



ARTS COUNCIL SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING AGENDA

Monday, June 17, 2024

Mercer Island Community & Event Center, 8236 SE 24th Street, and via Zoom
8236 SE 24th St | Mercer Island, WA 98040
Phone: 206.275.7706 | www.mercerisland.gov

ARTS COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chair: Rene Stratton

Vice Chair: Erin Vivion

Members: Jessica Prince, Candace Chuck, Gaylene Vaden, Amy Barnes, Erik Gordon, Damian Schwiethale, Xixi Shakes, 2 Vacant Positions

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for meetings should notify the Staff Liaison at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

SPECIAL BUSINESS

- 1. Arts Council Introductions**
- 2. Art in Public Places 6-Year Workplan – Workshop #2**

Recommended Action: Discussion only; no action needed.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 3. Absences**

ADJOURNMENT



ARTS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Item (2)
June 17, 2024
Special Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Art in Public Places 6-Year Workplan – Workshop #2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Discussion only; no action needed.	

STAFF:	Sarah Bluvas
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Ted Weinberg
EXHIBITS:	None

SUMMARY

This special meeting is the second in a series of workshops to develop a 6-Year Workplan for the Art in Public Places Program (the Plan). The Mercer Island Arts Council held its first workshop on May 20, 2024, where they provided input to inform the public art project opportunities that will be included in the Plan as well as previewed upcoming public art policy and deaccession needs. ([Agenda Item #2](#) | [Video Recording](#); Item begins at 7:13)

During Workshop #2, the Arts Council will continue work to develop the public art project opportunities list and provide feedback on the Guidelines for Acquisition and Deaccession that will be updated as part of this planning process.

Staff will use the Arts Council’s feedback from this and subsequent workshops to draft the Plan, which will be presented for review and comment at the Arts Council’s Regular Meeting on October 16, 2024. The date for Workshop #3 will also be finalized.

