Citizen City: The Role of the Architect in Fostering Diversity, Inclusion, and Cultural Sustainability

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This presentation will focus on the role of the architect in fostering diversity, inclusion, and cultural sustainability. Based upon the ideals of Gregory Henriquez’s book “Citizen City” it will provide a provocative message on the role of the design community as thought leaders and relationship builders by challenging a new generation of architects towards greater civic engagement to address the issues facing society today.

“Citizen City” focuses on the incredible potential of cross-sector partnerships among private developers, nonprofits, and various levels of government in attempting to harness a portion of the wealth created in the real estate development process to achieve socially valuable urban planning goals: meeting the needs of the community’s most vulnerable members, providing affordable housing, and creating community amenities to promote a vibrant urban culture.

The presentation will highlight the success and failures of such partnerships with case studies of three Canadian building projects. The projects, led by Henriquez Partners Architects and collaborators from all sectors, are in varying stages of development from concept to completion. It is hoped that the lessons of these cross-sector partnerships will
aid the creation of a more vibrant, just, community-oriented city --- a Citizen City. These projects may also help guide other North American cities towards a more just existence.

The Vancouver studio of Henriquez Partners Architects designs complex mixed-used projects that aspire to integrate ethics and poetics to create inclusive and engaged communities. Our role as a metaphorical and architectural “Robin hood” relies on complex rezoning with economies to scale that enable the development community to meet their financial objectives in tandem with a necessary transfer of equity towards socially valuable objectives.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

**Gregory Henriquez** is the Managing Principal and a leader amongst a generation of architects who are reintegrating ethics and activism into the discipline. His work is founded on the belief that meaningful architecture must be a poetic expression of social justice. Gregory has shaped Henriquez’s current practice, which is now best known for complex, inclusive, and mixed-use projects. The Woodward’s Redevelopment completed in 2011 in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, remains unprecedented in Canada due to its scale, humanitarian aspirations and complexity. Elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Gregory has four published books: *Towards an Ethical Architecture*, *Body Heat*, *Citizen City* and most recently coming this June, *GHETTO: Sanctuary for Sale*. 