



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee

From: Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services

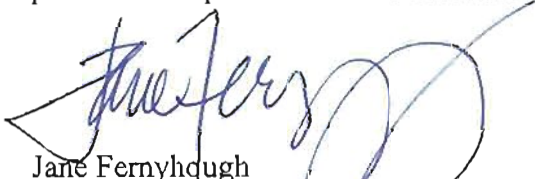
Re: **Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan**

Date: October 8, 2013

File: 11-7000-09-20-158/Vol
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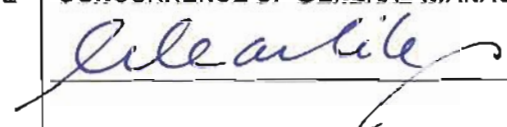

Staff Recommendation

That the Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan as presented in the report from the Director, Arts Culture & Heritage Services dated October 8, 2013 be approved as a guide for the placement of public art in the Alexandra Neighbourhood.



Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainability & District Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY DIRECTORS	INITIALS: DW	APPROVED BY CAO 

Staff Report

Origin

On March 25, 2013, Council endorsed the staff report entitled, “Vancouver Biennale Proposal for Charles Jencks Land Form Public Art Project for Alexandra Neighbourhood Park”. In the report, staff advised that prior to reporting back on the land based public art project that staff prepare a public art plan for the Alexandra Neighbourhood and present the plan to Council for approval.

This report presents for Council’s consideration the Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan. A report on the Charles Jencks land form public art project will be presented in late 2013 or early 2014.

This initiative is in line with Council Term Goal 9.1:

Build culturally rich public spaces across Richmond through a commitment to strong urban design, investment in public art and place making.

Analysis

A City inter-departmental staff team met to develop the themes, opportunities and constraints for the Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan. This Plan includes an overview of the neighbourhood area plan and its historical, environmental and planning context. It includes a thematic framework for the public art, guiding principles, site opportunities and constraints, selection processes, and budgets (**Attachment 1**).

“*Connectivity: Ecology, Infrastructure and History*” was chosen as the overarching theme to guide the selection and placement of public art within the emerging neighbourhood. Artists will be encouraged to consider connections to the area’s agricultural past, the connection to the ecology of Richmond, and the intercultural connections between the new residents of the area.

Innovative features within the district, including the Alexandra District Energy Utility, the connected system of greenways and parks, and the neighbourhood High Street commercial centre will provide opportunities for the integration of public art.

Unlike typical developer financed public art projects where artwork is created for individual private development sites, the majority of developer public art contributions for this neighbourhood have been pooled and held in trust to support the creation of public artworks within the public realm, including parks, greenways and streets.

The Richmond Public Art Advisory Committee has reviewed the Plan and recommends its adoption.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Public art plays a key role in providing identity to place. Artworks in a variety of scales on complementary themes help to achieve a connected community. The Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan will serve as a guide for the placement of public art in the Alexandra Neighbourhood, and serve to promote the area plan vision of a “*Complete and Balanced Community*”.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Fiss', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Fiss, Architect AIBC, PIBC
Public Art Planner
(604-247-4612)

ATTACHMENT 1

Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan



Acknowledgements

Staff:

Jane Fernyhough, Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
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Chris Charlebois
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Victoria Padilla
Xuedong Zhao

Public Art Advisory Committee Council Liaison:

Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt

Sponsors:

The Richmond Public Art Program graciously acknowledges the public art contributions provided by private developers involved in the building of the new Alexandra neighbourhood:

Concord Pacific
First Richmond North Shopping Centre Ltd.
Jingon Development Group Alexandra Ltd.
Oris Development Corp.
Polygon Development Ltd.



