it. Participants will be asked some or all of the following questions:

- How should the SATA proceed to implement this plan?
- Who should be responsible for implementing what part(s) of the plan?
- What should be the priorities in implementing this plan?

- In what order should the elements of this plan be implemented?

#### Clarification Questions

The primary researcher may follow up the specific questions above with the following general questions:

- Can you elaborate on that?
- Can you be more specific?
- Can you give an example?
- Can you rephrase that?
- Can you show me that location on a map?
- Can you describe where that location is?
- Can you think of why that is the case?
- Can you think of anything to add?

These research instruments may result in risks to physical safety such as those associated with using trails or other public spaces. They may also result in risks to emotional well-being such as those associated with having an informal group discussion. These may include, but are not limited to nervousness associated with public speaking; difficulty expressing personal goals, opinions, and preferences; interpersonal friction experienced negotiating differing opinions; etc.

### 3. PARTICIPANTS

Participants will be recruited through the Strait Area Trails Association (SATA). This is a volunteer community organization. Members of the SATA will be invited to participate in this project by email. They will in turn be encouraged to invite other family or community members to participate by forwarding the email invitation. The goal will be to recruit a diverse group of participants who represent a spectrum of potential trail user groups. The goal of this project is to involve community members in creating design plans for the future development of the local community trail network. Part of the value of these plans (for leveraging future grant funding, community buy-in, etc.) will lie in the fact that members of the community have been actively involved in their creation.

The number of participants will be limited to thirty (30). There is a possibility that SATA members may decide that youth should be invited to participate. If this is the case, both the youth and their legal guardian(s) will be required to sign the Consent Form.

Scripts of a sample Recruitment Email and Response Email are included on the following page.

*Sample Recruitment Email:*

To the walkers, hikers, runners, joggers, cyclists, dog walkers, bird watchers, nature lovers, and all other residents of Port Hawkesbury and the Strait Area:

Do you know about the public trails located behind Port Hawkesbury? Have you used them? Do you think they could be improved? Would you be willing to help?

I'm a Master of Landscape Architecture (MLArch) student at the University of Manitoba. I'm living and working in Port Hawkesbury while working with the Strait Area Trails Association on my MLArch practicum project to develop plans for improving the trails system. My practicum project explores the potential role of the landscape architect in establishing a common vision during the participatory design process. Participatory design is the process of involving the people who will use a product in the design of the product - in this case, a public trail system. The Strait Area Trails Association is interested in developing a plan to guide future trail improvements. Together, we need community members like you to help us.

Participants will only be asked to attend *up to* five meetings. At these meetings, they may be asked to walk portions of the trails together or individually, photograph or sketch parts of the existing trail system, discuss or complete questionnaires related to trail or open space design, discuss or complete questionnaires related to how they feel the trail system should be improved, or participate in other similar activities related to the design of public space.

If you would like to volunteer (or would like more information), I will be hosting an information meeting at [time] at [location] on [date]. At this meeting I will be explaining the project in more detail and answering questions. I will also be distributing consent forms for participants to complete and sign. If you plan to attend, please reply to this email so I can estimate attendance.

I look forward to working with you on this exciting project!

Nathan MacLeod

Master of Landscape Architecture candidate, University of Manitoba

*Sample Response Email:*

Hi [respondent name],

Thanks for expressing interest in my practicum project. I honestly appreciate it. I look forward to meeting you at the information meeting at [time] at [location] on [date]. In the meantime, please forward my original email to anyone you think might be interested. The more participation in this project, the better! Please feel free to email me with any other questions you might have before the meeting.

Take care,

Nathan MacLeod

Master of Landscape Architecture candidate, University of Manitoba

**4. INFORMED CONSENT**

A copy of the project Consent Form is attached.

**5. DECEPTION**

This project will not involve deception.

**6. FEEDBACK/DEBRIEFING**

Participants will be given feedback after each group meeting during the participatory design process. This will include a summary of information gathered and how the information is expected to inform or be incorporated into the final design(s). At the beginning of the following meeting, participants will be shown how the information gathered *has* informed or been incorporated into the final design(s) (if applicable). At the end of the participatory design process, participants will be invited to attend a presentation of the final design(s) for the trail system made to the SATA. This presentation is expected to be conducted in-person, but may also be made in the form of a detailed PDF slide show distributed by email. If this is the case, the researcher's contact information will be clearly indicated in the slide show so clarifications or explanations may be easily requested.

**7. RISKS AND BENEFITS**

Participation in this practicum project may result in risks to the physical safety of participants such as those associated with using trails or other public spaces. Participation may also result in risks to the emotional well-being of participants such as those associated with engaging in an informal group discussion. These risks may include, but are not limited to nervousness associated with public speaking; difficulty expressing personal goals, opinions, and preferences; interpersonal friction experienced negotiating differences of opinions; etc. These risks will be described in the Consent Form and are not expected to exceed the risks posed by moderate outdoor activity and the human interactions that are typical of daily life. The researcher will ask participants to wear appropriate clothing and footwear and to be cautious and courteous to each other to minimize these risks.

Participation in this practicum project may result in direct benefits to participants in terms of having the opportunity to describe to the researcher and their fellow community members their vision for how the trail system should be improved. In the long-term, participation will help develop a design vision for the trail system that may or may not be implemented in whole or in part by the SATA. If the SATA chooses to implement this vision in whole or in part,

participation in this practicum project may help shape how the trail system is developed over time and result in personal satisfaction and increased community pride.

#### **8. ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

This project will be intentionally designed to resemble a public engagement process such as might be conducted as part of a municipal planning, urban design, or park design project. These are public processes and the identity of participants is not kept anonymous or confidential. In the same way that participation in a public open house would not be kept anonymous or confidential, participation in this project will not be kept anonymous or confidential. The *details* of participation (comments made, opinions expressed, information shared, etc.) *will* be kept anonymous and confidential. For example, someone reading the resulting Masters practicum will be able to read the names of participants. They will not be able to read the details of what the participants said or did during their participation. Participants' photographs and creative work may be presented or published upon completion of this project only if they give consent in the Consent Form.

#### **9. COMPENSATION**

Participants will not be compensated for any costs they incur that are directly or indirectly related to their participation in this practicum project, such as transportation, food, and childcare.

#### **10. DISSEMINATION**

At the end of the project, the researcher will be presenting his findings to the SATA in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia for their information and the Faculty of Landscape Architecture at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Landscape Architecture. In addition, the researcher may attempt to publish his findings or present them at conferences. It will be explained to participants in the Consent Form that if they release your photograph and creative property, they may be published or shown during these presentations.



## **APPENDIX C:** Sample Informed Consent Form



Department of Landscape Architecture  
 201 Russell Building  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba  
 Canada R3T 2N2  
 Telephone (204) 474-9458  
 Fax (204) 474-7532

## CONSENT FORM

**PROJECT TITLE:** Who is the Visionary? Establishing a Common Vision During the Participatory Design Process

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Nathan MacLeod, Graduate Student, Faculty of Landscape Architecture, University of Manitoba  
 [REDACTED]

**RESEARCH SUPERVISOR:** Dr. Richard Perron, Professor, Faculty of Landscape Architecture, University of Manitoba  
 [REDACTED]

**HUMAN ETHICS COORDINATOR:** Pinar Eskicioglu, Human Ethics Coordinator, Office of the Vice-President, University of Manitoba  
 [REDACTED]

**INTRODUCTION:** This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. The researcher will be explaining this form to you. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, or have any questions at any time, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** You are being invited to engage in the participatory design of site-specific outdoor furniture, wayfinding infrastructure, and interpretive elements for a community trail system located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. The scope of this design may be broadened or limited based on the results of the participatory design process. The project will be completed with the cooperation of the Strait Area Trails Association (SATA) but is being undertaken by Nathan MacLeod in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Landscape Architecture under the indirect supervision of Dr. Richard Perron from the University of Manitoba. The project will be his practicum project (final project) of his degree program. The primary goal of the practicum project is to better understand the role of the landscape architect in establishing a common vision during the participatory design process. Participation is expected to consist of three (3) meetings but may involve up to five (5) meetings. These meetings will be scheduled on dates that are acceptable to the majority of the participants and the researcher. These meetings are not expected to exceed two (2) hours in length. During one or more of these meetings you may be asked to use the existing trail system and reflect on your experience. You may be asked to photograph points of interest and share and/or explain the photographs within a group setting. You may be asked questions about the existing trail system, your experience on the trail



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system, and what improvements you would like to be made to the trail system. You may be asked to look at images related to the design of public spaces and discuss your preferences and opinions regarding these images. Questions may be posed to you in questionnaire or discussion format. Questions will be intentionally open-ended so that the participatory design process may be responsive to your goals, opinions, and preferences related to the practicum project. You may also be asked to participate in other activities than those described above. This flexibility is intentional, so that the participatory design process may respond to input made by the participants. If you are uncomfortable participating in *any* activity you are requested to participate in as part of this practicum project you are under *no* obligation to participate in that activity.

**PHOTO RELEASE:** If you provide your consent below, you may be photographed while participating in this practicum project. Your photograph may be used by the researcher in his Masters practicum and/or shown in presentations about the practicum project.

**CREATIVE PROPERTY:** If you provide your consent below, photographs you have taken, sketches you have made, or any other creative work or idea produced or submitted by you may during your participation may be used in and become part of this practicum project. Where possible, your authorship will be attributed. However, this attribution will not be guaranteed due to the fact that the creative work is expected to be produced in a group setting where more than one person may contribute.

**COMPENSATION:** You will not be compensated for any costs you incur that are directly or indirectly related to your participation in this practicum project, such as transportation, food, and childcare.

**RISKS:** Please note that your participation in this practicum project may result in risks to physical safety such as those associated with using trails or other public spaces. Your participation may also result in risks to emotional well-being such as those associated with engaging in an informal group discussion. These risks may include, but are not limited to nervousness associated with public speaking; difficulty expressing personal goals, opinions, and preferences; interpersonal friction experienced negotiating differences of opinions; etc.

**BENEFITS:** Your participation in this practicum project may result in direct benefits to you in terms of having the opportunity to describe to the researcher and your fellow community members your vision for how the trail system should be improved. In the long-term, your participation will help develop a design vision for the trail system that may or may not be implemented in whole or in part by the SATA. If the SATA chooses to implement this vision in whole or in part, your participation may help shape how the trail system is developed over time.

**CONTACT:** Following your participation, the researcher may need to contact you for further information or clarification, which would only involve brief conversations by email or telephone. This contact is optional and you may indicate whether you consent



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to this contact below. At the end of the project, which will be in the fall of 2016, you will have the option of receiving a brief summary of the findings of the practicum project.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS: At the end of the project, the researcher will be presenting his findings to the SATA in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia and the Faculty of Landscape Architecture at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba. In addition, he may attempt to publish his findings or present them at conferences. If you agree to release your photograph and creative property, your photograph and creative property may be published or shown during these presentations.

