

GMHB EXHIBIT 100



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6519
September 3, 2024
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6519: 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: City Council Deliberations on the Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Direction to Staff to Prepare the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Complete deliberation of proposed amendments and provide direction to staff on next steps.	

DEPARTMENT:	Community Planning and Development
STAFF:	Jeff Thomas, Community Planning and Development Director Adam Zack, Senior Planner
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City Council Economic Development Element Proposed Amendment Matrix 2. Agency and City Proposed Amendment Matrix 3A. City Council Proposed Amendment Matrix (Non-Substantive Items) 3B. City Council Proposed Amendment Matrix (Substantive Items) 4. Question and Comment Matrix
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to deliberate on the proposed amendments to the draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan and provide direction to staff to prepare the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan for public review and comment.

- Multiple exhibits accompany this agenda bill, and they are summarized as follows:
 - **Exhibit 1:** Proposed amendments to the Economic Development Element.
 - **Exhibit 2:** Proposed amendments and findings to address external agency comments (i.e. WA Department of Commerce and others) as well as staff proposed amendments.
 - **Exhibit 3:** Proposed amendments from City Councilmembers since the July 16 handoff of the draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan from the Planning Commission.
 - Exhibit 3A: Non-substantive proposed amendments.
 - Exhibit 3B: Substantive proposed amendments.

- Exhibit 4: Staff responses to questions submitted by City Councilmembers.

On September 3, the City Council will review the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and provide direction to the staff on the amendments to be included in the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan. The items included in Exhibit 1, related specifically to the Economic Development Element, are recommended to be addressed via the formation of an Ad-Hoc Committee.

BACKGROUND

The City began the 2024 periodic review of its Comprehensive Plan in March 2022, when the City Council approved the Scope of Work, Master Schedule, and Public Participation Plan (see [Resolution No. 1621](#)). Per the WA Growth Management Act (GMA), the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic review must be adopted by December 31, 2024.

The Planning Commission (PC) prepared public hearing drafts for each Comprehensive Plan Element, except for the Shoreline Master Program, over the course of 24 public meetings between March 2022 and May 2024. Drafts were posted to the [project website](#) for public review throughout the PC review process. The public had the opportunity to comment on the drafts throughout the process, including public comment opportunities during each PC meeting.

On May 29, 2024, the PC conducted a public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan and began deliberating on its recommendation to the City Council. These deliberations continued at meetings on June 5 and June 12. On June 12, 2024, the PC finalized its recommendation to the City Council, and handed off their recommendation on July 16, 2024.

The following is a summary of key events and dates which have occurred during and since the last City Council meeting on July 16, 2024:

- July 16, 2024: The City Council received the Planning Commission draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan ([AB6510](#)) and established by motion a process and schedule for City Council proposed amendments to be submitted to staff during the August recess in preparation for deliberation on September 3, 2024.
- July 25, 2024: The WA Department of Commerce (Commerce) provided comments to the City on the draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan (Exhibit 2).
- July 29, 2024 through August 12, 2024: The City Council submitted proposed amendments to staff.
- August 14, 2024: Staff shared a preview of the City Council proposed amendment matrix with Each Councilmember for review of errors and omissions as well as an opportunity for Councilmembers to withdraw any proposed amendments.
- August 21, 2024: Staff shared with Councilmembers the preliminary drafts of Exhibits 2, 3 and 4.

Comprehensive Plan Elements

The Comprehensive Plan is composed of topic-specific elements that establish goals and policies. The goals detail what the City would like to accomplish in the next 20 years. The policies establish the high-level strategies the City will use to achieve its goals. The goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan elements are implemented through regulations, programs, and projects. The City Council will determine which actions the City will take to implement the updated goals and policies after the Comprehensive Plan elements are adopted.

Drafting New Elements

The City Council approved scope of work for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update included a substantial reworking of the Housing Element and development of two new Comprehensive Plan Elements: the Economic Development Element and the Parks and Open Space Element ([Res. No. 1621](#)).

In 2023, the approved scope of work was supplemented with additional tasks for the Housing Element in response to updated statewide requirements ([Res. No. 1645](#)). The Council-adopted scope of work included the formation of a Housing Work Group and Economic Development Work Group composed of Planning Commissioners and Councilmembers. These two work groups prepared the initial drafts of the Economic Development and Housing Elements, which the Planning Commission reviewed, refined with some amendments, and recommended for adoption to the City Council.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Exhibit 1 – Councilmember Proposed Economic Development Elements

Two City Council proposed amendments provide alternative drafts of goals and policies for the Economic Development Element. The proposed drafts are provided in Exhibit 1. Given that these proposed amendments constitute rewrites of the Economic Development Element, staff recommends the City Council form an Ad Hoc Committee to work with staff to reconcile these proposed amendments for review and consideration by the full City Council at the September 17, 2024 City Council meeting. The Ad-Hoc Committee may also be assigned to review other proposed amendments as directed by the City Council.

Ad Hoc Committee

If the City Council desires to appoint an Ad-Hoc Committee, up to three Councilmembers may be appointed to serve in this role. The Ad-Hoc Committee will immediately commence their work to make the short turn time in between City Council meetings. The Ad Hoc committee will dissolve after it makes its recommendation to the City Council.

Exhibit 2 – Agency and Staff Comments and Responses

The City received comments on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review from the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Puget Sound Energy, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the WA Department of Commerce (Commerce). The WDFW and PSE comments were considered during the Planning Commission deliberations ([PCB 24-16](#)). The comments from PSRC and Commerce and the staff proposed responses are provided in Exhibit 2. The full text of all agency comments is provided in Exhibit 2, Appendix B.

PSRC Comments

The PSRC is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties. Under the GMA, RTPOs must certify that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns within the region are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan and, where appropriate, conform with the requirements of the GMA ([RCW 47.80.023\(3\)](#)).

The PSRC has adopted a regional planning document called VISION 2050, which established multicounty planning policies (MPPs) to provide direction for how the region will address growth. Within the GMA framework, comprehensive plan policies must be consistent with MPPs. In preparation for the Planning Commission public hearing, the City contracted with consultants from Kimley-Horn to review the proposed policies in the Comprehensive Plan periodic review for consistency with the MPPs and identify possible gaps

[\(PCB 24-12\)](#)). Prior to making a recommendation to the City Council, the Planning Commission made amendments to the draft Comprehensive Plan to address the identified gaps.

The PSRC submitted a comment letter on June 18, 2024 (Exhibit 2, Appendix B). The PSRC comment recommends a few revisions to ensure the updated Comprehensive Plan is consistent with VISION 2050 and identified some optional amendments. The PSRC comments and staff response are provided in Exhibit 2. When preparing the table in Exhibit 2, staff recommended a response to only those PSRC comments that required action, the optional amendments can be found in the PSRC comment letter.

Washington State Department of Commerce Comments (Commerce)

Commerce is the state-level department tasked with implementing the GMA. Counties and cities must notify Commerce at least 60 days prior to adoption of any comprehensive plan or development code amendment ([RCW 36.70A.106](#)). Mercer Island's 60-day notice was submitted to Commerce on May 3, 2024, and Commerce acknowledged receipt of the notice in a letter dated May 6, 2024. Commerce reviewed the draft Comprehensive Plan and provided comments in a letter dated July 25, 2024 (Exhibit 2, Appendix B). The Commerce comments are summarized with a staff response in Exhibit 2, Table 1.

Findings

Several of the staff recommended responses to agency comments suggest that the City Council make a finding. Findings will be included with the adopting ordinance. Findings are a way for the City Council to give further context to the Comprehensive Plan update such as:

- Direction for implementing the Comprehensive Plan, providing clarifying information about what and how the City should prioritize actions, and
- Information to supplement the record to explain how the Comprehensive Plan update satisfies requirements.

Staff Proposed Amendments

Staff proposed some amendments to the Capital Facilities Element to reflect the current state of facility planning, including the permanent closure of City Hall. Given that the facility planning work was lagging behind the Comprehensive Plan review, these amendments are being submitted to the City Council for review and consideration. The staff proposed Capital Facilities Element amendments are provided in Exhibit 2, Appendix A.

Exhibit 3 – City Council Proposed Amendments

The City Council proposed amendments are listed and categorized in Exhibit 3. Staff divided the City Council proposed amendments into two categories: Non-substantive and Substantive changes.

Exhibit 3A – Non-substantive Changes

Non-substantive changes are proposed amendments that are not expected to significantly alter the policy direction of the Comprehensive Plan. In general, the non-substantive changes are those that would change either the feel or style of a goal or policy but would not change the substance. Staff recommends that the City Council address all non-substantive changes with a single motion.

Exhibit 3B – Substantive Changes

Substantive changes are proposed amendments that would change the policy direction in the draft Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends the City Council review and discuss each of the substantive

amendments individually. Direction to incorporate a proposed amendment will come via motion. Staff have included comments related to each proposed substantive amendment for Council consideration.

NEXT STEPS

The following dates are reserved on the Council Planning Schedule to ensure completion of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update by the end of the year:

- **September 17, 2024:** Receive the recommendation from the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Economic Development Element and any other tasks assigned to the Committee at the September 3, 2024 City Council meeting. Complete deliberation and direct staff to finalize the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan and commence a public review and comment period of not less than thirty (30) calendar days.
- **November 5, 2024:** Consider public comment received on the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan and complete first reading of an ordinance to adopt the 2024 Comprehensive Plan.
- **November 19, 2024:** Complete second reading of an ordinance and adopt the 2024 Comprehensive Plan effective December 31, 2024.

NOTE: There will be other dates this fall for the City Council to consider adopting amendments to the Mercer Island City Code (MICC) necessary to maintain consistency with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Necessary MICC amendments will relate to parks/open space zoning and Town Center development regulations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

As part of the City Council deliberation on the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic update, staff recommends the following motions in the order they appear below:

Prior to commencing deliberations:

1. **Recommended Motion – Produce a 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan:**
“Move to direct staff to incorporate all approved amendments into the 2024 City Council Draft Comprehensive Plan and make this draft available for public review and comment for a period of not less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the City Council completing the first reading of an adopting ordinance scheduled for November 5, 2024.”
2. **Recommended Motion – Appointment of a 2024 Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee:**
“Move to form an Ad-Hoc Committee comprised of up to three City Council members to work with staff to formulate recommendations on the proposed Economic Development Element amendments contained in Agenda Bill 6519, Exhibit 1 as well as any other proposed amendments referred by the City Council. The Ad-Hoc Committee shall commence work immediately and present their recommendations to the full City Council at the September 17, 2024 Regular City Council meeting.”

