

Information and Discussion

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Bellevue Arts Commission

1E-113 or Zoom Meeting, 4:30 pm

City of Bellevue, WA

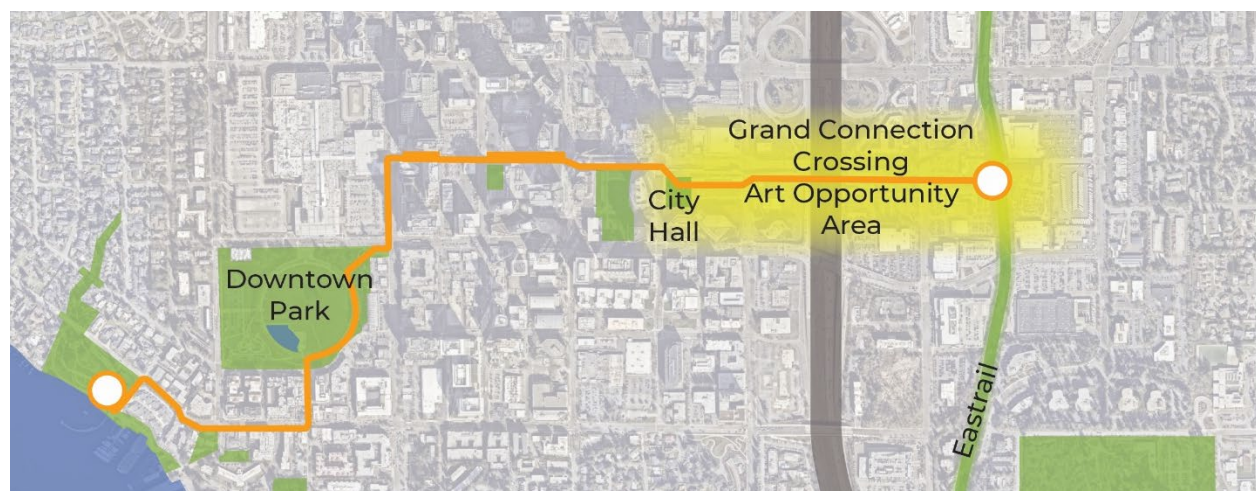
Grand Connection Crossing Art Plan Update

At today's meeting staff and artist Matthew Mazzotta will provide an update on the community engagement work completed in preparation for the development of an art plan for the Grand Connection Crossing.

Code and bylaw support: This item is presented to the Commission as it is supported by City Code 3.56.070 item F: "Develop recommendations for acquiring public artwork consistent with guidelines and priorities approved by city council."

Background

The Grand Connection is a pedestrian route from Meydenbauer Bay Park through Downtown, over Interstate 405 and terminating at EasTrail, a regional pedestrian and bicycle trail. As much of the Grand Connection is located within private property or has been previously developed, the city is developing a series of targeted projects intended to elevate the overall experience. The largest missing link within this route is the section between Bellevue City Hall over the freeway to EasTrail. To address this, the city has been working to refine designs of this section, called the Grand Connection Crossing, with the intention of it being built by the end of this decade. To enliven the Crossing and turn the bridge into a signature experience, the city has hired artist Matthew Mazzotta to develop an art plan and a preliminary concept for a major public artwork for the Crossing.



Mr. Mazzotta's scope of work consists of the following key elements:

1. Development of an Art Plan for the Crossing – this will include an overall theme for artworks on the Crossing, Public Art Opportunities (temporary and permanent projects), and recommendations for cultural programming on the Crossing.
2. Provide a Preliminary Concept for a large-scale artwork
3. Design Coordination – work with the design team to provide an artist's perspective on design elements and ensure that identified opportunities in the art plan are provided for in the design of the Crossing.

4. Optional – the city may elect for the Preliminary Artwork Concept to be developed through full design.

Today's Update

As part of the development of the art plan, the artist is required to conduct community engagement. This work should lay the foundation for the development of the theme and other elements in the plan, as well as provide important ideas that could lead to the future Preliminary Artwork Concept. As part of this work, Mr. Mazzotta, who lives in rural New York state, came to Bellevue between September 18th through the 24th for meetings, tours and explorations.

Key meetings, tours and experiences from the artists visit:

- Met with SuttonBeresCuller, the artist team that created the original Grand Connection Art Plan
- Work session with the Crossing Design Team
- Tour of Grand Connection with the Office of Grand Connection
- Tour of KidsQuest Children's Museum and meeting with their executive director
- Met with Friends of Grand Connection Leadership Team
- Bike tour of Eastrail with Eastrail Partners
- Light Rail trip to Redmond stopping at the BelRed Arts District, and multiple pedestrian bridges over Interstate 520 (Overlake, Redmond Technology Center)
- Tour of Bellevue Botanical Garden and Debrief

Since their visit, the artist has also:

- Facilitated two discussions with city staff from Planning, Cultural and Economic Development, Environmental Stewardship team, Parks and Community Services, and Utilities to learn more about what the future of Bellevue is planned to be and more about the community they serve.
- Met with the full Friends of Grand Connection membership for a discussion about their vision for the Grand Connection and the Crossing, more specifically.

At today's meeting, the artist will provide a summary on what they've learned and heard from their community engagement. A summary of this work, including some themes that have repeatedly come out of engagement, is included in Attachment A. A discussion will follow their presentation.

Next Steps

Mr. Mazzotta is currently starting work on the Grand Connection Crossing Art Plan. Feedback from the commission will be considered as that work progresses. Staff will provide the commission with additional information as the Art Plan continues to take shape.

Attachments

Attachment A: Community Engagement Summary

Staff Contact

Scott MacDonald, Public Art Specialist
smacdonald@bellevuewa.gov, 425-452-7897