



# ARTS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Item 5  
October 25, 2023  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Luther Burbank Waterfront Improvements (LBWI) Art in Public Places Project Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Recommend the LBWI Art in Public Places Project and Appropriation Request be approved by City Council as part of the construction contract award.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>STAFF:</b>	Sarah Bluvas, CIP Project Manager	
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Ted Weinberg	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. <i>Mercer Island Medallions</i> Final Concept for Approval <b>UPDATED 10.25.23</b>	

## SUMMARY

### SUMMARY

On [May 16](#), the Mercer Island City Council appropriated \$50,000 from the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund (1% fund) and authorized the City Manager to execute an artist agreement with Marsha Rollinger to complete Phase 1 of the Luther Burbank Park Waterfront Improvements Art in Public Places project. During the special Arts Council meeting on October 25, Rollinger, City staff, and members of the Mercer Island Arts Council Public Art Committee will present the final concept for 12 bronze medallions, which will be inlaid at the Luther Burbank waterfront during construction in 2024 (Exhibit 1). Staff ask the Arts Council to recommend that the City Council accept Rollinger’s designs and appropriate \$80,000 (\$75,000 from LBWI 1% contribution and \$5,000 from existing 1% fund) to complete fabrication and installation of the medallions and other art elements. This recommendation will be transmitted to the City Council as part of the construction contract award package.

### BACKGROUND

The [Luther Burbank Waterfront Improvements \(LBWI\) capital project](#) is a major capital project to redesign and renovate the waterfront and docks at Luther Burbank Park. Construction is expected to begin in 2024 and will include replacement of the south piers, renovation of the north pier, expansion of the cobble beach, renovation of the waterfront plaza, stabilization of the Boiler Building, and other improvements.

This capital project is expected to generate a significant contribution to the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund (1% fund), and the Mercer Island Arts Council has been engaged throughout the process to determine how to use those anticipated public art dollars at the site. A timeline of Arts Council participation in this process is provided below.

#### **August 6, 2020 – LBWI Design Charrette**

An Arts Council representative participated in the initial Design Charrette hosted by City staff and the design team. The meeting collected input on four design areas – docks, breakwater, access, and placemaking. This input informed the development of the LBWI conceptual design. ([Video Recording](#))

### **September 14, 2021 – Special Arts Council Meeting**

City staff and the design team presented an overview of the LBWI project and design progress to the Arts Council and sought input related to integrating the existing *Handsome Bollards* installation into the waterfront redesign. The Arts Council's feedback informed the 30% design, which was approved by the City Council on March 1, 2022. Additionally on September 14, the Arts Council learned about opportunities for integrating public art and/or placemaking elements into the final design. This discussion included potential themes, locations, and types of art/media that could be pursued using the project's 1% fund contribution. (Reference 09.14.21 Special Meeting Materials: [Agenda Packet \(Item 3\)](#) | [Video Meeting Recording](#))

### **September 14, 2022 – Special Arts Council Meeting**

Staff provided the Arts Council a primer on the 1% fund and the related Art in Public Places Program (AIPP). At staff's request, the Arts Council reestablished the Public Art Committee, and Arts Councilmembers Daniel Becker and Suzanne Skone were appointed to the committee to collaborate with staff to steward public art projects. The Arts Council also received a presentation from the LBWI design team and discussed the preferred themes for types of artwork/media for the project as well as the process for engaging an artist in subsequent design phases. The Public Art Committee was tasked with working with staff to develop the Request for Proposals (RFP) for integrated art elements for the LBWI project. (Reference 09.14.22 Special Meeting Materials: [Agenda Packet \(Items 1 and 2\)](#) | [Video Meeting Recording](#))

### **January 18, 2023 – Arts Council Meeting**

The Public Art Committee met three times from October 2022 to January 2023 to draft the RFP for integrated art elements for the LBWI project. After discussing the solicitation and selection process, the Arts Council approved the RFP for distribution. (Reference 01.18.23 Meeting Materials: [Agenda Packet \(Item 3\)](#) | [Video Meeting Recording](#))

### **April 19, 2023 – Arts Council Meeting**

Staff and Arts Council Member Daniel Becker, the Chair of the LBWI Artist Selection Panel, presented the results of the artist selection process and sought the Arts Council's recommendation to award the project to artist Marsha Rollinger. The Arts Council voted to recommend to the City Council to award the project to Rollinger and appropriate \$50,000 from the 1% fund to develop the final concept in consultation with the design team. (Reference 04.19.23 Meeting Materials: [Agenda Packet \(Item 3\)](#) | [Video Meeting Recording](#))

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**

Throughout summer 2023, Rollinger gathered community input to develop unique icons and phrases that represent themes identified in collaboration with the LBWI design team and the Arts Council:

- Local indigenous peoples' history
- Human powered boat construction as an artform
- Nautical themes
- Local/regional geography and natural history
- Mercer Island heritage/history at the site