To commence deliberations:

3. **Recommended Motion – Agency / City Proposed Amendments:**
“Move to approve the recommended amendments and findings to respond to agency comments as well as the City staff proposed amendments in Exhibit 2.”

4. Recommended Motion – City Council Non-Substantive Proposed Amendments:

“Move to approve the City Council non-substantive proposed amendments in Exhibit 3A.”

To conclude deliberations:

5. Recommended Motion – City Council Substantive Proposed Amendments:

“Move to approve the City Council substantive proposed amendments [read log numbers ‘CC-XX’, ‘CC-XX’, etc] in Exhibit 3B.”

6. Recommended Motion – Referral of City Council Proposed Amendments to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee (If Needed):

“In addition to the proposed Economic Development Element items already referred, move to refer City Council substantive proposed amendments [read log numbers ‘CC-XX’, ‘CC-XX’, etc] in Exhibit 3B to the Ad-Hoc Committee.”

AB 6519

EXHIBIT 1

**COUNCILMEMBER PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES**

Agenda Bill 6519 Exhibit 1 – City Council Economic Development Element Comments.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-166	Craig Reynolds	Economic Development	preamble	[page 1, line 5] By many measures Mercer Island is poised to significantly grow its economy during the planning period. [page 13, line 12] The majority of people employed on Mercer Island commute from outside the city. [page 13, line 14] The majority of people employed on Mercer Island commute from outside the city. [page 13, line 31] Assuming that housing costs should be around <u>not exceed</u> 30 percent of a household’s income, this would require a monthly income of roughly \$6,498 <u>7,220</u> or \$77,976 <u>86,640</u> annually to be affordable. Expanding to the county level, the 2020 median rent in King County was \$1,695. The King County median rent would require a monthly income of about \$5,085 <u>5,650</u> or \$61,020 <u>67,800</u> annually to be affordable. [page 14, line 16] The City can monitor the supply of developable commercial land to determine whether the availability of commercial space is not increasing the displacement risk for local businesses. [Page 14, line 26] Shoppers may seek commercial areas that are more comfortable in a warmer climate <u>to shop in ways and for products that reduce climate impact, which may include increased prioritization of shopping locally.</u>	
CC-167	Craig Reynolds	Economic Development	7.1	7.1 <u>Audit/Review</u> the development code and permitting processes to identify code amendments to support businesses, improve effectiveness, and make efficient use of City resources. The following goals should be coequally considered when identifying code amendments: [...]	
CC-168	Craig Reynolds	Economic Development	7.5	7.5 Establish a small-business pre-application process to help guide applicants through the permitting process.	
CC-169	Craig Reynolds	Economic Development	11	Goal 11 – Public space in Town Center is plentiful <u>adequate</u> , providing residents and visitors <u>access to</u> places to <u>shop</u> , gather, celebrate, and socialize.	
CC-3	Salim Nice	Economic Development	New	Replace the proposed goals and policies in the Economic Development Element with the draft dated August 12, 2024.	Mayor Nice’s draft begins on page 3 of this exhibit
CC-172	Ted Weinberg	Economic Development	New	Economic Development Element. I propose that we start from the attached revised draft, which combines elements from both the ED Workgroup’s draft and from the draft I received via the Director of the Chamber of Commerce. See file called “Economic Development Goals and Policies - Revised.docx”	Councilmember Weinberg’s draft begins on page 9 of this exhibit

From: [Salim Nice](#)
To: [Adam Zack](#)
Cc: [Jeff Thomas](#)
Subject: Re: Mayor Nice Economic Development Amendment
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 3:39:32 PM
Attachments: [Economic Development Amendment - Nice.docx](#)

From: Salim Nice <salim.nice@mercerisland.gov>
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 at 3:38 PM
To: Adam Zack <adam.zack@mercerisland.gov>
Cc: Jeff Thomas <jeff.thomas@mercerisland.gov>
Subject: Mayor Nice Economic Development Amendment

This replaces the chapters goals.

[Salim Nice](#)

Mayor

City of Mercer Island

p: 206-275-7997 | m: 206-232-0133 | mercerisland.gov

Notice: Emails and attachments may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act (chapter 42.56 RCW).

II. Business Ecosystem Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Transform Mercer Island's Town Center into a Vibrant Destination

Policies:

1.1 Leverage the opening of Sound Transit's East Link Light Rail Line 2 to attract residents, commuters, and visitors to the Town Center.

1.2 Develop and promote a theme and vision (e.g., "Savor the Soul of Mercer Island," which plays on Mercer Island's geography, looking like the sole of a shoe, and points toward the "Walkability" of the Town Center) to create a unique and appealing identity for the Town Center.

1.3 Implement a cohesive visual brand, including a logo, color scheme, and typography, that reflects the island's natural beauty and upscale yet welcoming character.

1.4 Create branded wayfinding signage, street furniture, and public art to reinforce the Town Center identity.

1.4.a Prioritize improvements in key locations such as the Mercer Island Farmers Market site.

1.4.b Dedicate permanent signage for established community events like the Mercer Island Farmers Market.

Goal 2: Establish Mercer Island as a Premier Wine Destination

Policies:

2.1 Expand and promote the "Art Uncorked" event as a flagship attraction, leveraging its popularity to draw visitors year-round.

2.2 Actively recruit wineries to establish tasting rooms on Mercer Island, positioning the island as a premier, easily accessible wine destination. Emphasize Mercer Island's unique advantages, including its proximity to Seattle and Bellevue, excellent public transportation links, and picturesque island setting, to differentiate it from other regional wine experiences.

2.3 Facilitate partnerships between commercial landlords and wineries to encourage the establishment of tasting rooms in strategic locations.

2.4 Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to position Mercer Island as a unique wine destination, distinguishing it from Seattle and Bellevue.

2.5 Encourage the development of complementary businesses such as artisanal food shops, wine-focused restaurants, and boutique hotels to support the wine destination concept.

2.6 Emphasize farm-to-table and outdoor dining experiences where possible.

Goal 3: Enhance and Diversify Business Offerings

Policies:

3.1 Attract a diverse mix of businesses that complement existing offerings and fill market gaps, with a focus on unique, locally-owned establishments.

3.2 Encourage the development of restaurants, cafes, and food-related businesses that align with the wine destination theme.

3.3 Support the growth of specialty retail shops catering to residents and visitors, emphasizing quality and uniqueness over specific business types.

3.4 Promote pop-up shops and rotating vendor markets to add variety and attract shoppers.

3.4.a Support existing markets by lowering vendor permit fees, reducing ROW fees, and studying and adjusting the budget for on-site support.

Goal 4: Integrate Arts & Culture

Policies:

4.1 Incorporate public art installations and performances that complement the wine destination theme and overall visitor experience.

4.2 Support cultural events and activities that enhance the appeal of Mercer Island to both residents and visitors.

4.3 Encourage the development of art spaces and events that align with and support the wine destination concept.

4.4 Develop and expand "Arts on the Island Weekend" as a signature annual event each September, enhancing the arts and culture experience.

4.5 Invest in strategically placed infrastructure to facilitate nonprofit organizations, the City, and other partners' hosting of music and art events, such as a permanent stage, improved public bathroom facilities, hot water access, solar energy, accessible seating, and access to the Town Center.

Goal 5: Implement Supportive Policies & Incentives

Policies:

5.1 Establish a dedicated "concierge" service to guide businesses through permitting.

5.2 Implement a guaranteed 30-day permit review for target business types.

5.3 Waive or reduce permit fees for the first 20 qualifying businesses in identified priority categories.

- 5.4 Offer a 3-year B&O tax exemption for new qualifying businesses in Town Center.
- 5.5 Explore the creation of a "Restaurant Row" designation with additional tax benefits.
- 5.6 Develop incentives that attract targeted businesses through public and private partnerships to foster affordable commercial space solutions.
- 5.7 Create a comprehensive "best practices" section on the City website detailing steps for business setup at city, state, and county levels.
- 5.8 Streamline and simplify the process for new business setup, making it more intuitive and user-friendly.
- 5.9 Act as a liaison between commercial landlords and desired businesses, mainly focusing on bringing wineries and complementary businesses.

Goal 6: Optimize Parking and Infrastructure

Policies:

- 6.1 Conduct a comprehensive review of current parking regulations in the city code to ensure they align with the Town Center's vision and economic vitality.
- 6.2 Analyze historical parking space trends in Town Center and correlate them with retail business numbers (e.g., Mostly Music in the Park, the Mercer Island Farmers Market, etc.).
- 6.3 Consider shared parking agreements to utilize existing surface lots for general Town Center parking.
- 6.4 Invest in public parking infrastructure, including angle-in-street parking and acquiring property for parking development.
- 6.5 Consider eliminating on-site parking requirements for a few net-new restaurants or retail businesses, leveraging right-of-way parking.
- 6.6 Consider eliminating traffic study requirements for small businesses outside of new development.
- 6.7 Implement and enforce time limits for street parking using existing ALPR technology.
- 6.8 Plan for increased parking needs as the wine destination concept develops, including considerations for ride-sharing and public transportation options.
- 6.9 Improve pedestrian infrastructure to support walkability between tasting rooms, restaurants, and other businesses.

Goal 7: Activate Public Spaces

Policies:

7.1 Create flexible-use outdoor spaces for dining, markets, and events.

7.2 Implement and promote a permanent seasonal parklet program allowing businesses to convert parking spaces to outdoor seating.

7.3 Develop a year-round program of events and activations to drive foot traffic in the Town Center.

7.3.a Prioritize coordination with established community-led events to ensure adequate resources for multiple events.

7.4 Ensure adequate public parking for community events like Music in the Park and the Farmers Market when planning new developments.

Goal 8: Establish an Implementation Sequence

Policies:

8.1 Finalize Town Center branding and begin implementation as a near-term action.

8.2 Launch expedited permitting program and initial tax incentives as a near-term action.

8.3 Begin public space improvements and activation as a near-term action.

8.4 Roll out marketing campaign targeting key market segments as a mid-term action.

8.5 Evaluate and adjust incentive programs based on initial uptake and feedback as a mid-term action.

8.6 Develop a signature event series as a mid-term action.

8.7 Reassess market conditions and adjust strategy as needed as a long-term action.

8.8 Consider expanding successful programs to other commercial areas as a long-term action.

8.9 Prioritize developing and promoting the wine destination concept as a near-term action.

Goal 9: Track Performance Metrics & Evaluation

Policies:

9.1 Track new business openings, sales tax revenue, and commercial vacancy rates.

9.2 Conduct annual surveys of residents, businesses, and visitors.

9.3 Monitor light rail ridership and conduct intercept surveys to gauge Town Center visits.

9.4 Establish a Town Center business coalition within the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce to provide ongoing feedback and collaboration.

