

**Gateway Theatre
Presentation to the Community Working Group
Simon Johnston, Producer and General Manager
September 18, 2004**

Thank you for the opportunity to join you this evening. I feel excited and privileged to participate in planning the quality of life that we all want for our community.

I would like to introduce Board Chair, Ron Climenhaga, and Board member Shannon Kwok.

We see the outcomes of the Master Plan as a living tool that will assist Gateway to forge closer connections with the community. As such it is vital to our strategic plans for the next 10 years.

Quote: "Only connect". "Only connect the prose and the passion and both shall be exalted and humanity will be seen at it's height – live in fragments no longer" E. M. Forster from *Howard's End*. Almost 20 years ago a group of Richmond residents connected the prose and the passion to create a theatre.

Power Point Presentation

20 years ago those pioneering residents had a vision for a theatre in this community that they felt would be a vital link between the residents and the performing arts. And 20 years later, phase one, of their goal. has been completed.

Over the next 20 years we will build on our strengths and we will respond to a community that is radically different to what it was two decades ago. Join me now in a helicopter ride.

Let's fast forward to 2013. Let's look at Gateway. What are they up to?

Let's look at their Programming:

- There are two sections: A Theatre Section and a Music Section responding to the demand for quality, professional level performing arts that is expected of a great community.
- Both sections are fed by graduates from the Gateway Academy and from the Piano competition
- There is a theatre production from a Pacific Rim country – a Chinese opera? A Japanese Noh play?
- And we see that Gateway is packaging their sets, props and costumes ready to send another homegrown production to Singapore perhaps? Or to Hong Kong? Or Tokyo?
- The programming of both the Theatre Sections and the Music Section reflects the Richmond's. Why not a play in Chinese? In Erdu? In Dagalo?

Let's look at their Governance:

- Cultural diversity is visible on their board of directors, in the society's membership, in the volunteer corps and in the administration staff

Let's look at their Partnerships

- In Cultural Tourism, Gateway is now a destination and there are:
 - partnerships with hotels, restaurants

- partnerships with other local cultural destinations
- partnerships with tour group operators
- In Education, there is a cross curriculum content connection with the Richmond School District
- Local businesses use the Gateway for client/staff appreciation events
- With the City of Richmond, there is synergy between the wellness committee, The Arts Strategy, the Master Plan, local cultural groups and Gateway

Let's look at their Facilities development

- There is a new auditorium: 1,800 seats purpose built facility that is state of the art acoustically excellent concert hall/theatre
- There is a new Academy facility housing 1,000 students per year of all ages offering interest level to professional level training that has a cross cultural focus for actors, designers, writers, directors, stage management and technicians

Strategies that build towards this vision

- Increase our focus on
 - excellence in the performing arts by bringing the best cross cultural artists to our theatre making it unique in Canada
 - contributing to the quality of life in our community
 - participating in life long learning skills
 - building a professional theatre company that includes artists of diverse cultures
 - finding partners/sponsors for facilities development
- Program development that will
 - remain consistent with the community's diverse cultural growth
 - meet the demands for youth training in performance studies
- Equip our facility, staff and cultural partners to support cultural tourism. This requires development in:
 - Unique, professional level programs
 - Accessibility, parking, transportation
 - Hospitality services
 - Customer service
- Foster partnerships with community groups and businesses to support our goals
- Increased use of the Internet: Patrons should be able to book tickets, restaurant reservations, parking overnight packages and a tours of Richmond's Golden Village, or Art Gallery.

I have outlined what Gateway can do for the community. Now I would like to ask the you to. remember the excellent work performed over the last twenty years that built a theatre for our community. Partner with us. Include our vision and strategies in your plans. Together, our dreams will become reality.

Quote from Mishnah Hillel, a first century philosopher: "If not now, when? If not you, then who?"

Quote: "Only connect the prose and the passion and both shall be exalted and humanity will be seen at its height – live in fragments no longer"

Thank you.