Islanders provided input in-person at three community events – Mercer Island Farmers Market (June 25), Summer Celebration (July 15), and Mostly Music in the Park (August 10) – as well as on Let's Talk via the

Share Your Ideas tool at <https://www.mercerisland.gov/medallions>. Many community groups were also asked to share information and participate, including:

- Mercer Island Historical Society
- Mercer Island Visual Arts League (MIVAL)
- Stroum Jewish Community Center (SJCC)
- Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of Luther Burbank Park
- Mercer Island School District
- Mercer Island Preschool Association (MIPA)
- One MI
- Mercer Island Sister City Association
- Mercer Island Rotary Club
- Mercer Island Community Fund
- Mercer Island Boys and Girls Club

The artist also met directly with representatives from the Mercer Island Historical Society, MIVAL, MIPA, and Friends of Luther Burbank Park.

Wednesday's presentation will include images and highlights from the public participation process.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF FINAL MEDALLION CONCEPTS AND OTHER ART ELEMENTS**

Rollinger used the community input collected throughout the summer to develop 12 individual bronze medallions that will be inlaid in the pavement at the renovated waterfront plaza. The designs were reviewed and refined through meetings with the City Manager and staff; the Public Art Committee; and representatives from the Historical Society, MIVAL, and Friends of Luther Burbank Park. The resulting works of art offer the viewer opportunities to discover the cultural, historical, and environmental landscape of Luther Burbank Park, Mercer Island, and the Lake Washington region. The medallions will be installed at the end of waterfront construction (tentative late 2024), and the pieces will also be added to [STQRY](#), the City's mobile platform for public art engagement.

The design team and Rollinger also identified three other integrated art components that foster vertical interest and extend the artist's visual aesthetic throughout the plaza area, creating continuity and cohesion at the site. These elements will be discussed during the meeting and include:

- Light pole fixture – Arts Council to choose 1 of the three figures.
- Vinyl decals for the Boiler Building – Includes salmon figures and park signage
- Kiosk art embellishments – Metal artwork that will be installed on top of the two-panel kiosk

Finally, Rollinger is also developing the historical bronze plaques that will be installed at the Boiler Building and other locations of interest throughout the park. These plaques are part of a new interpretive program developed in partnership with the Mercer Island Historical Society and funded by a grant from the Washington State Historical Society's Heritage Capital Project grant program. Viewers will be able to learn more about sites by scanning a QR code that links to STQRY. An example of the plaques is provided in the agenda packet to demonstrate their alignment with Rollinger's other designs.

**PROJECT BUDGET UPDATE + APPROPRIATION REQUEST**

This public art project is divided into two phases. The Phase 1 budget was \$50,000 and encompassed the design of the medallions and related artwork as well as work to integrate the artwork into the overall project design. These funds were appropriated from the existing 1% fund balance by the City Council on May 16. Phase 2 includes fabrication and installation of the medallions, light pole fixture, building decals, and kiosk embellishments. The budget for Phase 2 is outlined below.

<b>LBWI ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROJECT PHASE 2 BUDGET</b>	
<b>Bronze Medallions + Plaques</b>	
Fabrication (medallions)	\$63,000
Fabrication (plaques)	\$13,000
Installation coordination	\$2,000
Documentation	\$1,500
Contingency	\$2,500
<b>Light Pole Fixture</b>	
Fabrication (Salmon)	\$3,600
Fabrication (Woodpecker)	\$1,000
Fabrication (Kingfisher)	\$1,300
Installation	\$2,000
<b>Vinyl Decals</b>	
Salmon (6 decals)	\$700
Luther Burbank Park sign	\$800
Installation	\$1,500
<b>Kiosk Art Embellishments</b>	
Fabrication	\$2,400
<b>TOTAL</b>	
w/ Salmon light pole fixture	<b>\$93,000</b>
w/ Woodpecker light pole fixture	<b>\$90,400</b>
w/ Kingfisher light pole fixture	<b>\$90,700</b>

The anticipated 1% fund contribution from the LBWI capital project is \$75,000, and the bronze historical plaques will be funded through the Heritage Capital Project grant referenced earlier in this staff report. This leaves \$2,700 to \$5,000 to fill in the project budget if the Arts Council wishes to add the additional art elements to the design package.

Staff recommend appropriating an additional \$5,000 from the existing 1% fund to include all the additional art elements in the design package, bringing the total Phase 2 budget funded from 1% fund dollars to \$80,000. The current 1% fund balance as of October 18 is \$105,936.

If recommended by the Arts Council, the Phase 2 work will be included in the contract for construction of the entire waterfront project, which will be bid in Q1 2024 and in Q2 2024.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Recommend the LBWI Art in Public Places Project and Appropriation Request be approved by City Council as part of the construction contract award.