9.5 Track changes in available parking spaces in the Town Center over time.

9.6 Conduct regular reassessments of the economic development strategy, allowing for adjustments based on market response, community feedback, and the success of the wine destination concept.

Goal 10: Integrate Sustainability

Policies:

10.1 Offer incentives to businesses and developers implementing innovative sustainability practices.

10.2 Align economic development goals with the city's comprehensive plan sustainability element.

10.3 Encourage green building practices and energy-efficient retrofits in commercial spaces.

10.4 Launch an electric shuttle service pilot program to provide on-demand transportation within Mercer Island, reducing short car trips and supporting sustainable transportation.

10.4.a Collaborate with local businesses and stakeholders to identify key shuttle stops, ensuring convenient access to the Town Center, light rail stations, and popular destinations.

10.4.b Promote the service as a convenient, eco-friendly transportation option for residents and visitors, enhancing the Town Center's walkability and reducing traffic congestion.

10.4.c Monitor and report on the environmental and economic impacts of the shuttle service, using data to make adjustments and improvements.

10.5 Enhance sustainability infrastructure in the Town Center.

10.5.a Increase the presence of compost and recycling bins throughout the area.

10.5.b Work with providers for seamless collection-bin pick-up during events.

10.5.c Add solar-powered streetlights and carbon-reducing plantings consistent with the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP).

From: [Ted Weinberg](#)
To: [Jeff Thomas](#); [Adam Zack](#)
Cc: [Jessi Bon](#); [Jason Kintner](#)
Subject: 8/12 Update: Proposed Comp Plan Changes
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 11:55:47 PM
Attachments: [City Council Comp Plan Amendment Log - Weinberg - 2024 0812.docx](#)
[Economic Development Goals and Policies - Revised.docx](#)

Greetings!

This email contains two attachments:

- **City Council Comp Plan Amendment Log - Weinberg - 2024 0812.docx.** This contains 5 new entries since my 8/5 submission. None of the 30 submissions from 8/5 or before have changed.
- **Economic Development Goals and Policies - Revised.docx.** As indicated in change #CC-31 in the amendment log, I'm proposing a new draft of the Goals and Policies section of the Economic Development Element. While it contains many of the policies from the ED Workgroup's draft, I have consolidated and rearranged them enough that I plan to move at the 9/3 council meeting that we use this revised draft as the starting point and make amendments from there as desired.

Cheers!

[Ted Weinberg](#)

Councilmember

City of Mercer Island

P: 206-275-7993 | e: ted.weinberg@mercerisland.gov | w: mercerisland.gov

Notice: Emails and attachments may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (chapter 42.56 RCW)

From: Ted Weinberg

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:39 PM

To: Jeff Thomas <jeff.thomas@mercerisland.gov>; Adam Zack <adam.zack@mercerisland.gov>

Cc: Jessi Bon <jessi.bon@mercerisland.gov>; Jason Kintner <jason.kintner@mercerisland.gov>

Subject: 8/5 Update: Proposed Comp Plan Changes

Greetings!

Attached is an updated copy of my log of proposed comp plan amendments. The log now contains 30 changes distributed as follows:

Element	Date Submitted	# of Proposed Changes
Introduction	7/29	2
Land Use	7/29	8

Housing	7/29	0
Transportation	8/5	10
Utilities	8/5	5
Capital Facilities	8/5	5

Cheers!

[Ted Weinberg](#)

Councilmember

City of Mercer Island

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Notice: Emails and attachments may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (chapter 42.56 RCW)

From: Andrea Larson <Andrea.Larson@mercergov.org>

Sent: Monday, July 29, 2024 4:38 PM

To: Adam Zack <adam.zack@mercerisland.gov>; Jeff Thomas <jeff.thomas@mercerisland.gov>

Cc: Jessi Bon <jessi.bon@mercergov.org>; Ali Spietz <ali.spietz@mercerisland.gov>; Deb Estrada <Deborah.Estrada@mercerisland.gov>; Ted Weinberg <ted.weinberg@mercergov.org>

Subject: FW: Proposed changes for Introduction, Land Use, and Housing elements

Hello,

Please find Councilmember Weinberg’s proposed amendments.

Thank you,

[Andrea Larson, CMC](#)

City Clerk

City of Mercer Island

206.275.7793 | mercerisland.gov

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The City of Mercer Island utilizes a hybrid working environment. Please see the City’s [Facility and Program Information](#) page for City Hall and City service hours of operation.

From: Ted Weinberg <ted.weinberg@mercergov.org>

Sent: Monday, July 29, 2024 4:24 PM

To: City Clerk <cityclerk@mercerisland.gov>

Cc: Jessi Bon <jessi.bon@mercergov.org>

Subject: Proposed changes for Introduction, Land Use, and Housing elements

Greetings!

The attached Word document contains my proposed changes to the Introduction, Land Use, and Housing elements of the Comprehensive Plan. I have used the matrix format that you provided. To be clear, my proposed changes include:

- 2 proposed changes to the Introduction.
- 8 proposed changes to the Land Use element.
- No proposed changes to the Housing element.

Cheers,

[Ted Weinberg](#)

Councilmember

City of Mercer Island

P: 206-275-7993 | e: ted.weinberg@mercerisland.gov | w: mercerisland.gov

Notice: Emails and attachments may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (chapter 42.56 RCW)

II. Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Establish and fund a healthy ecosystem of partnerships with businesses, local organizations and other public agencies.

Policies

- 1.1 Partner with the Chamber of Commerce, local, regional, state, and federal economic development agencies to provide abundant resources for business owners, entrepreneurs, and job seekers including:
 - 1.1.1 Guides to doing business on the island with particular emphasis on the permitting process and the pre-application process.
 - 1.1.2 A mentorship program pairing experienced business owners and retirees with people interested in starting a new business.
 - 1.1.3 A “Shop Mercer Island” marketing campaign.
 - 1.1.4 A wayfinding kiosk on the light rail station platform informing commuters of shops available on the island.
 - 1.1.5 A regularly updated list of employment opportunities on Mercer Island.
- 1.2 Partner with the Chamber of Commerce, Mercer Island Visual Arts League (MIVAL), and other community non-profit organizations to develop and expand a year-round program of arts, cultural, and activation events which draw the community to our commercial areas, including:
 - 1.2.1 The First Friday Art Walks from May to September;
 - 1.2.2 The Sunday Farmers Markets from June to September;
 - 1.2.3 Summer Celebration each July;
 - 1.2.4 The summer “Mostly Music in the Park” events;
 - 1.2.5 The Arts on the Island Weekend each fall, including the Art Uncorked event;
 - 1.2.6 The Holiday Makers Market each December.
- 1.3 Appropriate funding for the implementation of this element through the City budget process.
- 1.4 Utilize federal, state, regional, and county resources and grants to implement this element.
- 1.5 Encourage the development of public-private partnerships to foster affordable commercial space solutions.
- 1.6 Conduct outreach to surrounding businesses before initiating capital projects in commercial zones. This outreach should create a two-way dialogue with businesses, offering a seat at the table when capital projects might affect business operation.

- 1.7 Identify and adopt measures to reduce the displacement of existing businesses as new development occurs. Notify nearby businesses of any potential redevelopment.

Goal 2: Develop expedited permitting, expedited inspections, and other regulatory policies in support of business development.

- 2.1 For targeted business types, implement, and provide sufficient staff to deliver, a guaranteed 28-calendar-day review for complete permit applications.
- 2.2 For targeted business types, implement, and provide sufficient staff to deliver, a guarantee of inspections within 7 calendar days of request.
- 2.3 Every 2 years, review and adjust the list of targeted business types that qualify for expedited permits and inspections.
- 2.4 Audit the development code permitting processes to identify additional code amendments to support businesses, improve effectiveness, and make efficient use of City resources. The following goals should be co-equally considered when identifying code amendments:
 - 2.4.1 Minimizing delay and reduce uncertainty in the entitlement process;
 - 2.4.2 Improving conflict resolution in the entitlement process;
 - 2.4.3 Mitigating the risk of business displacement as new development occurs;
 - 2.4.4 Beneficial impacts to parking and greenhouse gas emissions; and
 - 2.4.5 Lowering compliance costs for business owners.
- 2.5 Evaluate City fees imposed on development to determine their effect on business startup costs and City finances. The impact on business start costs must be balanced with the financial needs of the City.
- 2.6 Update home business regulations to support a mix of commercial uses while ensuring home businesses remain compatible with neighboring residential uses.

Goal 3: Diversify dining options throughout the City.

Policies

- 3.1 Include cafés as a business type targeted for expedited permits and inspections.
 - 3.1.1 An establishment qualifies as a café if it sells food, has a seating area, is open during morning commute hours, and includes breakfast items on its menu.
- 3.2 Seek out new restaurateurs who bring novel and diverse dining options to Mercer Island.

Goal 4: Attract more high-wage and commercial office employers to the City.

Policies

- 4.1 Include commercial office employers in the list of business types targeted for expedited permits and inspections.
 - 4.1.1 Establish a target for the percentage for jobs on the island with commercial office employers.
- 4.2 Include high-wage employers in the list of business types targeted for expedited permits and inspections.
 - 4.2.1 A business qualifies as a high-wage employer if the median salary of its on-island employees is equal to or greater than 90% of the median income of City residents; it resides in the Town Center, Commercial Office Zone, or Planned Business Zone; and the primary use of the space it occupies is not residential.
 - 4.2.2 Target increasing the percentage of island residents who work on-island to 30%.
- 4.3 Establish more networking and social events for young professionals.

Goal 5: Provide safe multimodal circulation and parking to commercial areas for residents, visitors, and employees of local businesses.

Policies

- 5.1 Provide safe and welcoming access to Town Center from the light rail station.
- 5.2 Create wayfinding signage guiding visitors to parking and gathering places such as Mercedale Park and the Gretta Hackett Outdoor Sculpture Gallery.
- 5.3 Balance parking requirements between reducing barriers to entry for new businesses and the need for adequate parking supply.
- 5.4 Develop a program to manage public parking spaces with the goal of achieving a peak occupancy of 85%.
- 5.5 Attract more hour-long and multi-store shoppers by developing a program to deploy a mix of high-speed EV chargers in on-street parking, off-street parking, and on utility poles. Target the electrification of 20% of parking spaces in Town Center by 2044.
- 5.6 Conduct a periodic review of Town Center public parking supply, demand, and management systems for both cars and bicycles. Make policy adjustments to align with the Town Center's vision and economic vitality.
- 5.7 Analyze the feasibility of establishing a Parking and Business Improvement Area (PBIA) or Local Improvement District (LID) in one or more commercial areas to fund improvements for economic development.
- 5.8 Look into the possibility of creating shared parking agreements or constructing a dedicated parking structure.

