



To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** July 11, 2007
From: Greg Scott, P. Eng., LEED A.P. **File:** 06-2052-50-11-02/Vol 01
 Director, Major Projects
Re: Richmond Oval: Site Landscape Design & Integrated Public Art Concept

Staff Recommendation

That Council approve the Richmond Oval site landscape design and integrated public art concept.

Greg Scott, P. Eng., LEED A.P.
Director, Major Projects
(4372)

Att. 1

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Parks Design, Construction & Programs..	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Culture and Heritage	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

The Richmond Oval site concept was part of a report entitled “Oval – Form and Character, Schematic Design Report” (SDR), approved by Council on December 19, 2005. The site concept has since been refined and revised, due to the completion of the building design, advancement of surrounding development plans, and integration of the public art process.

As per the City’s public art policy and guidelines set out in the Oval Precinct and Surrounding Area Art Plan approved by Council on May 23, 2006, an international selection process was launched for two of the "high priority" Oval public art opportunities: the Pedestrian Bridge and the Water Works. This led to the unanimous choice by the selection panel of Boston artist Janet Echelman. The two opportunities were awarded as one commission, which was publicly announced in May, 2007.

This report presents the site landscape design and integrated public art concept (attached) for Council approval.

Analysis

The site landscape design process has been guided by the four principles adopted for the Oval Neighbourhood: Build a Legacy, Build a Complete Community, Build Green, and Build Financial Viability. The SDR reaffirmed these site principles, through the series of environments connected by “The Stroll”, which tied into access to the building, the dyke trail system, the new High Street and the surrounding proposed urban fabric.

There are three main, interconnected public spaces within the site landscape design:

- **Legacy Plaza** welcomes and accommodates crowds arriving and leaving the building, and is coordinated with drop-off and parking space on the new High Street. It is designed to accommodate small gatherings, as well as future public art per the Oval Art Plan;
- **Waterworks** consists of a large pond that will detain water, improve water quality, potentially provide water for site use, and serve as a major public urban space and attraction. The quality of the space, and circulation between Riverside, High Street and the Parcel 6 development is now enhanced by the art concept;
- **Riverside**, which incorporates the original Fitness Fun and West Side elements from the SDR, is a major festival space that connects the Oval to the water. It includes plaza and lawn space, oriented with amphitheatre seating and steps toward the Middle Arm Dyke Trail and the Fraser River. A “node” feature will anchor the space where stairs leading to building entry, access to Parcel 6, and paths to Waterworks intersect.

Connecting these main spaces are plazas, accessible pathways and stairs that comprise The Stroll around the Oval building. Furnishings throughout the site provide opportunity for resting, viewing and gathering. Plant material has been selected for amenity, aesthetics, ecology and low maintenance.

The site landscape design will fully integrate with other future improvements in the oval precinct, including dyke resurfacing on the Middle Arm Trail alongside the Oval site, an intertidal marsh component of the Oval Site West Open Space Plan, enhancement of the Hollybridge Canal corridor immediately east of the Oval Site, and the Experiential Walk environmental and interpretive concept for the precinct.

The Oval Art Plan recommends public art be fully integrated with landscape development and building form. To this end, the artist has been working closely with the Oval design team. Through this process, the public art work has evolved from the initial Pedestrian Bridge and Water Works requirements into a series of bridge, water and “aerial” elements that are both public art and part of the landscape. Following is a brief description of the concept jointly developed by the artist and design team.

Integrated Art & Landscape Concept:

- *Mysterious beauty that creates a desire to see it, and satisfies that desire;*
- *Unique sense of place that inspires interpretation by the public;*
- *Integrates multiple sensory pathways: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, intellectual;*
- *Transformation of spaces, from rapid pass-through to pausing and spending time;*
- *Engagement of viewers from multiple directions and distances.*

Components of the Work:

- *Integrated layers of a garden: Water, Land, and Sky:*
 - *Water: flat and reflective / active plane of water, with contrasting marsh plants; integration of public art with environmental functions;*
 - *Land: boardwalks, gravel paths and stone at water edges;*
 - *Sky: lanterns that respond to the changing wind and sky, and create play between water, land and sky.*

Influences:

- *Physical references:*
 - *Beauty of water and marsh landscape; reflection; playful quality of water;*
 - *Revealing the functioning stormwater system;*
 - *Abstracted images of the Fraser River delta, hydrological patterns, deposition;*
 - *Flow, Flight and Fusion.*
- *Cultural References:*
 - *Work evokes the fishing nets and traps of many of Richmond’s cultural groups;*
 - *Wooden walkway creates the path of the Chinese dragon dance, and the color red in the suspended forms evokes festival celebration and is believed to bring good fortune and good luck.*
- *Local Gardens:*
 - *Quality of space, beauty, and time from regional strolling gardens (e.g. Nitobe and Sun Yat Sen Gardens, Vancouver);*
 - *The meander notion of traveling a path; a journey; paving textures and variations; pause/shift; changes in vistas and views; reflections of sky and water; bridge crossing over water;*
 - *A miniaturized version of the greater landscape;*
 - *Rich details of scale.*

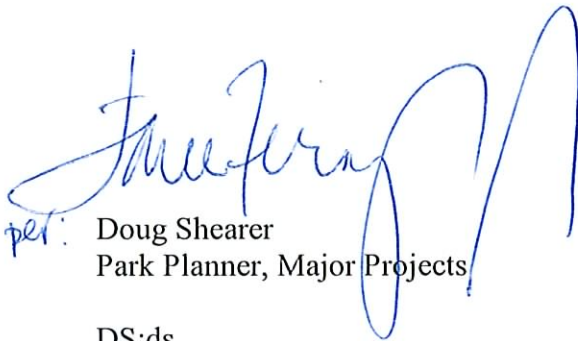
Financial Impact

The costs for landscaping and public art fall within the approved project budgets. As per Council's previous approval, all required funding for this component of the landscaping and public art project is in place with the exception of \$300,000 which will be submitted in the 2008 Capital Budget.

Conclusion

The site landscape design embodies the original principles of the Oval Neighbourhood Urban Design Framework, and refines the SDR site concept. It addresses the various functional site issues and provides a significant urban amenity befitting the Oval building. The integrated public art concept for the northeast corner of the Oval site is the exciting, collaborative outcome of a thorough public art process.

Staff recommends that the site landscape design and integrated public art concept, as described in this report and presented by the landscape architect and artist, be approved.



per: Doug Shearer
Park Planner, Major Projects

DS:ds



RICHMOND OVAL 2007
SITE LANDSCAPE