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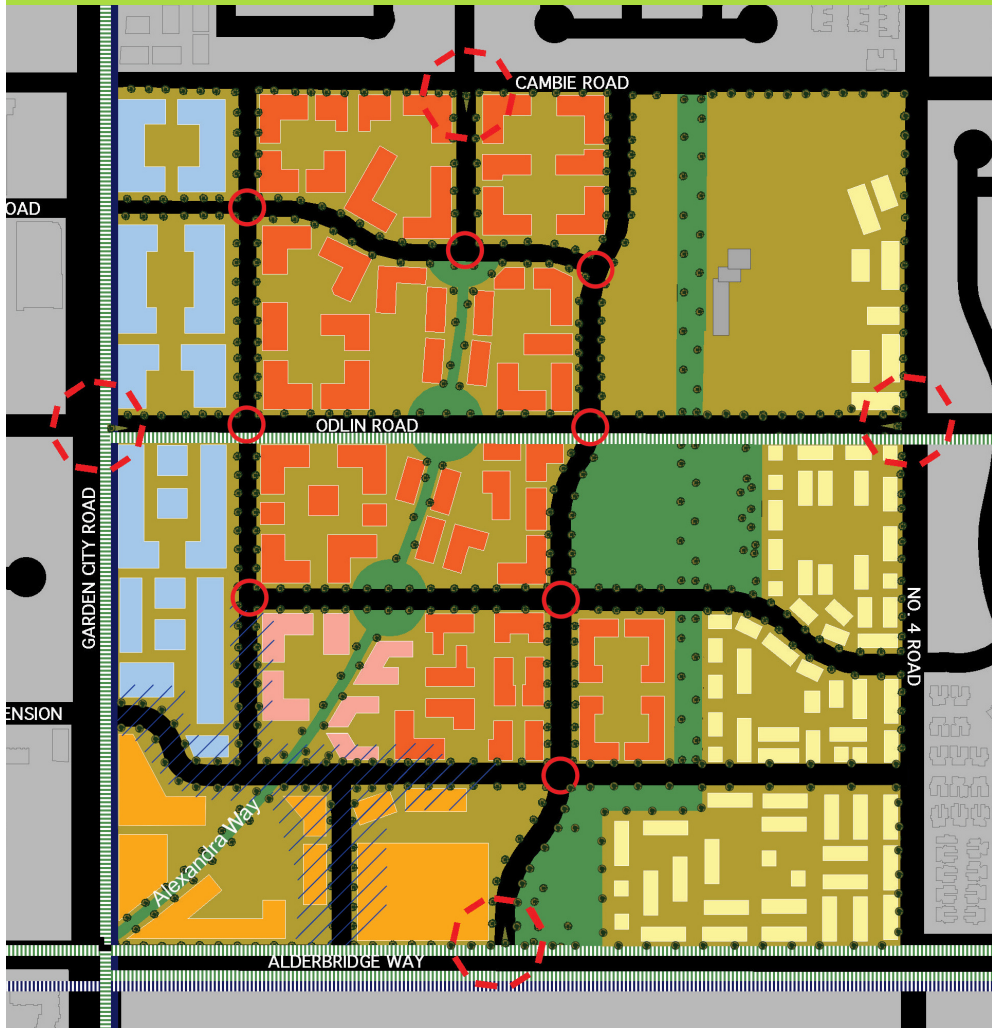
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Alexandra Neighbourhood Character Areas Map
"A complete and balanced community"



LEGEND					
	Business Office		Low Density Housing		Proposed Trails & Greenways
	Mixed Use (Retail/Office/Hotel)		Mixed Use: • abutting the High Street, medium density residential over retail; • not abutting the High Street, medium density residential.		Existing Cycle Routes
	The High Street		Open Space System		Proposed Cycle Routes
	Medium Density Housing				Traffic Calming
					Gateway Intersection

The images in this figure illustrate the range of built forms and open spaces that are envisioned for Alexandra. Each of the six character areas is described in the text and illustrated in more detail on Figures 3 through 8.



INTRODUCTION

The Alexandra neighbourhood is in transition from a semi-rural predominantly vegetated landscape comprised of single-family homes and farms to a more urban and complete community of multiple family housing and places to work, shop and play. Public art contributes to this transformation, sparking community participation in the building of our public spaces and encouraging citizens to take pride in public cultural expression.

The Alexandra neighbourhood is uniquely located to provide a transition from the established residential neighbourhoods to the east and north to the emerging City Centre to the west. The Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan identifies guiding principles that will support the creation of unique public spaces and foster a sense of community for the area residents.

The Plan builds on the history and ecology of the neighbourhood. Priority will be given to development of artworks in the public realm: parks, streets and greenways. These will serve as landmarks and meeting places, as residents make connections through the community.

CIVIC PUBLIC ART PLANS

One of the fundamental visions of the Richmond Official Community Plan is creating a Vibrant City. The Public Art Program plays a key role in shaping, animating and enriching the public realm, and building civic pride and community identity.

The Public Art Program Policy, adopted by Council July 27, 2010, sets a goal for public art to complement and develop the character of Richmond's diverse neighbourhoods to create distinctive public spaces, which enhance the sense of community, place and civic pride.