Goal 6: Keep commercial areas attractive and inviting to the Mercer Island community and visitors.

Policies

- 6.1 Encourage programming that enables residents and visitors to gather, access spaces, socialize, and celebrate in the city safely. Encouraging public gathering throughout the city can improve the quality of life, make the City a more vibrant place for residents and visitors, and in turn drive increased economic activity.
- 6.2 Emphasize spaces that are human-scaled, safe, and comfortable for walkers and bikers.
- 6.3 Utilize public art in concert with outdoor space and furniture design to activate public spaces.
- 6.4 Maintain the existing City program to beautify Town Center with landscaping, street trees, and flower baskets.

Goal 7: Promote climate-friendly economic development.

- 7.1 Consider Climate Action Plan strategies during economic development decision making.
- 7.2 Incentivize businesses' investment in energy efficiency improvements to realize long-term cost savings and economic benefits as well as environmental benefits.
- 7.3 Ensure multimodal transportation options are available for workers and shoppers to access on-island employment centers and retail businesses.
- 7.4 Encourage the development of community solar arrays, enabling properties with significant sun exposure to reduce their energy costs, reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and sell any excess power generated either back to the grid or to neighbors with less sun exposure.

Goal 8: Economic Development Plan ImplementationNear-Term Policies (i.e. next 1-2 years)

- 8.1 Finalize and launch the "Shop Mercer Island" marketing campaign and branding.
- 8.2 Fund, staff, and launch the expedited permitting and inspections program for targeted business types.
- 8.3 Complete the 2023-2024 Town Center Parking Study and implement its suggested solutions.
- 8.4 Designate sufficient City staff to partner with the Chamber of Commerce in implementing the near-term policies.

- 8.5 Publish a biennial report documenting progress on implementing this element, including new business openings, sales tax revenue, commercial vacancy rates, and growth of targeted business types.

Mid-Term Policies (i.e. 3-4 year timeframe)

- 8.6 Conduct periodic survey of residents, businesses, and visitors to keep a pulse on the overlaps and gaps between the products and services desired and delivered on Mercer Island.
- 8.7 Evaluate and adjust incentive programs as goals are achieved and needs change.
- 8.8 Develop a new “main event” for the spring or summer.

Long-Term Policies (i.e. 5+ year timeframe)

- 8.9 Attract considerably more hour-long and multi-store shoppers by achieving the installation of high-speed EV chargers in 10% of Town Center parking spaces by 2034 and 20% in 2044.
- 8.10 Attract another 300+ employee, high-wage employer to the island.

Agency Comments

The City has received comments on the Comprehensive Plan periodic review from the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Puget Sound Energy, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the WA Department of Commerce (Commerce). The WDFW and PSE comments were considered during the Planning Commission deliberations ([PCB 24-16](#)). The comments from PSRC and Commerce that need a response and the staff proposed responses are provided in Table 1.

PSRC Comments

The PSRC is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties. Under the GMA, RTPOs must certify that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns within the region are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan and, where appropriate, conform with the requirements of the GMA ([RCW 47.80.023\(3\)](#)).

The PSRC has adopted a regional planning document called VISION 2050, which establishes multicounty planning policies (MPPs) to provide direction for how the region will address growth. Within the GMA framework, comprehensive plan policies must be consistent with MPPs.

The PSRC submitted a comment letter on June 18, 2024 (Appendix B). The PSRC comments are summarized with a staff response in Table 1.

Commerce Comments

Commerce is the state-level department tasked with implementing the GMA. Counties and cities must notify Commerce at least 60 days prior to adoption of any comprehensive plan or development code amendment ([RCW 36.70A.106](#)). Mercer Island's 60-day notice was submitted to Commerce on May 3, 2024 and Commerce acknowledged receipt of the notice in a letter dated May 6, 2024. Commerce reviewed the draft Comprehensive Plan and provided comments in a letter dated July 25, 2024 (Appendix B). The Commerce comments are summarized with a staff response in Table 1.

Staff Comments

Staff proposes some amendments to the Capital Facilities Element to reflect the current state of facility planning. The staff proposed Capital Facilities Element amendments are provided in Appendix A, beginning on page 13 of this document. The staff proposal tracks changes from the clean version of the Planning Commission recommended draft, all proposed changes shown in Appendix A are new revisions.

Staff Response to Comments

Table 1 shows the staff response to agency and staff comments. The staff response recommends that the City Council either amend the Comprehensive Plan or make a finding to be included in the adopting ordinance. Findings are a way for the City Council to give further context to the Comprehensive Plan update such as direction

for implementing the Comprehensive Plan or information to supplement the record to explain how the Comprehensive Plan update satisfies requirements. The staff responses recommend amendments or findings as follows:

- AC-1: Make a finding
- AC-2: Make an amendment
- AC-3: Make a finding
- AC-4: Make an amendment
- AC-5: Make an amendment
- AC-6: Make a finding
- AC-7: Make a finding
- AC-8: Make a finding
- AC-9: Make an amendment
- AC-10: Make an amendment
- AC-11: Make an amendment
- AC-12: Make a finding
- AC-13: Make an amendment
- AC-14: Make an amendment

Table 1. Agency and Staff Comments and Responses.

Log #	Agency	Comment	Staff Response
AC-1	Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)	King County's Urban Growth Capacity Analysis and the city's Economic Analysis Appendix identify a shortage of capacity to accommodate the city's employment target. The plan needs to demonstrate adequate capacity to accommodate planned employment growth through either rezoning or documenting sufficient existing capacity within its current zones.	<p>Make the following finding:</p> <p>The City's employment growth target is 1,300 new jobs by 2044 per the growth targets established in the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The City has capacity for 961 jobs according to the King County Urban Growth Capacity Report. In its capacity calculations, the Urban Growth Capacity Report did not account for existing vacant commercial office buildings that could accommodate additional employment. Specifically, the vacant office building at 3003 77TH AVE SE in the Town Center was not considered part of the City's employment capacity. That building has capacity make up the 339-job difference between capacity and employment growth target. Factoring in that building, the City has capacity to accommodate its employment growth target.</p>
AC-2	PSRC	<p>VISION 2050 calls for multimodal level of service standards, and the Growth Management Act will also require these standards by 2029 (MPP-DP-52-53). The plan has a policy to establish bicycle, pedestrian, and transit levels of service.</p> <p>PSRC encourages the city to make progress in this area and adopt standards that will support development in the Town Center. Resources on multimodal LOS can be found in PSRC's Transportation Element guidance.</p>	<p>Overlaps with Commerce comment, would be addressed by making the finding proposed in Comment Log # AC-10</p>
AC-3	PSRC	<p>The draft comprehensive plan does not provide supporting documentation indicating sufficient land capacity for emergency housing and emergency shelter. RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c) states jurisdictions must ensure sufficient capacity for all housing types, including emergency housing and emergency shelter, are identified in the housing element. We recommend the city consider including this information in the final land capacity analysis.</p>	<p>Overlaps with Commerce comment, would be addressed by making the finding proposed in Comment Log # AC-6</p>
AC-4	WA Department of Commerce (Commerce)	<p>Based on our review of proposed Mercer Island Land Use Element Goal 16.4, the city's goals for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) do not yet align with RCW 36.70A.681(1)(c), which explicitly states, "The city or county must allow at least two accessory dwelling units on all lots that are located in all zoning districts within an urban growth area that allow for single-family homes...". The city's proposed amendment to policy 16.4, shared via email on July 19, 2024, limits ADUs to single-family zones, which is not consistent with the statutory requirement that counties and cities must allow ADUs in all zones within an urban growth area that allow for single-family homes. While Mercer Island is not required to implement HB 1337 in its development regulations until June 30, 2025, Commerce recommends updating goals and policies in your proposed draft comprehensive plan, and incorporating into your development regulations, the full range of new ADU regulations, beginning with RCW 36.70A.680 and RCW 36.70A.681, during the periodic update process. Commerce has developed several tools to help local governments implement the current ADU requirements, including the Guidance for Accessory Dwelling Units in Washington State, the ADU Checklist, and the ADU EZView webpage with references and resources devoted to the topic.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission recommended draft Land Use Element Policy 16.4 states: "Promote accessory dwelling units in single-family districts <u>zones</u> subject to specific development and owner occupancy standards."</p> <p>Staff recommends the following amendment to Land Use Element Policy 16.4:</p> <p>Promote accessory dwelling units in <u>all zones where single-family districts homes are allowed</u> subject to specific development and owner occupancy standards.</p> <p>State law prohibits cities from requiring owner-occupancy for ADUs within urban growth areas. RCW 36.70A.681(1)(b) states "The city or county may not require the owner of a lot on which there is an accessory dwelling unit to reside in or occupy the accessory dwelling unit or another housing unit on the same lot;"</p>

