

# **DEPARTMENT POLICY**

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## **City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department PARK IMPROVEMENT, GIFT ACCEPTANCE AND DONOR RECOGNITION**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department welcomes and encourages support from private individuals and entities that support the programs and services the Department and its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils and groups provide to the public.

### **2.0 PURPOSE**

To establish a policy, criteria, guidelines and procedures for receiving and considering proposals to initiate funded, partially funded or unfunded capital projects, including gift and donor recognition projects or undertake changes to a park property that will in the judgment of the Director, modify the property's use, appearance or overall aesthetics

### **3.0 POLICY**

It is the policy of the City of Mercer Island:

- 3.1 To facilitate publicly and privately funded park improvement proposals and encourage public and private gifts, bequests, and such contributions that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the park and recreation system.
- 3.2 To accept only those gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects that are consistent with the mission, policies, park property restrictions, park master plans and most current Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails and Art Plan of the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department and the mission and policies of its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils or groups.
- 3.3 To accept only those gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects given with the full understanding that they become the property of the City and are subject to the laws, policies and procedures that govern the Parks and Recreation Department and its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils or groups.
- 3.4 To encourage the development of park master plans for major park, open space, trail and recreation areas (i.e. Luther Burbank Park, I-90 Lid, Mercerdale Park, Homestead Field, Island Crest Park, South Mercer Playfields, and Pioneer Park), and to update such plans as needed to incorporate significant changes in trends, use patterns, amenities and features, operations and maintenance and/or incorporate adjacent or connecting properties.
- 3.5 To solicit and encourage public comment and involvement in the development of park master plans.
- 3.6 To accept gifts of land, from private individuals, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations and public entities when City ownership will further the objectives of the City as identified in the park and open space evaluation and acquisition

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procedures and current Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails and Art Plan.

- 3.7 To accept gift and park improvement proposals, other than land, from private individuals, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations and public entities which:
  - 3.7.1 Are given with no contingencies other than that they be used for a specific program, activity or area of programming. (Gifts from corporate donors who have a corporate sponsorship requirement fall under a yet to be developed Corporate Sponsorship Policy);
  - 3.7.2 The City is not obligated to replace if the gift or park improvement is stolen, vandalized, worn out, irreparably damaged or destroyed.
- 3.8 To strongly discourage gift and park improvement proposals that, in the judgment of the Parks and Recreation Director, are incompatible with the park location, other park uses or users.
- 3.9 To strongly discourage gift, park improvement and donor recognition object proposals that are memorial in nature, to emphasize that the park system exists to meet the varied recreational, social, wellness, and educational needs of park users.
- 3.10 To protect designated open space and green space areas as fundamental aspects of the quality of life on Mercer Island, and to limit gifts and park improvements in those areas to benches, trees or other plant materials. Benches should be placed only where placement is deemed a park or recreational necessity as determined by guidelines developed, monitored, and evaluated by Department staff and designated landscape architects.
- 3.11 To prohibit donor recognition objects on gifts in designated open space and green space areas.
- 3.12 To limit, as much as possible, plaques and visible recognition objects to areas of a park recognized as "built" environments, i.e., benches, picnic tables, water fountains, buildings, play areas, ballfields, tennis courts, etc.
- 3.13 To limit, as much as possible, all gifts and park improvements in "built" environments to items that complement those environments, e.g., murals for buildings; turf/fall surfacing/sand/benches/tables/play equipment for play areas; turf/backstops/bleachers/scoreboards/fences for ballfields; nets/posts for tennis courts; backboards/nets/scoreboards for basketball courts.
- 3.14 To limit, as much as possible, the number of donor recognition projects that involve decorative tiles, pavers, and artwork that require mounting on walls, concrete, or any other surface that enhances the "gray" and detracts from the "green" characteristics of our parks. Such projects may require a verifiable demonstration of community support.

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- 3.15 To limit, as much as possible, the number of park improvements that involve surfaces that enhance the “gray” and detract from the “green” characteristics of our parks. Such projects may require a verifiable demonstration of community support.
- 3.16 To ensure that all donor recognition objects are consistent with design guidelines approved by the City of Mercer Island.

**4.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1. Assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils or groups are any working or advisory board or committee created by City Council action or initiated by the Mayor or City Manager’s Office and assigned to or administratively supported by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- 4.2. Gifts are all gifts, bequests, or donations to include but not be limited to endowments, real property, structures or portions of structures; money or negotiable securities; materials; equipment, flora, or fauna; improvements to facilities or land; statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of art; plaques, graphics and/or signs; or recreation and cultural arts program instruction, equipment and supplies.
- 4.3. Donor Recognition Object is a physical object placed in a park to acknowledge a gift donor
- 4.4. Donor is a private individual, for-profit company, non-profit organization, or public agency wishing to donate funds or objects to the Department
- 4.5. Donor Recognition Project is a proposal and plan for placing a donor recognition object at a park or park facility
- 4.6. Gift Needs Inventory is a list of identified Department operational and capital needs which would make appropriate gifts.
- 4.7. Memorial Art is any statue, monument, sculpture, mural, memorial, or other structure or landscape feature designed to perpetuate in a permanent manner the memory of a person, group, event or other significant element of history.
- 4.8. Park Improvement Proposal may include a funded, partially funded or unfunded capital project(s) request consisting of real property, structures, or portions of structures; materials; equipment; flora or fauna; improvements to facilities or land and other non-art items.
- 4.9. Park Improvement Proposer is a private individual, for-profit company, non-profit organization, or public agency wishing to initiate a funded, partially, funded or unfunded capital project(s) consisting of real property, structures, or portions of structures; materials; equipment; flora or fauna; improvements to facilities or land and other non-art items.

