



# 6-Year Art in Public Places Workplan – Workshop #1

Arts Council Special Hybrid Meeting  
May 20, 2024



# Goals for Tonight's Conversation

1. Provide input to inform draft project opportunities list.
2. Learn about upcoming 2024 Public Art Deaccession Request.
3. Preview Public Art Policy needs.
4. Confirm the date and time for Workshop #2.



# Project Opportunities Discussion

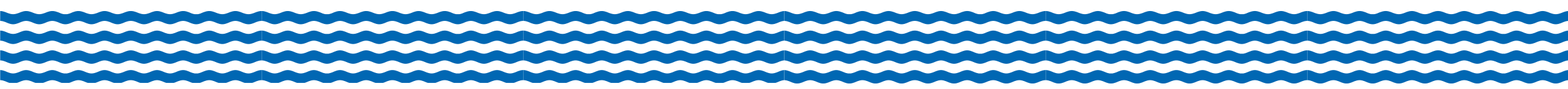


*Peruvian Paso Colt* by Joe Halko  
Acquired 2001



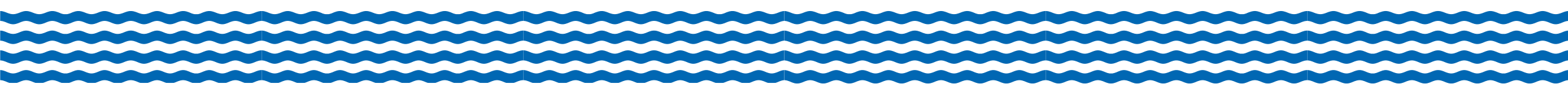
# How do you describe the public art collection today?

- The Mercer Island public art program today is not as high quality or robust as those in neighboring communities.
- The art community does not feel connected, and the community does not seem to be particularly connected to the arts.
- We have many artists, art patrons, and citizens that desire more access and opportunity to engage with the arts locally.
- Lot of physical art → bronze, sculpture, not as much performing art; can we commission a play? Or a dance piece?
- Well-supported and prioritized on the Island → commissioning and maintaining
- But also under-appreciated and less well-known among your community
- Geographically concentrated in TC and North End
- Sizable collection → more significant than realized
- Very focused on visual arts → need to find a way to engage in the performing arts; ample opportunity
- Lacking space to gather to perform arts → goal to work toward
- Lack of awareness → Arts Council; arts community is disconnected; play a role in connecting the different groups together → have more crowd-sourced projects to get people together; more permanent projects like that



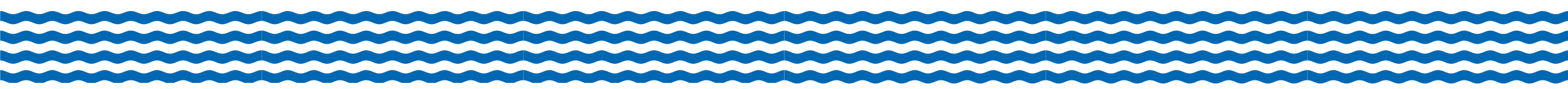
# How do you describe the public art collection today?

- Example of crowd-sourced → MI Medallions
- Use existing opportunities to engage community members for more feedback → MMIP, SC, etc. Arts Summit, etc.
- Artwork that inspires feeling and emotion → figures in front of QFC, children outside the Mercer (more realism)
- Artwork is a bit dated → we need to maintain the artwork but update it more
- Inspiring and beautiful
- Having in-person and digital engagement is really helpful
- Accessible → known to the public and available to see
- People know there is art → likely able to reference things that are around
- The Source → earthwork
- Variety in the artwork → working off a good foundation
- Sculpture gallery → centralize and well-organized; we have something to show others at the station area; should we centralize more artwork to make it a destination for the region
- Interactive artwork → dragon, source, etc. → opportunities for kids to interact



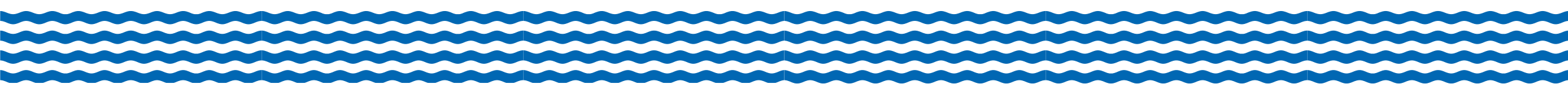
# Where do you want to see the public art collection go?

