



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

**Item 3
September 1, 2022
Regular Business**

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Public Art Donation Concept- “The Gathering Stacks”	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive presentation, and, if desired, demonstrate support for the development of a design and proposal by the donor.	

STAFF:	Ryan Daly, Recreation Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Craig Reynolds
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance, and Donor Recognition Policy 2. Presentation- The Gathering Stacks 3. Aerial View of Proposed Location for Donation

SUMMARY

The City of Mercer Island welcomes and encourages support from private individuals and entities that support the programs and services the Parks and Recreation Department (Public Works) and its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils and groups provide to the public. Attached as Exhibit 1, the current *Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance, and Donor Recognition Policy* provides guidelines and procedures for receiving and considering donation and gift proposals.

This staff report will provide an introduction of a concept design for a public art and placemaking project donation from a Mercer Island resident (“donor”). Tonight, Berger Partnership, a landscape architecture firm contracted by the donor, will provide a presentation (Exhibit 2) and concept proposal for painting the “Stacks” in Aubrey Davis Park and other potential placemaking opportunities in the area. This presentation was delivered in similar format to the Mercer Island Arts Council at their [July 20 Regular Meeting](#). An aerial view of the site has been provided to identify the proposed location (Exhibit 3). Following the presentation, Berger Partnership would like to receive input and feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission to inform possible next steps by the donor.

BACKGROUND

In early 2021, a Mercer Island resident (wishing to remain anonymous at this time) approached City staff with the request to donate a project, which, when completed, would offer community gathering space and placemaking elements at the area east of the tennis courts in Aubrey Davis Park, which hosts the WSDOT ventilation stacks for Interstate 90, known colloquially as the “Stacks.” The donor’s intent was to create a location where people could passively come together to engage, reflect, escape, and connect.

Recognizing limitations on City staff capacity and with a strong desire to see this potential project move forward in a successful manner, the donor contracted with Berger Partnership to begin work on a concept design. Berger Partnership began to engage City staff with a draft concept in January 2022 and has requested

to present their concept proposal to the Mercer Island Arts Council and Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Commission for review and reaction.

DISCUSSION

Before the donor invests additional personal resources in a design proposal, they request the Parks and Recreation Commission discuss the merits of the proposed donation and, if desired, demonstrate support for the donor and Berger Partnership to move forward with developing a complete design and final proposal for review and possible acceptance by the City. This potential project is not identified within the Capital Improvement Program and would be considered a donation, which requires acceptance by City Council.

Key Questions to consider:

- Would this concept be a benefit to the community of Mercer Island?
- Does this project concept align as part of the [Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan](#)?
- Does the Parks and Recreation Commission support this concept moving forward?

NEXT STEPS

Following the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the donor will decide whether or not to continue the project in to design.

If the donor elects to continue the project forward:

- City staff will coordinate with the donor to determine the scope of the donation and responsibilities as well as identify what capital and operational impacts the project may have on the City budget.
- City staff would assist in engaging WSDOT on the potential concept, as the property owner WSDOT must give approval before a project can be completed at the proposed site.
- Once a scope of the donation is confirmed and potential impacts to the City budget are known, the donor would return to the respective boards to present their proposed donation. At that time, the donor may request the Arts Council and Parks and Recreation Commission review the design, provide additional feedback, and provide a recommendation to the City Council on the proposal.

Following recommendations from the Arts Council and/or Parks and Recreation Commission, staff would coordinate with the donor to present the donation to City Council for acceptance.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive presentation, and, if desired, demonstrate support for the development of a design and proposal by the donor.