Area specific public art plans provide a guide for achieving this goal. Supplementing the city-wide policies of the Public Art Program, each Area Plan provides additional direction concerning the themes and opportunities unique to each specific community. The Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan will be a new member of the family of Richmond Public Art Plans, which include the Richmond Oval Art Plan / *Flow, Flight, Fusion*, and the City Centre Public Art Plan / *Honouring Yesterday, Celebrating Today and Building Tomorrow*.



THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Connectivity: Ecology, Infrastructure, and History

In keeping with the West Cambie Area Plan's Vision for the Alexandra Neighbourhood, as a "complete and balanced" community, the thematic framework will incorporate Richmond's unique cultural heritage, while also exploring the theme of "Connectivity: Ecology, Infrastructure and History" as a way to describe the many layers of urban systems required for sustainable and healthy living cities. Artists will be encouraged to design their works within this thematic framework, while allowing room for artistic exploration and a diversity of projects.

Connecting Ecology

Richmond's landscape and hydrology has been formed by its unique location within the Fraser River delta. Alexandra contains remnants of historic sloughs and agricultural networks. Local wildlife is connected to larger networks throughout Richmond. Public art can play an integral part in bringing awareness to the importance of ecological connections and addressing the sensitive nature and challenges of designing with ecosystems in mind.

Connecting Infrastructure

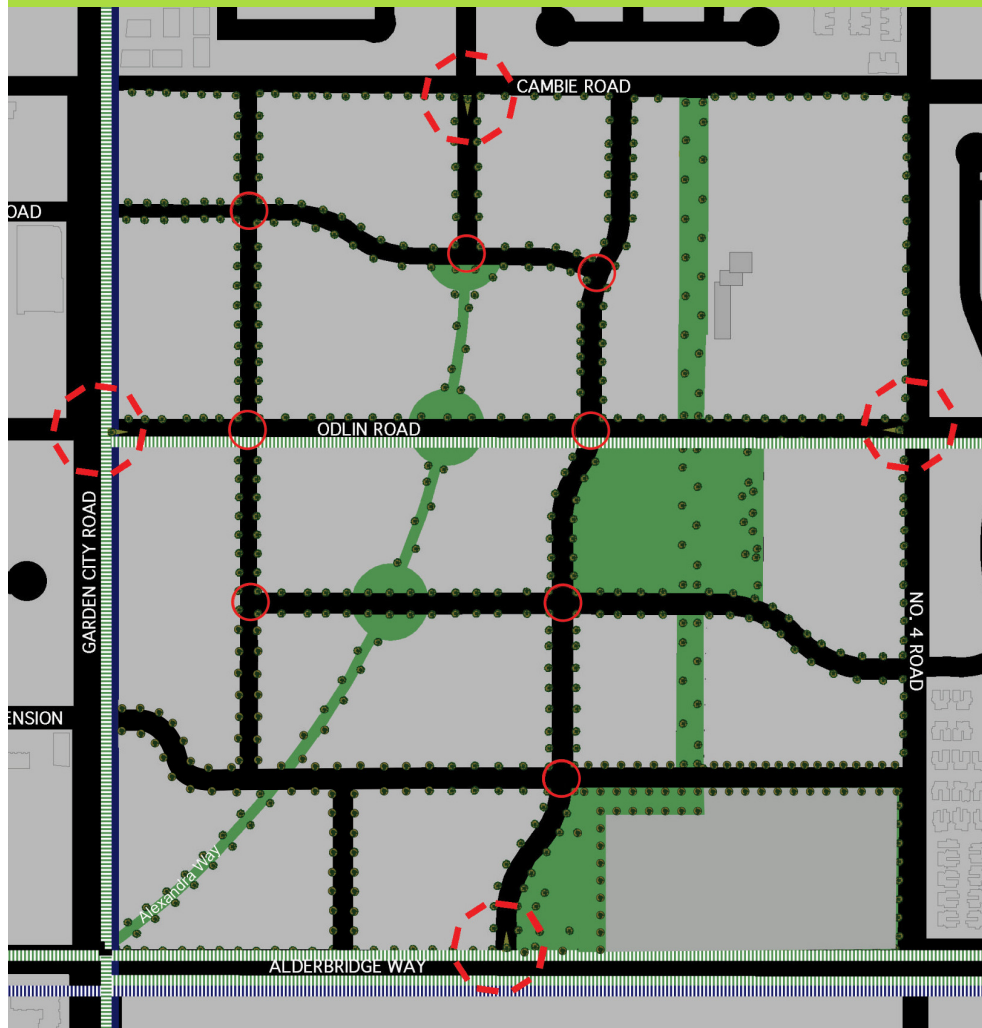
Richmond is building a sustainable City through innovative infrastructure initiatives. The Alexandra District Energy Utility (ADEU) provides geothermal energy to heat and cool homes in the neighbourhood. The ADEU building is located in the Alexandra neighbourhood park, with geothermal wells within the Alexandra Greenway to the north. The ADEU building features the public artwork *Current* by artist Andrea Sirois on its exterior facades, to tell the story about the integration of sustainable infrastructure systems in the development of residential neighbourhoods.