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY: This project will be intentionally designed to resemble a public engagement process such as might be conducted as part of a municipal planning, urban design, or park design project. These are public processes and the identity of participants is not kept anonymous or confidential. In the same way that your participation in a public open house would not be kept anonymous or confidential, your participation in this project will not be kept anonymous or confidential. Please not that the details of your participation (comments made, opinions expressed, information shared, etc.) will be kept anonymous and confidential. For example, someone reading the resulting Masters practicum will be able to read your name in a list of participants and will know that you participated. They will not know what you said or did during your participation. Your photograph and creative work may be presented or published upon completion of this project only if you give consent below.

MISCELLANEOUS: Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and that you agree to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher from her legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions or participating in any activity without prejudice or consequence. You are free to leave any meeting at any time, choose not to attend any meeting, or choose not to participate in any activity in part or whole without compromising your attendance at future meetings or participation in future activities. You may withdraw from the study up until the date the completed Masters practicum has been submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (January 4, 2017). After this time it will no longer be feasible to remove record of your participation from the practicum. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 1-204-474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.



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CONSENT: If you agree to each of the following statements, please place a check mark in the corresponding "Yes" box. If you do not agree, please place a check mark in the corresponding "No" box:

- 1. I have read (or had read to me) the details of this consent form. [ ] Yes [ ] No
2. My questions have been addressed. [ ] Yes [ ] No
3. a.) I am of the age of legal consent (18 years or older). [ ] Yes [ ] No
b.) If I am not of the age of legal consent (younger than 18 years), I understand that my parent or guardian must also sign this consent form in order for me to participate. [ ] Yes [ ] No
4. I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), agree to participate in this study. [ ] Yes [ ] No
5. I agree to permit my photograph to be taken during my participation. [ ] Yes [ ] No
6. I agree to release any creative work produced or otherwise submitted during my participation. [ ] Yes [ ] No
7. I agree to have the findings of this project (which may include my photograph and/or creative work) published or presented in a manner that may reveal my identity. [ ] Yes [ ] No
8. I understand that I will only be able to withdraw from the study up to January 4, 2017. [ ] Yes [ ] No
9. I agree to be contacted by phone or email if information is required after my participation. [ ] Yes [ ] No
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
10. I wish to receive a summary of the findings. [ ] Yes [ ] No
11. I would like to receive a summary of the findings by: [ ] Email [ ] Letter Mail
Address: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Signature of Participant's Parent or Legal Guardian (if required): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D:** November 19, 2016 Questionnaire Results

Workshop 1: Part 1	
1.	<p>What do you like most about the trail system?</p> <p>Closeness to home. Easy access.            What I like most about the trail system is that it allows people to get exercise and enjoy nature.            Close to town.            It's a fast way to get across town, it's a good walk.            Escape from concrete &amp; asphalt. Close proximity. Standards of trail making.            Sounds.            Accessibility.  <i>Look off, good walking/snowshoeing.</i>  <i>Bridges, challenging, look off, signage, easy walking (gravel/width of trail for specific people)</i>  <i>The openness, and vegetation.</i>  <i>Natural elements - Crandall Road the trail isn't too overbearing - blends in with the surroundings or is just natural ground (roots, earth) - Tamarac - the accessibility for strollers, wheelchairs - that it seems remote while still in town limits.</i>            GOOD WALK, ACCESSIBILITY (CLOSE TO TOWN), NATURAL ELEMENTS, SOUNDS (WATER, ETC.), WE HAVE IT!, DISTINCT START AND END, LOOK OFF (WEST SIDE OF CRANDALL ROAD), STANDARDS SET (TRAIL WIDTHS, ETC.), OPENNESS (SAFETY, SENSE OF SAFETY), EASY WALKING, VARIETY OF VIEWS.</p>
2.	<p>What do you dislike most about the trail system?</p> <p>No response.            What I dislike most about the trail system is that there are not enough garbage cans, so more people will litter.            Not finished.            No response.            No response.            Any mud or wet tread ways.            Not complete.  <i>Groomed in the winter.</i>  <i>In the winter, difficult for showshoeing/cross country. Need to be groomed?? Swamps and wetlands (need boardwalks)</i>  <i>Dislike boggy areas.</i>  <i>Needs more maps/directional arrows at Crandall Road.</i>  <u>MUD</u>, NOT COMPLETE, BOARDWALKS OVER WET AREAS (SWAMPS), STEEP IN PLACES, NO GARBAGE CANS (NOT EMPTIED OFTEN)(OR "PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT" POLICY?), NEED TO USE A SNOWMOBILE TO "GROOM" THE TRAILS FOR WINTER USE (SIGNAGE/PROGRAM FOR THIS?), NOT ENOUGH MAPS (AT INTERSECTIONS, SHOWING REMAINING DISTANCE, NAVIGATION)</p>

3.	<p>What are you most hopeful about for the trail system in the future?</p> <p>Less mud. Places to stop.            I am most hopeful for the trail system to be around in the far future.            To be completed.            Garbage cans, shelters, rest areas.            Increased traffic. Activities centred on trails. Snowshoeing. Seasonal based activities i.e. Christmas.            Dry, clean, well maintained rest areas. Use for education.            To be used.  <i>No response.</i>  <i>The ability to be used by everyone, especially youth!</i>  <i>Further surfacing to enhance walkability. Rest stops, teaching classroom.</i>  <i>Increased use.</i>  <u>QR CODES (OR NAVIGATION APP), EMERGENCY SIGNAGE (LANDMARKS AND/OR SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE), SHELTERS (FOR HOMELESS OR CAMPING), COMMUNITY SPIRIT!!!, TRAILHEADS (PUBLICITY), GOOD ENOUGH FOR CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING, NEW RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES</u></p>
4.	<p>What are you most worried about for the trail system in the future?</p> <p>Not being used.            I am most worried for the trail system to be vandalized and a good amount of damage be done to it in the future.            Up-keep.            People ruining (abusing) the trails.            Vandalism, enthusiasm drop off, funding, volunteer burnout.            Lack of use.            Damaged or not kept.  <i>Nothing.</i>  <i>Vandalism, lack of use.</i>  <i>Ongoing funding and vandalism.</i>  <i>Vandalism, garbage.</i>  <u>VANDALISM, LACK OF USE, LACK OF PROMOTION, WILDLIFE (COYOTES), SCHOOL POLICIES DISCOURAGING STUDENT USE?</u></p>
5.	<p>How often do you use the trail system? (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?</p> <p>About 4 times a week.            I use the trail system monthly.            Monthly.            Weekly.            Weekly.            Monthly.            Weekly.            Weekly.            Weekly.            Monthly, bimonthly.            Weekly.</p>

6.	<p>When you think of the trail system, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?</p> <p>Quiet. When I think of the trail system, the first thing that comes to mind is those little red diamonds on the trees to prevent people from getting lost. Quiet time. A little hike through nature. Escape. Bridges. Connection - 1 area of town to another. <i>No response.</i> <i>Quiet, tranquil.</i> <i>Green, peace.</i> <i>Peaceful place to walk.</i> PEACE, QUIETNESS, ESCAPE, BRIDGES, TRACTORS, A CONNECTOR, WORK TO DO, TRAIL MARKERS ON TREES (DIAMOND SHAPES IDENTIFYING TRAILS)</p>
7.	<p>Where do people come from to use the trails? (roads, sidewalks, directions, etc.)?</p> <p>Roads. Most people drive to and park. People mostly come from roads to use the trails. Sidewalks. Sidewalks. Sidewalks. School, runners. No response. <i>Road.</i> <i>Roads.</i> <i>Roads.</i> <i>Roads.</i> VEHICLES, CLOSE PROPERTIES, PIT, TENNIS COURTS, TAMARAC (SUBDIVISION), PARK ON CRANDALL ROAD (SAFETY ISSUE!)</p>
8.	<p>Where do people live who use the trails? (neighbourhoods, neighbouring communities, etc.)?</p> <p>Community. People who live in the neighbourhood come to use the trails. Neighbourhoods. Port Hawkesbury. Neighbourhoods. Town. Within two neighbourhoods of town. <i>Town.</i> <i>Upper Crandall, Lower Crandall, town &amp; us.</i> <i>Town and surrounding communities.</i> <i>Surrounding neighbourhoods.</i></p>

9.	<p>How do people get to the trail system? (automobile, bike, foot, etc.)?</p> <p>Walk. People get to the trail system by automobile. Automobile. Cars and walking. Automobile, foot. Automobile &amp; foot. Foot. <i>Foot.</i> <i>Automobile, foot.</i> <i>Majority automobile.</i> <i>Mostly automobile.</i> FOOT, CAR</p>
10.	<p>Can you show me your favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?</p> <p>No. My favourite part of the trail systems is the look-off on the Hemlock Trail. Kramer's Cut. The twin bridges (T4, T5) The top of old steep part of trail, huge pine tree. Bridges, look-off top of Kramer's Cut. No response. <i>Yeah, the look off.</i> <i>Yes - Upper and Lower Crandall.</i> <i>Fraggle Rock, T4 &amp; T5 twins [bridges]</i> <i>Tamarac - entire trail as it is (or will be once complete), very user friendly for runners, people with strollers, etc.</i> <i>Crandall - where Hemlock and Maple Trail meet, and the look off point at that spot.</i> LOOK OFF (LONE PINE BY KRAMER'S CUT), TWIN BRIDGES (T4, T5), T1 (BRIDGE), FRAGGLE ROCK, VARIETY, BESIDE T6 (REST STOP)</p>
11.	<p>Can you show me your least favourite part of the trails on a map? (or describe it)?</p> <p>No. My least favourite part of the trail systems is the muddy spots on the Tamarac Trail. No response. Fraggle Rock. Currently Fraggle Rock area. Oakley Field to T6. No response. <i>No response.</i> <i>Lower Crandall - swamp area.</i> <i>Grant's Pond entrance too wet.</i> <i>None, really. Crandall has muddy sections but those will be addressed as time goes on.</i> FRAGGLE ROCK (ROUGH), SWAMPY AREA (WEST OF CRANDALL ROAD)</p>

12.	<p>Who do you know is using the trail system now? (demographics, user activities, etc.?)</p> <p>Young families, dog owners.                  No response.                  No response.                  People in Port Hawkesbury, SATA, Schools, Community.                  Wide range.                  Students and some runners.                  No response.                  School.                  Walking dogs, snowshoeing, cross county skiing, runners.                  Families walking, dog walkers.                  Dog walkers, runners, hikers, mostly adults.                  SNOWSHOEING, CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNER ("IRON MAN"), DOG WALKERS, POKER WALK (EVENT)</p>
13.	<p>Who else would you like to see using the trail system in the future? (demographics, user activities, etc.?)</p> <p>School group, Brownies, Scouts.                  No response.                  No response.                  Everybody in the town/visitors                  Schools, groups, 4H, Girl Guides, teams.                  No response.                  Everyone, whole community.                  No response.                  Schools.                  Seniors, students.                  Youth - education opportunities re. nature.                  CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING TEAMS (TEC, SAERC), SCHOOLS (TEC ESPECIALLY), GROUPS (4-H, GUIDES, ETC.), "UPPER" AND "LOWER" USERS, SENIORS</p>
<p>Any other notes:</p> <p>*Map with [walking] distances</p>	

<p>Workshop 1: Part 2</p>	
<p>Getting There</p>	
1.	<p>Was it easy to find the trailhead (beginning of the trail system)?</p> <p>No response.                  It was easy to find the trailhead.                  Yes.                  Yes.                  No.                  No, too many zigs &amp; zags.                  No, better signage.</p>
2.	<p>Was it easy to find parking?</p> <p>No response.                  It was easy to find parking.                  Yes.                  Yes.                  Could be improved.                  Yes.                  Yes, but could be widened, more space</p>
3.	<p>Was parking adequate?</p> <p>No response.                  The parking was very adequate.                  Yes.                  No response.                  Could be improved.                  Yes.                  No.</p>
4.	<p>Were you confident about the route? (where you should walk, where you were going, etc.?)</p> <p>No response.                  I was very confident about this route because I know this trail very well.                  Yes.                  Yes.                  No response.                  Yes.                  Yes.</p>
<p>Any other notes:</p>	

Workshop 1: Part 2
Section 1
1. What did you like about this section?  The brook. No response. Down hill. Nice scenery. No response. No response. No response.
2. What did you dislike about this section?  Steep hill. No response. No response. Wash away. No response. No response. Washout at bottom.
3. What would you like to be able to do on this section?  Stop for a rest. Benches and tables for picnic. No response. No response. Prevent wash away. Rest area at T6. No response. Shelter.
4. Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?  Follow the brook a little further. No response. No response. Picnic table. No response. No response. No response.
5. What was most memorable about this section?  Brook. No response. Brook. Nice spot. No response. No response. No response.

