PUBLIC ART PROJECT PLAN

FOR NORTH AND SOUTH CIRCLE PARK
Block 32, Eisenhower Avenue

Date Approved: February 21, 2023
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I. Introduction

The City of Alexandria's Public Art Implementation Plan outlined a vision and goals for the public art program and established three Creative Directions: Time and Place, Neighborhoods & Gathering Spaces, and Natural and Urban Systems.

The Plan also sets out a process for the commissioning of new public art. For each project approved in the Annual Public Art Work Plan, the Commission for the Arts appoints a Public Art Project Task Force to advise on the entire project development process. The staff and the Project Task Force develop a Project Plan that sets out the project scope, project goals, artist selection process, budget, timeline, and communications strategy. The Project Task Force then selects an artist, through a process set out in the Project Plan. The artist develops a concept, which is then approved by the Project Task Force and the Commission for the Arts.

This document is the Project Plan for public art at North and South Circle Park.

II. Site and Context

About the City of Alexandria

Alexandria, Virginia is a small historic seaport city of about 150,000 residents located on the Potomac River, minutes from Washington, D.C. It is best known for its historic Old Town but is also home to federal agencies such as the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office, the Defense Department and the headquarters of the National Science Foundation.

About South Circle Park/Eisenhower East Gateway and North Circle Park

As part of the new development on Block 32 at the corner of Eisenhower Avenue and Holland Lane, a new city park will be created (currently called South Circle Park). Since this park will be a city-owned property, the City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts will commission public art for the site with funds provided by the developer. The park design was scheduled to begin in early 2023 as part of Phase 1 of the development design, but construction of the park (and the installation of the artwork) will be part of Phase 2 and commence at a later date.

When constructed, the South Circle Park will serve as a visual gateway into the Eisenhower neighborhood for those travelling south on Holland Lane and turning onto Eisenhower Avenue and will be the most visible open space within the development. The public art will provide both a visual gateway into the Eisenhower neighborhood and a bold landmark that fosters a sense of identity for the neighborhood. The artwork could also be designed to encourage visitors of the park to travel upwards to the public open space deck.

Public art will be incorporated into the landscape of the South Circle Park with the potential to extend into the Transition Zone, creating both a destination for the park as well as an invitation into the greater park and open space system of the block. As the majority of the South Circle Park is land owned by the City, the artist selection process will follow the City's Public Art Policy. The Applicant's public art contributions will be focused within this area to provide maximum impact, and the conditions of approval address a timeframe and process that will ensure that the artist and artwork are integrated into the landscape design process for the development.

Across from this site, another park is being created (currently called North Circle Park). While funding from the developer is not provided for public art on that site, the Project Task Force recommends to the Arts Commission that the scope of the public art project be expanded to include public art at North Circle Park . Public art at North Circle Park would be funded by the City's Public Art Program. North Circle Park is programmed as a primarily passive open space with neighborhood-serving amenities. Elements of the design include a large open green space, flexible seating, fixed interactive seating elements, and multi-functional pavement areas.