Connecting History

Art that references the farming and agriculture heritage and local history of the area connects new residents with the area's past. History includes telling the story of the land, from geologic times to the present, as well as the story of human settlement and cultures that have inhabited the neighbourhood. Public art will assist this new community in creating memorable places, by linking the past to the present.



Alexandra Neighbourhood Open Space System Map





OPPORTUNITIES

Achieving a Connected Community

The following opportunities identify the potential for a variety of different scaled works, which can serve as landmarks, place-makers, or integrated site elements. In new developments, it is sometimes challenging for new residents to establish social ties to the existing community. The public art plan aims to promote artworks that establish frameworks and platforms for residents to engage and develop social relationships within the area.

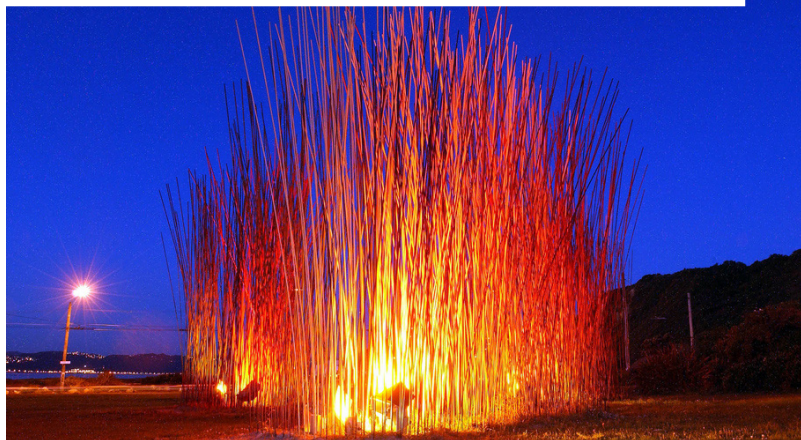
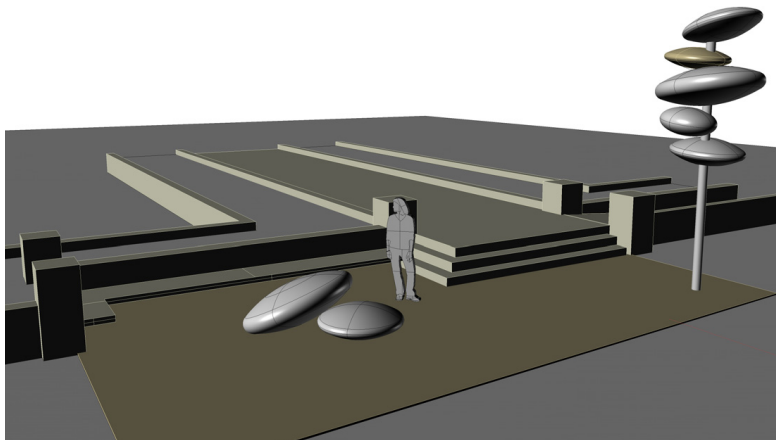
While it is typical for public art to be integrated with a specific building project, owned and maintained by the building owners, the network of public open space in Alexandra affords an opportunity to situate public art throughout the public realm. Flexibility should be exercised to support the integration of public art with a new development where it supports the overall vision for engaging the whole community.

All of the public art may not be permanent. There may be opportunities for temporary and ephemeral works or annual festivals of sculpture and installations by interdisciplinary installations.

Alexandra Neighbourhood Park and Greenway

The Alexandra Greenway and new six-acre Alexandra Neighbourhood Park span across the neighbourhood and connect the established residential neighbourhood north of Cambie Road to the Garden City Lands south of Alderbridge Way. The Garden City Lands, a natural and semi-natural area with important environmental values, is envisioned as an exceptional legacy open space for residents and visitors.

