



CITY OF RICHMOND

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

December 5, 2019

Bloomberg Philanthropies
25 East 78th Street
New York, NY 10075

Dear Bloomberg Philanthropies:

As Mayor of the City of Richmond, I am writing in full support of the Asphalt Art grant application “Richmond Arts District Place-Making Project” being jointly submitted to Bloomberg Philanthropies by the Richmond Public Art Commission and Venture Richmond for an asphalt art display at the intersection of Brook Road and Adam Street in the Historic Jackson Ward neighborhood of the City.

Richmond’s formal commitment to public art is best demonstrated by City Ordinance 97-3-41 that details the City’s Percent for Art Program. The ordinance makes clear that the City of Richmond supports a strong public art program. Our city recognizes that public art contributes to tourism and culture, that public art is a vehicle for dialogue between different cultural groups within a community, and that public art can serve as a catalyst for urban revitalization.

Like any effective public art initiative, the three components of the “Richmond Arts District Place-Making Project” — a parklet, intersection mural, and pedestrian plaza — will provide multiple benefits to this neighborhood gateway. It aims to transform the intersection into a safe and friendly community space and encourage pedestrian traffic in the area.

Also, our Public Art Commission will work in partnership with local community organizations, Art 180 and Gallery 5, to ensure equitable and diverse community input for the asphalt art display’s design and creation. I believe Art 180, a community organization that provides inner-city youth with art resources, and Gallery 5, a dynamic gallery space for local and regional artists, are the perfect components to assist our Richmond Public Art Commission and Venture Richmond with steering input and conversations for the design of the asphalt art display.

Most importantly, the asphalt intersection mural will give voice to the lost and forgotten stories that are the foundation of Jackson Ward, which is one of only two districts in the City that are National Historic Landmarks. This area includes deep history, as it was once the epicenter of



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African-American life in the country, attracting artists and entertainers from across the nation.

A grant award from Bloomberg Philanthropies, along with matching funds from Venture Richmond, and in-kind contributions from Walter Parks Architecture, can ensure that the “Richmond Arts District Place-Making Project” will be an important and creative net asset for the City of Richmond, its citizens, and visitors alike. We are grateful for this opportunity and hopeful that you will grant us the assistance to transform and elevate our gateway to Jackson Ward to continue telling its often forgotten story.

Sincerely,

Levar M. Stoney
Mayor