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- 5.1. The Parks and Recreation Director, or appointed designee, is responsible for:
  - 5.1.1. Receiving all gift, park improvement and donor recognition proposals, including memorial and non-memorial art, and related donor recognition objects and making an initial decision to either accept or reject.
  - 5.1.2. Determining the appropriateness and compatibility of all details of the proposed gift, park improvement and/or donor recognition object, including but not limited to the location, impact on other park uses or users, the size, scale, color, design, materials, contractor, and construction schedule
  - 5.1.3. Advancing approved gift and park improvement proposals to assigned and applicable advisory boards, commissions, councils or groups for design review and refinement.
  - 5.1.4. Making the final decision on acceptance of all gift, park improvement and donor recognition object proposals, unless determining it appropriate for City Council Park and Recreation Committee consideration or full City Council decision.
  - 5.1.5. Declining proposed gift, park improvement or donor recognition object proposals that are limited by special restrictions, conditions or covenants, which pose extreme budgetary obligations on the City, or which, in the opinion of the Director, may not be in the best interest of the park system and/or citizens of Mercer Island.
  - 5.1.6. Making the final decision on the park, recreation area, trail and open space location for the placement of specific gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects.
  - 5.1.7. Determining the life expectancy of gifts and park improvements; their appropriateness, usefulness and continued value to the park system and to the City; and their retention, relocation, modification, improvement, return to donor, transfer, sale, donation to other agency, or other disposition in conjunction with the Arts Council policies for art deaccessioning.
  - 5.1.8. Determining anticipated costs associated with ongoing maintenance of gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects, including statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of memorial and non-memorial art and related donor recognition objects, in conjunction with other advisory boards, commissions, councils or groups as appropriate.
  - 5.1.9. Generating a "Gift Needs Inventory" and reviewing it for currency once a year.
- 5.2. The Donor or Park Improvement Proposer is responsible for:
  - 5.2.1. A portion or all of the financial costs of gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects, and their installation if determined appropriate by the

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Parks and Recreation Director. *(The City is under no obligation to replace stolen, vandalized, irreparably damaged or destroyed recognition objects).*

- 5.2.2. A portion or all of the financial costs associated with ongoing maintenance of gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects, including statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of art and related donor recognition objects, if determined appropriate by the Parks and Recreation Director, in consultation with applicable advisory councils, commissions, boards or groups as appropriate.
- 5.2.3. Appearing before the applicable advisory council, commission, board or group to present their gift, park improvement and/or donor recognition object proposal.
- 5.3. The Arts Council is responsible for:
  - 5.3.1. Receiving and considering a gift proposal advanced from the Parks and Recreation Director, or designee, that is in the form of a memorial or non-memorial statue, monument, sculpture, mural, and other work of art and associated donor recognition object.
  - 5.3.2. Advancing the gift proposal for memorial or non-memorial art and associated donor recognition object to the Public Art Committee and Parks and Recreation liaison for design review and approval considering applicable Arts Council criteria which may include: artistic merit, aesthetic quality, credentials of the artist, installation methods, maintenance requirements, proposed location, the functional or design contribution to the setting, relationship to circulation and use patterns, quality, scale and character of the art proposal and, and installation methods and refining the proposal as needed.
  - 5.3.3. Receiving the refined gift proposal for memorial or non-memorial art from the Public Art Committee for further refinement as needed and advancing the recommended proposal to the Parks and Recreation Director, or designee, for final approval.
  - 5.3.4. Insuring that public comment and feedback is solicited and considered for all art and associated donor recognition objects by providing for a public comment period which may include neighborhood mailings, workshops, open houses, public meetings, advertisements and notices in local media, postings on the City's website, and other methods appropriate to collect citizen input.
  - 5.3.5. Providing the Parks and Recreation Director the name(s) of recommended park, recreation area, trail and open space locations for the placement of statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of art and associated donor recognition objects.
  - 5.3.6. Determining anticipated costs associated with ongoing maintenance of memorial and non-memorial statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of art and related donor recognition objects, in conjunction with

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the Parks and Recreation Director and/or other advisory councils, commissions, boards or groups as appropriate.

- 5.3.7. Providing an appraisal of memorial and non-memorial statues, monuments, sculptures, murals and other works of art after final acceptance by the Parks and Recreation Director and updating appraisal information as needed consistent with established Arts Council policies and procedures and City insurance requirements.
- 5.4. The City Council is responsible for:
- 5.4.1. Reviewing proposals for gifts, park improvements and donor recognition objects referred to it by the Parks and Recreation Director and for making a final acceptance or rejection decision.