

Oval construction progressing rapidly

Construction work on the Richmond Oval is progressing rapidly as the building's massive roof begins to take shape. Several of the Oval's 15 roof spans, among the longest clear spans in North America at nearly 100 metres, have now been installed. Installation has also begun on the unique wood wave roof sections, primarily made from BC pine beetle kill wood, which will join together the spans to form the complete roof, which will be more than six acres in size.

Work is also progressing rapidly in a number of other areas throughout the building. The Oval will open in the fall of 2008. The Richmond Oval will be home to the long track speed skating competition for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Post-Games, the Oval will become a multipurpose international centre of excellence for sport and wellness, providing a wide variety of community, sport and recreation, health and wellness and cultural programming and events. The Oval will also be the centerpiece of a new urban waterfront neighbourhood consisting of a mix of residential and commercial development and public amenities.



Spirit Square supports Oval plaza plan

Richmond will be developing its very own B.C. Spirit Square, as part of the Richmond Oval site, thanks to \$500,000 from the provincial government. The funding was announced on July 25 by Richmond MLAs Olga Ilich, Linda Reid and John Yap.

The Riverside Open Space will be the heart of the Richmond Oval site and will be a public space for activities such as cycling, walking, jogging, and enjoying the view of the river and north shore mountains. Events such as festivals, boat shows and concerts will be held at the Open Space. The space will showcase public artwork and have a theme that emphasizes the local Musqueam First Nations culture, and will be connected to Richmond's dyke trail system.

The \$20 million B.C. Spirit Square program is helping to create or improve outdoor public meeting/celebration spaces based on 50/50 cost-sharing with local governments, to a maximum provincial contribution of \$500,000. The Squares are to be a legacy of BC2008, a province-wide celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Crown Colony of British Columbia.

Oval landscape design, new art work approved

A dramatic combination of cultures and nature's elements will come together in a stunning new integrated public art work designed for the Richmond Oval site by internationally-acclaimed artist Janet Echelman, in collaboration with landscape architects Phillips Farevaag Smallemberg and the Oval consultant team.

Two giant red lanterns created from a translucent and durable fabric that responds to the changing wind and sky will be suspended over a large pond adjoining the Oval. The lanterns evoke a variety of images, including the fishing nets common to many of Richmond's cultural groups. A unique wooden walkway, influenced by Asian gardens, will cross over the water and under and beside the giant lanterns, creating an ever-changing sensory experience that combines elements of weather, land and sky and a fusion of cultural and historic references.

The new public artwork is just one part of an integrated landscape design for the Richmond Oval site that envisions an outdoor environment that will complement the diverse recreational opportunities, cultural experiences and other public amenities that will be offered inside the Oval. The Richmond Oval Site Landscape

and Integrated Art concept that was approved by Richmond Council on July 23.

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 on the south side of the Oval. 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
- Riverside, which is a major festival space, capable of hosting up to 8,000 people, 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

Connecting these main spaces are plazas, accessible pathways and stairs that comprise The Stroll around the Oval building. Furnishings throughout the site will provide opportunity for resting, viewing and gathering.

The landscape design and new public artwork will be constructed in concert with the Oval, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2008.

To view a video animation of Echelman's proposed Richmond Oval artwork and to see other examples of her work, visit www.richmond.ca and click on the Olympic Oval link.

Community update offered

Richmond Oval Update is a monthly report to the community on City initiatives related to the Richmond Oval project and to the community's preparations for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. For more information on the Richmond Oval visit the City's website at www.richmond.ca and click on the Olympic Oval link on the home page.