III. Maps & Photos

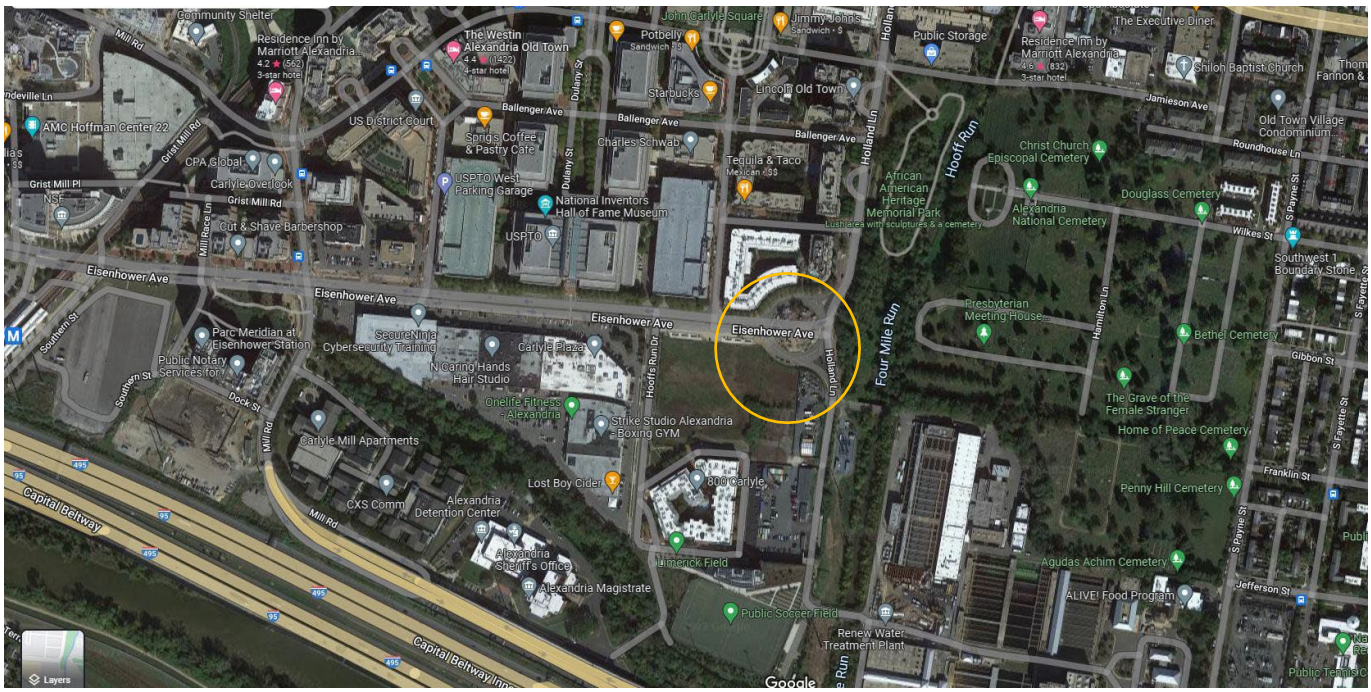

Figure 1:Intersection of Eisenhower Avenue and Holland Lane

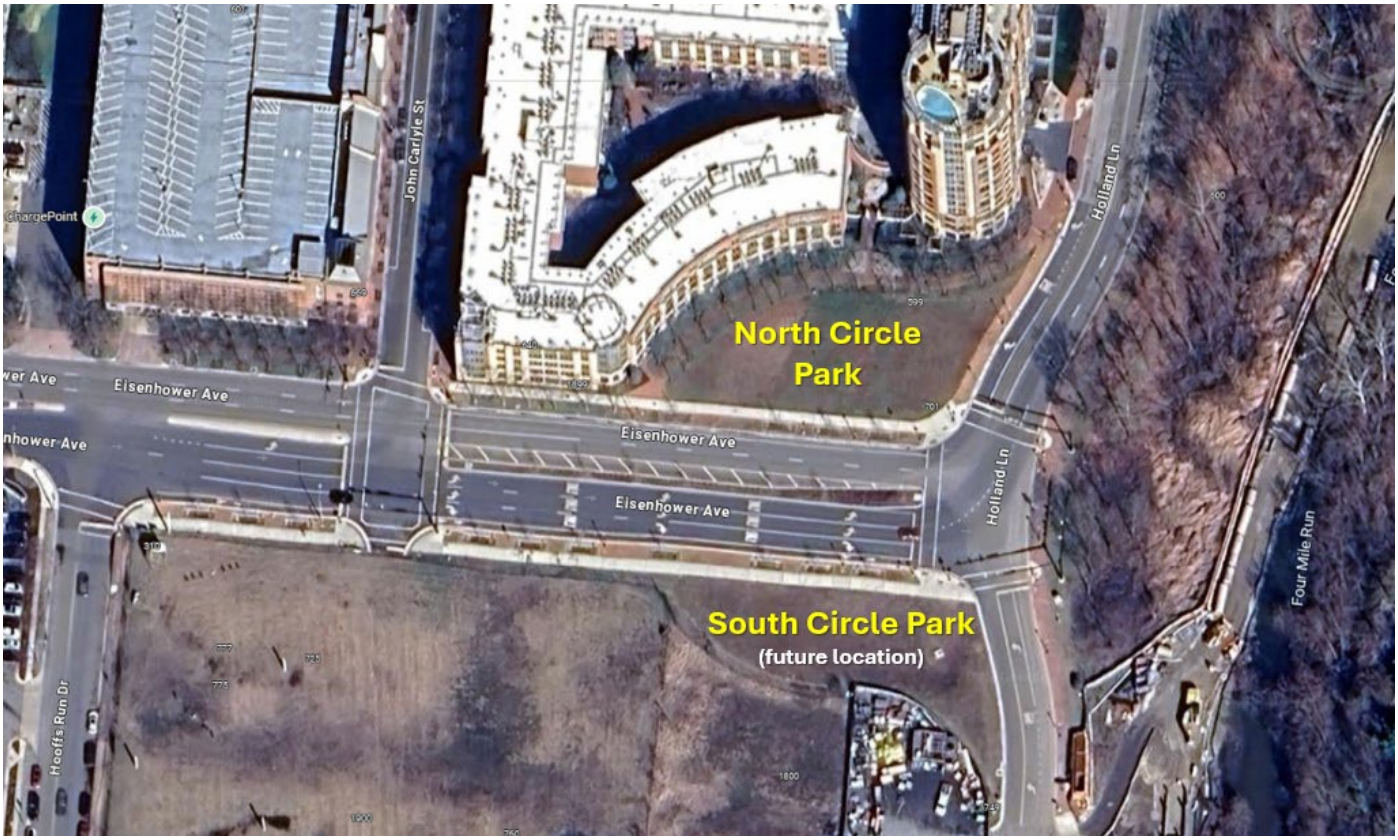

