



*Deep Roots
Greater Heights*

District of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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District of Maple Ridge and Westminster Savings Unveil Public Art Project

Maple Ridge, BC: Work has begun on the installation of Maple Ridge's newest public art project in front of Westminster Savings at the corner of 224 Street and Lougheed Highway. Over the next two weeks, the sculpture titled 'Balance' will emerge from behind the construction screen and take its place at this important intersection.

The official dedication ceremony will take place on Saturday, September 29, 2012, at 1:30 pm in front of Westminster Savings (22415 Lougheed Highway) as part of a day filled with events to celebrate Canada Culture Day in Maple Ridge.

Mayor Ernie Daykin said, "A special thank you to Westminster Savings for joining with the District as equal funding partners in this project. Public art projects are a part of many great cities around the world, and it takes leadership and vision to bring this principle of urban design to the suburbs. The location of this beautiful sculpture at the front door of 224 Street is one more addition to our new Town Centre where pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, quality public spaces, great local businesses and this new focus on heritage and street art raise the bar on the aesthetic nature of our community." He added, "Join me in thanking the Maple Ridge Public Art Steering Committee and the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Arts Council for their vision and dedication to help bring this project to completion."

"Westminster Savings is committed to supporting the communities we share with our neighbours and we're exceptionally pleased to be a partner in bringing this piece of public art to life," says Paul Pederzini, Senior Branch Manager, at the Maple Ridge branch of Westminster Savings. "We relocated our Maple Ridge branch to the corner of Lougheed Highway and 224 Street in January

2011. This dynamic new art piece in front of the branch is a further addition to the transformation and revitalization of the downtown core”

The current project involved funding from the District of Maple Ridge of \$20,000 and a matching donation of \$20,000 from Westminster Savings. Narland Properties, the owners of Haney Place Mall, have provided the land that the sculpture will sit on.

The final selection of this sculpture was made by the Maple Ridge Public Art Steering Committee, a group of dedicated volunteers and representatives from each of the partners. The Public Art Steering Committee is chaired by Kristin Krimmel, one of Maple Ridge’s many talented artists. Barbara Duncan, Curator of the Maple Ridge Art Gallery, acted as the Project Manager for the Public Arts Steering Committee on this installation. Ms. Duncan’s participation was made possible by the support of the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Arts Council.

Kristin Krimmel, chair of the Public Arts Steering Committee said, "We are truly fortunate to have a Council which supports the Arts. Through the dedication of the Public Art Steering Committee volunteers, we have been able to select a top quality, elegant sculpture to enhance this central downtown location. It captures not only the spirit of Maple Ridge through its inspirational theme, but also describes through glass and steel, the modern spirit of this growing community."

Shelley Jorde, staff liaison to the Maple Ridge Public Art Steering Committee commented, “One of the things that we have learned from this project is the wide range of technical skill required when we partner with artists in this kind of enterprise. The Committee is grateful for the assistance, guidance and expertise of District staff from numerous departments including Parks & Leisure Services, Engineering, Planning, Purchasing, Finance, and Licences, Permits and Bylaws as we worked to ensure this beautiful sculpture has been designed and installed so that it will be an inspiration for decades to come.”

This is the second public art project in Maple Ridge created with the oversight of the Public Art Steering Committee. The Committee was formed in 2009, to strengthen our community identity and culture by developing “spirit of place” through the commissioning, collecting and incorporation of unique works of art. Maple Ridge has a number of art works that are part of public facilities and spaces including works commissioned by the Spirit of Wood Committee, the Ridge Meadows Education Foundation and the District of Maple Ridge through the Artist in Residence Program. The first formal project undertaken by the Public Art Steering Committee was the project titled ‘Tendance’ which was installed just east of the Maple Ridge Leisure Centre as part of a larger inter-municipal art project in the Lower Mainland.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE SCULPTURE AND ARTIST:

The winning design was submitted by Claudia Cuesta and Bill Baker, known collectively as art.site. The sculpture, "Balance," is a free-standing articulated sculpture 20 feet high by 12 feet in diameter, with tempered blue and green coloured glass. Light shining through the glass will dance to the rhythm of the season and weather. The inspiration for the sculpture comes from the inspiration for the name of our community – the stand of maple trees on the McIver Farm.

Highlights from the art.site submission:

The sculpture seeks to reflect ancient symbolisms attached to the maple tree - balance, promise and practicality. The maple is often seen as a happy, alluring and mystical tree that brings together all who gather under its sheltering branches. Carrying a young child through the branches of a maple tree was traditionally thought to encourage good health and long life. The maple is also said to bring lifelong success and abundance.

Balance is the ability to maintain a centre of gravity; it implies that there is a core that is connected to its centre. "Balance" will become a centre in Maple Ridge that creates a special focal point where the community can feel a sense of place.

Balance in art refers to harmony. As an example, in classical artworks all elements of the composition are in proportion to keep the viewer's eye inside the artwork. The installation has been carefully placed within the community to add balance and harmony to the surrounding urban landscape.

Claudia Cuesta completed postgraduate studies at the renowned Slade School of Fine Art in London, England. Since that time, she has exhibited in numerous galleries both in Canada and abroad. Her work is held in the Vancouver Art Gallery as well as other galleries in the United States, South America and Europe.

Bill Baker is an urban designer, artist, and residential designer. He studied art history at the Sorbonne University in Paris, worked as an urban designer for the City of Vancouver and a private urban design consulting firm. He has been a residential designer/builder/project manager since 1978 to present. As an artist, he has exhibited in distinguished galleries in Canada, South America, Japan, the United States and Europe.

PUBLIC ARTS STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Ms. Kristin Krimmel - Artist
- Ms. Gabrielle Morrison – Community Member
- Ms. Susan Hayes - Artist
- Mr. Wayne Bissky - Architect
- Mr. Craig Redmond - Developer
- Ms. Barbara Duncan – Arts Council representative and Project Manager
- Councillor Judy Dueck – Council liaison
- Staff liaisons to the committee, Ingrid Kraus and Shelley Jorde

ABOUT WESTMINSTER SAVINGS:

Headquartered in New Westminister, Westminster Savings provides a full range of retail, commercial and wealth management services, plus vehicle and equipment leasing services through its wholly-owned subsidiaries WS Leasing Ltd. and Mercado Capital Corporation. Its 400 employees serve more than 50,000 members from 12 retail branches across metropolitan Vancouver. Westminster Savings also offers a wide range of online and mobile banking services, access to global ATM networks and extended telephone service through its contact centre located in New Westminister. For more information, visit www.wscu.com.