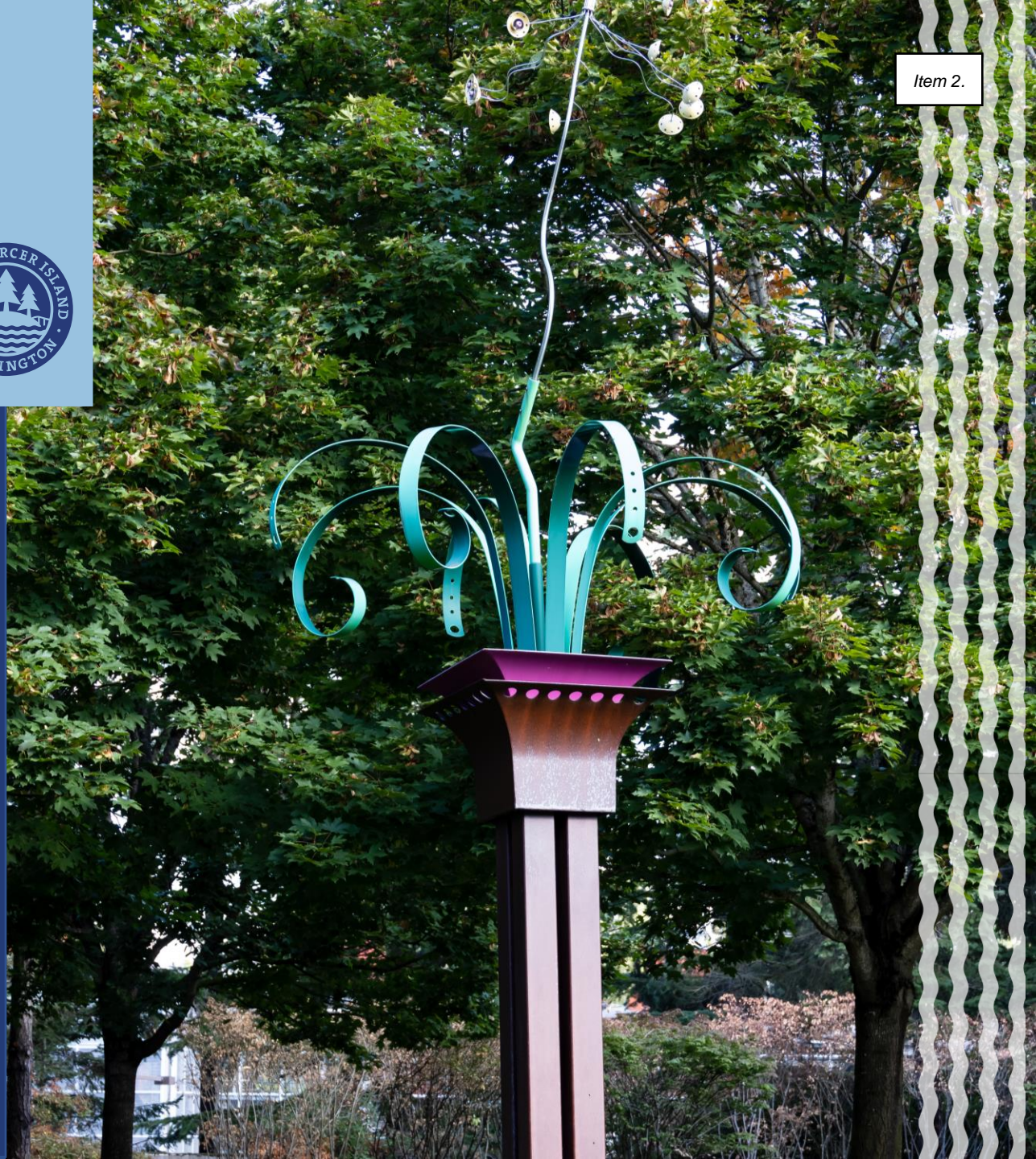
RECOMMENDED ACTION

Discussion only; no action needed.



6-Year Art in Public Places Workplan – Workshop #2

Arts Council Special Hybrid Meeting
June 17, 2024



Goals for Tonight's Conversation

1. Draft public art “framing statements.”
2. Provide input to update the Guidelines for Acquisition & Deaccession.
3. Discuss summer event outreach opportunities.
4. Look ahead and confirm the date/time for Workshop #3.



Project Opportunities Discussion

Rescue by Hai Ying Wu

Acquired 1991, Fire Station 91 AIPP



How do you describe the public art collection today?