With traces of Alexandra's agricultural past and habitat supporting numerous species of birds and other wildlife, there are abundant opportunities for artworks to connect with the ecology and history of the area. Artwork in the park and greenway has the opportunity to assist in promoting and communicating the initiatives underway for renewable and sustainable energy systems for the community, which include the Alexandra District Energy Utility, based in the park.



There is an opportunity to expand and integrate the geothermal wells under the eastern portion of the park without affecting the community use of it.

The scale and type of artworks that are to be considered for the park and greenway include earthworks and environmental art; large scaled place-making works; and smaller works to be discovered along the greenway and in quiet corners of the park. Temporary works, artists-in-residencies, and annual sculptural exhibitions may also be considered. Selection of artworks and planning for community based projects will begin concurrently with the planning and construction of the park and greenway.

Budget Estimate: \$10,000 per small project to \$200,000 for large works.

Alexandra Way

A pedestrian and cyclist path with resting nodes has been identified in the Alexandra Neighbourhood Land Use Map. Alexandra Way links the residential areas to new commercial zones in the south west corner, at Alderbridge Way and Garden City Road. There is an opportunity for public art to promote a safe and friendly environment to bike and walk between local destinations and to lessen vehicular traffic in the area. Permanent artworks may be of a wide range in size. Resting points and street crossings provide opportunities to incorporate artwork. Art trails incorporated along the pedestrian and cycle paths will be promoted through walking and bicycle tour maps. Development of artwork projects will be implemented over time to coincide with the pace of construction of new roads and public rights-of-way.

Budget Estimate: \$10,000 per small project to \$100,000 for large works.

Alexandra Road High Street

The mixed-use commercial precinct located in the south west portion of the Alexandra Neighbourhood includes a grade-oriented retail street, commonly known as a “High Street”, catering to the day-to-day needs of area residents and workers. The High Street along Alexandra Road is the symbolic heart of the Alexandra neighbourhood, providing a variety of public amenities and places for

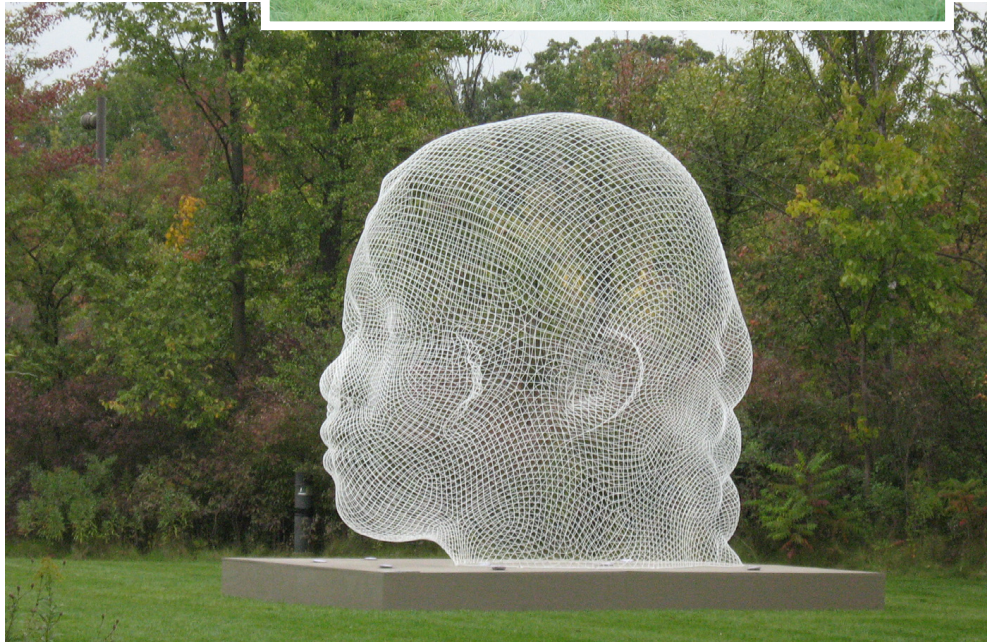
people to shop, work and socialize. The High Street is an excellent opportunity to integrate public art with the design of the urban infrastructure, including:

- **Street Furniture:** Incorporate art in the design of benches, bike racks, lighting, trash receptacles, and tree grates strategically placed to provide points of interest at resting nodes.
- **Utility Box Wraps and Manhole Covers:** Integrate art in City utility boxes and manhole covers.
- **Signage/Wayfinding:** Integrate public art markers and landmarks in a creative way to tell the story of place and engage the community.
- **Crossings/School traffic/Pedestrian/Cycle Paths:** Incorporate art into ground surfacing materials and lighting at key intersections and crosswalks.