Figure 2: Relationship between North and South Circle Parks

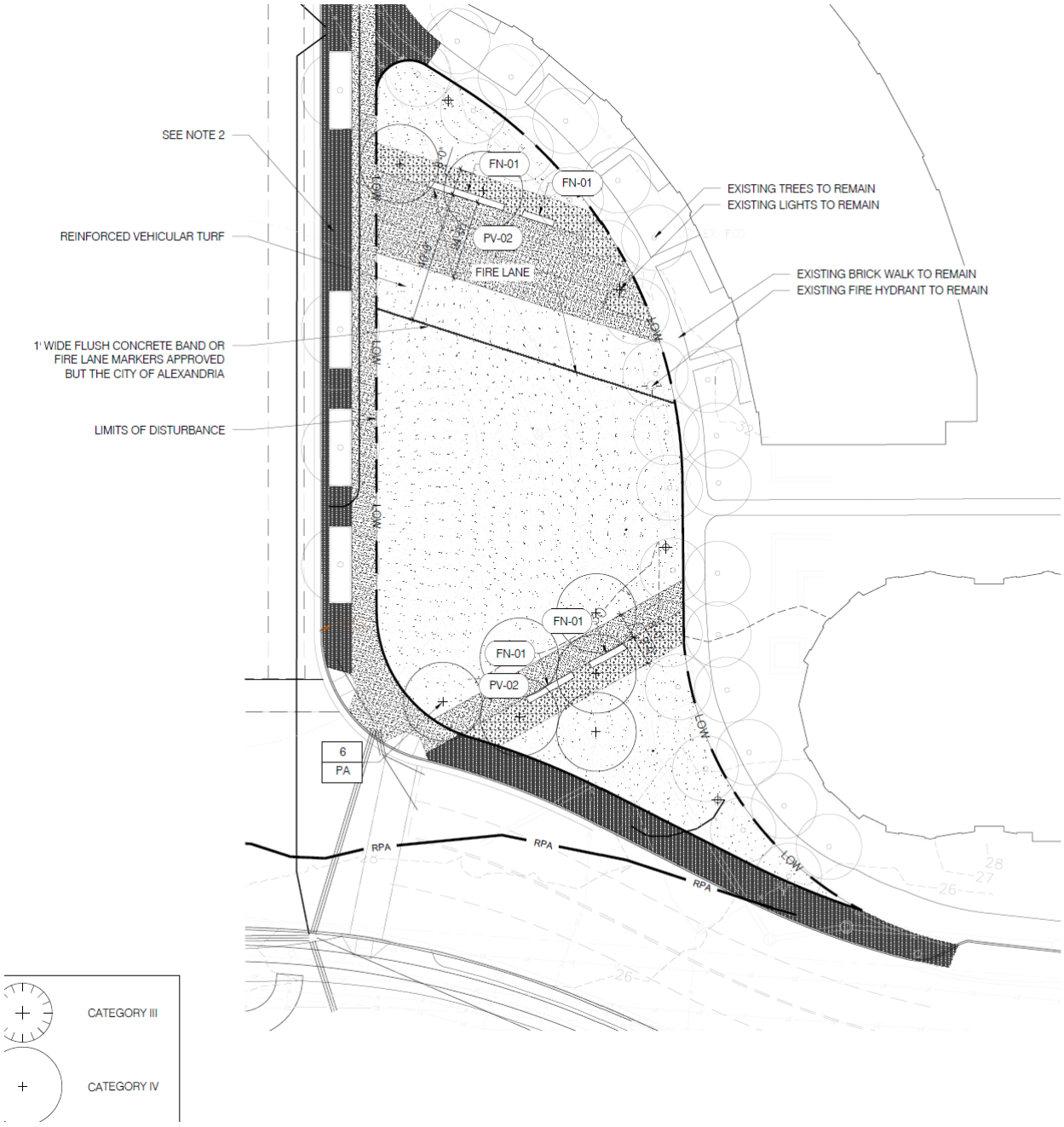

Figure 3: North Circle Park (Interim Plan Detail)