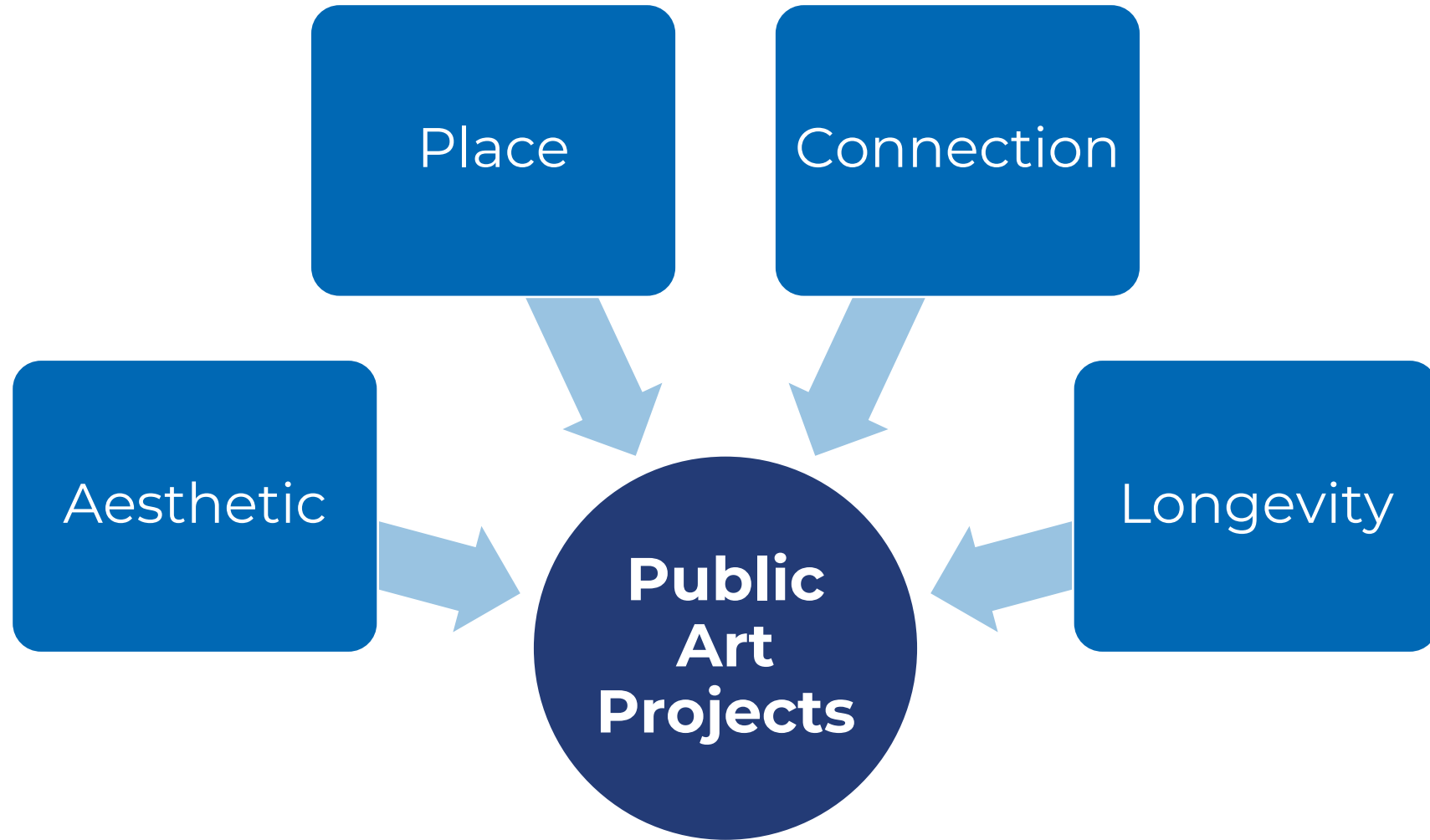
Responses	Keywords
Not as high quality as those in neighboring communities	Quality
Art community does not feel connected	Disconnected arts community
Community does not feel connected to the arts	Disconnected from public art
Island has many artists, art patrons, and citizens who want more access and opportunity to engage with the arts locally.	Opportunity and access Local artists / arts
Lot of visual art → bronze, sculpture	Visual arts heavy Bronze Sculpture
Not as much performing arts	Performing arts needs
Well-supported and prioritized on the Island through commissions and maintenance	Supported
Also under-appreciated and less well-known among our community	Under-appreciated Lacks awareness
Geographically concentrated in Town Center and North End	Town Center North End Concentrated geographically
Sizable collection; more significant than I realized	Sizable Significant Surprising
Very focused on visual arts	Visual arts heavy
Lacking space to gather to perform arts → goal to work toward	Performing arts need
Lack of awareness about the Arts Council	Lacks awareness
Arts community is disconnected → can the Arts Council play role in bringing different groups together?	Disconnected arts community
Artwork inspires feeling and emotion (e.g. figures at QFC, children at The Mercer fountain, etc.)	Inspiring Emotion
Artwork is inspiring and beautiful	Inspiring Beautiful
In-person and digital engagement opportunities for the collection are helpful	Community engagement
Accessible → known to the public and available to see all the time	Access
Artwork is a bit dated → need to maintain but also update the collection	Out-dated artwork Maintain but update
Artwork as landmark → people reference things around it or use it as reference points (placemaking)	Landmarks Placemaking
<i>The Source</i> is a landmark.	<i>The Source</i>
Variety in the artwork	Variety
Working off a good foundation	Foundation
Sculpture Gallery is central and well-organized → have something to show others at the Light Rail station area; centralize more artwork there to make it a destination?	Outdoor Sculpture Gallery Centralized
Interactive artwork → <i>Kenton's Dragon</i> , <i>The Source</i> , etc., provide opportunities for kids to interact.	Interactive Engaging kids / families

Where do you want to see the public art collection go?

