UBC’s Vancouver Campus Outdoor Art Strategy

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1. Introduction & Purpose

The University of British Columbia (UBC) seeks to create a major collection of outdoor art for the education, inspiration and pleasure of the university community and of visitors to the Vancouver campus. Building on and greatly expanding the current holdings of outdoor art on UBC’s Vancouver campus, new outdoor public art will be carefully selected, prominently displayed and attentively curated.

As UBC becomes one of the world’s pre-eminent universities, it is in a position to turn a large suburban location of unrivalled natural beauty into a site of ecological, social, and artistic experimentation. Efforts are currently underway to achieve this vision through major sustainability initiatives, new types of student housing, innovative design guidelines for new buildings, and the creative use of spaces between buildings. As imaginative public art, some of it controversial, is added to the campus, it becomes part of the process of ongoing experimentation so essential to a vital university.

In building its collection of outdoor art, the university will keep in mind both the vantage point from which it addresses the world and the larger world of ideas with which it must always be in-touch. UBC is composed of a unique amalgam of people situated in a diverse and changing British Columbian society that produces many outstanding artists. Public art at UBC will continue to express these many connections. It will also support the research mandate of an international university, and will reach out to international ideas and artists. The resulting collection will have local roots and global connections. In its domain, it will become as known internationally as the university itself.

So conceived and thoughtfully assembled, the collection will be imaginative and creative, a worthy component of a university given to curiosity and ideas.

This document outlines the policy framework, objectives, and implementation strategies that will guide UBC’s Outdoor Art Collection.

2. Context

UBC’s 400 hectare (1000 acre) campus is situated atop cliffs at the western tip of Vancouver’s West Point Grey peninsula, in a uniquely beautiful natural west coast setting overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It is separated from the City of Vancouver by the 763 hectare (1,885 acre) forests of Pacific Spirit Regional Park.

Over the last 100 plus years UBC has become a major world University. The reach of its scholars, research, and former students is global. The Vancouver campus site, selected in 1911 for the provincial university, has become by day a university city of approximately 49,000 students, and 14,000 staff and faculty.
Unlike most universities, the Vancouver campus also includes residential neighbourhoods on campus. By night, the campus remains active with a resident population of 9400 student beds, plus 8700 faculty, staff and public residents in the campus neighbourhoods.

Outdoor Art for enjoyment by the public is supported and encouraged both on the academic lands and in the residential neighbourhoods, through the respective land-use policy frameworks and regulations in each of those areas. The Vancouver Campus Plan guides the detailed character and development objectives for the academic lands, and the Neighbourhood Plans do the same for each respective neighborhood. Public Outdoor Art is supported and encouraged in both of these planning contexts.

3. The Outdoor Art Collection Today

3.1. Outdoor Art on Academic Lands

UBC began its formal outdoor public art collection in the late 1950’s.

Approximately twenty-eight outdoor public artworks are currently distributed throughout the academic campus. They include pieces in the formal University Art Collection, objects of interest, and community level artwork that has been commissioned or donated to specific faculties and departments (see Appendix 1). These works greatly enrich the campus landscape, tell stories about the history of UBC and Vancouver, and are part of a narrative of the ongoing history of art.

Outdoor art projects on academic lands may originate from donations or university acquisitions and commissioned works. Development Permits are required for all outdoor artworks on Academic lands.

3.2. Outdoor Art in the Neighbourhoods

Public outdoor art is also encouraged in the Neighbourhood Housing Areas of campus as part of the overall objectives of supporting vibrant and engaging public spaces. Outdoor art projects in the neighbourhoods may originate from developer contributions, art donations, community grants, or community fund-raising initiatives and commissioned works.

Development permits are required for all proposed outdoor art installations in the Neighbourhood Housing areas. Land use regulations that may affect art installations in these areas are found in the UBC Neighbourhood Plans.

Requests for further information on Neighbourhood Plans, or applications for specific public artwork installations, should be directed to Campus and Community Planning.
4. The Outdoor Art Collection in the Future: Academic Lands

As the desire for more public art on the campus academic lands grows, it is important to understand the university’s land-use planning regulatory context, the relevant players, and the university’s public art objectives.

