

OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACES

educating through design



Specialists in planning, designing, and building Outdoor Learning Classrooms, with the consultation of Indigenous Elders and professional educators.

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THE GARDEN OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Located at the University of Manitoba's Fort Garry Campus, Turtle Garden was designed to honour the victims of Canada's Residential School System. It is a place for all Canadians to gather, to remember the atrocities committed, pay their respects, and continue the healing process.

The Turtle Garden project incorporates several symbols of Indigenous culture. The overall design focuses on bringing attention to the practices, beliefs, and traditions of our Indigenous people. The east-facing turtle was chosen to honour the Anishinaabe creation story of Turtle Island, and its importance in the Seven Sacred Teachings. The turtle faces the rising sun, representing the dawn of a new day on the path of healing.

Surrounding the turtle is a paved walkway in the style and colours of the traditional medicine wheel. An inner ring containing thirteen darker paving stones signifies the annual cycles of the moon. The turtle sits in a red shale rock garden with medicinal and native prairie plants.



NIIGAANAKI DAY CARE GARDEN

The goal of this design was to create a safe and enriched learning environment for the day care children and staff. Niigaanaki Day Care Centre is located adjacent to a parking lot, and was enclosed only by an old, dilapidated fence. Perimeter security was a daily concern for staff.

This project included:

- Replacing the wooden fence with chain link, improving visibility and reducing the likelihood of overnight intruders
- Cedar privacy screen with whiteboard to facilitate outdoor teaching
- A large boulder for staff seating, surrounded by a children's seating area made of 100% recycled rubber
- Cinder block vegetable planter wall created from recycled materials
- Cedar reconstruction of an old, City of Winnipeg phone booth for children to play with
- Wood sailboat and dock mock-up to create elements of an imaginary lake area
- Cedar sandbox representing water
- Cedar bench, built around the base of a tree so as not to disturb the existing natural elements, and shaded by the canopy
- Funhouse-style mirrors
- A metal shed for storage and security for toys and teaching supplies



MEDICINE WHEEL OF INDIGENOUS LEARNING

Located at the University of Manitoba's Bannatyne Campus, the Medicine Wheel Learning Garden is to be primarily used by the Faculty of Medicine to expand cross-cultural understanding of Canada's First Nation's heritage.

The Medicine Wheel Garden is the first phase of a larger project focusing on the sacred teachings of the Indigenous People. Working closely with Indigenous Elders, medical doctors, and the U of M Physical Plant, the first of four planned Outdoor Learning Classroom phases has been established. This design incorporates many aspects of Indigenous symbolism as well as traditional medicinal plants.

Anchoring the medicine wheel is a Sacred and Mighty Tree. In First Nations cultures, the Sacred Tree is a powerful symbol representing the link between human health and that of the natural world. Raised, wooden planters exhibit medicinal flora, while specially-placed boulders outline the paths spreading from the center.

These paths separate four rock gardens, which are coloured red, white, yellow, and black in accordance with Indigenous tradition. An outer ring of paving stones completes the circle.

The three remaining phases of this project will be developed as the university secures additional funding. Future Outdoor Learning Classrooms will incorporate themes that honour local Inuit and Métis cultures. Our long-term goals are to preserve First Nations teachings and traditional knowledge. Western scientific and medical communities are increasingly recognizing the value of these medicinal plants.



GOLDEN DOOR GERIATRIC RETIREMENT CENTRE

Working closely with the owners and facility managers, we identified the specific needs of the centre's residents and their families. The gardens were designed and built to be a safe place for healing and relaxation. A primary goal of the garden design was to include features that stimulated all 5 human senses; sound, sight, smell, taste, and touch.

Fragrant, flowering trees and plants, a bird feeder, and a water feature provide a meditative experience and attract bees and birds. Several beautiful raised stone planters allow residents to plant annual flowers and vegetable gardens. The entire project was designed with wheelchair and walker-accessible patios and paths.

Cedar pergolas, benches, and custom B. Locke furniture were included. Beautiful shade trees, colourful shrubs, boulders, and tumbled stone walls complete the warm and welcoming environment.



