

Policy

Deaccessioning is a procedure for the withdrawal of an artwork from the public collection. Deaccessioning should be considered only after a significant amount of time has elapsed from the date of installation of permanent works and acceptance in the case of portable works or under special circumstances (e.g., the piece has been damaged beyond repair.) Deaccessioning will be considered only after a careful and impartial evaluation of the artwork within the context of the collection as a whole. At the beginning of the process, District staff will make reasonable effort to notify any living artist whose work is being considered for deaccessioning.

Eligible Artworks

All artworks owned by Mercer Island whether acquired through Commission, a Percent for Art Program, donation, or any other method. In the case of donated artworks, all legal documents relating to the donation will be consulted prior to beginning the process.

Criteria for Deaccessioning

A Public Art Committee may consider the deaccessioning of artwork for one or more of the following reasons in the event that it cannot be resited:

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.

Deaccessioning Procedure

A Deaccessioning Subcommittee will be appointed by the Arts Council when necessary. This subcommittee will consist of no more than five arts professionals/experts (including one member of the Public Art Committee and an art conservator or curator).

As part of the ongoing evaluation of the collection, the Deaccessioning Subcommittee of the Public Art Committee will review the collection when deemed appropriate. The Arts Council staff will be responsible for recommending artworks for consideration/evaluation for deaccessioning.

1. The Subcommittee determines that an artwork meets one of the criteria for deaccessioning listed above.
2. The Council staff prepares a report that includes:
 - a) The opinion of legal staff on any restrictions which may apply to this specific work.
 - b) Approval of appropriate city authority

- c) Written recommendation for deaccessioning.
3. The Public Art Committee will review the report. The Committee may seek additional information regarding the work from artists, art galleries, curators, appraisers or other professionals prior to making a recommendation to the full Arts Council.
4. A recommendation for action is sent to the City Council for approval at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Upon confirmation of its recommendation, a PAAC shall consider the following actions:

1. Sale or Trade
 - a) Artist will be given first option to purchase or trade artwork.
 - b) Sale may be through auction, gallery resale or direct bidding by individuals, in compliance with appropriate law and policies governing surplus property.
 - c) Trade may be through artist, gallery, museum or other institutions for one or more artwork(s) of comparable value by the same artist.
 - d) No works of art shall be sold or traded to members or staff of the District, consistent with District conflict of interest policies.
 - e) Proceeds from the sale of a work of art shall be returned to a departmental account from, which the original purchase was made if acquired through the District or a % for Art Program. Funds from the sale of gifts shall go into a Public Art Trust Fund for future artwork projects. Any pre-existing contractual agreements between the artist and the District regarding resale shall be honored.
2. Destruction of work deteriorated or damaged beyond repair and deemed to be of negligible value.
3. If the council is unable to dispose of the artwork in a manner outline above, the work shall be donated to a nonprofit organization or otherwise disposed of as council sees fit.