Log #	Agency	Comment	Staff Response
AC-5	Commerce	<p>We appreciate the several goals and policies within the draft plan that address re-constructed and new public service facilities such as fire stations, fire flow protection and fire and emergency response that will increase service capacity and protect public safety on the island. However, the land use element must be expanded to include specific goals and policies that reduce and mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070 (I), amended in 2023. We recommend adding community wildfire preparedness and fire adaptation measures to your land use element and look forward to seeing these updates as required in your final comprehensive plan update. You may wish to reference the Wildland Urban Interface Code (RCW 19.27.560), developed and adopted by the Washington State Building Code Council, as an example of development regulations intended to separate human development from wildfire prone landscapes and protect existing residential development and infrastructure through community wildfire preparedness and fire adaptation measures.</p>	<p>Add a new Land Use Element Policy under Goal 18:</p> <p><u>Establish development standards to reduce the risk to life and property posed by wildfires through community wildfire preparedness and fire adaptation measures. This should include measures to separate human development from wildfire prone landscapes and protect existing residential development and infrastructure.</u></p> <p>The proposed policy mirrors the relevant language from RCW 36.70A.070(1) to address the comment from Commerce.</p>
AC-6	Commerce	<p>During our review of your draft housing element, we did not find supporting documentation indicating sufficient land capacity for emergency housing and emergency shelter as required by RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c). While Commerce guidance indicates jurisdictions do not need to complete a land capacity analysis (LCA) for emergency housing and emergency shelter if they allow these uses in all zones that allow hotels, RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c) expressly states jurisdictions must ensure sufficient capacity for all housing types, including emergency housing and emergency shelter, is identified in the housing element. Therefore, we recommend the city consider including this information in the city's final land capacity analysis.</p>	<p>Make the following finding in the adopting ordinance for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic update this fall:</p> <p>The City analyzed emergency housing development capacity and found that there is adequate capacity to accommodate the City's emergency housing needs under the interim regulations established by Ordinance 21C-23. That analysis was provided to the City Council with Agenda Bill 6519, Exhibit 2. As part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, the City will consider an ordinance to establish permanent regulations that allow a similar level of capacity for emergency housing.</p> <p>Review of permanent regulations for emergency housing should include a detailed analysis of any spacing requirements to ensure that they allow adequate capacity to accommodate the City's emergency housing needs as established by King County.</p> <p>The spacing requirements are established by MICC 19.06.080(B)(3)(c). The table referenced in the proposed finding is provided as Table 2 below.</p>
AC-7	Commerce	<p>Thank you for evaluating barriers to housing development, Table 2, Programs and Actions Needed to Achieve Housing Availability. To strengthen this evaluation, we encourage you to expand and identify specific barriers in addition to the broad barrier categories listed in Table 2. For example, while citing recent state law in Table 2, please consider expanding on the specific actions the city will take to comply with statewide legislation and how these actions will address the associated barriers. Please refer to Housing Element Book 2, Chapter 4 Adequate Provisions and Appendix B for examples of specific barriers and actions.</p>	<p>Make the following finding in the adopting ordinance:</p> <p>The City evaluated barriers to housing development and included a summary of that analysis in the Housing Element. A more detailed evaluation of the barriers to housing development was provided to the City Council with Agenda Bill 6519, Exhibit 2.</p> <p>The table referenced in the proposed finding is provided as Table 3 below.</p>

Log #	Agency	Comment	Staff Response
AC-8	Commerce	<p>We appreciate the use of 'permanent supportive housing' in the definition of 'special needs group housing', and noting the interim amendment made through Ordinance 21C-23, which adds 'emergency housing' in the definition of 'social service transitional housing'. We recommend the use and adoption of 'emergency housing' as defined in RCW 36.70A.030(14) rather than as defined in RCW 84.36.043(3)(b). Commerce offers review, technical assistance and land use tools, such as specific checklists, to help local governments develop regulations pertaining to the siting and development of shelter, transitional housing, emergency housing, and permanent supportive housing (STEP).</p>	<p>Make a finding to guide development of permanent regulations for STEP housing that states:</p> <p>Use the definition of "Emergency Housing" established in RCW 36.70A.030(14) when establishing permanent development regulations for shelter, transitional, emergency, and permanent supportive (STEP) housing.</p> <p>For reference, the definition of emergency housing established in RCW 36.70A.030(14) states: ""Emergency housing" means temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement."</p> <p>In 2021, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 21C-23, which enacted interim regulations to ensure that the development code was consistent with recent changes in the state law while the City completes its Comprehensive Plan periodic review. Permanent regulations to address STEP housing that replace the interim regulations will be developed following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review. The proposed finding will guide the development of permanent regulations regarding STEP housing.</p>
AC-9	Commerce	<p>New changes in HB 1220 require jurisdictions to examine racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusion and displacement risk in housing policies and regulations and adopt policies to begin to undo the impacts (RCW 36.70A.070(e)). We appreciate your work on this, particularly the review of housing-related policies in Racially Disparate Impacts Evaluation, Appendix A: Policy Evaluation. We see that four policies were evaluated as 'approaching' because "the lack of defined terms in this policy can be problematic." We recommend identifying any undefined and problematic terms in your policies and recommending specific changes, as the intent of the review of policies is to identify areas where changes could be made in your next comprehensive plan. Please see Housing Element Book 3 Step 3: Evaluate policies (pg. 33) and Step 4: Revise policies (pg. 36) for more information on this process.</p>	<p>The Racially Disparate Impacts Report identified the following undefined terms in housing-related policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "neighborhood character" Housing Policy 1.1 and Land Use Policy 15.1 "character of existing development" Housing Policy 2.5 "character of the surrounding neighborhoods" Housing Policy 2.7 "compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods" Land Use Policy 16.5 <p>With the exception of Land Use Policy 15.1 and 16.5, housing policies using undefined terms are proposed to be removed from the Comprehensive Plan. The remaining undefined term is 'neighborhood character'. Staff recommends amending Land Use Policy 15.1 as follows:</p> <p>Existing land use policies, which strongly support the preservation of <u>Preserve the neighborhood character-existing conditions in the single family all residential zones, will continue to apply. Changes to the zoning code or development standards will be accomplished through code amendments. For the purpose of implementing this element neighborhood character only refers to the form, bulk, scale, and intensity of the built environment.</u></p> <p>Note: the staff proposed amendment is the addition of the final sentence. The other amendments were proposed in the Planning Commission recommended draft presented in Agenda Bill 6510.</p> <p>The proposed amendment to Policy 15.1 would resolve the problem identified by clarifying that the undefined term should be narrowly understood as referring to physical aspects of the built environment.</p>

Log #	Agency	Comment	Staff Response
AC-10	Commerce	<p>During our review [of the Transportation Element] we did not see multimodal level of service standards (MMLOS) present in the draft transportation element. While adoption of MMLOS are not required for 2024 jurisdictions until the 5-year implementation progress report per RCW 36.70A.130(9)(a), given the complex issues that will need to be addressed and the extent of coordination with regional partners, including King County and PSRC, we encourage jurisdictions to begin the work and not necessarily wait until during the five-year progress report process.</p> <p>The draft transportation element does not identify specific actions to bring transportation facilities and services to established MMLOS (RCW 36.70A.070 (6)(a)(iii)(D) and WAC 365-196-430). We recommend the city consider including this information in the final comprehensive plan document to better align with statute.</p>	<p>Staff recommends adopting a new Transportation Element Policy under Goal 10 that states:</p> <p><u>Work with partners to establish multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards. MMLOS policies should detail actions the City will take to ensure transportation facilities and services meet those standards.</u></p>
AC-11	Commerce	<p>Thank you for including a transition plan as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For improved clarify, we recommend adding a reference to the transition plan in your draft transportation element.</p>	<p>Staff recommends amending Transportation Element Policy 5.2 as follows:</p> <p>Meet the requirements of <u>Ensure that all transportation improvements are consistent with the adopted Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan and apply these standards to development of the transportation system.</u></p>
AC-12	Commerce	<p>RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iv)(A) and WAC 365.196-430(2)(k)(iv) require an analysis of future funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources. We did not find specific language addressing this provision in your draft transportation element. While there is a funding section in the element, we recommend updating your transportation element or related appendices to include an analysis of future funding capability.</p>	<p>City Staff and consultants from KPG-Psomas used the City's 2023-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to develop a 20-year financial analysis for the Transportation Element update. The analysis forecasts that the City will generate \$103,600,000 in transportation revenues from 2023-2044, which is more than sufficient to fund the Transportation Element's Project List. Because the City's forecasted revenues are significantly higher than the project list cost, this satisfies Commerce's second bullet point.</p> <p>Staff recommends the following finding to address this comment:</p> <p>The City conducted an analysis of future funding capability for transportation facilities and found that probable funding resources will meet the projected needs and allow the City to maintain adopted levels of service. That analysis was provided in Agenda Bill 6519, Exhibit 2.</p> <p>The table referenced in the proposed finding is provided as Table 4 below.</p>
AC-13	Commerce	<p>During our review, we did not identify specific language addressing funding shortfall strategies in your draft transportation element. We recommend updating the draft finance subelement (within the transportation element) to include a discussion of how additional funding will be raised, or how land use assumptions will be reassessed to ensure that level of service standards will be met, if probable funding falls short of meeting the identified needs of the transportation system, including state transportation facilities (RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iv)(c) and WAC 365-196-430(2)(l)(iii)).</p>	<p>Existing Transportation Element Policy 10.3 addresses this comment:</p> <p>10.3 Implement the following strategy when vehicle capacity or funding is insufficient to maintain the LOS standard: (1) seek additional funding for capacity improvements, (2) explore alternative, lower-cost methods to meet level-of-service standards (e.g., transportation demand management program, bicycle corridor development or other strategies), (3) reduce the types or size of development, (4) restrict development approval, and (5) reevaluate the level of service standard to determine how it might be adjusted to meet land use objectives.</p>

Log #	Agency	Comment	Staff Response
AC-14	City Staff	Amend the Capital Facilities Element as shown in Appendix A.	<p>The proposed Capital Facilities Element amendment shown in Appendix A will align the Comprehensive Plan with the current expectations for City operations in light of the City Hall closure.</p> <p>The proposed amendment would add one new goal and eight new policies to the Capital Facilities Element.</p>

Source: Placeholder

Table 2. Emergency Housing Land Capacity Analysis.

Zone	A Net Developable Land (Acres)	B Emergency Housing Typology	C Beds Per Facility by Typology	D Max Facilities Per Zone based on 1,000 Ft. Spacing ²	E Beds based on 1,000 ft. Spacing and Beds per Facility by Typology
R-8.4	53.90	Single-family conversion	24	3	72
R-9.6	74.75	Single-family conversion	24	4	96
R-12	5.64	Single-family conversion	24	1	24
R-15	112.38	Single-family conversion	24	6	144
MF-2L	0.16	2-3 story facilities	100	1	100
MF-2	1.58	2-3 story facilities	100	1	100
MF-3	43.54	2-3 story facilities	100	2	200
PBZ	0	2-3 story facilities	100	0	0
C-O	5.96	2-3 story facilities	100	1	100
B	0	2-3 story facilities	100	0	0
TC Zones	24.01	2-3 story facilities	100	1	100
Total	321.93	-	-	26	1,536¹

Notes:

1. The City’s capacity for up to 1,536 emergency housing beds is enough to accommodate the City’s need for 237 beds.
2. The 600 foot spacing from certain developments such as parks and schools ([MICC 19.06.050\(B\)\(3\)\(c\)](#)) is not considered in this analysis because it is expected that the City will consider modifying this requirement during its review of emergency housing regulations following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review.

Table 2 Column Source and/or Formula

- A. King County Urban Growth Capacity (UGC) Report.
- B. WA Department of Commerce *Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element* (Commerce Guidance), Exhibit 18.
- C. Commerce Guidance, Exhibit 18.