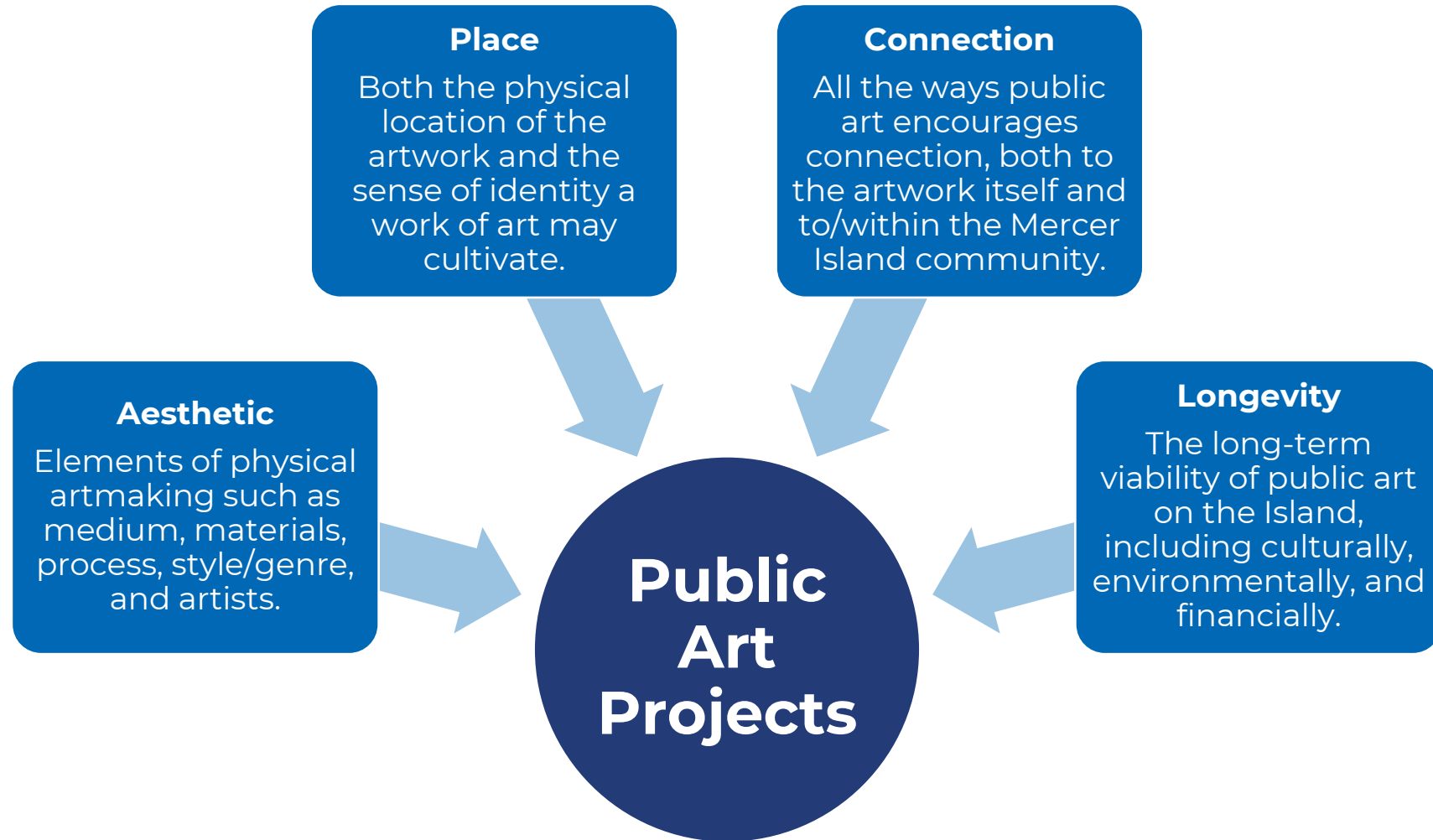
Responses	Keywords
Plays a crucial role in quality of life in the community, fostering creativity, cultural exchange, and social cohesion.	Quality of life Creativity Social cohesion
Enriches urban landscape, stimulates dialogue, and contributes to the overall well-being and vitality of a community.	Dialogue Enriching Community vitality
More variety and types → especially more interactive art	Variety Interactive
Stronger integration with the surrounding context → pieces that make sense in the spaces in which they are installed	Context Integrated
More lighting → light-based artwork, lighting of the artwork, lighting for public safety	Lighting
Coordinated arts cooperation → bring arts / non-arts groups and individuals together	Coordination Cooperation
More crowd-sourced projects to bring people together → permanent projects like <i>Mercer Island Medallions</i>	Crowd-sourced Bring people together
Sustainability → environmental, social	Sustainability Equity
Explore other mediums → beyond sculpture to include glass, lighting, performance; make it a broader collection	Beyond sculpture Broader collection
Geographic equity	Geographic equity
Integrate context → tell the history of Mercer Island	Context History
Reflect values and pride of Mercer Island → open spaces / natural environments, schools, great place for families <i>Mercer Island Medallions</i> a good example of telling the Island's history and community values	Mercer Island values <i>Mercer Island Medallions</i>
Be intentional about what is commissioned and maintained going forward → future financial sustainability; position the City to commission more pieces rather than just maintain	Financial sustainability Future community Intentional
Honor Indigenous history of the Island	Indigenous history
Dedicated opportunities for different Island communities / organizations to express themselves	Self-expression Inclusion
Artwork to inspire inclusion and acceptance	Inclusion
Focus on placemaking → amphitheater at Luther Burbank Park, <i>The Source</i> , <i>Primavera II</i> , etc., are examples of artwork/arts spaces that create sense of place	Placemaking
Think about ways to welcome folks to Mercer Island, e.g. roundabouts in Thonon-les-Bains	Welcoming
Celebrate the place we're in	Celebrate place
Artwork as a theme throughout the City → e.g. Pigs in Pike Place Market; unifying theme throughout the community	Unifying
Water as a unifying theme → fountains, spray park, both art and functional	Water
Sculpture Gallery is central and well-organized → have something to show others at the Light Rail station area; centralize more artwork there to make it a destination?	Outdoor Sculpture Gallery Centralized Destination
Artwork is a bit dated → need to maintain but also update the collection	Update
Arts community is disconnected → can the Arts Council play role in bringing different groups together?	Arts Council as convener
Very focused on visual arts	Incorporate performing arts
Opportunities exist to engage community members for feedback	Engage community

