



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 3
November 3, 2022
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy (Draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed:
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Endorse the Gift Acceptance Policy and provide input toward procedural elements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
STAFF:	Eleanor Knight- Recreation Coordinator	
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Craig Reynolds	
EXHIBITS:	1. (Current) Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy 2. (Draft) Gift Acceptance Policy	

SUMMARY

The City's *Strategy for the Mercer Island Community and Event Center and Recreation Programs and Services* (also known as the Reset Strategy) calls for updating existing or developing new policies to ensure that Parks and Recreation Department actions are consistent with the Reset Strategy.

The purpose of this staff report is to introduce revisions to the current *Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy* (Exhibit 1) which clarify language and purpose, while removing procedural elements and retitling the policy. Renamed the *Gift Acceptance Policy* (Exhibit 2), this policy builds on the foundation of previous policy to provide guidance, criteria, and clarity for the solicitation and acceptance of donations and gifts for Mercer Island parks, facilities, and programs. Tonight, staff will seek an endorsement of the draft Gift Acceptance Policy and solicit Commission input toward staff's development of procedures for implementation of this policy.

Background

Currently the Department utilizes the *Park Improvement, Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy*, however the current version is out of date, includes intermixed and dated procedures, and has been inconsistently implemented with the boards, community, and staff. The current policy was developed by staff in the early 2000's with limited input. For this policy revision, staff sought to engage the Commission to ensure policy elements are reflective of community desires.

At the [October 6 Regular Meeting](#), the Commission provided input and consensus on policy elements. Staff has incorporated that input into the draft policy document.

Discussion

Tonight, staff seeks the Parks and Recreation Commission's endorsement of the Gift Acceptance Policy. The current policy (Exhibit 1) and revised policy (Exhibit 2) have been provided for comparison. Additionally, earlier this month staff provided various examples of similar policies in other municipalities. Some key elements contained within the revised policy include:

- Encouraging public and private gifts, that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the park and recreation system and community of Mercer Island.
- Ensuring gifts complement the proposed locations.
- Limiting gifts, donor recognitions, or improvements which detract from the character of a space or the characteristics of our parks.
- Soliciting community engagement and input.
- Removing language in the policy relating to works of art, which will be a separate policy document.
- Removing reference to memorial language. Staff recommends memorials be assessed and reviewed under the same requirements as gifts.

Following the endorsement of this policy by the Commission, staff will develop procedures to accompany the Gift Acceptance Policy. These procedures will guide the process of accepting and soliciting gifts. Tonight, staff seeks high-level Commission input on the procedural elements which will be contemplated by staff for inclusion. Staff will be presenting additional questions during the presentation to assist in discussion.

Please contemplate the following aspects and what procedural elements would be desired to support:

- Community engagement
- Elimination of barriers/Ease of access
- Standardization
- Consistency in application of policy

Next Steps

1. Once endorsed, staff will begin development on procedures to accompany the policy.
2. Staff will implement the policy and communicate opportunities for donations and gifts.
3. Develop (in collaboration with the Commission) additional supporting policies such as:
 - a. Facility Dedications and Naming Rights
 - b. Corporate Sponsorships and Recognition

RECOMMENDATION

1. Endorse the *Parks and Recreation Gift Acceptance Policy*.
2. Provide Commission input toward procedural elements.