6. Where would you take "selfies" on this section?  Don't do selfies. No response. No response. On the bridge. Bridge. No response. No response.
7. What would you take pictures of on this section?  By the brook. No response. No response. The bridge. No response. No response. By bridge.
8. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?  No response. No response. No response. No. No response. No response. No response.
Any other notes:



WORKSHOP 1: PART 2	
Kramer's Cut	
1. What did you like about this section?	Nice windy hill up Kramer's Cut. I liked the bridges. View. No. Twin bridges. The stream beside the trail. Bridges, larger pine trees. Good grade up the hill.
2. What did you dislike about this section?	Sit and read a book. I disliked all the hidden roots that someone could easily trip over and hurt themselves. No response. Wash away. No response. Requires more gravel & brush thinning. Washout at twin bridges.
3. What would you like to be able to do on this section?	Stop for a rest. Benches and tables for picnic. I would like to be able to sit and have a rest. Finish. Prevent wash away and add a picnic table. A look-off at the top. Repair storm damage. Rest stop at the top.
4. Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?	No. I wanted to explore the dark section of trees I saw. No response. No. The old trail big pine tree. No response. No response.
5. What was most memorable about this section?	Big pine tree. No response. No response. Twin bridges. Twin bridges. New cut. The way the section is cut into the hill.

6. Where would you take "selfies" on this section?	No response. No response. No response. The middle of the bridge. Pine, look-off, bridges. Bridges. No response.
7. What would you take pictures of on this section?	Pine tree and twin bridges. No response. Yes. Looking down Kramer's Cut and Twin Bridges. Stream. No response. Twin bridges.
8. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?	No response. No response. No response. No. No response. No response. No response.
Any other notes:	

Workshop 1: Part 2
Fraggle Rock
1. What did you like about this section?  Just so much to see / running water, rocky terrain. I liked all the different side-trails that you could venture off onto. View. Nothing. The stream. No response. Sound of water.
2. What did you dislike about this section?  A bit wet. No response. No response. Everything. Swampy area. No response. Not complete - ran closer to the stream.
3. What would you like to be able to do on this section?  Nice bench to sit. I would like a picnic table. Bypass. Make it better. More trail closer to stream. No response. No response.
4. Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?  Along the brook. No response. No. No. No response. No response. Stream.
5. What was most memorable about this section?  The rocks. No response. No response. Nothing. The stream, rock formation. No response. Mud.

6. Where would you take "selfies" on this section?  No response. No response. No response. Nowheres. Stream. No response. No response.
7. What would you take pictures of on this section?  Brook. No response. Yes. Nowheres. Stream. No response. No response.
8. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?  The rock formation. No response. No response. No. No response. No response. No response.
Any other notes:

Workshop 1: Part 2
Section 4
<p>1. What did you like about this section?</p> <p>Up and down, lots to see.          No response.          Close to school.          Look offs (a lot).          No response.          New T1 and T2, good sounds.          Openness, easy walking, graded nicely</p>
<p>2. What did you dislike about this section?</p> <p>No response.          No response.          No response.          Nothing.          No response.          Needs more gravel.          Section where [landscape] fabric popping up.</p>
<p>3. What would you like to be able to do on this section?</p> <p>Rest at bridge and enjoy brook.          No response.          No response.          Add a nice bench at a look off.          No response.          [illegible] brook at T1 bridge.          No response.</p>
<p>4. Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?</p> <p>No.          No response.          No.          No.          No response.          No response.          No response.</p>
<p>5. What was most memorable about this section?</p> <p>Bridge.          No response.          No response.          A look off.          No response.          Water, large trees.          T1 bridge.</p>

<p>6. Where would you take "selfies" on this section?</p> <p>No response.          No response.          No response.          The look off &amp; T6 [T1].          No response.          T1 bridge.          T1 bridge.</p>
<p>7. What would you take pictures of on this section?</p> <p>Water.          No response.          No response.          The look off &amp; T6 [T1].          No response.          No response.          No response.</p>
<p>8. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?</p> <p>No response.          No response.          No response.          No.          No response.          No response.          No response.</p>
<p>Any other notes:</p>

Workshop 1: Part 2	
Section 5	
1.	What did you like about this section?
2.	What did you dislike about this section?
3.	What would you like to be able to do on this section?
4.	Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?
5.	What was most memorable about this section?
6.	Where would you take "selfies" on this section?
7.	What would you take pictures of on this section?
8.	Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?
Any other notes:	

Workshop 1: Part 2	
Section 6	
1.	What did you like about this section?  Quiet and closed in. No response. No response. Nothing. No response. New. Easy walking.
2.	What did you dislike about this section?  Nothing. No response. No response. Nothing. No response. Requires thinning and gravel. No response.
3.	What would you like to be able to do on this section?  It's the start or finish - just want to get going. No response. No response. Park. No response. Rest. No response.
4.	Was there anywhere you wanted to be able to explore further on this section? (off the trail)?  No. No response. No response. No. No response. No. No response.
5.	What was most memorable about this section?  No response. No response. No response. Nothing. No response. T1. Easy walking.

6. Where would you take "selfies" on this section?
No response. No response. No response. No where. No response. No response. No response.
7. What would you take pictures of on this section?
No response. No response. No response. No where. No response. No response. No.
8. Was there anything you saw on this section you would like to know more about?
No response. No response. No response. No. No response. School access, lighting. No response.
9. Was it easy to find the trailhead (beginning of the trail system)?
Yes. No response. No response. Yes. No response. No. Bigger sign.
10. Was it easy to find parking?
No. No response. No response. No. No response. No. No response.

11. Was parking adequate?
I don't park. No response. No response. Yes. No response. Perhaps. No.
12. Were you confident about the route? (where you should walk, where you were going, etc.)?
Yes, very easy to follow. No response. No response. Yes. No response. Yes. Yes.
Any other notes:

**APPENDIX E:** November 29, 2016 Questionnaire Results

Workshop 2: Parts 1 + 2	
1.	<p>Celebrating Points of Interest (Total: 20 € / Nickels: 3 / Pennies: 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look-off at Kramer's Cut</li> <li>• Consider all four seasons; tell stories about the points of interest</li> <li>• Lone Pine</li> <li>• Completed with benches and tables</li> <li>• Incorporate stories in QR codes</li> <li>• Having benches and rest areas at our points of interest</li> <li>• More look-offs; shelter for rain/snow</li> <li>• Benches and rest stop</li> </ul>
2.	<p>Supporting New Uses (16 € / Nickels: 3 / Pennies: 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disc golf?</li> <li>• Winter grooming: spook walk at Halloween; Christmas walk</li> <li>• MPAL [municipal physically active leadership] coordinator to be contacted</li> <li>• Having our local schools use the trail more; snowshoeing with headlamps or full moon</li> <li>• More use with school; snowshoeing full moon</li> <li>• Grooming for snowshoeing and cross country skiing</li> </ul>
3.	<p>Improving Wayfinding (14 € / Nickels: 1 / Pennies: 9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trailheads should be similar in appearance; distance in time as well as distance; use of overhead view with interesting waypoints</li> <li>• Trailhead at the playground; aids for distances and estimated times</li> <li>• QR codes and app support</li> <li>• Make signage at every entrance/intersection</li> <li>• Consider plain language &amp; font size</li> <li>• Signs and locations; keep signage and benches rustic</li> <li>• Signs but do not look new</li> </ul>
4.	<p>Completing the Trails (11 € / Nickels: 2 / Pennies: 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fraggle Rock Completion</li> <li>• Full gravel walkway</li> <li>• Trailheads; mixed surface</li> <li>• Trail finished to Oaklee Bagley Field; shredded tires used to improve drainage; bridges; areas that need gravel; no extensions - finish what has been started!</li> <li>• Bridges; fill in mud</li> <li>• Finish gravel</li> </ul>
5.	<p>Improving Trail Experience (10 € / Nickels: 1 / Pennies: 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree of difficulty</li> <li>• Better parking; addition of shelters</li> <li>• Consider winter use</li> <li>• Benches; rest area; solar lighting at entrances</li> <li>• Rustic benches; carvings; stone inukshuks; outdoor classroom on the trail at T1 bridge (IMPORTANT)</li> <li>• Natural benches and tables for rests; outdoor classroom</li> </ul>
6.	<p>Leaving a Lasting Legacy (3 € / Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize walks to attract new people and volunteers; have information sessions</li> <li>• Put signs up around town</li> </ul>
6.	<p>Planning for Possible Emergencies (3 € / Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a marker every so often</li> <li>• Outreach to EHS and Fire Department</li> <li>• Number on signs with trail locations; number or name trail locations</li> <li>• Phone numbers on signs</li> </ul>
6.	<p>Increasing Awareness (3 € / Nickels: 0 / Pennies: 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trailheads; website and Facebook</li> <li>• Form of celebration to kick off</li> <li>• Functions on the trail (information sessions, poker runs)</li> <li>• OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT T1 TEC</li> <li>• Group activities</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX F:** Vision Document





**PORT HAWKESBURY TRAILS**  
**our vision**

**“Collective creativity does not mean giving up your own point of view [...] It simply means a commitment to accept other’s input and to strive collectively and creatively to find a solution which is the aggregate of all inputs.”**  
**-Lawrence Halprin**



**W**hose vision for the Port Hawkesbury Trails are you reading right now? I was privileged to have a part in it, but it’s not mine. The vision is ours. It doesn’t just belong to runners, dog-walkers, elementary school students, retirees, or Town employees. It actually belongs to all of them... and more. It’s the outcome of our collective creativity. This is **our** vision.