- D. Max Facilities Per Zone based on 1,000 foot spacing = $A * 0.0015625 * 36$. Formula multiplies the developable acreage by the number of acres per square mile (0.0015625 acres per square mile) and then multiplies the result by the rate of facilities allowed per square mile based on the 1,000-foot spacing requirement. If facilities must be spaced 1,000 feet apart, 36 facilities per square mile would be allowed. Facilities per square mile = $(5280/1000 + 1)^2 = 36$. For the purpose of the rate per square mile formula, the 5280/1000 term is rounded down to the nearest whole number. Each zone is assumed to have capacity for at least one facility except for the PBZ and B zones because they don't have any net developable land.
- E. Beds based on 1,000 foot spacing and beds per facility by typology = $C * D$.

Table 3. Housing Development Barrier Analysis, Programs, and Actions.

Housing Type	Share of Existing Housing Units ¹	Likelihood Barriers Exist	Potential Barriers	Action or Program	Related Land Use and Housing Element Policies ⁹
Single-Family	67%	Very Low Likelihood given the large share of existing units	Development Regulations	No change.	Land Use 15.1, 15.2, 15.5, 15.6, 16.1, 16.3, 16.4, 16.6, 16.7, 16.8
			Other Limitations: Permitting Process	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(d)} .	Land Use 15.2, 16.2, 16.4, 16.5
			Other Limitations: Development Capacity	No change.	Land Use 15.2, 16.2, 16.3,
Multifamily and Mixed-Use	27% ²	Moderate Likelihood given the lower share of existing units and the need to increase capacity ³ during the periodic review	Development Regulations	Review multifamily zone development regulations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify the requirements • Reduce permit review times • Consider adjustments to bulk, dimensions, and parking standards 	Land Use 1.1, 5.1, 5.2, 15.3, 17.3 Housing 2.2.A, 5.1
			Other Limitations: Permitting Process	Consider streamlining design review for multifamily and mixed-use development, particularly for developments with income-restricted affordable units.	Housing 5.1.C
			Other Limitations: Development Capacity	Increase development capacity within existing Town Center and Commercial Office zone boundaries to address the capacity shortfall identified in the City's Land Capacity Analysis Supplement ⁷ .	Land Use 1.1, 5.2, 5.3, 15.3, 17.3 Housing 1.9, 1.11, 1.12, 2.2.B,
			Other Limitations: Displacement Risk	Establish anti-displacement measures to reduce and mitigate risk of displacement in areas with increased displacement risk.	Housing 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4
Middle Housing	6% ⁴	Moderate Likelihood given the small share of existing units	Development Regulations	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(b)} .	Land Use 15.2, 15.6, 16.3, 16.5 Housing 5.2, 5.3
			Other Limitations: Permitting Process	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(b)} .	Land Use 16.5 Housing 5.2, 5.3
			Other Limitations: Development Capacity	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(b)} .	Land Use 16.5 Housing 2.4, 5.2, 5.3
Income Restricted Units, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and	<1% ⁵	High Likelihood given the small share of existing units	Development Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with statewide legislation^{8(a)} for PSH and emergency housing Adopt additional incentives to spur development of new income-restricted affordable housing units	Land Use 5.3, 16.1 Housing 1.9, 1.12, 1.13, 2.2.A, 2.3, 2.5, 2.12, 2.13
			Other Limitations: Permitting Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with statewide legislation^{8(a)} Consider streamlining design review for developments with income-restricted affordable units.	Housing 2.13

Housing Type	Share of Existing Housing Units ¹	Likelihood Barriers Exist	Potential Barriers	Action or Program	Related Land Use and Housing Element Policies ⁹
Emergency Housing			Other Limitations: Development Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase land capacity within existing boundaries to address the capacity shortfall identified in the City's Land Capacity Analysis Supplement⁷ Comply with statewide legislation^{8(a)} 	Land Use 5.3, 15.3, 16.1, 16.2, 16.6 Housing 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 2.2.B,
			Funding Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain membership in A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) and continue to contribute to the ARCH Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Evaluate potential local revenue sources for affordable housing Evaluate an affordable housing fee-in-lieu program Use incentives to reduce the per-unit costs for affordable housing Coordinate efforts with providers, developers, and government agencies 	Land Use 29.4 Housing 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	N/A ⁶	Very Low Likelihood given ADUs are allowed in all single-family zones	Development Regulations	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(c)}	Land Use 15.2, 15.6, 16.4 Housing 5.3, 5.4, 5.5
			Other Limitations: Permitting Process	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(c)}	Housing 5.3, 5.4
			Other Limitations: Development Capacity	Comply with statewide legislation ^{8(c)}	Land Use 15.2, 16.1, 16.4 Housing 5.3, 5.4

Notes:

1. Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2022 American Community Survey (ACS), Table B25024. This is an estimate of the number of existing housing units based on an annual survey.
2. Multifamily and mixed-use housing type is categorized as residential development with ten or more units per structure.
3. A multifamily and mixed-use housing capacity deficit was found in the Land Capacity Analysis Supplement (Appendix X). The capacity deficit was addressed in the Comprehensive Plan periodic review, but additional actions can address other potential barriers.
4. Middle housing development is categorized as residential development with 2-9 units per structure.
5. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) maintains [an inventory of income restricted housing units per jurisdiction](#). As of November 6, 2023, PSRC tracked that there were 102 income restricted affordable housing units in Mercer Island. Per the PSRC inventory, there were 30 units for extremely low-income households, 59 units for very low-income households, and 13 units for low-income households.
6. Accessory dwelling unit share of housing units is combined with the single-family. Between 2006 and 2022, the City permitted 104 ADUs.
7. The Land Capacity Analysis Supplement was developed to evaluate whether the Comprehensive Plan allows adequate capacity to accommodate its housing needs (Appendix X).
8. Statewide legislation passed in the years preceding the Comprehensive Plan periodic review affected several types of housing as follows:
 - a. House Bill 1220 – Adopted in 2021, this bill amended several GMA requirements and also set limits on how jurisdictions can regulate PSH and emergency housing;
 - b. House Bill 1110 – Adopted in 2023, this bill requires cities to allow middle housing types in zones where single-family homes are allowed. Jurisdictions must make amendments to comply with this bill within six months of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review;
 - c. Housing Bill 1337 – Adopted in 2023, this bill requires cities and counties to amend the development regulations for ADUs. Jurisdictions must make amendments to comply with this bill within six months of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review; and
 - d. Senate Bill 5290 – Adopted in 2023, this bill requires cities and counties to meet permit review timetables.
9. Related Land Use and Housing policy numbers are in reference to the Planning Commission recommended draft of the Comprehensive Plan provided to the City Council in Agenda Bill 6510. Some policies address more than one barrier or housing type.

Table 4. Financial Analysis Provided by KPG-Psomas.

RESOURCES (\$ in thousands)	COMMENTS	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029-2044	2023-2044
Beginning Fund Balance		\$6,214	\$8,345	\$9,913	\$9,888	\$9,351	\$9,953	\$11,259	\$10,953	\$8,345
Revenues										
Real Estate Excise Tax	<i>RCW 82.46.101</i>	2,253	2,298	2,344	2,391	2,439	2,488	2,538	47,200	61,700
Fuel Tax	<i>RCW 47.24.040</i>	429	470	466	461	456	452	447	6,700	9,500
MI Transportation Benefit District	<i>MI Ordinance 14C-11 (Oct 2014)</i>	375	375	375	375	375	375	375	6,000	8,300
Transportation Impact Fees	<i>MI Ordinance 16C-01 (Jan 2016)</i>	75	65	65	65	65	65	65	1,000	1,400
Interfund Transfers	<i>Utility work within street projects</i>	526	513	583	658	566	300	540	9,300	12,500
State Shared - Multimodal Transportation	<i>ESSB 5987 (July 2015)</i>	34	34	34	33	33	33	32	500	700
Grant Funding			200	200	200	200	200	200	3,200	4,400
Mitigation - Sound Transit	<i>Ends December 2025</i>	200	1,958	2,402	935	0	0	0	0	5,300
Total Revenues		\$3,893	\$5,914	\$6,469	\$5,118	\$4,134	\$3,912	\$4,197	\$73,900	\$107,500
EXPENDITURES (\$ in thousands)										
EXPENDITURES (\$ in thousands)	COMMENTS	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029-2044	2023-2044
A. Residential Streets Preservation Program		900	900	933	966	998	1,031	1,064	22,300	29,000
B. Arterial Street Improvements		75	678	1,510	1,608	916	533	2,334		TBD
C. Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities - New		50	100	1,094	1,465	830	115	473		TBD
D. East Link Traffic/Safety Mitigation Projects		200	1,958	2,402	935	0	0	0	0	5,300
E. TIP Other		0	175	0	107	194	315	0	0	TBD
F. Operation Other	<i>Non-TIP Related Work</i>	538	535	554	574	593	613	632	13,171	16,700
Total Expenditures		\$1,763	\$4,346	\$6,494	\$5,655	\$3,532	\$2,606	\$4,503	\$35,500	\$51,000

Growth Assumptions	
Rate	Notes
1.74%	2023-28 growth
-0.82%	2023-28 growth
0.00%	No growth
0.00%	No growth
0.88%	2023-28 growth
0.00%	No growth
n/a	Assumes \$200k/yr
n/a	2023-28 TIP
3.04%	2023-28 growth
3.02%	2023-28 growth

Total Revenue	Total Revenue	\$107,500
Preservation/Operation Expenditures	Preservation/Operation Expenditures	45,700
Available Revenue for New Projects	Available Revenue for New Projects	\$61,800

APPENDIX A

STAFF PROPOSED CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT AMENDMENTS

Capital Facilities Element Amendments

[Changes tracked from the clean Planning Commission recommended draft of the Capital Facilities Element]

[...]

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Mercer Island is served by seven City-owned public buildings, the Mary Wayte Pool owned by the Mercer Island School District and operated by Olympic Cascade Aquatics, one Post Office and one King County Library System (KCLS) Branch Library. Facility uses, locations, and sizes are listed in Table 1 and further described below.

During 2001, construction of a new Main Fire Station and a sizable remodel of the Thrift Shop were completed. The City became the owner of Luther Burbank Park in 2003 after transfer of the property by King County. The Mercer Island Community and Events Center was completed in 2006. The reconstruction of Fire Station 92 at the south end of the Island was completed in 2015.