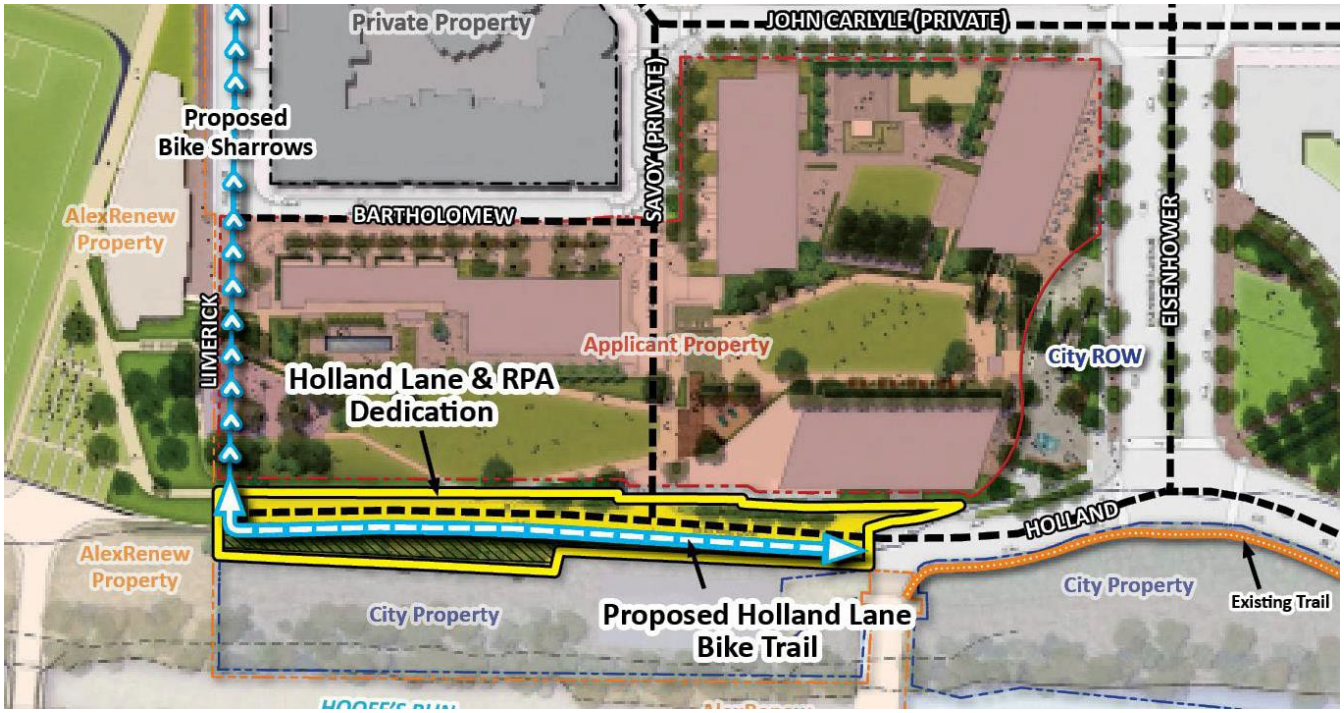

Figure 4: Future Development South of Eisenhower Avenue

Figure 5: South Circle Park and the Transition Zone

IV. Scope

- Public art will align with overall site development for the park(s).
- Uses developer funds ($300,000 total) for South Circle Park, and funds from the City's Public Art Program for Public Art at North Circle Park.
- Phase 1 for design concept only ($50,000 budget for South Circle Park and $10,000 for North Circle Park)
- Public art final design, fabrication, and installation with Phase 2
- Timeline for Phase 2 TBD

V. Goals

The Alexandria Public Art Program is interested in commissioning artists to join the development and landscape architecture team to create a site-specific, permanent work of art for South Circle Park as part of the park's creation. The overall park design will be influenced by the public art.

The program goals for public art at South Circle Park are to:

- Creates a bold landmark that fosters a sense of identity for the Eisenhower East neighborhood.
- Establishes a visual gateway into the Eisenhower East Neighborhood.
- Encourages visitors of the park to travel upwards to the public open space deck.
- Provides an interactive environment to keep visitors engaged.
- Invokes a welcoming experience for a diverse audience, with an artistic theme accessible to the general public.
- Create a new work of art for Alexandria that is informed by the context of the site and recognizes the past, present, and future of the park and surrounding neighborhood.