4.1. The Vancouver Campus Plan

The Vancouver Campus Plan, adopted in 2010, is the policy framework that guides all future physical land-use and development on the Vancouver campus academic lands (does not apply to the Neighbourhoods), in support of the university’s academic mission. The fundamental strategies of the Campus Plan are to:

- Create a sustainable campus
- Provide a campus for world class teaching, learning and research
- Nurture a more vibrant and interesting campus for UBC’s community of scholars
- Rediscover UBC’s sense of place and natural west coast beauty
- Ensure a well-connected and accessible campus

The primary character objectives are to rediscover and accentuate UBC’s unique sense of place and its natural west coast beauty, improve the cohesiveness of the buildings and landscapes, and ensure the campus reflects the quality and stature of a world-class university. It strongly promotes place-making; improving the interest, engagement and vibrancy of the public realm; and the strengthening of UBC’s unique identity and sense of place.

The Campus Plan identifies outdoor public art as an important contributor to these objectives. Such art is a means of bringing meaning and interest to the campus landscape, enhancing the reach of existing art-related education and outreach programs, and engaging with the creative and artistic ideas of the day.

**Policy 44 of the VCP (Part 2, Section 7.3)** encourages the further acquisition of public outdoor art on academic lands, identifies potential siting opportunities, and outlines permit requirements for all installations.

The Campus Plan identifies two types of public outdoor artworks:

- Those of sufficient artistic merit to be considered worthy of inclusion in the formal University Art Collection, as administered under the curatorial responsibility of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery; and
Those displays of outdoor art termed community level art, which are not in the formal University Art Collection, but which may have significant relevance to the UBC campus community.

Copies of the Vancouver Campus Plan are available at: http://www.campusplan.ubc.ca/.

The University Art Committee support on the merits of the artworks would be obtained according to the procedures discussed in this Strategy in Section 4.7: Approvals and Siting.

4.2. What is Outdoor Art?

Outdoor Art at UBC, also commonly referred to as public art, refers to works produced in any medium sited in the public realm, outdoors and therefore accessible to everyone. The term signifies particular kinds of art practices, sometimes marked by community involvement and collaboration. In recent years, ideas about public art have expanded in scope to embrace practices that are sometimes process-based and ephemeral. The commissioning of such public art usually results in permanent artworks and sculptures, but can also lead to less permanent installations. The range of possibilities for public art is wide, constantly changing, and subject to debate.

In recent years, the University Art Committee (previously known as the Provost's Committee on University Art) with the Belkin Art Gallery has arranged for the installation of a number of works of public art on campus, some of which were commissioned, and others not. Three works provide an idea of the range of possibilities for public art (see also Appendix 1).

- **Native Hosts** by Edgar Heap of Birds consists of twelve aluminum signs that address the relationship between First Nations and British Columbia. The modestly-sized signs are sited in different locations on the campus.

- **Wood for the People** by Myfanwy MacLeod consists of 230 identical, cast concrete logs stacked in the form of a woodpile installed along the entrance walkway of the Belkin Art Gallery.

- **Millennial Time Machine** by Rodney Graham is housed in a glass walled pavilion at the south-west corner of Main Mall and Memorial Road. This sculpture is the first work of art to be commissioned for the campus at UBC since 1976.

4.3. Curatorial Directions & Objectives for UBC’s Outdoor Art Collection

The UBC Outdoor Art Collection aims to stand out from other institutional collections by celebrating and reveling in its university nature. Like the university itself, the collection should be experimental, cerebral, and provocative. It should comment on the processes and products of
thoughtful enquiry, innovation, and critical thinking. In various ways, it should address the human condition, science, and beauty.

An exhibit in the formal outdoor art collection on academic lands at UBC may range from landmark sculptural works to temporary installations. It may take the form of participatory, process-based projects, or of collaborations of various types. It may lead to an artist in residence for a time, or to competitions that assemble a number of selected artists.

In assessing proposed additions to the Outdoor Art Collection, the University Art Committee will be guided by the following considerations:

- Artworks should continue to express a diverse and changing British Columbian society and its relationship to the world.
- Artworks should signal a creative, idea-rich campus, and support the university’s research and teaching mandates, and reach out to international ideas and artists.
- Artworks should be carefully chosen to enhance social interaction and discussion in public places. Some artworks may be tucked away in quiet spaces.
- Artworks should include a wide variety of quality pieces.
- Artworks may identify particular sectors of the university’s intellectual life. Departments or faculties, for example, can be marked off in the campus landscape by relevant outdoor public art.
- Artworks may bring artists and groups of scholars together. Consider an artist attached for a time to the Department of Physics, or Biochemistry, or French -- and the fruits of such collaborations.
- Artworks may include more aboriginal content.
- A sculpture garden in the Library Gardens is encouraged.

