

Mercer Island Policy and Procedure
**PARK IMPROVEMENT, GIFT ACCEPTANCE AND DONOR
 RECOGNITION**



Effective Date: 2023	Last Updated: N/A	Approved By:
Code and Statutory Authority: 2.50.020 4.44.010 3.53.020	Related Polices: Strategy for MICEC and Recreation Programs and Services	

Purpose

The City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department welcomes and encourages support from private individuals and entities that support the programs and services the Department and its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils, and groups provide to the public.

The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria and guidelines for receiving and considering proposals to initiate funded, partially funded, or unfunded capital projects, including gift and donor recognition projects, park asset donations, or to undertake changes to a park property that will in the judgment of the director, modify the property’s use, appearance, or overall aesthetics.

Definitions

- I. Parks and Recreation Department consists of the Park Maintenance Division and Recreation Division within the Public Works Department under the direction of the Chief of Operations (director).
- II. Assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils, or groups are any working or advisory board or committee created by City Council action or initiated by the Mayor or City Manager’s Office and assigned to or administratively supported by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- III. Gifts are all gifts, bequests, or donations to include but not be limited to endowments, real property, structures, or portions of structures; money or negotiable securities; materials; equipment, flora, or fauna; improvements to facilities or land; statues, monuments, sculptures, murals, and other works of art; plaques, graphics and/or signs; or recreation and cultural arts program instruction, equipment, and supplies.
- IV. Donor Recognition Object is a physical object placed in a park to acknowledge a donor.
- V. Donor is a private individual, for-profit company, non-profit organization, or public agency wishing to donate funds or objects to the Department.
- VI. Donor Recognition Project is a proposal and plan for placing a donor recognition object at a park or park facility.
- VII. Gift Needs Inventory is a list of identified Department operational and capital needs which would make appropriate gifts.

- VIII. Memorial Art is any statue, monument, sculpture, mural, memorial, or other structure or landscape feature designed to perpetuate in a permanent manner the memory of a person, group, event, or other significant element of history.
- IX. Park Improvement Proposal may include a funded, partially funded, or unfunded capital project(s) request consisting of real property, structures, or portions of structures; materials; equipment; flora or fauna; improvements to facilities or land and other non-art items.
- X. Park Improvement Proposer is a private individual, for-profit company, non-profit organization, or public agency wishing to initiate a funded, partially, funded, or unfunded capital project(s) consisting of real property, structures, or portions of structures; materials; equipment; flora or fauna; improvements to facilities or land and other non-art items.

Policy

It is the policy of the City of Mercer Island:

- 1.1 To facilitate and solicit publicly and privately funded park improvement proposals and encourage public and private gifts, bequests, and such contributions that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the park and recreation system and community of Mercer Island.
- 1.2 To accept only those gifts, memorial art, park improvements and donor recognition objects that are consistent with the mission, policies, park property restrictions, park master plans and most current Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan and associated trails and arts plans of the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department and the mission and policies of its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils, or groups.
- 1.3 To accept only those gifts, memorial art, park improvements and donor recognition objects given with the full understanding that they become the property of the City and are subject to the laws, policies and procedures that govern the Parks and Recreation Department and its assigned advisory boards, commissions, councils, or groups.
- 1.4 To accept gifts of land, from private individuals, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations and public entities when City ownership will further the objectives of the City as identified in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan and associated trails and arts plans.
- 1.5 To accept gift, memorial art, and park improvement proposals, other than land, from private individuals, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations, and public entities which:
 - 1.5.1 Are given with no contingencies other than that they be used for a specific program, activity, or area of programming. (Gifts from corporate donors who have a corporate sponsorship requirement fall under a yet to be developed Corporate Sponsorship Policy);
 - 1.5.2 The City is not obligated to replace if the gift or park improvement is stolen, vandalized, worn out, irreparably damaged, or destroyed.

- 1.6 To reject gift, memorial art, and park improvement proposals that, in the judgment of the director, are incompatible with the park or facility location, other facility uses or users.
- 1.7 To prohibit gift, park improvement proposals, and donor recognition object proposals that are memorial in nature (excluding memorial art).
 - 1.7.1 The City may elect to recognize a community member, individual, family, group, or organization in the naming of a facility. In these limited and unique scenarios, the donor recognition object may provide memorial recognition as deemed appropriate by the director. Naming rights to facilities will be included in a to be developed policy.
- 1.8 To protect designated open space and green space areas as fundamental aspects of the quality of life on Mercer Island, and to limit gifts and park improvements to those which maintain or enhance the character of the space and/or meet identified objectives within the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan and associated trails and arts plans.
- 1.9 To prohibit donor recognition objects on gifts in designated open space areas.
- 1.10 To limit, as much as possible, plaques and visible recognition objects to areas of a park recognized as “built” environments, i.e., benches, picnic tables, water fountains, buildings, play areas, ballfields, tennis courts, etc.
- 1.11 To limit, as much as possible, all gifts and park improvements to items that complement the proposed location, e.g., murals for buildings; turf/fall surfacing/sand/benches/tables/play equipment for play areas; turf/backstops/bleachers/scoreboards/fences for ballfields; nets/posts for tennis courts; backboards/nets/scoreboards for basketball courts.
- 1.12 To limit, as much as possible, the number of donor recognition projects that involve decorative tiles, pavers, and artwork that require mounting on walls, concrete, or any other surface that detracts from the characteristics of our parks. Such projects may require a verifiable demonstration of community support.
- 1.13 To limit, as much as possible, the number of park improvements that involve installations which detract from characteristics of our parks. Such projects may require a verifiable demonstration of community support.
- 1.14 To maintain and update annually a Gift Needs Inventory document.
- 1.15 To ensure that all park improvement proposals, gifts, memorial art, and donor recognition objects are consistent with all applicable provisions of the City of Mercer Island City Code.

Procedure(s)

Additional procedures will be established and approved, administratively, by the department director and division manager, following approval of the policy.

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