We freely admit we weren’t able to involve the whole community. We realized that would be more than a little difficult to organize. But a surprisingly diverse group of people volunteered their time and effort to work together to create our vision. The group consisted of younger and older, male and female, private business-people and public sector employees. Most were volunteer members of the Strait Area Trails Association and others were community members invited to represent various demographics or interest groups.

I was honoured to work as a member of the group and to put our work together into the document you’re reading. This project will serve as part of my final project (practicum) for my Master of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Manitoba. My practicum will be available in the University of Manitoba Library system. You can find out more on <ADDRESS.umanitoba.ca>. If you have questions about this vision document, please feel free to contact me by email at <macleod5@myumanitoba.ca>.

We held five different workshops to create our vision. The first was an information session about the overall process and explanation of the informed consent forms required by the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board.

The second was an information gathering workshop where we pooled our information and walked a section of trail together to reflect on our experience. During the third we summarized and ranked our objectives from the information gathered previously. In the fourth workshop we looked at design options to achieve our objectives and decided which we preferred. The fifth workshop was a detailed discussion of the preferred designs and what steps were needed to make our vision reality.

How is this vision document supposed to be used? Think of it more as a tool than a blueprint. It’s supposed to be a catalogue of items and ideas that can be adapted for different situations and used in different ways. It’s supposed to be flexible. It isn’t supposed to be a rigid master plan that sets out every single feature in detail. It should be as helpful when deciding what to build as when applying for money to buy more materials.

Our vision begins with the objectives we discovered during out workshops. It goes on to explain our logo and the story behind it. It lays out the logic behind the part of our wayfinding strategy. It also explains our shelters and furnishings and the different ways they can be used. Finally, it explains how we hope to promote the trails in different seasons and for different uses.

Thanks for letting me help! See you on the trails,

**Nathan MacLeod**  
 Graduate Student, Faculty of Landscape Architecture,  
 University of Manitoba



The objectives of our vision were the product of our second workshop. Based on responses given on a questionnaire before and during a group walk of the Tamarac Trail, we identified eight different objectives for our vision of the Port Hawkesbury Trails.

We ranked the objectives using an exercise called, "If my time was money, where would you spend it?" Given a nickel and three pennies, people were asked to place the nickel on the objective they cared most about. They could spend the remaining three pennies wherever they chose, including their number one choice. When we totaled the money placed on each objective, the values ranked the importance of the different objectives to the group with a three-way tie for sixth place. Note that all of the objectives are important to the group. The ranking simply helped us identify the ones we wanted to address most thoroughly in our vision document.

The objectives are ranked in the following list.

- 1. Celebrating points of interest.** This could mean building lookoffs, placing benches or picnic tables, or placing signage, etc. to draw attention to key features on the trails.
  - 2. Supporting new uses.** This could mean organizing winter grooming to support snow-shoeing and skiing, planning new events, or promoting the trails as an outdoor classroom for school subjects, etc.
  - 3. Improving wayfinding.** This could mean designing more effective trailheads, placing navigational signs, designing QR codes for app support, better identifying trails, etc.
  - 4. Completing the trails.** This could mean designing and building boardwalks over wet areas, finishing surfacing, managing washouts, improving trail connections, thinning brush, etc.
  - 5. Improving trail experience.** This could mean designing more effective trailheads, implementing a garbage management strategy, placing shelters, placing seating, improving parking areas, etc.
  - 6. Planning for possible emergencies.** This could mean placing distance markers along trails for easily reporting the location of emergencies to first responders, funding specialized equipment for trail rescues, distributing trail maps to first responders, implementing a wildlife management strategy, etc.
- Leaving a lasting legacy.** This could mean attracting new volunteers, transferring leadership, planning for continued funding and maintenance, managing vandalism, etc.
- Increasing awareness.** This could mean designing more effective trailheads, creating a promotional strategy, attracting new users, outreach to community groups and teams, building community spirit, etc.



# PORT HAWKESBURY TRAILS



PORT HAWKESBURY TRAILS



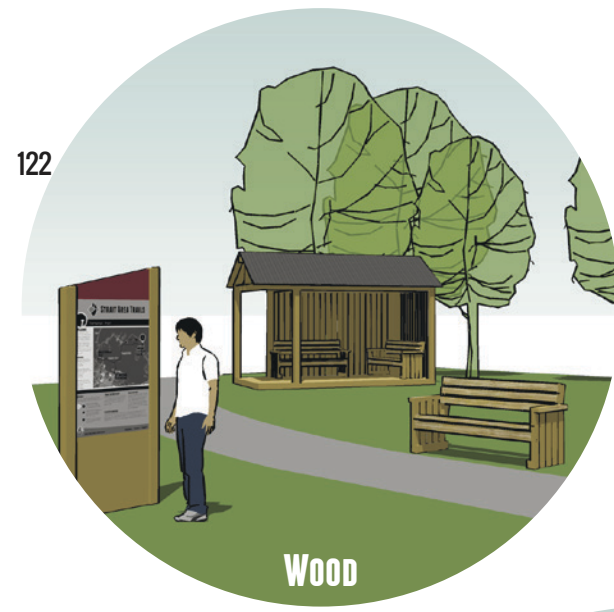
PORT HAWKESBURY TRAILS

A visual identity would be useful in achieving several of our objectives. For example, promotional material for could be more effective with a recognizable logo to represent the trails. "Improving Wayfinding," "Increasing Awareness," and "Supporting New Uses" will probably involve printed material that would typically feature a logo or other visual identity. Furthermore, like a political flag, a logo can serve as a source of pride in addition to providing a recognizable symbol.

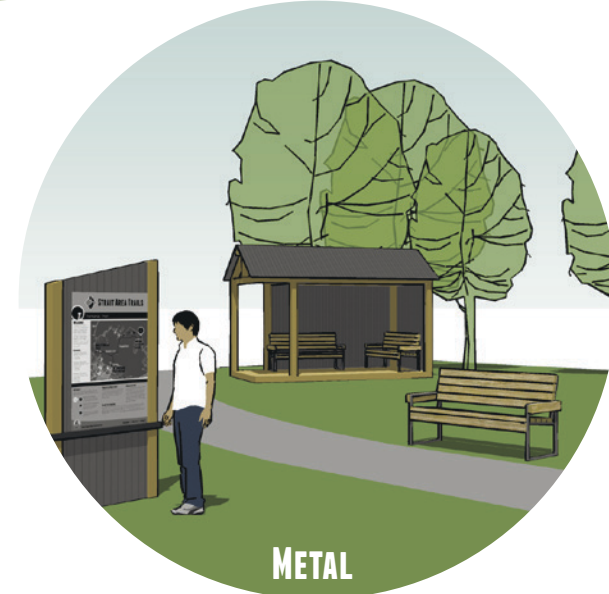
So what represents the Port Hawkesbury Trails? One of the questions we answered in the second workshop was "When you think of the trail system, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?" Some of the responses were: quietness, tranquility, escape, the little red diamonds on the trees to prevent people from getting lost, quiet time, a hike through nature, escape, bridges, a peaceful place to walk, tractors, connector, work to do, and green. These responses were used as the inspiration to create our logo, as described below.

Of the different logo options we considered, we settled on a basic diamond shape to represent the trail markers on the trees. The logo features two coniferous trees that form the top of the diamond with a sweeping curve leading upwards into the trees. The curve represents the trails and the escape they offer into the peace of nature represented by the trees. The name "Port Hawkesbury Trails" is included in Franchise font. The logo is simple, clean, and memorable.

Shown left, the logo can be configured in colour, greyscale, or black & white. It can also be configured with the text centred below, centred right, or in line with the bottom of the logo.



WOOD



METAL



RUSTIC

The top two objectives in our vision are to “Celebrate Points of Interest” and to “Support New Uses.” We decided the most efficient way to address both is to create structures that can be used in different locations and for different purposes. These structures can be used to celebrate points of interest *and* support new uses. For example, a shelter structure can draw attention to a particularly interesting view *and* provide a windbreak for cross country skiers. We decided to focus on designing four key items: a bench, table, a shelter, and a trailhead. By providing variations of these items, we can use them for various applications.

What should the items look like? Three different design themes were presented to the group - inspired by information gathered during the workshops. A common design theme for all the structures helps create a visual identity for the trails as a whole. The themes were wood, metal, and rustic. The “wood” theme featured all wood construction using standard wood dimensions and was based on the construction and appearance of the bridges previously built by volunteers. The “metal” theme featured wood and metal construction and preserved some of the appearance of the bridges but included metal features to be fabricated in collaboration with the local community college. The “rustic” theme featured all wood construction but featured natural tree trunks and limbs as design elements. As a group, we decided the structures and furniture would be designed using the “rustic” theme.

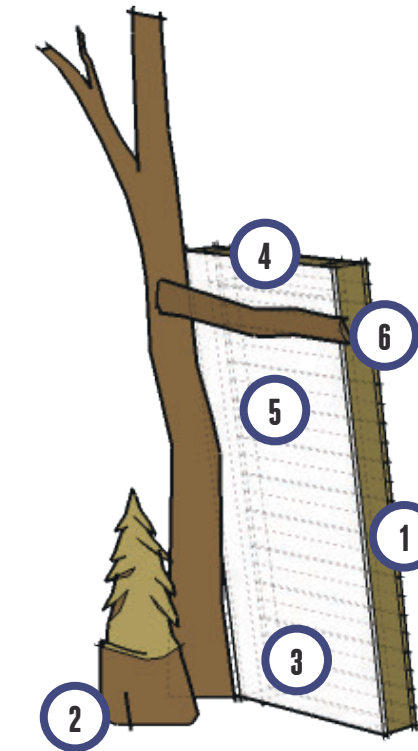
The “rustic” theme still incorporates the materials and building techniques used in our existing bridges, but also features natural tree trunks and limbs. This allows us to incorporate the

work of one of our younger volunteers who creates chainsaw art using tree trunks and stumps. The “rustic” theme also responds to comments we received that trail elements should “not look new.” Further benefits to the “rustic” theme are ease of construction, ease of repair, and the reinforcement of the idea that the trails represent escape to nature.

Consistent with the idea that this vision document should be a used as a catalogue, the designs for these structures and furnishings are not detailed construction drawings. They provide materials and key dimensions, but depend on the carpentry skills of the volunteers already demonstrated in building bridges and boardwalks.