Table 1. Facility uses, locations and sizes

Facility	Use	Location	Approx. Size
City Hall ¹	Police, Dispatch, General Administration, Municipal Court, Facility Maintenance & Permitting Services	North MI 9611 SE 36th St. ¹	32,000 sq ft
Public Works Shop	Parks, Water, Sewer, Right-of-Way, Stormwater, Fleet, Engineering &	North MI 9601 SE 36th St.	15,000 sq ft
Community and Events Center	Community meeting space, Recreation programs, Gymnasium, and Fitness	North MI 8236 SE 24th St.	42,500 sq ft
Luther Burbank Administration Building	Parks and Recreation and Youth and Family Services Depts.	North MI Luther Burbank Park 2040 84th Ave. SE	5,000 sq ft
Mercer Island Thrift Shop	Sales-Fundraising: Recycled Household Goods	Central Business District 7710 SE 34th St.	5,254 sq ft
Fire Station 91	Fire & Emergency Response, Administration	Central Business District 3030 78th Ave. SE	16,600 sq ft
U.S. Post Office	Postal Service	Central Business District 3040 78th Ave. SE	10,000 sq ft
Mary Wayte Pool	Indoor Swimming Facility	Mid-Island 8815 SE 40th St.	7,500 sq ft

King County Library (KCLS) Branch Library	Public Library	Mid-Island 4400 88th Ave SE	14,600 sq ft
Fire Station 92	Fire & Emergency Response	South End Shopping Center 8473 SE 68th St.	7,940 sq ft

Notes:

1. City Hall was permanently closed on October 3, 2023, when the City Council approved [Resolution No. 1650](#).

City Hall – Permanently Closed October 2023

In April 2023, City Hall was temporarily closed after asbestos was detected in several locations in the building, including in the ventilation system, with the highest concentration numbering over thirteen million asbestos structures per square centimeter (13,000,000 s/cm²), found inside the Air Handling Unit located in the attic. Asbestos was also detected in 11 settled dust samples from 10 locations inside the ducts, as well as in two HVAC system filters. The source of the asbestos in the ventilation system is unknown.

During the course of evaluating the HVAC system, environmental consultants also performed tests for asbestos throughout the rest of City Hall. Additional asbestos-containing materials were identified in 13 samples, including three types of flooring (covering an additional 20,000 sq ft), flooring adhesive, window putty, and 31 interior fire doors.

City staff and outside experts worked extensively to identify solutions to address the asbestos contamination in the ventilation system and evaluate the best path forward for City Hall. Two scenarios for re-occupying the City Hall building, either fully or partially, were evaluated for timeline, preliminary costs, and impact to City operations. Unfortunately, the cost of both scenarios to re-occupy City Hall exceeded the benefits due to the age and condition of the building.

City Hall was built in 1957 and has been repaired and renovated over the years, with the last major renovation occurring in the late 1980s. Prior to the asbestos situation, the City Council recognized the need for a replacement strategy for aging city facilities and in early 2023, the City began working on a Facilities Conditions Assessment to guide long-term decisions. The initial assessment work highlighted the many other matters of concern related to the long-term use of City Hall. The building suffers from structural and seismic deficiencies. Almost all of the interior walls have been identified as lacking lateral bracing and, unless reinforced, are at risk of failure in the event of seismic activity, potentially rendering the building inoperable. Additionally, the building does not conform with current energy or building code requirements, and multiple building systems are failing or need to be substantially replaced.

Given this additional information and the anticipated investment needed to re-occupy City Hall and bring it up to current standards, the City Council approved

Resolution No. 1650 on October 2, 2023, ceasing City operations at City Hall and permanently closed the building.

Following the initial closure of City Hall in April 2023, the services provided at City Hall were relocated to other City facilities. Utility billing moved into the Public Works Building. Information and Geographic Services (IGS) staff and Police Department staff moved first to the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) and then to the Luther Burbank Administration Building located in Luther Burbank Park. The City Council transitioned public meetings to the Zoom platform while staff worked to identify an alternative location for in-person meetings. Municipal Court proceedings were suspended while staff worked to identify a location for court services. Meanwhile court staff worked from the Conference Room at Fire Station 91. The remainder of City employees transitioned to remote work.

Following the initial closure, temporary arrangements have been made to house City services at existing facilities while a permanent solution to replace City Hall is identified. Current facilities and the City services they house are further described below.

Public Works Building

The Public Works Building is 15,350 square feet. Located south of the now-closed City Hall, this building was constructed primarily as a workshop and mechanic facility in 1981. Since then, it's been repurposed several times to meet the changing needs of City operations. There are 64 permanent employees and 15 to 20 seasonal employees operating out of this facility. Those employees make up the following operational and administrative teams:

- Right-of-Way;
- Stormwater;
- Water Utility;
- Sewer Utility;
- Utility Billing (temporary);
- Parks Maintenance;
- Support Services;
- Public Works Engineering; and
- Public Works Administration.

Given the age and condition of the Public Works Building, the City prepared a Facilities Conditions Assessment (FCA) for this building in 2024. The FCA identified the following preliminary findings about the building's condition:

- Roofing is at the end of its projected useful life and leaks are prevalent throughout the building.
- The current 150kVA electrical service is insufficient to support the current needs of the facility.

- The electrical distribution system is aged, with some critical components at the end-of-life.
- The original HVAC system is mostly obsolete throughout the building, delivering poor performance, high energy consumption, and marginal air quality.
- Plumbing is inadequate to meet the staffing levels for the building, requiring the use of portable toilets to meet sanitation requirements.

Based on the findings from the FCA and known operational deficiencies of the Public Works Building, the City Council directed the City Manager to commence design of a new Public Safety and Maintenance Building in March 2024.

Luther Burbank Administration Building

The Luther Burbank Administration Building is a 5,000 square foot building constructed in 1928 and located at 2040 84th Ave SE inside Luther Burbank Park. This building traditionally houses Youth and Family Services staff and Recreation, Capital Project, and Natural Resources team members. Due to the closure of City Hall in 2023, the Luther Burbank Building is also now hosting IT and GIS staff and the Police Department.

A Facilities Conditions Assessment is currently underway for the Luther Burbank Building and early findings indicate that renovations will be needed in the coming years to support ongoing operation of this building. Improvements will be needed related to HVAC and electrical upgrades, energy efficiency, seismic retrofits, and safety and ADA improvements. The building at Luther Burbank will continue to serve as an essential facility for the delivery of city services.

Temporary City Council Chambers

After the City Hall closure in 2023, City Council Chambers was moved to the Slater Room at the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC). This large classroom was repurposed for City Council meetings and now includes audio/visual technology capabilities for hybrid in-person/online public meetings. The conversion of this room at the MICEC eliminated a large recreation programming space, previously used for programs, classes, and community meetings. Additionally, the City upgraded the audio/visual technology capabilities of Room 104 in MICEC to support City Council Executive Sessions, partially removing this room from public availability.

Temporary Municipal Court

The Mercer Island City Hall housed the City's Municipal Court. After the building was permanently closed, the Municipal Court was moved temporarily to the City of Kirkland Justice Center while other accommodations could be made. Beginning in 2024, the City leased space in the Newcastle Professional Center, which houses the Newcastle City Hall. The interlocal agreement between Mercer Island and Newcastle includes the use of Newcastle City Council chambers for court proceedings and the use of office space for court administration. The interlocal agreement will expire in 2026 unless the cities renew it.

Temporary Police Department

The Mercer Island City Hall included headquarters and support facilities for Police Department operations. When City Hall was permanently closed, the Police Department moved to MICEC, and then to the Luther Burbank Building, while alternatives were evaluated.

At the end of 2024, the Police Department is housed in three separate modular buildings on the City Hall campus. The modular buildings provide office space, locker rooms and showers, and processing facilities.

Remote Work

In 2024, approximately sixty employees are without a dedicated workspace. These employees are working from home and making use of available “touch down” spaces at the City’s various buildings for meetings and in-person office needs. Most of these affected employees are from Administrative Services, Community Planning and Development, Finance, the City Attorney’s Office, and the City Manager’s Office.

Public Safety and Maintenance Building

During the March 1, 2024 City Council meeting, the Council directed the City Manager to commence planning for a new Public Safety and Maintenance Building (PSM) on the current City Hall campus. This new facility will replace the existing Public Works Building and provide a new combined home for the City’s Public Works teams, the Police Department, the Emergency Operations Center, and the IT & GIS team.

The PSM building focuses on replacing critical City operational and emergency response facilities displaced by the closure of City Hall and the functional obsolescence of the Public Works Building. In addition, the facility will include new covered vehicle and equipment storage and re-design and optimization of the public works yard. In addition to providing secured parking for police vehicles, the PSM building must store and maintain over 100 pieces of equipment and City vehicles, many of which are the largest and most expensive vehicles owned and operated by the City.

As a centralized emergency response and management facility, the PSM building should be constructed to risk category IV “essential public facility” building standards, the highest risk category designation possible. Risk Category IV includes buildings that are essential in that their continuous use is needed, particularly in response to disasters. Police stations and emergency vehicle garages, Emergency Operations Centers, public works staff areas and equipment necessary for emergency response, must remain operational during and after major disaster type events. The new building is a lifeline to the community in the most extreme circumstances, and continuity of operations for the work groups housed at this facility is essential during critical events.

[...]

IV. Capital Facilities Financing

The community should expect most funding for future capital improvements to come from local public sources. Substantial investments in transportation facilities—including parking, sewage collection and conveyance, ~~and~~ stormwater facilities, City facilities to address the 2023 City Hall closure will be needed over the 20-year planning period. Funding for open space acquisition and parks improvements may also be needed to meet community expectations. Private development will finance some minor new capital improvements, such as stormwater facilities, sewage conveyance improvements, and transportation improvements where proposed development will exceed adopted levels of service. Impact fees on new development will also generate some revenue to offset the impact of such growth on Mercer Island's public schools, parks and open space, and transportation facilities.

[...]

Goal 2 Aging or obsolete public buildings are renovated, retrofitted, and replaced on Mercer Island, ensuring continuity of essential City Services.

Policies

2.1 Complete the design and secure funding for the development of the new Public Safety and Maintenance building.

2.2 Provide modern, safe, energy efficient, and high-quality facilities for the delivery of city services.

2.3 Centralize customer service functions to ensure easy and convenient community access to all City services.

2.4 Provide Level IV facilities for public safety and maintenance teams that ensure continuity of services during an emergency response. Co-locate work groups who often respond and operate together during an emergency.

2.5 Protect the City's fleet through the provision of covered and secure parking. Provide for on-site mechanical facilities to maintain 24/7 response.

2.6 Design new facilities such that common spaces can be shared, avoiding the costly duplication of identical spaces at other locations on the Island.

2.7 Incorporate sustainable practices in the design, renovation, repair, and replacement of City facilities. Plan for the electrification of the City's fleet.

2.8 Complete facility conditions assessments for all City facilities, establishing long-term asset repair and replacement schedules. Facility conditions assessments should be reviewed and updated every 7 to 10 years.

[...]