### 4.4. The University Art Committee (UAC)

It is the particular role of the University Art Committee (UAC) to provide advice and recommendations to the university on acquisitions, installation and maintenance of artworks in the University Art Collection, indoor and outdoor.

When it comes to outdoor art, there is a two part approvals process: the first stage being artistic merit and acquisition approvals, the second stage being a more technical approval of site fine-tuning and technical installation through a Development Permit process. The UAC is responsible for the first stage approvals of the artistic merit and providing acquisition
recommendations to the Provost for both formal collection art work and community level art, for all proposals located throughout most of the campus academic lands (See List A, Appendix 3). The Campus and Community Planning office will be responsible for the second stage technical siting and installation approvals through the Development Permit process prior to installation of any artwork (see Section 4.7 of this Strategy).

The only exception to this approval structure noted above, is for community level art works that are proposed within interior courtyards described on List B, Appendix 3. For those proposals alone, a first stage artistic merit approval through the UAC is not required. However, Campus & Community Planning will use the Development Permit process to verify that these proposals are of significance to, generated (or commissioned) by the UBC Academic community, and not objectionable to other surrounding campus stakeholders. Campus + Community Planning may seek input from the UAC or university administration in its considerations and is not obliged to approve proposals in this category.

The voting members of the UAC are as follows: four to seven UBC faculty members, one UBC student member, one UBC staff member, the Associate Vice-President of Campus and Community Planning or their designate, and three members from the community at large. The Director of the Belkin Gallery and the UBC curator(s) are non-voting members.

The chair of the UAC is appointed by the Provost as, with the advice of the chair, are committee members from UBC. The chair, in consultation with members of the UAC and the Provost or his/her representative will select the community members on the basis of the following qualifications:

- Volunteer participation
- Community standing
- Art literacy
- Representativeness of the Vancouver community
- Capacity to add credibility to the committee

Subject to available funds, a special curator of outdoor public art is also recommended to initiate and develop contacts with artists, recommend particular artists and projects to the UAC, obtain the permissions required at various levels of the university, and manage the curatorial development and logistical delivery of public art projects. At such time, the UAC will also advise and assist the special curator of public outdoor art.

**4.5. Acquisition Methods**

Additions to the Outdoor Art Collection at UBC may be obtained in various ways, including:
The commission of a particular work: On the recommendation of the curator and with the approval of the University Art Committee and the Associate Vice President of Campus and Community Planning, an artist is commissioned to create a work, usually for a particular site, either in association with a building project, or on its own.

The commission of a resident artist: An artist recommended by the curator and approved by the University Art Committee is invited to work with a group of faculty (a department, for example) and / or students to achieve a permanent or temporary artwork of particular relevance to the group involved.

The creation of an artistic event or festival: An important date in the history of the university, for example, may be the occasion to bring a number of artists to the campus for a few weeks to create permanent or, more likely, temporary works of art.

Purchase: The curator and the University Art Committee may recommend the purchase of an existing artwork.

Donation: An artist or private donor may wish to donate an artwork which, subject to the recommendation of the curator and with the approval of the University Art Committee could be added to the collection.

Community level outdoor art: Artwork projects by members of the university community may be proposed on campus. It is recommended that these community level works are for the most part located in the internal courtyards of, or in secondary locations in close proximity to, the building of the sponsoring department for which they hold relevance.

4.6. Funding

4.6.a General

To date, acquisitions for the Outdoor Art Collection have been secured through donations, fundraising and external grants. These projects have been administered by the Curator and staff of the Belkin Art Gallery with the advice from the University Art Committee (UAC). Other programs and sources may be arranged in future.

