



ARTS COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AC 26-01
January 21, 2026
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AC 26-01: Guiding Documents Workshop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Overview and discussion on Arts Council’s Guiding Documents	

STAFF:	Katie Herzog, Recreation Supervisor Ryan Daly, Recreation Manager
EXHIBITS:	1. n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Arts Council (AC) with a presentation the arts and culture related guiding documents, to reaffirm and clarify the roles and responsibilities of this board, and to provide a workshop style forum for the board to discuss ways to better utilize these tools in support of the arts community on Mercer Island.

- The Arts Council was established as an advisory board with a mission to nurture, promote, and support high quality arts and culture activities for the community.
- The Council's role, priorities, and practices have evolved in response to community needs, City policies, and the growing recognition of arts and culture as essential to civic vitality.
- Serving in an advisory capacity, the Arts Council continues to help guide public art, cultural planning, and arts-related initiatives that enrich Mercer Island.
- The board, which was once focused on the delivery of specific programs/events, transitioned to a model which identifies community needs and establishes priorities to enable the City and community organizations to better serve the diverse needs of the Mercer Island community.

The Arts Council utilizes a set of guiding documents, including the [Bylaws](#), [the Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan](#), the [City Arts and Culture Workplan](#), and the [Art in Public Places 6 -Year Plan](#) to inform how they execute their responsibilities.

BACKGROUND

The Arts Council [was established](#) in 1985 as an advisory board with the purpose of advising and making recommendations to the City Council and any other board or commission of the City on arts and culture related matters with a mission to nurture, promote, and support high quality arts and culture activities for the community.

Over the 40-year history of the Arts Council there has been an evolution in how the arts and culture priorities of Mercer Island are best served. The board, which was once focused on the delivery of specific programs/events, transitioned to a model which identifies community needs and establishes priorities to enable the City and community organizations to better serve the diverse needs of the Mercer Island community.

The Arts Council utilizes a set of guiding documents, including the [Bylaws](#), [the Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan](#), the [City Arts and Culture Workplan](#), and the [Art in Public Places 6 -Year Plan](#) to inform how they

execute their responsibilities. These documents serve as the foundation for Council operations and decision-making. Periodic review ensures that all members are familiar with these documents and that the Council continues to function effectively in alignment with City goals, policies, and the Open Public Meetings Act.

[Bylaws](#) – The Arts Council Bylaws were restructured in collaboration with the City Clerk to align with other City boards and commissions. This document, adopted in January of 2024, defines how the Arts Council is governed and how it carries out its work.

[Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan](#) – Developed in 2016 through significant community input and extensive collaboration between staff and the Arts Council, this document provides a long-term framework to support, develop, and integrate arts and culture into the community

[City Arts and Culture Priorities and Work Plan](#) – Adopted by the City Council as part of each biennial budget, this document establishes the two-year priorities set by the Arts Council. Staff then develop work plan items, based on available resources, to address the Arts and Culture priorities through actionable steps.

[Art in Public Places 6-Year Plan](#) – This living document is updated annually and outlines the City’s strategy for commissioning, acquiring, and maintaining public art over a six-year period. Items from the 6-Year plan are submitted to the City Council as recommendations by the Arts Council for funding through the 1% for Public Arts Fund.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

The January meeting will be conducted in a workshop format. Recreation Division staff, with support from the City Clerk, will provide an overview of key guiding documents to strengthen the Arts Council’s understanding and support the effective execution of its duties.

The workshop will also address compliance and best practices for public communications; review operational procedures, expectations, and protocols; discuss communication and attendance at events and activities; explore ways Council members can be better involved and engaged with the community and with one another; and provide an opportunity for members to ask clarifying questions.

NEXT STEPS

Staff encourage Arts Council members to review and maintain knowledge of these documents to be utilized as tools to most efficiently and effectively execute their duties as Arts Council Members.

Staff will provide periodic updates and highlight opportunities for revisions and updates to the documents as appropriate or as recommended by the Arts Council in alignment with the biennial Arts and Culture Priorities and Work Plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive Report.