Item 2.

Four Public Art Pillars



Four Public Art Pillars



Are these accurate? Is anything missing?

Drafting Public Art Framing Statements

- Asked Arts Council members to come prepared with statements to “frame” how public art projects are prioritized and developed in the 6-year workplan.
- These framing statements will be used to evaluate each project opportunity and decide whether to pursue it.

Framing Statements Exercise

- Using the notepads at your seat, write each framing statement on its own note.
- Once you’re done, add each note to the whiteboard.
- We will share out each grouping/statement for Arts Council comments/questions.
- Staff will use feedback to narrow statements to present at Regular Meeting on July 17.

9 Framing Statements Provided by Arts Council on 06.17.24

Item 2.

Art installations should enhance the sense of place, creating landmarks that celebrate the identity of Mercer Island and ensure geographic equity across all neighborhoods.

It should be easy for viewers to understand the connection of each piece to Mercer Island's past and present.

Sparking curiosity with artwork located throughout the Island where people walk, gather, and play.

Celebrate variety of forms of arts with a strong emphasis on high aesthetic quality.

Public art will celebrate diverse aesthetics and mediums, embracing innovation across vibrant and inclusive canvases. We aim to prioritize projects that actively engage diverse community voices, ensuring that each piece resonates and reflects the cultural richness of our city. This approach ensures that public art is not just a form of decoration but a platform for dialogue and community pride.

Promote non-resident interest in visiting Mercer Island.

Educate and promote arts on the Island. Arts are an essential element *and* an extra.

Create a destination to bring local artists together and make their work more accessible to the community.

The 6-year plan should focus 100% on the "front door" of Mercer Island. The Greta Hackett Outdoor Sculpture Gallery would welcome people to Mercer Island from Light Rail, be in the densest population, and be accessible to all.

Priority should be given to pieces that are integrated into their surroundings such that they appear to be commissioned specifically for that location.

Each project will be thoughtfully integrated into its geographical and cultural context, enhancing the unique identity and historical significance of its location. We will turn artworks into landmarks that narrate the rich history of Mercer Island, creating spaces that are not only visually captivating but also educational. This strategic placement aims to strengthen the connection between our community and the environment, making art a cornerstone of civic identity and pride.

Embrace Mercer Island's natural environment. In suitable projects, blend art and natural science to provide the public with a holistic, educational, and family friendly experience.

Promote arts and culture projects that expand resident involvement in the civic and cultural life of the community (e.g. volunteerism, political participation, arts/culture creation).

Art projects should be designed with sustainability in mind, ensuring cultural, environmental, financial, and physical durability.

Encourage and facilitate community members of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and economical means to participate in art creation, performance, and appreciation.

Artwork should either provide something new that does not already exist in our collection or intentionally expand on existing pieces/elements.

10 Framing Statements Provided by Arts Council on 06.17.24 (continued)

Item 2.

Create opportunities that can be funded in the future with 1% funds, grants, and donations – sort of a menu of opportunities that are scoped out with cost and space.