4.6.b 2011 $2.5 Million Matching Fund Program

In 2011, and, after considering recommendations from the President’s Advisory Committee on Campus Enhancement, the university authorized a one-time matching fund of $2.5 million for public art on campus, to be supported through the Infrastructure Impact Charges fund. With this financial support from the university, the opportunity is now at hand for a bold and sustained commitment to outdoor public art on the UBC academic lands.
A proposal will need to be prepared annually by the Curator and/or Chair of the University Art Committee for the IIC Planning Committee, requesting priority consideration for matching fund withdrawals from this fund for acquisition and installation of upcoming art projects that year.

This fund for outdoor art will be administered by Campus and Community Planning. Conditions of the matching fund are as follows:

1) The program only applies to outdoor artworks intended for Academic lands (not in the Neighbourhoods).

2) The program only applies to outdoor artworks that are supported by the University Art Committee and are part of the formal UBC Art Collection.

3) Matching funds will be released when the total of the matching funds and the donated funds or artwork or combination of the two, is sufficient to result in a completed art project on campus.

4) Partial financial donations to the University may be accepted and bundled towards eventual collective submission to the matching fund program when the total will yield sufficient funds to result in a completed art project on campus.

5) A completed art project should include acquisition or commissioning and all installation costs as defined below.

“Installation Costs” consist of any combination of the following:

a. Transportation

b. Hard installation costs (cranes, foundations, any required infrastructure, site preparation);

c. Interpretive signage;

d. Minor restoration associated with relocating the piece;

e. Artist fee as part of interpreting and recreating the piece in the UBC context for works that are not installed identically in each location (e.g. the Bell by Geoffrey Farmer);

To take advantage of this new 2011 Matching Fund Program opportunity, the following actions will be undertaken:

a) Opportunities for matching funds will be explored:
b) Clear donor guidelines and explanatory materials on the following topics will be developed to help the Development Office make effective use of donor opportunities and to ensure that donor expectations are realistic regarding:

- Opportunities for donations
- Acceptance procedures
- Siting and Approvals
- Curation
- De-accessioning

Outdoor Art projects that do not qualify under the 2011 Matching Fund Program may still be supported by the University Art Committee if they can be justified and funded through other channels (see 4.6.a above).

4.6.c Maintenance

To support the ongoing maintenance of art works in UBC’s formal Outdoor Art Collection $10,000 per year in addition to the matching fund will be set-aside for maintenance of new and existing art works. Request for release of these funds must be submitted by the curator annually through the Public Realm Budget.

Maintenance agreements need to be established for each new art work prior to installation of the piece on campus as part of the Development Permit process. These agreements will clarify maintenance roles and responsibilities for each work (See also, VCP Part 2, Section 7.3).

4.7. Approvals and Siting

All applications for outdoor art installation (both formal collection and community level artworks) on campus except those in enclosed interior courtyards (see List B, Appendix 3) will be directed to the UAC for assessment of artistic merit and relevance to the university’s public art strategy (Section 4.4) either as part of the formal collection, or a community art. If the UAC recommends acceptance, and the Provost approves the art proposal in concept, C+CP will then receive and process development permit applications for that installation.
Only those community level art proposals within interior courtyards (List B, Appendix 3) may proceed directly to Campus + Community Planning for consideration of the artwork and installation through a Development Permit application, without first obtaining support from the UAC. C+CP may still, at its discretion, consult with the UAC on these proposals. C+CP will also consult with building occupants /adjacent stakeholders, or other groups it considers to have an interest in the artwork. C+CP may approve or reject the work for either technical or academic community interest reasons.

All proposed Outdoor Art installations whether formal collection or community level, whether within interior courtyards, or elsewhere across the broader public realm, must obtain a Development Permit through the department of Campus and Community Planning (C+CP) approving detailed siting and installation of the artwork. It is strongly recommended that this step occur prior to final acceptance of a donation, in case installation issues become prohibitive. This Development Permit process will coordinate a review of the technical and practical installation considerations in the context of physical infrastructure, public realm program, circulation and other potential adjacency constraints.

