

APPOINTMENTS

DIRECTOR

- VISIT Milwaukee Board of Directors

COMMISSIONER

- Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE-CHAIR

- Licenses Committee
- Public Works Committee

MEMBER

- Public Safety & Health Committee

LAMONT WESTMORELAND ALDERMAN, 5TH DISTRICT

The Moving City: A huge waste of money that won't impact reckless driving

Statement of Alderman Lamont Westmoreland August 30, 2024

Earlier this month, the city unveiled *The Moving City* – an abandoned Ford Ranger pickup from the city Tow Lot – that is extensively adorned and modified as a mobile art creation meant to engage residents on the topic of reckless driving.

The Milwaukee Arts Board directed the majority of the funding for the project, which has staff oversight from the Department of City Development (DCD) and utilizes the city's first-ever Public Artist in Residence.

For transparency, I have **attached** a memo on *The Moving City* from the Legislative Reference Bureau.

I am embarrassed, upset and disappointed that funds and city staff time were directed toward this project. Previously, the Common Council approved giving the Arts Board such power to do whatever it wanted with their budgeted public art funds without needing Council approval. I've lost confidence that they're using these funds in the best ways and as a result, I am now working to change the ordinance which will require the Board to bring such ideas to the full Council for approval.

While so far about \$61,000 has been directed toward this project, once the final invoices come in the full price tag will be in the ballpark of \$88,000. **The kicker: \$88,000 spent on a project that will be decommissioned, with the vehicle going back to the Tow Lot and never seen again.**

So, in theory, this is an irresponsible waste of their valuable budgeted funds for something temporary when the Arts Board could very clearly have used that money toward permanent public art to beautify spaces throughout Milwaukee. Perhaps this project could have been completed for free by creative children from across the city who have an interest in art.

-More-

While I understand the well-meaning intention with this project, as an Alderman whose job it is to oversee the city's coffers, I see it as not being a responsible use of money (especially for something temporary). And let's be real – we won't see a real drop in reckless driving until penalties are drastically increased – as many of the perpetrators know the current justice system is weak and they'll just receive a slap on the wrist and be released. I don't think this vehicle will have the slightest impact on reckless driving and it won't engage people any more than they've already been engaged.

In my view, the wasteful idea of spending \$88,000 for the temporary *'The Moving City'* should have been thrown into the trash bin as soon as it was brought up as an idea.



Jim Owczarski
City Clerk

Keith Broadnax
LRB Manager

City Clerk's Office Legislative Reference Bureau

MEMORANDUM

To: Ald. Lamont Westmoreland
From: Christopher Hillard, Legislative Fiscal Analyst-Lead
Date: 8/29/2024
Subject: *The Moving City* Project Budget and Expenses

This memo is in response to your request for information regarding the budget and expenses related to *The Moving City* project commissioned by the Milwaukee Arts Board and created by artist Sarah Davitt as part of the Arts Board's pilot Public Artist in Residence Program (PAIR). According to Sally Svetic, the Art Board's Department of City Development staff person, the Board has yet to receive the final invoice, however, she was able to share the following information. Once the final invoices have been delivered, they will be included as an addendum to this memo.

Public Artist in Residence Project Initial Budget

Expenses:

- Artist Consultant Stipend: \$43,000.
- Project Costs (materials and subcontractors): Up to \$25,000.
- Liaison Stipend: \$20,000
- Total: \$88,000

Funding Sources:

- \$25,000 from the 2024 Milwaukee Arts Board Public Art Fund: The Arts Board receives \$25,000 a year from the City Budget to be used on new works of public art or to conserve existing works of public art.
- \$68,000 in unspent Public Art Funds from previous years, used for Artist stipend and project costs.
- \$20,000 from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation Grant Fund for the liaison stipend.
- \$5,000 from the Department of Public Works (DPW) as the host department. For this project, City departments were solicited to provide ideas for issues within the City that the Public Artist in Residence Program could address. DPW proposed reckless driving,

and this was selected by the Board. As part of this selection, the “host” department was expected to provide some funding (in dollars or in-kind contributions) to the project.

Public Artist in Residence Project Spending as of August, 2024

Expenses:

- Artist Consultant Stipend: \$34,317.00 in hours billed as of 2/1/24, currently waiting on final hours worked 2/22/24 through 6/30/24, which marked the end of the program.
- Project Costs (materials and subcontractors): \$22,128.52 in expenses incurred as of 2/21/24, waiting on final materials and subcontractor expenses from 2/22/24 to 6/30/24.
- Liaison Stipend: \$16,177.20 in hours billed.
- In-Kind expenses - \$5,000 donation of cones from Lakeside Plastics, and one Ford Ranger donated from the DPW Tow Lot; (this was a vehicle that had been towed and abandoned. The hope is that the art piece can be used by Vision Zero in the coming years, and the vehicle itself is intact, and can therefore be returned to the Tow Lot once the work is decommissioned).

Funding Sources:

- Milwaukee Arts Board Public Art Fund: \$52,622.72 allocated from unspent \$68,000 budget so far, final amount will be based on remaining billable hours worked 2/22/24 through end of program 6/30/24.
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation Grant Funds: \$20,000 fully spent on Liaison hours billed and subcontractor invoices.
- Department of Public Works contribution to PAIR as “host department”: \$3,234.80 in purchases made directly by DPW for materials and tools that will continue to be used by DPW after PAIR program concludes.

Based on this information, the City’s current contribution to the *The Moving City* as of August, 2024, has been \$61,857.52. The majority (\$52,622.72) of these funds came from unspent Public Art Funds, which are appropriated as part of the annual Budget for works of public art or to conserve existing public art. The remaining funds came directly from DPW in the form of materials and tools, at least some of which will continue to be used by DPW.

Once final invoices have been received, I will create an addendum to this memo.

Please let me know if you need any additional information.

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