



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6268  
May 16, 2023  
Consent Agenda**

**AGENDA BILL INFORMATION**

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 6268: Luther Burbank Park Docks and Waterfront Art in Public Places Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Appropriate \$50,000 from the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund and authorize the City Manager to execute an artist agreement with Marsha Rollinger to complete phase 1 of the Luther Burbank Park Docks and Waterfront Art in Public Places project.	

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Public Works
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations Clint Morris, Capital Division Manager Paul West, Senior CIP Project Manager Sarah Bluvas, CIP Project Manager Katie Herzog, Recreation Supervisor / Arts Council Staff Liaison
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Ted Weinberg
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. MICC 4.40.200 1% for Art in Public Places Fund 2. Proposed Artwork Concept 3. Proposed Community Engagement Plan
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	3. Make once-in-a-generation investments to update and modernize aging infrastructure, capital facilities, and parks.

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ 50,000
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ 0
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ 50,000

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda bill is to seek authorization to contract with artist Marsha Rollinger to develop the Art in Public Places project for the Luther Burbank Docks and Waterfront Improvements capital projects.

- Per MICC 4.40.200, the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund pools contributions from qualifying capital improvement program projects to support Art in Public Places projects on Mercer Island.
- Since 2020, the Mercer Island Arts Council has worked with staff and the design team to identify appropriate public art components and determined that integrated and/or functional art elements were preferred for the Luther Burbank projects.
- The City released the request for proposals for integrated art elements on January 19, 2023, and received five complete submittals.

- An Artist Selection Panel of City Council, Arts Council, and other City board members; local artists; and community members reviewed all submittals, met with two finalists, and selected artist Marsha Rollinger.
- On April 19, 2023, the Arts Council voted unanimously to recommend that City Council award the Luther Burbank Art in Public Places project to Marsha Rollinger and appropriate \$50,000 to develop the final artwork design in collaboration with the community and waterfront designer Anchor QEA.

## BACKGROUND

### 1% FOR ART IN PUBLIC PLACES FUND AND PROGRAM

Mercer Island's 1% for Art in Public Places Fund (1% Fund) was permanently established in 1993 to provide a dedicated funding source for public art acquisitions and maintenance (Exhibit 1). Contributions to the 1% Fund are pooled from qualifying capital improvement program (CIP) projects to support Art in Public Places (AIPP) projects on Mercer Island. The current 1% Fund balance is \$170,936. (Note this balance excludes the annual public art maintenance funds that were previously appropriated through adoption of the 2023-2024 biennial budget.)

The Mercer Island Arts Council, in collaboration with City staff and the community, is tasked with recommending 1% Fund projects to City Council. Much of the City's public art collection was partially or completely acquired using 1% Fund contributions. Funds also support annual and one-time public art maintenance to preserve the life and longevity of the collection.

Recent 1% Fund projects include the 2019 restoration of *Handsome Bollards* in Luther Burbank Park and the commission of *Island Icons*, the banner collection installed in Town Center in 2018.

### ART ELEMENTS FOR LUTHER BURBANK PARK DOCKS AND WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

The Luther Burbank Park Docks and Waterfront Improvements capital projects will generate an estimated 1% contribution of \$60,000-\$70,000. Since 2020, the Arts Council has engaged with City staff and consultants from KPFF and Anchor QEA (the City's dock and waterfront design team) to identify and evaluate public art opportunities for this important waterfront revitalization. A timeline of discussions and actions related to art elements for the Luther Burbank projects is provided below.

- **August 6, 2020:** The Arts Council's (former) Public Art Committee Chair participated in the Luther Burbank Docks Design Charrette to provide initial input about public art and placemaking opportunities. ([Design Charrette Recording](#))
- **September 14, 2021:** City staff, Anchor QEA, and the Arts Council discussed focus areas for incorporating artwork; potential themes for art and heritage components; and opportunities for including the existing *Handsome Bollards* installation (Tom Jay, 1971) in the waterfront redesign. ([Agenda Item #3](#) | [Meeting Recording](#))
- **March 1, 2022:** City Council accepted the Parks & Recreation Commission's recommended 30% design for the Luther Burbank Docks and Waterfront, which included opportunity areas for integrated public art. ([AB 6021](#) | [Meeting Recording](#))
- **September 14, 2022:** The Arts Council reviewed preferred themes and types of artwork/media, as well as discussed the process for engaging an artist in the next phases of the waterfront design. The board also reestablished the Public Art Committee, which had not been active since 2020, to work with staff to develop a request for proposals (RFP) for the AIPP project for the Luther Burbank waterfront. ([Agenda Item #2](#) | [Meeting Recording](#))