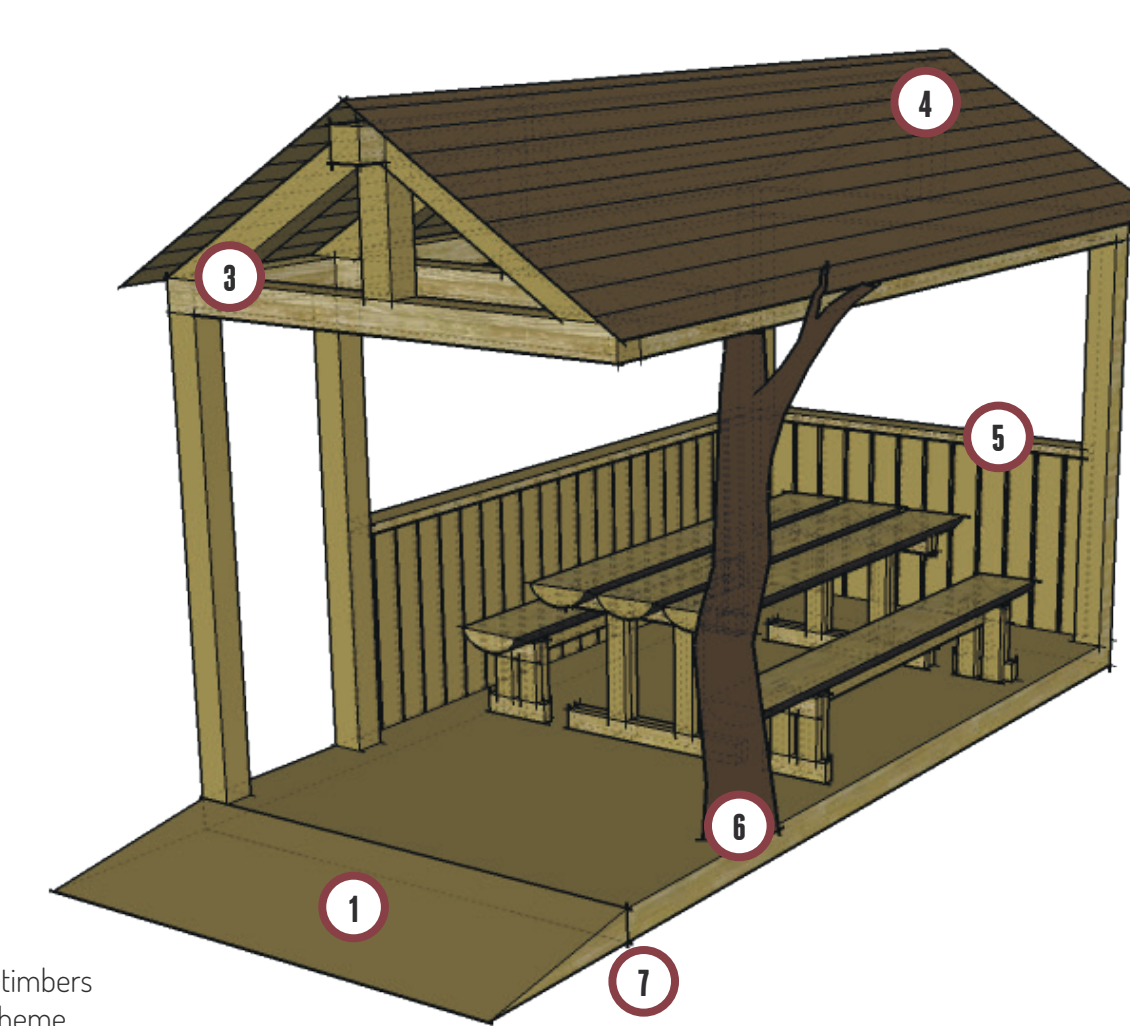
A useful way to think of the items may be as building blocks that can be put together in different configurations (e.g. two benches plus a table creates a picnic area - or six benches plus a table creates an outdoor classroom.) Some items feature variations for different applications. For example, the bench can be built with an arm and a back for maximum comfort. It can also be built with an arm but no back for locations where people may wish to sit facing in two directions. It can also be built with no arm or back for use with a table or in an outdoor classroom.

NOTES: stumps as seating, perceived safety, two views per shelter, accessibility, maximum area (building permits).



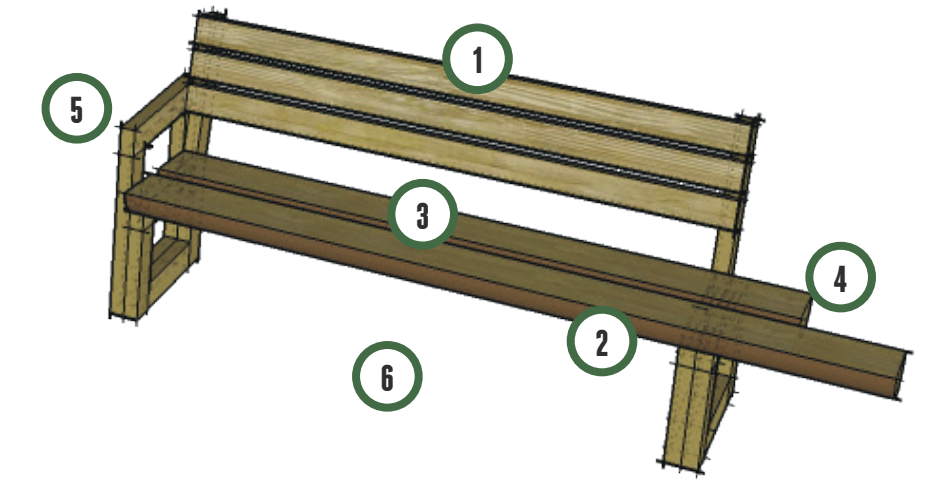
#### TRAILHEAD FEATURES

1. Trailhead built combination of lumber and natural timbers (hemlock or durable equivalent) to convey rustic theme
2. Trailhead features original chainsaw carving by Marc Timmons in natural timber (hemlock or durable equivalent)
3. Trailhead features 4'x8" aluminum printed wayfinding graphic
4. Trailhead features large Port Hawkesbury Trails logo at top
5. Trailhead features wayfinding information and trails policies at bottom for up-close legibility
6. Trailhead to be configured with timber cross-bar directing towards trail entrance



#### SHELTER FEATURES

1. Shelter to be easily accessible by means of earthen or wood ramp
2. Shelter built using timber-frame construction to convey rustic theme
3. Shelter evokes the image of a cabin (complete with front porch) to reinforce the idea of the trails offering escape
4. Shelter roofed with wood shingles or clapboards for easy construction and repair with volunteer skill
5. Shelter features 3'-6" half wall to give shelter from wind while providing sightlines for a sense of security
6. Shelter built with natural timber (hemlock or durable equivalent) to convey rustic theme
7. Shelter is fully open on two sides to optimize two views
8. Shelter designed to fall under the minimum floor area for structures requiring municipal building permits



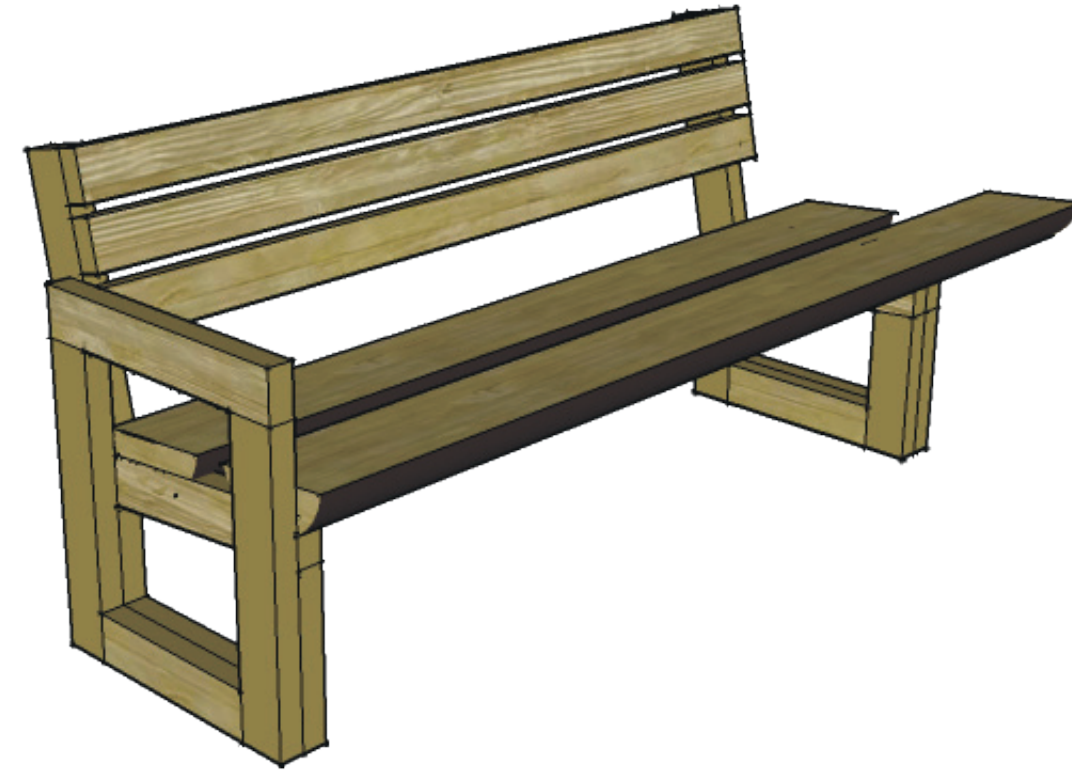
#### BENCH FEATURES

1. Bench built using 2x4 lumber for easy construction and repair with volunteer skill
2. Bench seat built with rip-sawn natural timber (hemlock or durable equivalent)
3. Bench seat angled for comfort and water drainage
4. Bench features extended timbers to convey rustic theme
5. Single bench arms help people with limited mobility to get up from bench
6. Bench features space to allow people to get their feet under them when getting up

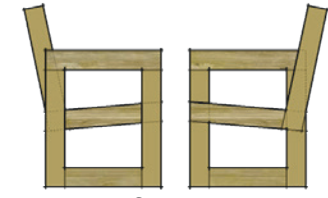


# BENCH

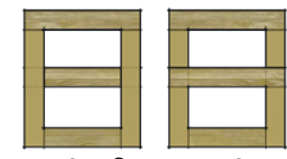
24



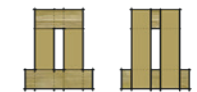
## FRAME DETAILS:



Configuration 1

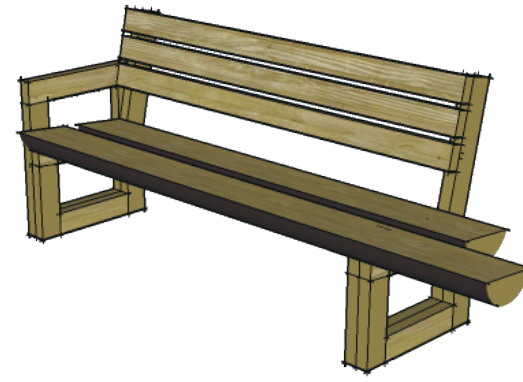


Configuration 2

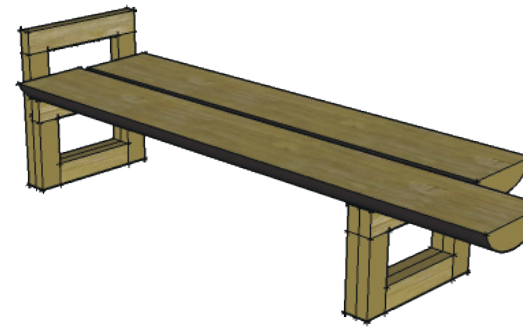


Configuration 3

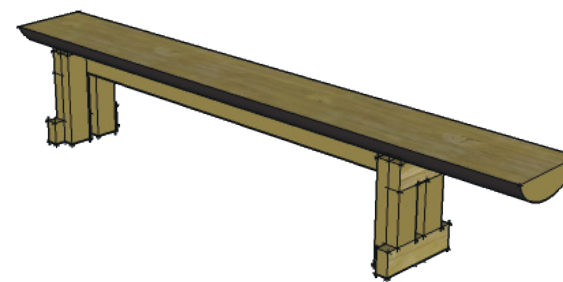
## OUR SHELTERS & FURNITURE



**CONFIGURATION 1:** Select for typical use

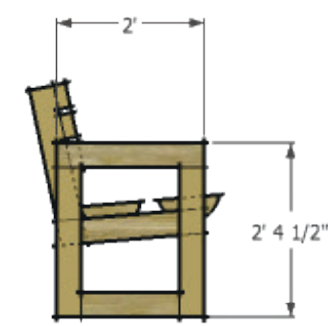
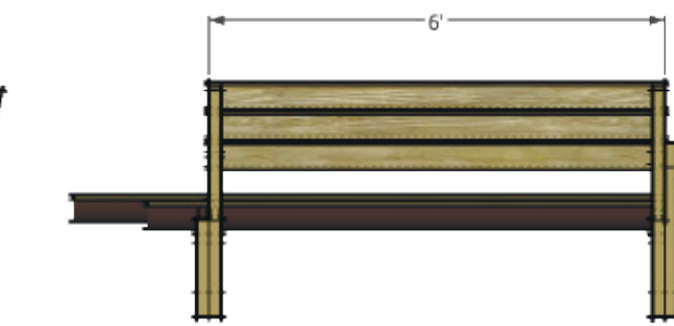


**CONFIGURATION 2:** Select for users to face either direction



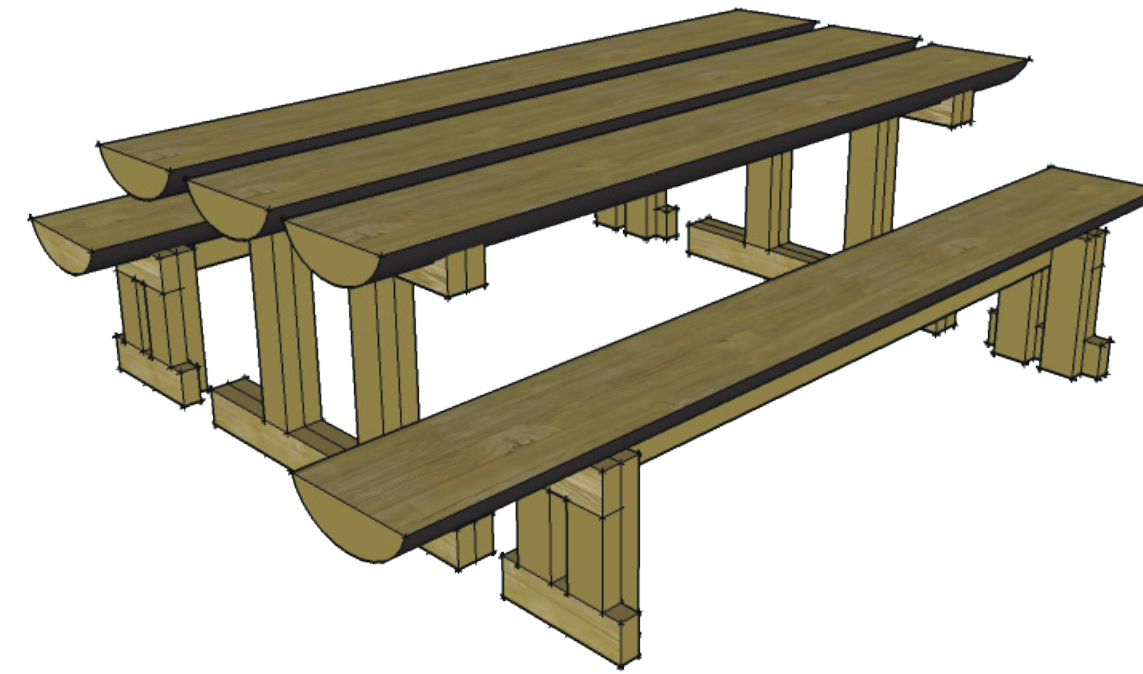
**CONFIGURATION 3:** Select for use with table or in classroom

## BENCH SCHEMATIC:

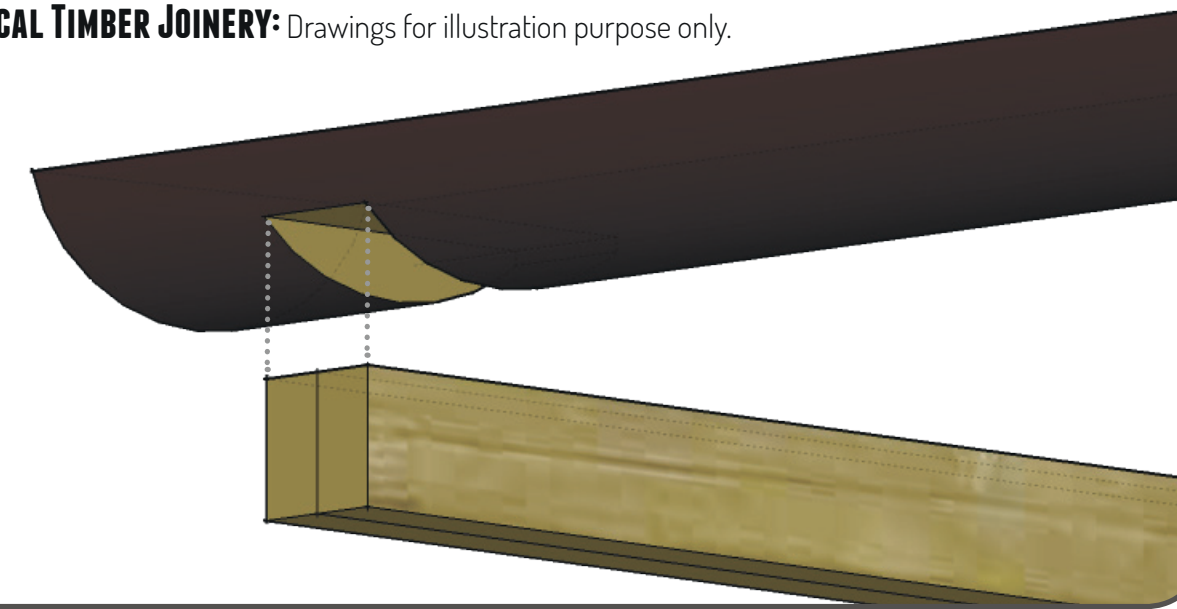


# TABLE

125



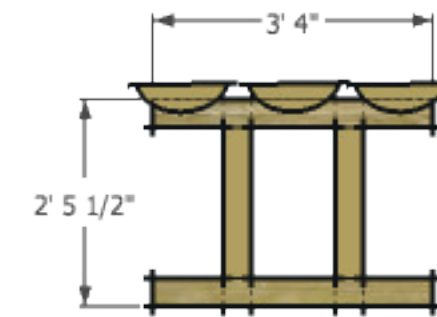
## TYPICAL TIMBER JOINERY:



## OUR SHELTERS & FURNITURE

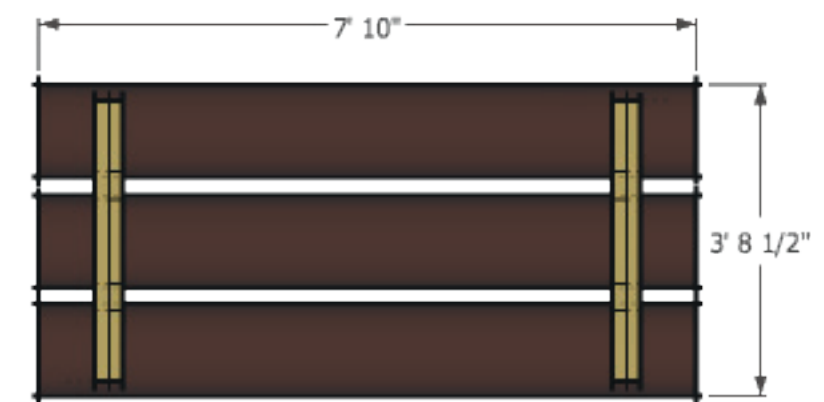
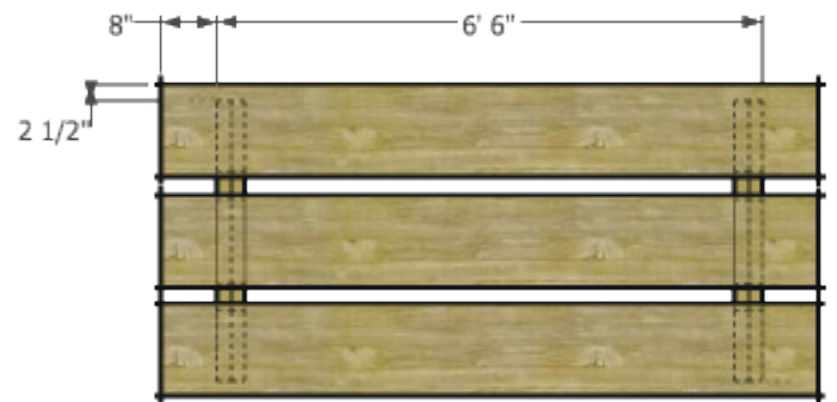
## TABLE SCHEMATIC:

Drawings for illustration purpose only. NTS.



