
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

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Arts Council June 9, 2021 Arts Reset

To: Arts Council

From: Sarah Bluvas, Economic Development Coordinator; Emily Moon, consultant

Date: June 9, 2021

Summary

During the May 12 Arts Council meeting, Consultant Emily Moon shared that City staff were beginning to contemplate recreation, Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC), and arts services in 2022. One focal point of this work includes developing the operating budget. Staff is planning to give an overview of a 2022 proposal to City Council during their regular meeting on July 6. As such, the Arts Council's and Parks and Recreation Commission's input on 2022 are being sought now. Staff anticipate refining the 2022 proposal following City Council's input in July and including the proposal for City Council's consideration as part of the biennial budget amendment process in November.

The Arts Council is currently conducting subcommittee meetings to work on the 2021 Immediate Action plan, which include the following objectives:

- Design and deliver a limited Mostly Music in the Park series during late summer/early fall
- Re-open the Mercer Island Gallery (indoor gallery) for a limited number of shows and in partnership with the Mercer Island Visual Arts League, pending re-opening of the MICEC
- Design and facilitate a community arts project that documents residents' experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic

The 2021 subcommittees will also provide recommendations for 2022, particularly if Arts Councilmembers desire to continue the 2021 activities into 2022.

In addition to the Immediate Action Plan subcommittees, the Arts Council formed a group to focus on developing long-term "reset" plan recommendations. This plan is intended to address the following:

- A prioritized list of policies the Arts Council plans to update and/or develop to guide future arts-related work (e.g., 1% for Art guidelines, art in private development process, etc.)

- A prioritized list of public art needs (e.g., maintenance and collection safety updates, 1% for Art Fund 6-year spending plan, signage/interpretation plan, etc.)
- An outline of programs/projects the Arts Council proposes to offer in 2022 and a respective operating resources request (i.e., budget)

Due to the fast-approaching high-level 2022 overview with City Council, staff suggests that the Arts Council show a proposed 2022 total operating budget that is similar to what was recently requested for 2021. This funding level has been sufficient in the past to carry out Arts Council activities and programs. Staff believes this funding level, which includes General Funds coupled with grants and contributions, would fund a 2022 anticipated work program that would include operating the indoor gallery; addressing a first round of the public art and policy work that is identified in the pending long-term reset plan; conducting prioritized special events/programs; and, perhaps, developing some aspect of a to-be-determined public art project. The Arts Council can continue to develop its 2022 workplan and fine-tune its budget request between July and October.

The Arts Council will continue to be staffed in 2022 by Recreation Division staff. The division's manager will be the official liaison and will call upon other staff resources to provide support for the Arts Council's 2022 workplan. These resources may include experienced staff members who are responsible for special events collaboration, fostering community partnerships, policy development, program delivery, asset management, and more.

Recommendation

Provide input to Staff on the 2022 budget.