



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6770
September 16, 2025
Consent Agenda

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6770: Six-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Approve the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places.	<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 Supervisor Shelby Perrault, Capital Parks Manager Sarah Bluvas, CIP Project Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Salim Nice
EXHIBITS:	1. Draft 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places 2. Summary of Arts Council Planning Process
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek City Council approval of the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places, a dynamic plan intended to guide management of the Mercer Island public art program.

- In 1993, the City Council adopted [Ordinance No. A-108](#), establishing the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund (1% for Art Fund) to support the acquisition and maintenance of visual artworks for the public realm. The 1% for Art Fund is established by [MICC 4.40.200](#), which requires all qualifying capital improvement projects to set aside 1% of the total project cost to support permanent public art installations.
- [MICC 3.55.050](#) states that the Mercer Island Arts Council (Arts Council) shall recommend projects to the City Council, using appropriations from the 1% for Art Fund.
- The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS Plan) identified the need to develop a long-range plan for the 1% for Art Fund, and this work item was included in the 2023-2024 City Arts and Culture Work Plan, which is carried out by the Recreation Division as part of the annual division work plan (Recreation 2023-2024 Work Plan Items 1.6 and 1.7).
- From May 2024 to March 2025, City staff and the Arts Council conducted seven meetings to develop the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places (the Work Plan), an internal planning document that

includes goals for the City’s public art program; public art opportunities to consider over the 6-year planning horizon; guidance for community engagement and collection management; and, other information to support the Mercer Island public art program.

- During their special meeting on March 19, 2025, the Arts Council voted to recommend that the Work Plan be approved by the City Council.
- Once approved, the Work Plan will provide a roadmap for making future public art project recommendations to the City Council.
- The Plan does not commit funding or other City resources to specific projects; funding requests will be made to the City Council as projects are developed.
- Additionally, on July 1, 2025, the City Council adopted [Ordinance No. 25C-19](#), which amended MICC 04.40.200 to allow the Council to fully or partially exempt capital projects from the 1% for Art Fund contribution requirements ([AB 6725](#)). The Council also directed staff to review the 1% for Art Fund in 2026 in collaboration with the Arts Council, and outcomes of that work will be incorporated in future iterations of the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places.

BACKGROUND

The City Council adopted [Ord. No. A-108](#) in 1993, which established the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund (1% for Art Fund) to support the acquisition and maintenance of visual artworks for the public realm ([AB 2578](#)). The 1% for Art Fund is established by [MICC 4.40.200](#), which requires all qualifying capital improvement projects to set aside 1% of the total project cost to support permanent public art installations.

Contributions to the 1% for Art Fund are used to integrate public art into a capital project or banked for future use. Pursuant to [MICC 3.55.050](#), the Mercer Island Arts Council (Arts Council) public art projects to the City Council, using appropriations from the 1% for Art Fund. Recent projects include:

- Acquisition of *Twin Foxes* by Georgia Gerber (2015)
- Commission of *Island Icons (Town Center Banners)* by Pamela Edwards (2018)
- Restoration of the Luther Burbank Park Playground Mosaic Murals by Sandy Glass and Jose Orantes (2024)

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS Plan) identified the need to develop a long-range plan for the 1% for Art Fund, and this work item was included in the 2023-2024 City Arts and Culture Work Plan, which is carried out by the Recreation Division as part of the annual division work plan (Recreation 2023-2024 Work Plan Items 1.6 and 1.7).

From May 2024 to March 2025, the Arts Council participated in eight meetings to draft the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places (Exhibit 1). A summary of the planning process is provided as Exhibit 2.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

The 6-Year Work Plan for the Art in Public Places Plan (the Work Plan) is a dynamic document intended to guide management of the Mercer Island public art program. It identifies the following goals for the Mercer Island public art program:

- Spark curiosity where Mercer Island residents live, gather, and play.
- Cultivate community pride, civic engagement, high quality of life, and social connection.
- Share Mercer Island’s rich history, natural beauty, and local creativity with Island residents and visitors.

- Invite and encourage community members to share their own diverse experiences, background, and beliefs through artmaking.
- Promote and implement sustainable practices through public art creation and exhibition.
- Provide accessible, inclusive, and safe public art experiences that make all feel welcome.
- Steward a public art collection that future generations can enjoy, engage with, and enhance.

The Work Plan includes six sections:

1. Introduction – Provides an executive summary, including information about roles and responsibilities for implementing the Work Plan.
2. Project Opportunities – Outlines the process for identifying public art project opportunities that can be implemented by the City as resources allow and includes a running list of opportunities to consider over 2025-2030.
3. Funding – Provides information about the 1% for Art Fund, other public art funding strategies, and guidance for selecting funding sources for future public art project opportunities.
4. Public Engagement – Documents how the City will engage the community in the public art process, connect the community with existing public art works, and communicate information about the public art program.
5. Collection Care – Documents collection management tasks, which are overseen by City staff.
6. Revising the 6-Year Work Plan – Guides the process for updating the Work Plan, which is intended as a dynamic document that can be reviewed and revised as needed over the 6-year planning horizon.

Several appendices are attached to the Work Plan, including the updated Guidelines for Administering the Mercer Island Public Art Program (Appendix D). These guidelines were evaluated and revised over the course of the Arts Council planning process. The final draft has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office, and suggested edits have been incorporated. If approved, the Guidelines will establish the procedures for developing public art projects, evaluating artist/artwork submittals, accepting community-initiated project proposals, and deaccessioning works of public art.

The Work Plan does not stipulate individual artists, artwork designs, or other public art elements that would be identified through a competitive selection process. It also does not commit funding or other City resources to specific projects; funding requests will be made to the City Council as projects are developed.

NEXT STEPS

Upon City Council approval of the Work Plan, Recreation staff will collaborate with the Arts Council to review it and determine public art action items to propose for the City's Biennial Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Approved items would be implemented by the appropriate City departments with Arts Council input and collaboration as necessary.

Additionally, on July 1, 2025, the City Council adopted [Ordinance No. 25C-19](#), which amended MICC 04.40.200 to allow the Council to fully or partially exempt capital projects from the 1% for Art Fund contribution requirements ([AB 6725](#)).

The Council also directed staff to review the 1% for Art Fund in 2026 in collaboration with the Arts Council. Staff liaisons and board leadership will collaborate this fall to determine timing for bringing this work forward to the full board. Staff anticipate presenting the Art Council's recommendation to the City Council by Q4 2026.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the 6-Year Work Plan for Art in Public Places.