Outdoor art will generally be sited in a manner consistent with the guidelines below, including consideration of the prominence and significance of the piece relative to the prominence or character of the chosen location.

a) General guidance regarding the hierarchy of available campus spaces, and outdoor art locations that would also support urban design objectives on campus, are suggested on Campus Plan Map 2-13 (Appendix 2). However, these proposed locations are flexible; UAC’s recommendations about the siting of particular artworks will be important considerations.

b) High prominence outdoor art locations in the campus public realm will be reserved for artworks of considerable distinction in the formal collection, with meaning to the whole campus community.

c) Art is encouraged in locations visible from campus social spaces or main vehicle and pedestrian routes.

d) A sculpture garden will be encouraged in the Library Gardens as a pre-eminent display area location for a number of acquisitions.

e) The majority of the collected outdoor artworks are to be concentrated within five minutes walking distance of the campus core or high density academic hubs, to increase the collection’s impact and accessibility.

f) In the South Campus Research precinct, public art should be located in the high visibility zone between the South Wesbrook roundabout and the intersection of the Main Mall greenway with Wesbrook Mall.
g) Works in the formal collection normally will be installed where, with the use of accessible pathways or viewing points, they can be seen by the broader UBC community.

h) In some cases, the nature of the artwork will favour a different site than otherwise indicated through urban design preferences in a) through g) above, and artist and UAC siting recommendations will be given careful consideration.

i) Community level artworks should be sited, through the development permit process, in internal courtyards of, and in close proximity to, the sponsoring buildings or precincts for which they hold relevance. With the recommendation of the UAC some community level art works may be installed in other primary and secondary public spaces on the Campus.

4.8. Public Consultation

The decision whether to acquire additions to the University Collection is made by the Provost office, based on recommendation from the University Art Committee.

Decisions on where to locate the outdoor art and approval of its technical installation considerations occurs through the Development Permit process, coordinated through Campus & Community Planning. The development permit process for all exterior public art installation proposals includes a public open house opportunity. All members of the university and public will be invited to see plans of the proposed artwork and its proposed site. Input from the public open house will be forwarded to the UAC and taken into consideration in the C+CP review. Extremely controversial projects may be referred to the Provost or University Executive by Campus + Community Planning for guidance on location options prior to approval or rejection of a proposed installation.
Appendix 1: Existing Outdoor Artworks
From the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery
Outdoor Art Tour, 2010

01 Myfanwy MacLeod (b.1961)
Wood for the People, 2002

02 Jamelie Hassan (b. 1948)
Because...there was and there wasn’t a city of Bagdad, 1991
03 Hock E Aye VI Edgar Heap of Birds (b.1954)
Native Hosts, 1991 – 2007

04 Gerhard Class (1924 – 1997)
Configuration, 1960
05 Robert Clothier (1921 – 1999)
Three Forms, 1956

06 Robert Murray (b. 1936)
Cumbria, 1966 – 67
07 Jack Harman (1927 – 2001)
Portrait Bust of Dr. Norman A. M. Mackenzie, 1976

08 Otto Fischer-Credo (1890 – 1959)
Asiatic Head, 1958
09 Gerhard Class (1924 – 1997)

Untitled (Tuning Fork), 1968

10 Stone Garden

Stone Garden, 1996
11 Richard E. Prince (b. 1949)
Script for an Asian Landscape, 1996

12 Gautam Pal (b. 1949)
Bust of Rabindranath Tagore, 2002
13 Jack Harman (1927 – 2001)
Transcendence, 1961

14 Lionel Thomas (1915 – 2005) & Patricia Thomas (b. 1919)
Untitled (Symbols for Education), 1958
15 Ellen Neel (1916 – 1966)

Replica by Calvin Hunt, Mervin Child, and John Livingston
Victory Through Honour
first dedicated in 1948, replica dedicated in 2004
16 Charles Marega (1871 – 1939)
Monkey and Bearded Man, 1925

17 George Norris (b. 1928)
Mother and Child, 1955
18 Rodney Graham (b. 1949)
Millennial Time Machine, 2003

19 The Maltese Labyrinth
The Maltese Labyrinth, 2006
20 Lionel Thomas (1915 – 2005)
The Lion and St. Mark, 1957

21 Joseph Caveno (b. 1938) & Hung Chung (b. 1946)
Goddess of Democracy, 1991
22 Sir Charles Wheeler (1892 – 1974)
King George VI, 1958

23 Robert Weghsteen (b. 1929)
Untitled, 1971
24 Làszlò Jòzsa (b. 1938) and Arpàd Gàl (b. 1946)
Sopron Gate, fabricated 1992, installed 2001

Thunderbirds, 1967
26 George Norris (b. 1928)