Sharing our history with future generations through landmarks and performing arts commissions.

Public art should foster community connections by being accessible, inclusive, and reflective of Mercer Island's history, values, and pride, encouraging dialogue and community engagement.

Operate the public art program with physical responsibility.

Public art projects should incorporate diverse mediums such as light-based art, glass, and interactive installations that reflect local artists' self-expression and integrate performing arts.

Expand opportunities for diverse communities to express their values and creative spirit.

Maximize use of the Greta Hackett Outdoor Sculpture Gallery to facilitate experiences like Art Uncorked, small stage for performances, water touch gardens for children, games for adults to gather around, etc.

Focusing on long-term sustainability, we will embody sustainability not only in materials but also in artwork's ability to remain relevant and engaging over time. Projects will be evaluated not only for their immediate impact but also for their potential to endure and inspire future generations, ensuring financial and environmental sustainability at its core. We aim for public art that inspire future generations, maintaining its beauty and significance through sustainable practices and forward-thinking design.

Heighten Mercer Island's quality of life by celebrating a diverse variety of self-expression.

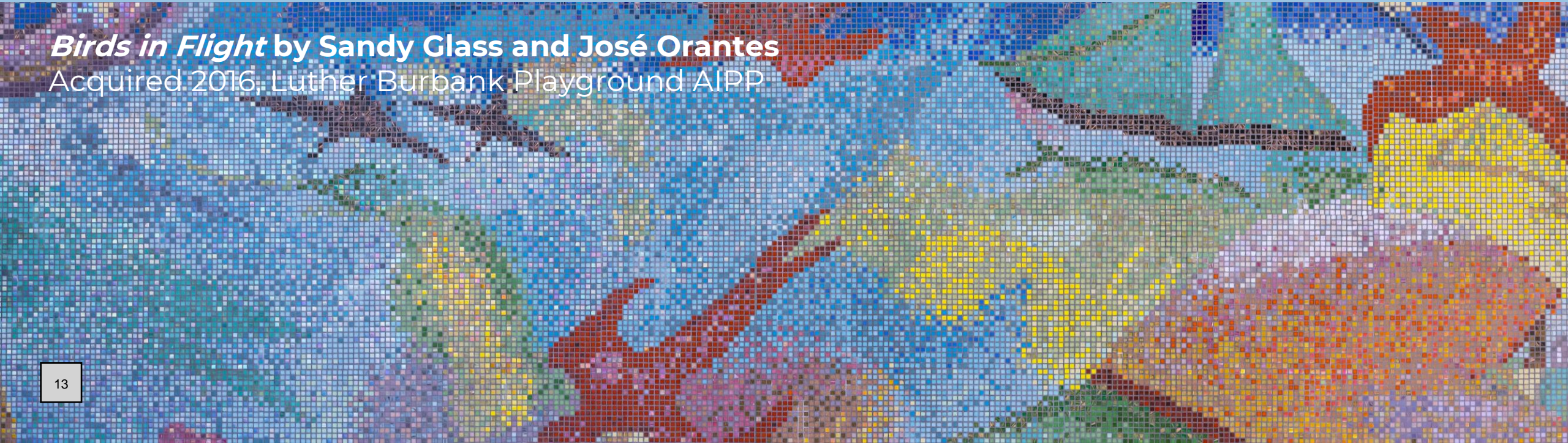
Promote arts and culture projects that contribute to sustainable development and intergenerational equity.

Artwork should thoughtfully consider its future on Mercer Island, including maintenance, environmental sustainability, and the changing interpretations of generations.



Public Art Policy Input

Birds in Flight by Sandy Glass and José Orantes
Acquired 2016, Luther Burbank Playground AIPP



Guidelines for Acquisition & Deaccession

- Staff aim to update and condense the acquisition and deaccession policies into one guidelines document.
- Guidelines will be used to develop a project opportunity, select an artist, implement the project, and evaluate whether deaccession is needed.
- What should the **baseline** be? (Can always do more than the guidelines prescribe.)
- Specificity vs. flexibility
- Tonight, we seek input to inform a first draft to share on July 17.



Handsome Bollards by Tom Jay
Acquired 2001, King County transfer



Who is involved in the acquisition process?