Implementation of the High Street artwork projects is subject to the development of the commercial precinct. Planning for the artworks will be coordinated with the design of the public realm.

Budget Estimate: \$5,000 per small project to \$50,000 for large works.





IMPLEMENTATION

Development of the Alexandra Neighbourhood has been the result of a coordinated effort in community building by the private development industry, the City and its stakeholders. Cooperation was needed in the planning and implementation of infrastructure to serve the community, including construction of roads, utilities and parks. Contributions for public art have also been included with new development in the area, in accordance with the Public Art Program Policy.

Funding Mechanisms

Public art funding is obtained from voluntary public art contributions through the development application process. A portion of the public art contributions have supported public art projects integrated with specific developments in the area. The majority of the funds contributed, however, have been held in the City's Public Art Reserve for artworks to be integrated with the Alexandra neighbourhood public realm, including the park, greenways, bikeways and streets, as identified in this Plan.

Integrated Approaches

Introducing artists during the early stages of implementation and strategic planning phases of public realm projects have the potential to be cost effective and provide meaningful and lasting outcomes. As each infrastructure or public realm project is identified, an interdepartmental staff team will work with the Public Art Program and the Public Art Advisory Committee to oversee the artwork selection process from artist call to fabrication and installation.

CONCLUSION

Public art animates the built and natural environment with meaning, contributing to a vibrant city in which to live, work and visit. The Alexandra Neighbourhood Public Art Plan provides a guide for integrating public art throughout the fabric of this new community and achieving the goal of creating a *Complete and Balanced Community*.

CONTACTS

Visit our website

richmond.ca/publicart

More information

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PHOTO CREDITS

- Cover** *Left* Dan Corson, *Sonic Bloom*, Pacific Science Centre, Seattle, WA, 2012, photo: Dan Corson
- Cover** *Middle* Douglas Taylor, *Bird Listening Station*, Seattle Centre, Seattle, WA, 2008, photo: Douglas Taylor
- Cover** *Right* Charles Jencks, *Cells of Life*, Jupiter Artland, Kirknewton, UK, 2009, photo: Charles Jencks
- P. iii Nicole Dextras, *Culture*, Van Dusen Botanical Gardens, Vancouver, 2012, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 1 Andrea Sirois, *Current*, Alexandra District Energy Utility, photo: Andrea Sirois
- P. 2 Erick James, Remy and Alexandra Gate Mixed Use Development, *Rookery & Roost*, Oris Development, illustration: Erick James
- P. 4 *Top* Dale Chihuly, *Installation*, Paris, 2007, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 4 *Bottom* Konstantin Dimopoulos, *Alara*, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 6 *Top* Charles Jencks, *Cells of Life*, Jupiter Artland, Kirknewton, UK, 2009, photo: Charles Jencks
- P. 6 *Middle* May Lin, *Ecliptic at Rosa Parks Circle*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 6 *Bottom* Roxy Payne, *Three Sculptures*, Madison Square Park, New York, 2007, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 8 *Top* Ruth Beer and Charlotte Wall, *Picnic*, 2014, Omega Residential Development, Concord Pacific, Beer and Wall
- P. 8 *Middle* Dan Corson, *Sonic Bloom*, Pacific Science Centre, Seattle, WA, 2012, photo: Dan Corson
- P. 8 *Bottom* Konstantin Dimopoulos, *Pacific Grass*, Wellington, NZ, 2001, photo: Konstantin Dimopoulos
- P. 10 *Left* Douglas Taylor, *Bird Listening Station*, Seattle Centre, Seattle, WA, 2008, photo: Douglas Taylor
- P. 10 *Right* Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, *Plantoir*, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 11 *Top* Alexander Calder, *Aria*, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, 1983, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 11 *Middle* *Green Chair*, Gardening in Paris, Hotel de Ville, Paris, FR, 2007, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 11 *Bottom* Jaume Plensa, *Sho*, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 14 *Top Left* Andy Goldworthy, *Grand Rapids Arch*, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, 2005, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 14 *Top Right* Jeff Koons, *Puppy*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain, 1992, photo: City of Richmond
- P. 14 *Bottom* *Watering Can*, Gardening in Paris, Hotel de Ville, Paris, FR, 2007, photo: City of Richmond

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