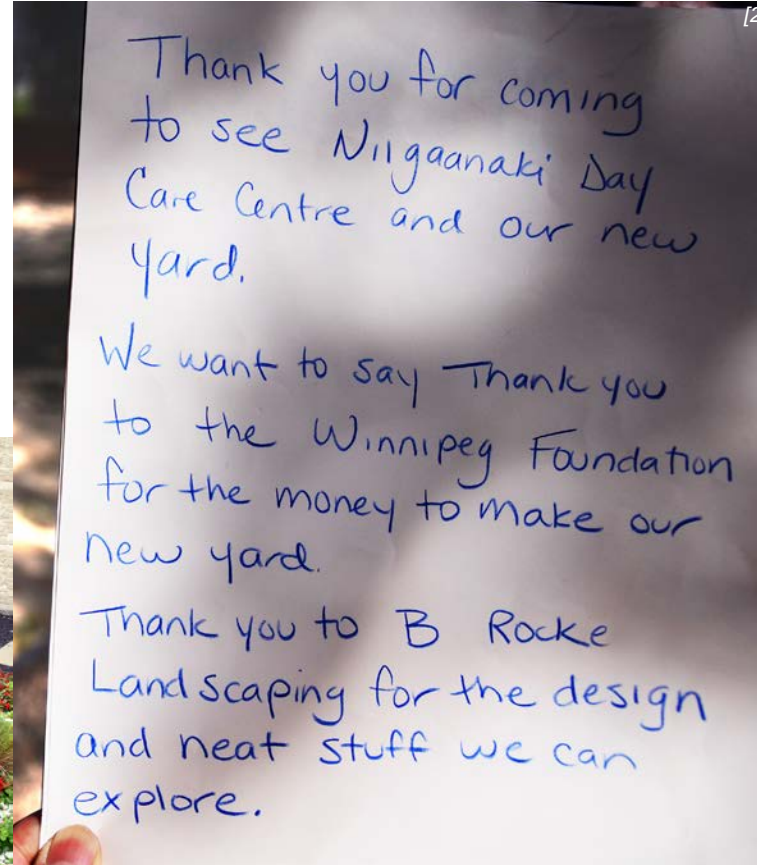
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

[1] Panoramic view of the completed Medicine Wheel Garden, a public space where members of the community can get involved with First Nations teachings and culture.

[2] Thank You letter written on behalf of the kids at the Niigaanaki Day Care and read aloud during the unveiling of the new play space.

[3] Opening ceremony at the Garden of Truth and Reconciliation

[4] A blessing ceremony was held before construction began on the Medicine Wheel Garden. First Nations Elders and the community, members of the Faculty of Medicine, as well as the President of the University of Manitoba were in attendance.



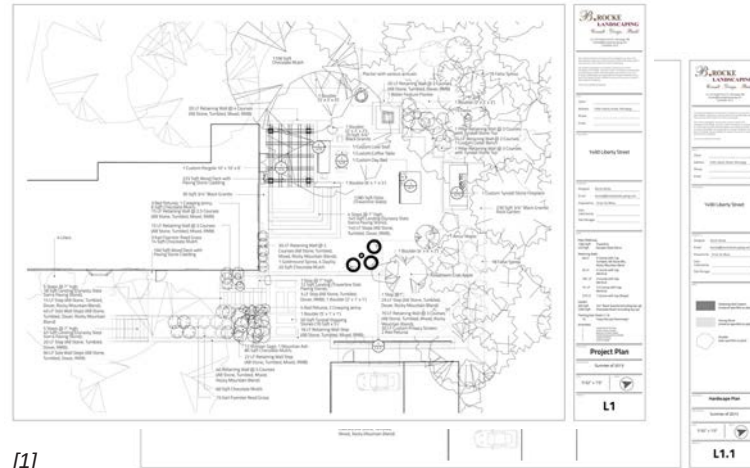
PROCESS - CONSULT, DESIGN, BUILD

[1] Designs are presented, revised, and distilled. Once the final plan and estimate are approved, construction drawings & details are generated.

[2] The design process begins at the on-site consultation with the client. Project ideas and goals are discussed.

[3] Using 3D imaging software, the Studio B. Design Team creates 2 design proposals. These designs blend the client's wish list with our staff expertise. (The Garden of Truth & Reconciliation)

[4] Prior to breaking ground, our experienced Project Manager meets with the Design Team to review the project details and conduct a site mark-out. The Project Manager is responsible for managing the construction schedule and ensuring client satisfaction.



[1]



[1,2] Comparison images of the 3D generated software image and what was produced and completed on site.

[3,4] Another side-by-side comparison of the 3D imaging software and a photograph of the completed Medicine Wheel Garden.





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