Untitled (Man about to Plant or Pick Alfalfa), 1967

27 George Norris (b. 1928)

Untitled, 1968
28 Paul Deggan (b. 1932)

Untitled, 1965
Appendix 2: Map of Outdoor Art Collection Siting Opportunities on Academic Lands

MAP
2-13
Potential Locations for Outdoor Public Art

- Outdoor Art Curated by Belkin Gallery
- Other Outdoor Public Art
- Existing Commemoration Sites
- Existing Graduation Trees
- UBC Buildings that House Public Art
  1. International House
  2. Morris & Helen Belkin Art Gallery
  3. Frederick Lasserre Building
  4. Music Building
  5. Irving Barber Learning Centre
  6. Student Union Building (AMS Art Gallery)
  7. Kennedy Building
  8. Museum of Anthropology
  9. Library Processing Centre
  10. Macmillan Building (Faculty of Agriculture)
  11. Buchanan Building
- Significant Opportunities for Siting Outdoor Public Art

UBC Vancouver Campus Boundary
Vancouver Campus Plan Area
Neighbourhoods in VCP Area
Family Housing Neighbourhoods (excluded)
Institutional Building Footprints
Current land uses remain until an academic plan for the area is complete and the density has been transferred. Refer to Campus Plan Details, Chapter 3 Campus Land Use for more information.

Excerpt from Vancouver Campus Plan (as amended from time to time)
Appendix 3: Approval Zones for Community Level Art Proposals

The Provost Committee on University Art (PCUA), soon to become University Art Committee (UAC), will be responsible for reviewing the artistic merit and acquisition of all community level outdoor art proposals proposed within spaces identified on List A, and including any other public campus spaces that are not on List B. The PCUA/UAC, will not be responsible for reviewing the artistic merit and acquisition of all community level outdoor art proposals proposed within “interior Courtyards” as defined on List B.

C+CP will review proposals in locations on List B. C+CP will, in those cases, consider if a piece is of sufficient academic community interest to allow the installation. C+CP will consider whether the artwork is relevant to, and originated by a group of faculty, students or staff. C+CP is not obliged to approve artworks in this category, and may seek advice from the UAC, or the Administration.

Campus + Community Planning (C+CP) will be responsible for Development Permit approvals for the technical installation, and siting fine-tuning of all art proposals whether for the formal university collection or community category.

List A and B may be adjusted from time to time.

**LIST A:** Spaces that do not qualify as “Interior Courtyards’ for Outdoor Art proposals. UAC support is required.

1) Botanical Garden East  
2) Botanical Garden West  
3) Nitobe Garden  
4) Asian Culture Garden  
5) Rose Garden  
6) Chan forecourt  
7) East Mall entry lawns (north end)  
8) Lasserre Courtyard  
9) Law courtyard – south side  
10) Music courtyard  
11) Flagpole plaza  
12) Buchannan Courtyard 1 and 2(because one is v open on the north end, and the other is v open on the south and east side)  
13) Brock Courtyard  
14) First Nations Gardens  
15) Library Gardens  
16) SUB North Plaza  
17) Bosque  
18) SCARFE Garden  
19) Pharmacy Lane  
20) IRC access area  
21) Copp Courtyard  
22) Main Mall South Commons  
23) East-west route through AERL to Food Nutrition Health building, and along south side AERL
24) Earth Ocean Sciences plazas and green space (Fairview Commons)
25) Aquatic Centre/Sub Plaza
26) MacInnes Field
27) IRC /Friedman courtyard
28) All parks, sports fields, research fields
29) Forested areas, edges and laneways, nooks and crannies accessible to public exterior to buildings

LIST B: “Interior Courtyards” for art proposal purposes. No UAC support required:

1) Old SUB courtyard
2) St Johns Courtyard
3) Biological Sciences Courtyard
4) Engineering courtyard
5) Beaty Biodiversity courtyard (upper green roof portion behind wall )
6) Gage residence plaza south side
7) Ritsumeikan courtyard
8) Computer Science Courtyard behind ICICS
9) Thunderbird Grad Residence courtyards
10) MacMillan Courtyard
11) Forestry Roof garden (east side)
12) Vanier residences Green spaces and courtyards
13) Totem Park Residences green spaces and courtyards
14) Marine Drive Residents courtyard