

**October 2, 2024**

## **Press Release**

### **Wiener Museum of Decorative Arts (WMODA) Secures Partnership with Chihuly Studios**

*To create a permanent art installation and creative experience at the proposed Lake Worth Beach Location*

The City of Lake Worth Beach, the Lake Worth Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the Wiener Museum of Decorative Arts (WMODA) is pleased to announce that a partnership with the Chihuly Studio of Seattle has been reached to bring a permanent art installation and immersive Chihuly experience to WMODA in the City of Lake Worth Beach.

The proposed WMODA Project, currently being considered by the City and CRA, entails the construction of a 33,000 square foot museum dedicated to the Fired Arts. Through his continued relationship with Dale Chihuly, Arthur Wiener, WMODA's benefactor, has secured a commitment from the Chihuly Studio to partner with the Museum to create a new cultural experience in Lake Worth Beach that promises to captivate the imagination of residents and visitors alike. As one of only eight other permanent Chihuly exhibitions in the World, WMODA Lake Worth Beach would now enter the realm of being an international destination for lovers of the fired arts and Chihuly in particular.

Chihuly's career has spanned over six decades and is known for his exhibitions and large-scale architectural installations around the world, for revolutionizing the studio glass movement, and creating some of contemporary art's most iconic works. Chihuly is an artist who transforms spaces with experiments in color, light, transparency and form. With these immersive experiences, visitors are drawn in, encouraging them to explore and interact with the space. These dynamic spaces foster community engagement, creativity and provide educational opportunities for all.

**"I want people to be overwhelmed with light and color in some way that they've never experienced." –CHIHULY**

The opportunity to bring Chihuly's work to the City of Lake Worth Beach and WMODA is a testament to the quality of this groundbreaking project that is currently being considered for approval. The number of visitors coming specifically to see these works of art will be transformative for the Downtown Business Community and the overall Art's District.

Dale Chihuly's exhibitions have consistently generated significant economic impact in cities across the U.S. by attracting large numbers of visitors which drive hotel bookings, restaurant sales, retail spending, and job creation in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Cities hosting his exhibitions, such as Seattle, Asheville, Dallas, and Richmond, have seen increased foot traffic in local attractions, resulting in millions of dollars in economic benefits. For Example:

#### **Chihuly Garden and Glass, Seattle, Washington (Permanent Installation Location)**

- Opened in 2012, this permanent installation continues to attract millions of visitors to Seattle, boosting tourism. It supports local businesses, restaurants, and hotels in the Seattle Center area, contributing significantly to the local economy. The exhibition is estimated to generate over \$1.1 million annually in direct revenue.

### **Morean Arts Center, St. Petersburg, Florida (Permanent Installation Location)**

- Chihuly's permanent collection at the Morean Arts Center has made St. Petersburg a cultural destination, attracting tourists and art enthusiasts alike. The economic impact includes increased visitor spending at local restaurants, hotels, and shops, contributing millions to the local economy since its opening.

### **Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami, Florida (2006)**

- The Chihuly at Fairchild exhibition, held at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami, Florida, had a substantial economic impact during its multiple showings, particularly in 2006 and later revisits in subsequent years. The initial Chihuly exhibition in 2006 attracted over 160,000 visitors, more than doubling the typical attendance of the garden. This significant increase in foot traffic brought a surge in local tourism, with many out-of-town visitors coming specifically for the exhibit.

### **Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia (2012)**

- The museum saw record attendance during Chihuly's exhibit, with a direct economic impact estimated at \$11 million. Visitors traveled from across the region, spending money on hotels, restaurants, and local businesses, benefiting the broader Richmond economy

### **Cheekwood Estate & Gardens, Nashville, Tennessee (2010 & 2020)**

- Chihuly's exhibitions at Cheekwood led to significant spikes in visitor numbers. In 2020, the event attracted over 150,000 visitors, contributing to Nashville's hospitality and retail sectors. Economic impact studies estimated that Chihuly's exhibits brought millions in revenue to the region through tourism.

The WMODA Mixed Use Cultural Arts Campus is a visionary project that has been well received by the community, largely due to its approach to public involvement in planning and implementation, and the WMODA Team hopes that this commitment by the Chihuly Studio will only create more excitement about the project. Upon hearing the news Mayor Betty Resch stated "I cannot think of a better home for the Wiener Museum of Art and a permanent exhibit by Dale Chihuly than downtown Lake Worth Beach. Culture, history, art, and creativity are woven into the fabric that makes our City so special."

From the CRA perspective CRA Chair Carla Blockson commented "The Lake Worth Beach Community Redevelopment Agency is grateful for the opportunity Mr. Wiener, his family and the Wiener Museum of Decorative Arts are bringing to downtown Lake Worth Beach. The partnership that now includes world-renown artist, Dale Chihuly, fulfills the long-term goal of positioning Lake Worth Beach as the place where art is made, seen, and appreciated by all. This new development joins many other local endeavors including the siting of the Cultural Council headquarters, the Urban Arts Lofts, the Benzaiten Center for the Arts, and local galleries and shops, making Lake Worth Beach an authentic, unique City where different cultures are celebrated and commingled through artistic expression."

"We could not be happier that we were able to accomplish this arrangement. The opportunity to share Chihuly with the public and specifically children and seniors is my passion, and the ability to

enhance our educational programs thought this relationship is immense”, stated Arthur Wiener. The Chihuly Experience will be the center focus of the museum which will have community programming and events dedicated to exposing visitors of all ages to the fired arts.

A Joint City and CRA Workshop for the WMODA Mixed Use Cultural Arts Project is scheduled for Monday, October 7, at the Lake Worth Beach Casino Complex at 6:00 p.m.

For more information on this exciting development and proposed project please contact the WMODA Team at [WMODALOVESLWB@gmail.com](mailto:WMODALOVESLWB@gmail.com) or visit their website at [www.wmodaloveslwb.com](http://www.wmodaloveslwb.com). For more information related to the City of Lake Worth Beach at 561-586-1631 or visit [www.lakeworthbeachfl.gov](http://www.lakeworthbeachfl.gov). You may also visit [www.lakeworthbeachcra.org](http://www.lakeworthbeachcra.org).