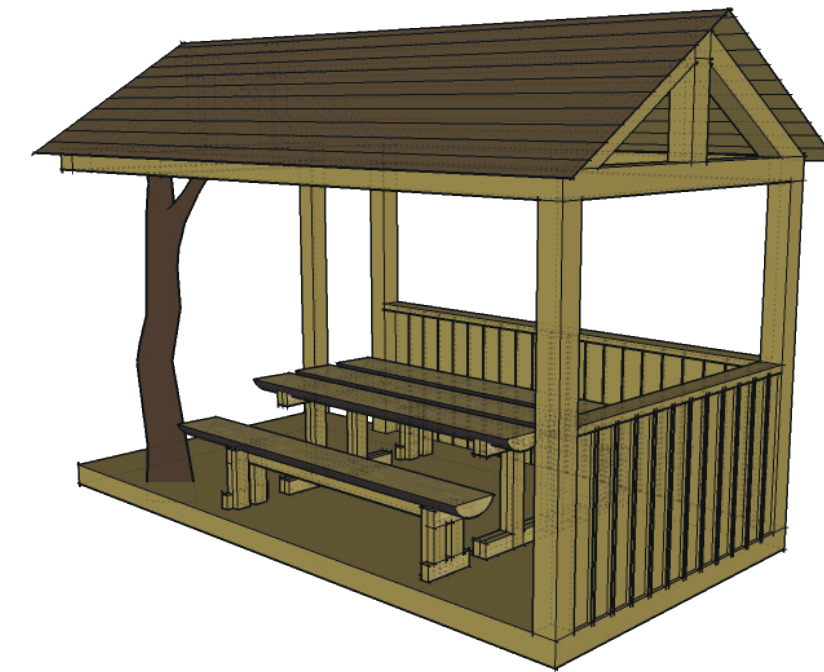
2' 5 1/2"

2' 8"

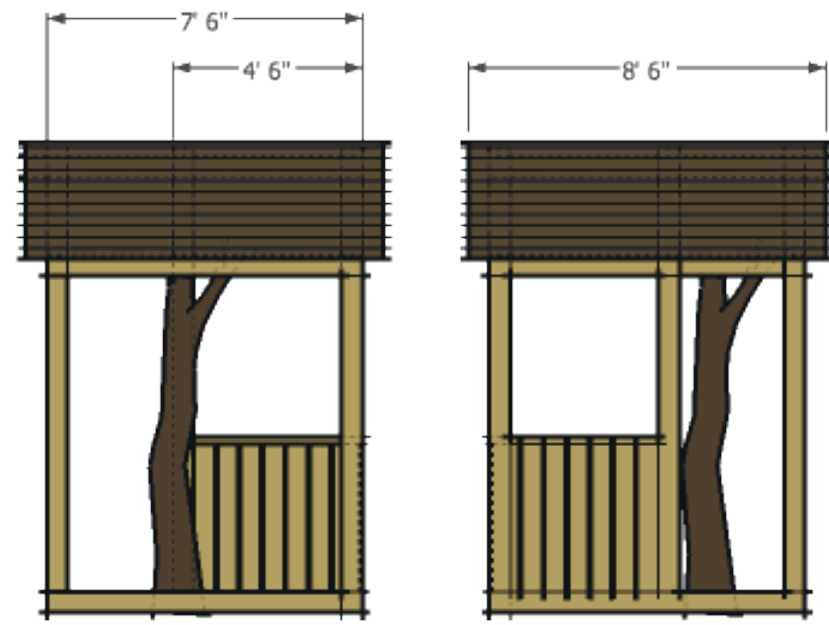


# SHELTER

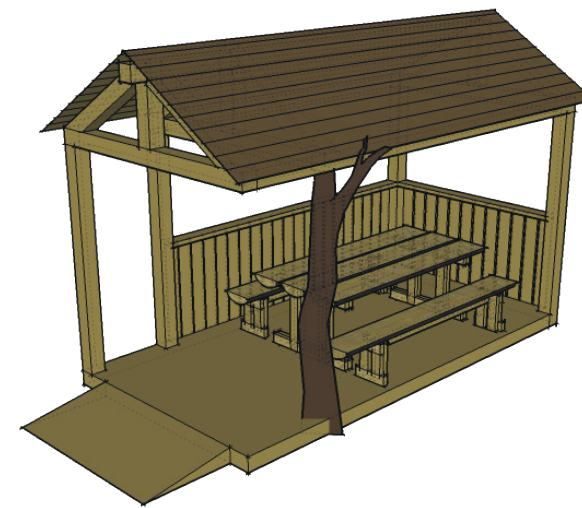
26



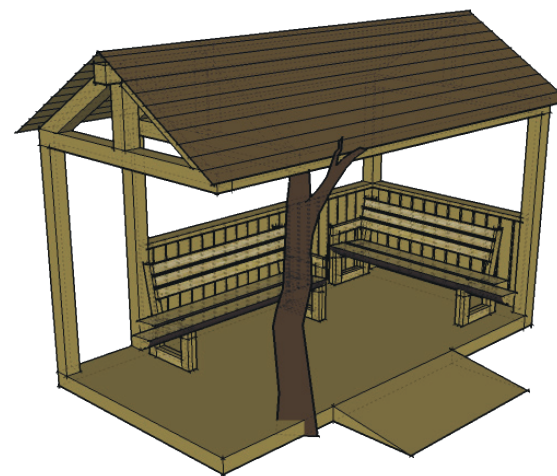
**CONFIGURATION 3:** Typical dimensions



## OUR SHELTERS & FURNITURE



**CONFIGURATION 1:** Select for use with picnic table

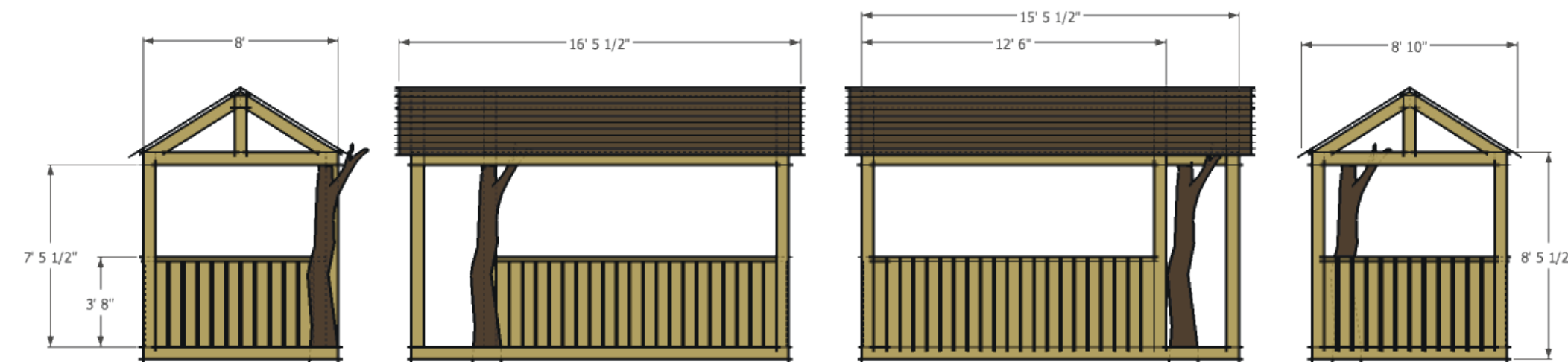


**CONFIGURATION 2:** Select for use with two significant views



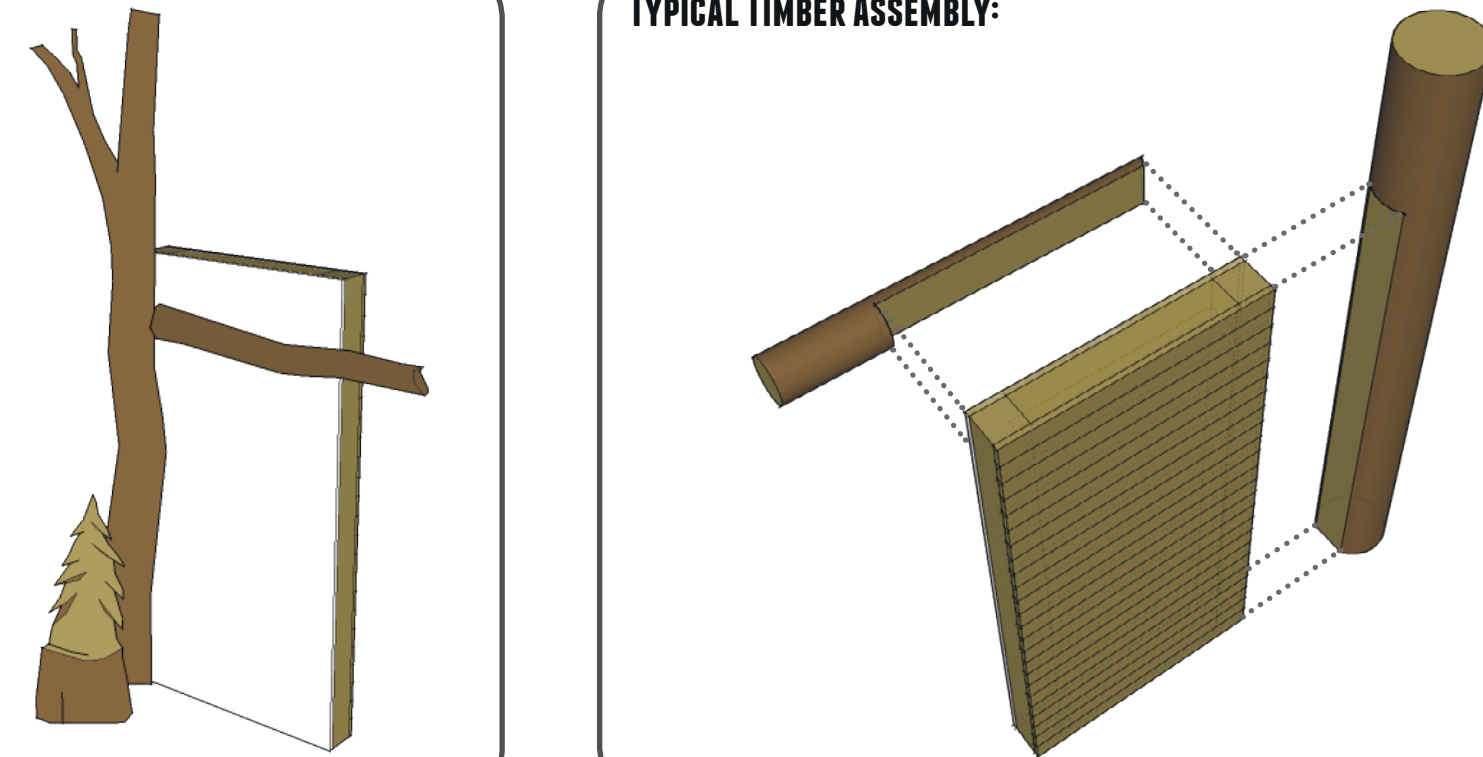
**CONFIGURATION 3:** Select for rest stop

