



# BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

**AB 6170**  
**October 18, 2022**  
**Special Business**

## AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 6170: Mercer Island Sister City Association Art Unveiling and Presentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Receive report. No action necessary.	

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Council
<b>STAFF:</b>	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Kirsten Taylor, MISCA Vice President
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	n/a
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	n/a

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to:

- Present a gift to the City of Mercer Island on behalf of sister city, Thonon les Bains, France, marking the 20-year relationship between the two cities.
- The City will also be presented with a piece of custom-made glass art which is an exact duplicate of the gift Mercer Island gave to Thonon.
- The Mercer Island Sister City Association (MISCA) will host a reception to unveil the art pieces at City Hall at 4 p.m. The reception precedes the regularly-scheduled City Council meeting at 5 pm and is open to the community.

## BACKGROUND

The year 2020 marked the 20th anniversary of the "jumelage" (sister city relationship) between Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains, France. In February 2020, a delegation of residents from Mercer Island, as well as then-mayor Benson Wong, traveled to Thonon for a formal exchange marking the 20th anniversary.

The mayors of the two cities signed a formal declaration to renew the close sister city friendship between Mercer Island and Thonon. The declaration was just prior to news of the Pandemic that was spreading throughout the world. The celebration of the gifts were postponed nearly three years because of COVID.

Since the "jumelage" was formed, the sister city relationship has been growing and going strong. Nearly 200 students have participated in exchange trips to Thonon, and the same number of Mercer Island families have welcomed French students into their homes.

This month, Mercer Island will welcome two Thonon players of American football, who will stay in Mercer Island homes for two weeks and learn about American football at the high school, college, and professional levels. They'll also experience Halloween, American-style.

In February, the Mercer Island Sister City Association will send 20 students to Thonon for approximately 10 days, to explore our beautiful sister city, to stay with host families, and to learn what it is like to go to school in France. The host students from France will travel to Mercer Island in October, 2023, to complete the exchange circle.

In addition to student and cultural exchanges, the MISCA puts on dinners, sponsors French films and art lectures, hosts travel events, wine tastings and other events to foster an interest in all things French and in Thonon les Bains in particular.

## **ISSUE/DISCUSSION**

After years of delay due to the COVID Pandemic, the Mercer Island Sister City Association will formally present a gift to the City of Mercer Island on behalf of its sister city, Thonon les Bains, France, marking the 20-year relationship between the two cities. The gift is a large oil painting of Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva) by Thonon artist Anne Foudral.

The City will also be presented with a piece of custom-made glass art depicting mountains, a lake and a bridge, engraved to mark the occasion of the 20th anniversary. The piece was designed by Jai Kumaran, West of West Architects, created by Seattle Glassblowing Studio, with a custom-made case by Michael Jekubik, Chameleon Woodcrafting. The glass piece is an exact duplicate of the gift Mercer Island gave to Thonon. The gift from Mercer Island to Thonon les Bain was funded by MISCA through private donations.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Receive Report. No action necessary.