The program goals for public art at North Circle Park are to:

- Provide a companion piece to the public art designed at South Circle Park that could also stand alone as an artwork that contributes to the sense of identity for the Eisenhower East neighborhood
- Further the creation of the visual gateway in this location.
- Support passive contemplation and community gathering within this more neighborhood serving open space.

VI. Selection Process

For the South Circle Park project, the Office of the Arts will issue an open Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for artists. The Task Force will review the applications and select an artist to join the design team.

North and South Circle Park Task Force

The Public Art Task Force helps shape the Project Plan for the project and recommends selection of artist(s) and approval of concept(s).

The two Commission for the Arts representatives on the Task Force are:

- Stacey Becker
- Dawn Rogala

The Community Stakeholders for the Task Force include:

- Robert Arzola
- Tristan Wright

Project Stakeholders for the Task Force include:

- Ana Vicinanzo, Park Planner
- Don Hoover, Oculus Landscape Architecture (for South Circle Park only)

Artist Selection Process and Concept Approval

A National call will be used to select artists for the South Circle Park project.

In accordance with the Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy, the Office of the Arts, will draft a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) based on the information provided in the Project Plan. This call will be issued via an online application system. Interested artists/artist teams will be welcome to submit a letter of interest, qualifications, and work samples.

The Task Force will review the letters of interest and qualifications and recommend an artist for the project. The selected artist/artist team will be approved by the Commission for the Arts.

The selected artist/artist team will join the project's design team to develop a Concept Proposal in collaboration with the Office of the Arts staff, consultants, and other partners. The Concept Proposal/s will include a rendering, narrative description, fabrication methods, and cost estimates. The Concept Proposal will be reviewed for feedback by the Task Force and be recommended for approval by Commission for the Arts. At the appropriate phase, the selected artist will be contracted to develop the final design, timeline, fabrication, etc.

In order to provide a companion piece of public art at North Circle Park, the Task Force recommends that the scope of the South Circle Public Art Project be expanded, and that the selected artist for South Circle Park create a concept for public art at North Circle Park.

VII. Timeline

South Circle Park

Jan 2023	Task Force reviews and recommends the Project Plan
Jan/Feb	Project Plan submitted to Arts Commission for approval
March	Staff develops call to artists
April	Issue Call for Artists (30 days)
May/June	Task Force review and score artist qualifications
July	Artist Interviews (optional)
Aug	Task Force meets and makes final artist recommendation
Sept	Arts Commission approves task force recommendation
Oct	Artist contract
Nov	Artist site visit and community engagement
April 2024	Concept proposals reviewed by Task Force
May	Concept proposal approved by Arts Commission
Dec	Artist submits final design for technical review
Phase 2	Final design is submitted to fabricator
Phase 2	Fabrication
Phase 2	Installation
Phase 2	Completion

North Circle Park

April 2025	Task Force reviews and recommends the amended Project Plan
April	Project Plan submitted to Arts Commission for approval
April/May	Amend Artist Contract
July/Aug	Artist develops concept proposal
Sept	Proposals reviewed by Task Force, and approved by Arts Commission
TBD	Artist submits final design for technical review
TBD	Final design is submitted to fabricator
TBD	Fabrication
TBD	Installation
TBD	Completion

The task force intends to convene in Summer 2026 for an update on the development of Block 32 and provide a recommendation on the timing for the implementation of public art at North Circle Park.

VIII. Budget

This phase of the project is for community engagement and design only with a budget of $60,000 ($50,000 for design within South Circle Park and an additional $10,000 for design within North Circle Park). The selected artist will be contracted for the fabrication and installation of the designed artwork at a later phase of the project. Alexandria's Office of the Arts will provide additional support to the project through marketing, publicity, and assistance with site permits. For North Circle Park, which would be implemented by the City, the artist will be asked to design a project that could be fabricated and installed for a budget of $100,000.

IX. Community Engagement, Marketing and Communications

Community engagement, marketing and communications should be geared toward engaging with existing stakeholders as well as bringing new audiences to experience the artwork.

Stakeholders

Community engagement, marketing, and communications should build upon the existing stakeholder base for the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Update and other planning initiatives. This will include, but not be limited to, representatives from:

- Residents of Eisenhower East and Carlyle
- Adjacent businesses
- Carlyle Community Council
- AlexRenew
- Parks and Recreation Commission

Marketing and Communications

The Office of the Arts staff will develop a marketing and communications strategy that could include:

- Materials in languages relevant to the surrounding community.
- Web-based information about the project.
- Media releases to local and national publications and blogs.
- Print and/or online advertising in local and regional publications.
- Micro-targeted online / social media advertising.
- Word of mouth, outreach.