- Public art plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life in communities, fostering creativity, cultural exchange, and social cohesion.
- It enriches the urban landscape, stimulates dialogue, and contributes to the overall well-being and vitality of a community.
- More variety and types → interactive art in particular
- Stronger integration with the surrounding context → pieces make sense in the spaces in which they are installed
- More lighting → lighting can be artwork but also better lighting for artwork and safety
- Coordinated arts cooperation → bring groups and individuals together; arts groups and others
- Sustainability → includes social equity as well as environmental protection and equity
- Explore other mediums → expand beyond sculpture; glass, lighting, performing art, make it a broader collection
- Geographic equity



# Where do you want to see the public art collection go?

- Integrating context → use art to tell the history of Mercer Island
- Reflect values and pride in the Island → open spaces and natural environments, schools, great place for families
- MI Medallions good example of telling the history and our values
- Be intentional about what is commissioned and what is maintained going forward → thinking about future financial sustainability; think ahead about that and position ourselves to commission more pieces going forward
- Honor Indigenous history of the Island and more art that reflects that
- Dedicated artwork for different Island communities to express themselves → create artwork to inspire inclusion and acceptance
- Placemaking → amphitheater at LB, the Source, Primavera; ways to welcome folks to Mercer Island; e.g. roundabouts in Thonon
- Celebrate the place we're in
- Using artwork as a theme throughout the City → e.g. pigs in Pike Place Market
- Unifying piece throughout the community
- Water as a unifying theme → fountains, spray park, can be both art and functional





# Preview of 2024 Public Art Deaccession Request

## ***Street Name Inlays by Ellen Sollod***

Acquired 1994 as part of *Downtown Streetscapes* project.

CABLE • HELEN





# What is deaccessioning?

- Process for the withdrawal of an artwork from a public art collection.
- All artwork owned by the City of Mercer Island is eligible for deaccessioning.
- City revised its deaccessioning policy in 2003.
- Last artwork deaccessioned: *Sizzling Water* by Nancy Hammer (2011)

***Sizzling Water* by Nancy Hammer**  
Deaccessioned in 2011



# Criteria for Deaccessioning

**Deaccessioning of artwork may be considered for one or more of the following reasons if it cannot be re-sited:**

1. A work is not, or is only rarely, on display because of lack of a suitable site.
2. The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonable guaranteed.
3. The artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated and repair is impractical or unfeasible.
4. The artwork endangers public safety.
5. In the case of site-specific artwork, the artwork is destroyed by severely altering its relationship to the site.
6. The artwork has been determined to be significantly incompatible or inferior in the context of the collection.
7. The City wishes to replace the artwork with work of more significance by the same artist.
8. The artwork requires excessive maintenance or has faults of design or workmanship.

# 2024 Deaccession Request

- Staff seek to formally deaccession *Street Name Inlays*, bronze inlays installed at various street corners throughout Town Center.
- Installed as part of the *Downtown Streetscapes* installation in early 1990s.
- City is designing new curb ramps to improve ADA accessibility in the Town Center, and the bronze inlays do not currently meet ADA standards.



**Details of *Street Name Inlays* by Ellen Sollod**  
Acquired 1994 as part of *Downtown Streetscapes* project

# 2024 Deaccession Request

- Met with artist Ellen Sollod in August 2023 to discuss removing the pieces.
  - Agreed that removal makes the most sense to meet ADA standards.
  - Noted that the inlays are truly site-specific, and the intention of the public art project is lost by re-siting them.
- Discussed removing the inlays with the capital project manager and design team.
  - Based on the installation and number of pieces that were salvaged, would cost \$20,000-\$50,000 to remove.



**Details of *Street Name Inlays* by Ellen Sollod**  
Acquired 1994 as part of *Downtown Streetscapes* project

## 2024 Deaccession Request

- Staff will return at the Regular Arts Council meeting on July 17, 2024, to seek the Arts Council's recommendation to deaccession *Street Name Inlays*.
- We are previewing this item now to learn if Arts Council members need additional information to inform their recommendation.



# Preview of Public Art Policy Updates

***Summer in the Wetlands* by Natalie Oswald**  
Acquired 2014, Art in Public Places Program





# Acquisition Guidelines for Art in Public Places

- Establish the process for acquiring public art for the City of Mercer Island.
- Stipulate criteria for developing public art project, selecting the artist, implementing the project, and documenting the public artwork after it has been created.
- Adopted in 1995 and last updated in 2009.
- Elements to consider during the update:
  - Artist compensation during selection process
  - Community engagement in the artmaking process



## Goals for Community & Temporary Public Art

- **Community Public Art Projects:** Requests from the community to install permanent public artworks
- **Temporary Public Art Projects:** Short-term projects generated by City staff, Arts Council members, and/or community members/organizations
- Currently no criteria or formal process for evaluating and implementing these requests.
- Could be integrated into Acquisition Guidelines for Art in Public Places Program.





***Hope*** by Mark Heisel  
Donated to the City in 2001

# Next Steps

- Schedule Workshop #2 – Monday, June 17, 5:30pm
- Discussion Topics
  - Review Draft List of Project Opportunities
  - Provide feedback for Acquisition Guidelines for Art in Public Places Program
  - Look for prep work in your **City E-mail Inbox by May 31.**
- Questions?