



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 5918
July 20, 2021
Consent Agenda

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5918: Illuminate MI-2021 Appropriation	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Appropriate \$50,000 from the General Fund to develop and implement Illuminate MI-2021.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
STAFF:	Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations Katie Herzog, Recreation & Operations Coordinator
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson
EXHIBITS:	n/a
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ 50,000
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ 50,000

SUMMARY

The Recreation Division, in the Public Works Department, is requesting the City Council appropriate \$50,000 of previously unbudgeted funds for the *Illuminate MI - 2021* lighting installation and community event. This installation and event will be partially funded by donations, sponsorships, and vendor fees totaling \$25,000.

In April, the City Council prioritized resources specific to supporting and implementing community-wide special events and partnerships through the implementation and subsequent acceptance of the *Mercer Island Community and Event Center & Recreation Programs Strategy*. Staff propose building upon past winter events and leveraging strategic community partnerships to provide this opportunity to come together as a community and to support local businesses.

BACKGROUND

Traditionally the City coordinated the Annual Tree Lighting and Firehouse Munch. These events were offered in collaboration with the Mercer Island firefighter's union (IAFF Local 1762) to bring the community, local businesses, and non-profits together for a winter celebration.

Following a reduction to special events in the 2019-2020 Biennial Budget, a group of community members came together in 2019 with the support of City staff and the firefighter's union to provide a one-time alternative event similar to years past. In 2020, restrictions related to the COVID-19 global pandemic did not allow for a formal event or gathering. Instead, during a challenging year for the community, the City's Emergency Operations Center staff created and coordinated *Illuminate MI* to brighten the downtown area, draw residents to local businesses, and create joy throughout the community. The *Illuminate MI* installation was implemented in 2020 at a total cost of \$63,000.

Public Works staff purchased and installed lights at the following locations:

- Mercerdale Park Pergola, Giant Sequoia Tree, and Park Hedges
- Pedestrian Median on 27th Ave SE.
- Over 30 trees down 78th Ave SE. from Mercerdale Park to 27th Ave SE.

The *Illuminate MI* installation was heavily supported by donors and sponsors and greatly appreciated by the community. Other organizations developed activities that connected to the City installation, such as the “Holiday Lights Map” provided by the Mercer Island Preschool Association (MIPA). Local businesses also joined in the event illuminating trees in front of their buildings and their storefronts. Fundraising efforts coordinated by the Community Fund, specifically for *Illuminate MI*, generated \$21,500, with over \$7,000 donated by individual community members. Organization and business sponsors contributed the remainder and included: The Mercer Apartments, RYAN Properties, Evergreen Church, Pagliacci Pizza, Rotary, Mercer Island Radio Operators, IAFF Local 1762, and the Community Fund.

ILLUMINATE MI - 2021

Staff proposes that *Illuminate MI - 2021* consist of two separate elements. The first element will be a lighting installation similar to the prior year, utilizing City owned light strands purchased in 2020 for this specific purpose. Installation will be completed by Public Works Department staff throughout the fall and the lights will be turned on during the week of Thanksgiving, remaining in place through February.

The second element will be a December 3 community event. This event is being conceptualized to include a night market, seasonal entertainment, various activities, and culminating with the lighting of the Giant Sequoia tree in Mercerdale Park.

Expenditure Estimate:

Staff estimate expenses for installing and maintaining the lights, along with special equipment rentals and replacement light strands, total approximately \$25,000. Estimates for the December 3 community event, including supplies, staffing, equipment rentals and marketing total approximately \$25,000.

Revenue Estimate:

Staff anticipates \$25,000 in direct revenue through private donations, sponsorships, and vendor fees for *Illuminate MI - 2021*. This amount is realistic and in alignment with the Recreation Division’s cost recovery goals for community-wide special events. Similar to the 2020 fundraising effort, staff are in the process of coordinating a partnership with the Mercer Island Community Fund to accept donations, a process that provided an easy option for residents to donate.

NEXT STEPS:

With City Council approval, staff will begin finalizing the details of *Illuminate - 2021* including the following:

- Order replacement light strands and equipment and schedule the installation of the lights.
- Secure community partners and engage local businesses
- Develop event framework
- Develop and implement public engagement platform and a donation/sponsorship strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

Appropriate \$50,000 from the FY2020 General Fund Surplus to develop and implement *Illuminate MI - 2021*.