Activity	Current “Who”	Updated “Who”
Develop RFQ/RFP document.	Program Writing Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council member (committee chair) City staff Project designer (e.g. CIP) Interested citizen Others identified by staff and/or City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove interested citizen Flexible depending on the project Find other ways for community engagement in the process
Approve RFQ/RFP document.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Program Writing Committee Chair presents to Arts Council for recommendation. Staff present Arts Council recommendation to City Council. City Council approves recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure the Arts Council has agency
Evaluate artist submittals.	Artist Selection Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artist Mercer Island citizen w/ special interest in project site Arts Council member (panel chair) Design Commission member Mercer Island citizen City Councilmember City staff (non-voting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum for Mercer Island citizens to weigh in at artist selection Commissions that will be involved with that location, project, etc. → for increased buy-in Interested constituency → less prescribed Interest in project site if project specific AC approve selection panel w/o CC approval
Select artist.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Artist Selection Panel Chair presents panel results to Arts Council for recommendation. Staff present Arts Council recommendation to City Council. City Council approves recommendation. Artist Selection Panel Chair notifies selected artist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff do the notification
Implement acquisition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artist Selection Panel Chair City staff 	

How are submittals evaluated?

Yes / No

1. Recognized as professional who routinely creates high quality work.
2. Worked with public, private, or corporate entities previously.
3. Completed commissioned work on time and within budget.

- Use the four pillars and framing statements to build out the evaluation criteria.
- Keep/update criteria for aesthetic quality.
- Possible to include criteria/evaluation related to artwork lifespan and maintenance needs?
- Make ranking less complicated / disparate.
- Consider general criteria + project-specific criteria.

Rank (1-6, Low to High)

4. Produced artwork sensitive and responsive to broad range of public.
5. Shows sensitivity to public benefit requirement identified in RFQ/RFP.
6. In scale with site and / or intended use; does not interfere with any traffic patterns.
7. Recognizes issues of theft, vandalism, weather, and excessive maintenance costs.
8. Experience in/ knowledge of chosen medium.
9. Written concept, sketches, and chosen medium/material expressed cohesively.
10. Entry compatible with RFQ/RFP.

Who is involved in the deaccession process?

Activity	Current “Who”	Updated “Who”
Identify deaccession needs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City staff recommend artworks for consideration/evaluation. 2. Arts Council appoints Deaccession Subcommittee of the Public Art Committee to evaluate and confirm artwork meets deaccessioning criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than five arts professionals/experts • Includes member of Public Art Committee and an art conservator/curator 	
Approve deaccession recommendation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff prepares a deaccession report. 2. Public Art Committee reviews report and makes recommendation to Arts Council. 3. Arts Council reviews Committee recommendation. 4. Staff present final recommendation to City Council for approval. 	
Implement deaccession.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Art Committee considers options (sale, destruction, donation, etc.) 2. Staff carry out selected action and update public art records. 	

How are deaccession needs evaluated?

Current Deaccession Criteria

1. A work is not, or is only rarely, on display because of lack of a suitable site.
2. The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonable guaranteed.
3. The artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated and repair is impractical or unfeasible.
4. The artwork endangers public safety.
5. In the case of site-specific artwork, the artwork is destroyed by severely altering its relationship to the site.
6. The artwork has been determined to be significantly incompatible or inferior in the context of the collection.
7. The City wishes to replace the artwork with work of more significance by the same artist.
8. The artwork requires excessive maintenance or has faults of design or workmanship.

Any other feedback?

- Should guidelines stipulate a certain level of community engagement in acquisition and/or deaccession?
- Should the same evaluation criteria be used for permanent and temporary installations?

Upcoming Events & Meetings



Call of the Wild by Donald Riggs
Donated to the City in 2013





Summer Outreach Opportunities

- Creating coloring sheets and other giveaways to highlight public art collection
- Arts Council interested in outreach at summer events?
 - Summer Celebration: July 13
 - Mostly Music in the Park: Thursdays, July 11-August 22



Public Art Planning Look-Ahead

- Regular Arts Council Meeting – Wednesday, July 17, 5:30pm
 - Request to deaccession *Street Name Inlays*
 - Finalize framing statements
 - Present draft of updated guidelines for acquisition and deaccession
- Schedule Workshop #3 – Monday, September 16, 5:30pm
 - Provide feedback on guidelines draft
 - Preview Collection Care and Funding Matrix elements of workplan
- Questions?

***Rising Times* by Brian Goldbloom and Maryann Kirkby**

Acquired in 1996, 76th Ave AIPP