**SHELTER SCHEMATIC:** Drawings for illustration purpose only. NTS.



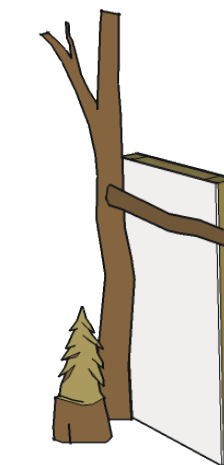
# TRAILHEAD

**TYPICAL TIMBER ASSEMBLY:**

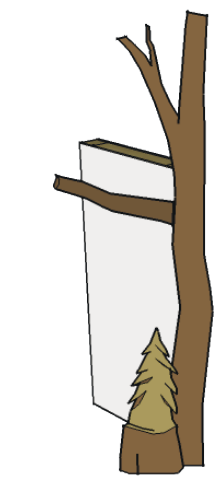


## OUR SHELTERS & FURNITURE

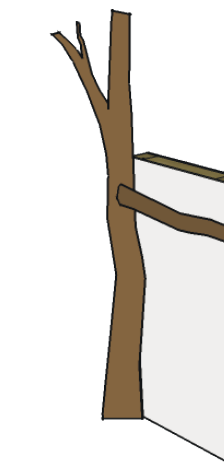
127



**CONFIGURATION 1:** Select if trail entrance is right of trailhead

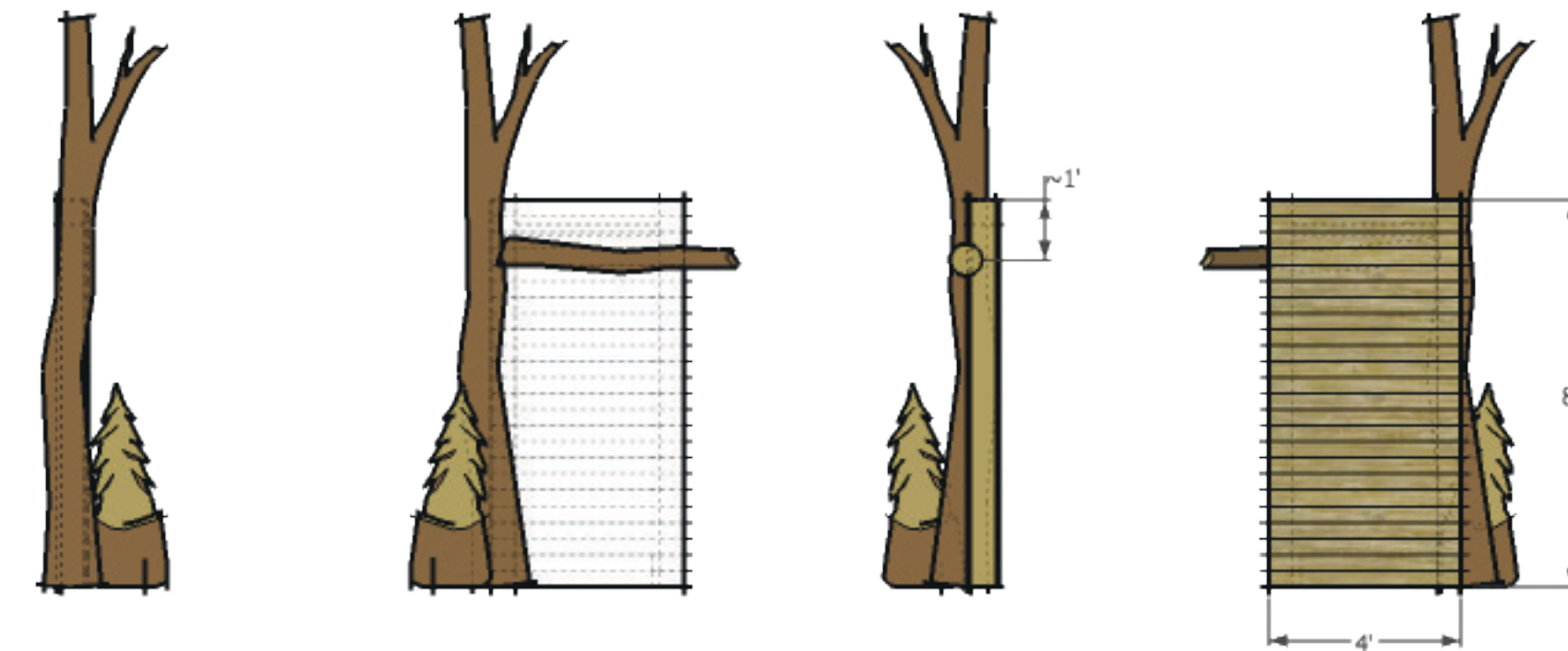


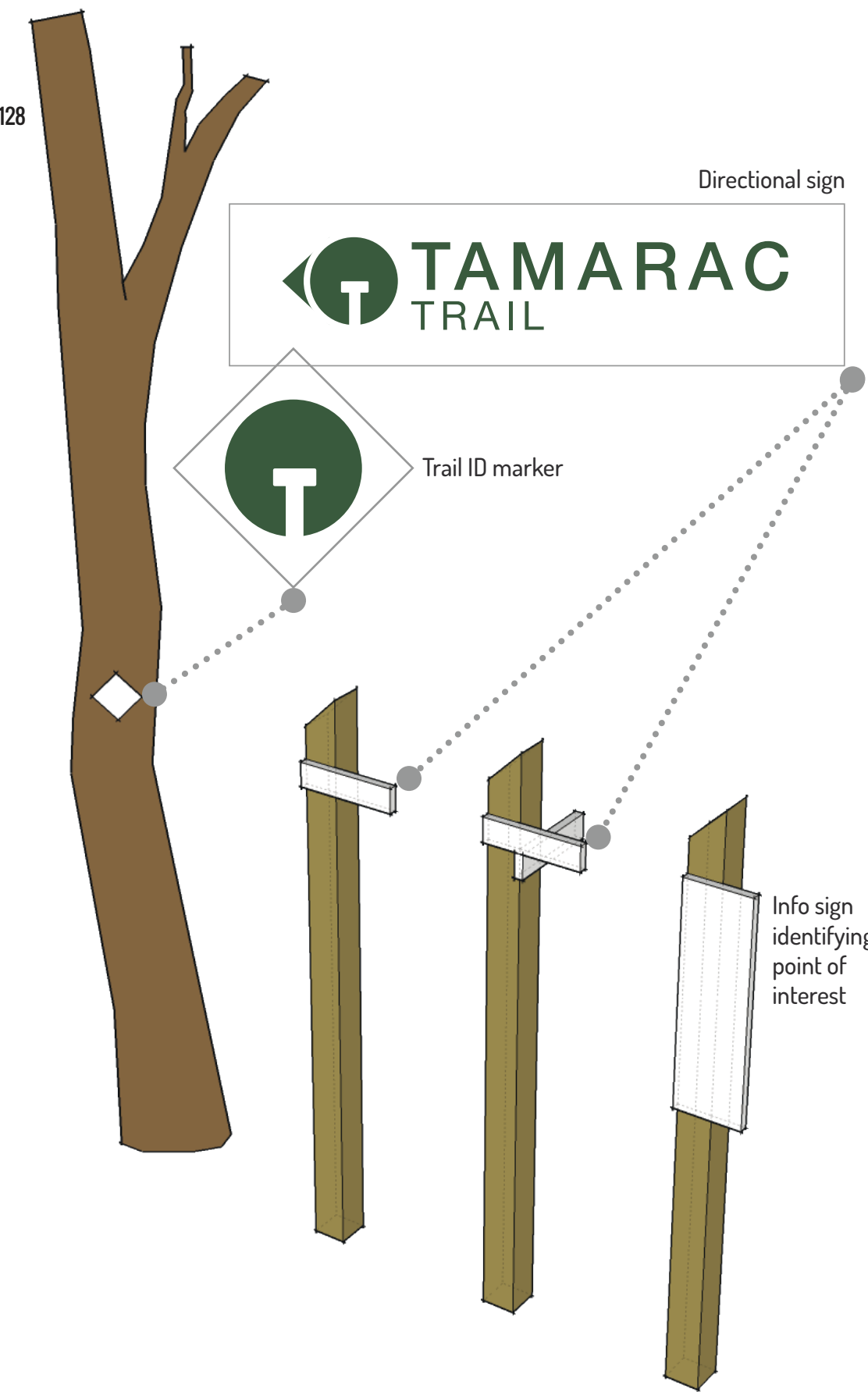
**CONFIGURATION 2:** Select if trail entrance is left of trailhead



**CONFIGURATION 3:** Select for lower traffic trailheads

**TRAILHEAD SCHEMATIC:** Drawings for illustration purpose only. NTS.





## PORT HAWKESBURY TRAILS

**DIFFICULTY LEVELS**  
Our trails feature three difficulty levels:

- Family Trail (Easy)**  
Gravel surface, rest stops, full signage. No wet areas.
- Nature Trail (Moderate)**  
Mixed surface, some trail upgrades, full signage. Some wet areas.
- Wilderness Trail (Hard)**  
Limited signage. Frequent wet areas.

**WALKING TIMES**  
The average human walking speed is around 3km/h. This means it will take most people around 10 minutes to walk 500m.

**WELCOME!**  
Thanks for visiting! If you'd like to help us make the trails even better, visit our website and facebook page to learn about volunteer opportunities. You can find us at <a href='\"#\">www.straittrails.com</a> and <a href='\"#\">facebook.com/straittrails</a>. If you see anything that needs maintenance please contact the Town of Port Hawkesbury Public Works Department at (902) 625-1975.

Please note there are no garbage cans located on the trails. For everyone's enjoyment, please take your trash with you. Pack it in, pack it out!

SUNRISE TO 10PM

EMERGENCY? DIAL 911

PLEASE AND THANK YOU

### OUR WAYFINDING

Our wayfinding strategy is an adaptation of an existing project commissioned by the Town of Port Hawkesbury. With use, people have identified limitations of the existing wayfinding project. Specifically, some users find it difficult to orient themselves when looking at the trail maps. Furthermore, due to budget limitations when developing the previous strategy, it features small signs marking each trail instead of prominent trailheads. Finally, there was limited provision for navigation/trail identification while on the trails themselves. Our new wayfinding strategy uses components of the old strategy while improving mapping, trail navigation, and trailheads.

Some key objectives for our wayfinding strategy were communicating distance in both metres and time, identifying a difficulty level for each trail, communicating our “pack it in, pack it out” garbage policy, and telling people what to do in case of an emergency.

Some key considerations for designing components of our wayfinding strategy were that fonts should be easily legible, words should avoid jargon and the amount of text should be kept to a minimum. Trail identification should be colour and shape-coded so that colourblind people may also navigate effectively.

We've designed our wayfinding strategy to be effective at different scales. Some components are legible from a car. Some components attract attention to where trails begin. Some components are meant to be read by a trail user for navigation or identifying points of interest.

### OUR FOUR SEASONS



An important objective in our vision (ranked second of eight) is to “support new uses.” The primary way we expect to accomplish this is through structures and furniture. For example, these can be used to support future winter use by providing shelter and future school use by providing outdoor classrooms. However, an important component of supporting new uses is raising awareness. People aren't likely to use the trails for new uses if don't think they're able to - or the possibility never occurs to them.

Below are a list of ideas we developed while creating this vision for supporting new uses. Some ideas refer to potential new uses, while others refer to increasing support for existing uses.

- Summer and winter brochure distribution to raise awareness of the trails and the possibility of winter use.
- Promote existing snowshoe rental program offered through the Town of Port Hawkesbury Recreation Department.
- Promote the trails as an outdoor classroom to SAERC and TEC. Consider building a physical outdoor classroom using the furniture illustrated in our vision.
- Create geocaches throughout the trail system to encourage people to explore new trails.
- Contact YMCA about using the trail for running clubs, fitness classes, etc.
- Contact MPAL coordinator(s) about increased collaboration.

- Draft a promotional letter or email to send to local groups or teams (Guides, 4-H, etc.) who may be able to make better use of the trails
- Consider options for trails grooming during the winter to support cross country skiing or showshoeing.
- Organize disc golf events (rent or make targets, then organize community tournament)
- Midnight or full moon snowshoeing
- Kickoff celebrations for completion of trail projects
- Reindeer run/Holiday walks
- Spook walks
- Terry Fox Run
- Poker runs/walks
- Easter egg hunts
- Create and promote hashtag to share trails photos on various social media platforms (e.g. #iusethe trails, #PHKtrailtales, #mytownmytrails, #PHKtrails, etc.) Choose through online contest? School contest?
- Promote the existing trails Facebook page by posting a weekly “Trails Tuesday” image, fact, event, etc.