- **October 2022-January 2023:** The Public Art Committee, City staff, and Anchor QEA met three times to develop and refine the RFP for integrated art elements.
- **January 18, 2023:** The Arts Council approved the RFP for integrated art elements. ([Agenda Item #3](#) | [Meeting Recording](#))
- **January 19-March 7, 2023:** The RFP was open for submittals, and the City received five complete submittals.
- **March 8-April 3, 2023:** The Artist Selection Panel, which was comprised of a City Council member, two Arts Council members, a Design Commission member, a Parks & Recreation Commission member, a local artist, a representative from Friends of Luther Burbank Park, and a lay community member, reviewed all submittals and selected two finalists. The panel met with finalists on April 3 and ultimately selected Marsha Rollinger as the preferred artist for the Luther Burbank AIPP project.
- **April 19, 2023:** The Arts Council accepted the selection panel’s decision and voted to recommend that the City Council appropriate \$50,000 from the 1% Fund to develop the artwork in collaboration with Anchor QEA, City staff, and the Mercer Island community. ([Agenda Item #3](#) | [Meeting Recording](#))

## ISSUE/DISCUSSION

### PROPOSED ARTWORK CONCEPT + ABOUT THE ARTIST

Artist Marsha Rollinger proposed incorporating cast bronze medallions and plaques into the waterfront plaza to create a visual trail from one end of the plaza to the other (Exhibit 2). If awarded, she will work with the Mercer Island community to develop icons, text, and other graphics to create twelve unique pieces of art (Exhibit 3) that will be cast by a local foundry and inlayed during project construction in 2024.

As part of this project, Rollinger will also design four historical plaques, including one for the Boiler Building, that will also be cast in bronze. An accompanying QR code will be added to the plaques after they are fabricated to allow community members to access more information about the Boiler Building and other points of interest on STQRY, the City’s public art and heritage engagement platform. The fabrication and installation of the plaques are partially funded by a \$513,000 Heritage Capital Grant through the Washington State Historical Society for the renovation of the Boiler Building. The grant requires installation of interpretative signage such as what is described here.

Cast bronze is durable as well as tactile, and the artwork will be installed in the plaza without blocking views or interfering with the access or function of the site. People of all abilities will be able to experience the artworks without obstacles. The round medallions range in size, which Rollinger says were inspired by the look of water bubbles and the fact that the plaza area was underwater until Lake Washington was lowered in 1916. In addition to the inlayed bronze medallions, staff and the artist are also exploring ways to incorporate Rollinger’s artwork into other site elements, including the kiosk, hand railings, light poles, bulkhead, and Boiler Building.

Rollinger is a professional visual and public artist residing in Renton, WA. She worked on Nintendo’s in-house graphic design team for 14 years before becoming a full-time public artist in 2012 and has also served on the Renton Municipal Arts Commission for 11 years. The artist brings extensive experience working with local governments and communities to develop and implement small and large-scale public art projects. Her largest public art project to-date was *Erasmus*, a 25’, 700lb aluminum dragon sculpture installed on a building roof in Downtown Renton. For that project, Rollinger also created a bronze “selfie spot” pavement inlay and is experienced in translating her graphic designs to cast bronze.

## PROJECT PHASES + APPROPRIATION REQUEST

This AIPP project will be divided into two phases:

- 1. Develop Artwork Design** – Rollinger will collaborate with Anchor QEA this summer to develop the final artwork concept(s) and integrate it into the 90% design. Developing the artwork concept(s) will include the artist’s design fee/project management, community engagement activities, marketing & outreach activities, and documentation. This phase will also include Anchor QEA’s additional scope to manage the public art integration into the design process. The budget breakdown for phase 1 is provided below.

Task	Budget
Artist Fee & Project Management	\$30,000
Community Engagement	\$5,000
Marketing and Outreach Materials	\$1,500
Documentation	\$1,500
Anchor QEA Additional Scope	\$12,000
<b>TOTAL Phase 1 Budget</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

- 2. Fabricate and Install Artwork** – Phase 2 includes the fabrication and installation of the art, which will be included in the construction bid requirements. Staff anticipate the bid award will be presented to City Council for approval in Q1 of 2024.

To fund phase 1 of this project, the Arts Council recommends that the City Council appropriate \$50,000 from the existing 1% Fund balance of \$170,936. This recommendation balances the need to integrate the artist into the 90% design process with the fact that the capital project’s 1% contribution will not transfer to the 1% Fund until *after* the capital project is completed through construction (estimated 2025). Fabrication and installation costs will be confirmed through the design process, and the phase 2 appropriation recommendation will be made by the Arts Council later this year.

## NEXT STEPS

Once the AIPP project award is made, staff will execute Rollinger’s artist agreement and complete contracting for Anchor QEA’s additional scope of work to ensure the 90% design process continues on-schedule. Two community engagement opportunities have already been identified for this project:

- Sunday, June 25: Mercer Island Farmers Market
- Saturday, July 15: Mercer Island Summer Celebration

Rollinger will also provide an update to the Arts Council at their regular meeting on July 19 and present the final artwork designs to the Arts Council for acceptance on October 18. All engagement opportunities will be published on Let’s Talk at <https://letstalk.mercergov.org/lbdock> when confirmed.

Staff will also share via City channels, including event marketing materials, the MI Weekly e-newsletter, social media; and through partner networks such as the Mercer Island Visual Arts League (MIVAL), Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce, and others.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Appropriate \$50,000 from the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund and authorize the City Manager to execute an artist agreement with Marsha Rollinger to complete phase 1 of the Luther Burbank Park Docks and Waterfront Art in Public Places project.