III. LEVEL OF SERVICE & FORECAST OF FUTURE NEEDS

In analyzing capital financing over 20 years, the City must make estimates in two areas: Cost of New Facilities and the Cost to Maintain Existing Facilities. To estimate the former, the City must evaluate its established levels of service (LOS) for the various types of facilities — streets, parks, recreational facilities, open space, trails, and public buildings — and project future needed investments to reach those service targets. In this case, "Level of Service" refers to the quantitative measure for a given capital facility. See Table 2. In establishing an LOS standard, the community can make reasonable financial choices among the various "infrastructure" facilities that serve the local population.

~~Fortunately, Mercer Island has already acquired and/or built most of the facilities needed to meet its LOS goals (e.g., parks acreage, recreational facilities, water and sewer system capacity, street system capacity, police, fire and administration buildings). As a result, while a few "LOS deficiencies" must be addressed over the next 20 years (open space, new trail construction, some street capacity improvements), most capital financing projections for Mercer Island involve reinvesting in and maintaining existing assets.~~

Listed in Table 2 below is a summary of level of service and financial assumptions (by facility type) used in making a 20-year expenditure forecast. In looking at the assumptions and projections, the reader should bear in mind two things: 1) No detailed engineering or architectural design has been made to estimate costs. The numbers are first level estimates; and 2) the objective of the analysis is to predict where major financing issues may arise in the future. The estimates should be used for long range financial and policy planning; not as budget targets.

Table 2 — Level of Service & Financial Forecasts¹

Capital Facility	Level of Service Standard	Capital Needs	New Capital Cost (To address deficiency) ²	Annual Reinvestment Cost
Streets				
Arterials	LOS "D"	2 locations identified	\$4,058,720	\$1,126,000
Residential	None	None	\$0	\$920,000
Town Center	LOS "C"	2 locations identified	\$2,928,000	\$166,000
Parking Facilities ⁴	To be assessed	To be assessed	To be assessed	To be assessed
Existing and New Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities	See Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan	Shoulder improvements, 78th Ave. pedestrian and bike improvements, safe routes to school	\$19.6 million	\$327,500
Other Facilities				

Parks & Open Space	See Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan	Dock infrastructure, restrooms, playgrounds, open space, trails, and athletic fields	\$4.3 million	\$1.3 million Parks & Open Space CIP
Recreational Facilities	See PROS Plan	None	None	None
Schools	Established in the Mercer Island School District No. 400 Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan as may be amended	Maintenance of existing buildings, new elementary school, middle school and high school expansions	\$98.8 million bond	\$7.5 million levy passed February 2022
<u>General Government: City Facilities</u>	<u>To be assessed⁵</u>	<u>New public safety and maintenance building, rehouse other services displaced by the City Hall closure, and maintenance of existing facilities</u>	<u>To be assessed⁶</u>	<u>To be assessed</u>
Water System				
Supply	6.7 m gal/day	None	None	\$6.5 million
Storage	8.0 m gal	None	\$2,750,000	
Distribution	> 30 psi	None	\$55,675,000	
Fire Flow	Multiple	None	None	
Sanitary Sewer System	0 - Sewer Overflows	Inflow & Infiltration Sewer Lakeline-portion of reaches	\$26 million	\$1.68 million
Storm & Surface Water System				
Piped System	WA DOE Stormwater Manual	Multiple	\$850,000	\$1.2 million
Ravine Basins	WA DOE Stormwater Manual	Multiple	\$365,000	

Notes:

1. More detailed LOS standards for capacity, operational reliability, and capital facilities needs can be found in the following documents: Transportation Improvement Plan, Water System Plan, General Sewer Plan, Comprehensive Storm Basin Review, Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan, Open Space Vegetation Plan, Luther Burbank Master Plan, Ballfield Use Analysis, and the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Costs are estimated for the twenty-year planning period from 2024-2044. Actual costs are determined at the time improvements are added to the CIP.

3. Annual reinvestment cost is estimated based on the total estimated twenty-year cost divided by twenty years. Actual costs are not expected to occur annually.
4. An analysis is in progress, capital needs and costs to be evaluated pending completion of studies, after completion of light rail.
5. Improvement, maintenance, and replacement of City operational and administrative facilities are assessed per facility with the completion of a facility condition assessment.
6. The City is in the process of evaluating the cost to address facility needs in light of the unexpected closure of City Hall in October 2023.

APPENDIX B

AGENCY COMMENT LETTERS

From: [McConachie, Justin](#)
To: [Jeff Thomas](#)
Cc: [Adam Zack](#); [Alison Van Gorp](#); [Larson, Matt](#); [Tousley, Amy](#)
Subject: Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan Update -- PSE Comments -- April 2024
Date: Friday, April 12, 2024 12:34:44 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[PSE Comp Plan Language Comments April 2024.xlsx](#)

Dear Jeff Thomas,

On behalf of Puget Sound Energy (PSE), I am reaching out to convey our thoughts for your consideration as part of the periodic update to the comprehensive plan and development regulations under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), specifically Chapters 36.70A and 43.21C.

The attached spreadsheet contains suggested language as it relates to customer programs and our shared climate goals. In the attached, you will find seven tabs grouped by category.

At PSE, we recognize that climate change is one of the biggest existential threats facing our planet today. As one of the largest producers of renewable energy in the Pacific Northwest, PSE has been an early leader in addressing climate change and investing billions in renewable resources and energy efficiency for homes and businesses. Now, PSE is on the path to meet the current and future needs of its customers and to deliver on the requirements to decarbonize operations and serve its customers and communities equitably. This transition is unprecedented in terms of the magnitude of the change and the accelerated time frame in which it must be achieved. By working together, we can successfully drive towards our shared clean energy goals.

PSE looks forward to providing input as the comprehensive plan items are discussed in more detail. Together, we can reduce emissions and keep energy safe, reliable, and affordable.

Thank you,

Justin McConachie

Municipal Liaison Manager | Municipal Relations
1140 N 94th St, Seattle, WA 98103 | Mailstop: NSO-01
Cell: 206.518.1452 | Office: 206.517.3432



Puget Sound Energy Proposed Policies

On April 11, 2024, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) submitted a comment on the Comprehensive Plan suggesting the following policies.

Policy 1 – Energy Equity

Partner with PSE to promote financial assistance and discounted billing programs for income qualified residents in order to ensure that the most vulnerable are not disproportionately impacted by the State's clean energy transition. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

PSE's Bill Discount Rate (BDR): Our BDR program provides income qualified customers with ongoing help on their monthly energy bill. Depending on household income and size, customers can save 5% to 45% a month on your bill.

PSE Home Energy Lifeline Program (HELP): PSE provides qualified customers with bill-payment assistance beyond the Washington state LIHEAP program. Customers do not need to owe a balance on their PSE bill to apply.

LIHEAP Program: This government program provides financial assistance so eligible households can maintain affordable, dependable utility services and avoid disconnection. PSE can assist with eligibility requirements and applications.

The Salvation Army Warm Home Fund: Administered by the SA and funded by voluntary contributions from PSE customers, employees, and investors. The Warm Home Fund provides short-term, emergency bill payment assistance to PSE customers facing financial difficulties.

Payment Arrangements: PSE will work with customers to produce a manageable payment schedule with a realistic timeline for up to 18 months.

Budget Payment Plan: PSE provides customers with a predictable average monthly payment to reduce bill fluctuation and avoid unplanned high bills during winter heating months.

Home Weatherization Assistance: This program provides free upgrades for single-family homes, manufactured homes or eligible apartment buildings. Upgrades can include insulation, duct sealing and much more.

Energy Efficiency Boost Rebates: PSE offers higher rebates on energy-efficient upgrades to income-qualified customers.

Low-Income Eligible Community Solar: This no cost program enables bill savings of up to \$40 per month for income eligible customers.

Policy 2 – Electric Vehicles

Support EV charging infrastructure throughout the community in order to support the decarbonization of our transportation sector. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

PSE Up & Go Electric for Public: PSE helps organizations easily and affordably install public charging for all EV drivers.

PSE Up & Go Electric for Fleet: PSE empowers businesses, municipalities and more with electrifying their fleets.

PSE Up & Go Electric for Multifamily: PSE brings pole charging to multifamily properties to attract new residents and keep existing ones.

PSE Up & Go Electric for Workplace: PSE brings charging to workplaces so employees can electrify their commutes.

PSE Home Charging: PSE provides rebates and incentives for the installation of home EV charging stations.

Policy 3 – Energy Efficiency

Partner with PSE to promote energy efficiency programs and initiatives. [Utilities Element]

Policy 4 – Energy Efficiency

Expedite permitting processes related to energy efficiency upgrades. [Land Use Element]

PSE Programs

Home Energy Assessment: PSE offers a quick and convenient 3-step process to help customers understand and control their home's energy usage.

Energy Efficiency Rebates:

- Appliance program
- Electric hybrid heat pump water heaters
- Smart thermostats program
- Weatherization program
- Windows, water heat and space heat programs
- Home weatherization assistance
- Insulation

Other PSE Energy Rebates:

- EV chargers
- New construction

Clean Buildings Accelerator: PSE assists customers with complying with Washington's Clean Buildings Law (HB 1257, 2019).

Policy 5 – Green Options

Partner with PSE to promote local investments and customer enrollment in clean energy projects and programs in order to achieve clean energy goals. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Green Power: PSE customers can voluntarily contribute to PSE investments in renewable energy projects in the Pacific Northwest.

Solar Choice: PSE customers can voluntarily purchase solar energy from independent sources through PSE.

Carbon Balance: PSE customers can voluntarily purchase carbon offsets from local forestry projects through PSE.

Community Solar: PSE customers can voluntarily contribute to solar projects of their choice installed on such facilities as local school and community centers.

Renewable Natural Gas: PSE customers can voluntarily purchase blocks of RNG to lower than carbon usage and support the development of locally produced RNG.

Green Direct: This program is offered to local municipalities and corporations seeking to reduce their carbon footprint by investing in large scale renewable energy projects. This program is currently full.

Policy 6 – Demand Response

Partner with PSE to promote and support programs designed to decrease load on the grid during times of peak use. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Time of Use (TOU) Program: PSE's current pilot program uses variable 24 hour pricing to incentivize customers to use less power during times of peak demand.

Flex Rewards: This program encourages and financially incentivizes voluntary reduction in energy use during peak demand.

Flex Smart: This program financially rewards customers for allowing PSE to make remote minor adjustments to thermostats during periods of high peak load and demand.

Flex EV: This program incentivizes EV charging during off-peak hours.

Policy 7 – Grid Infrastructure

Partner with PSE to effectively meet rapidly increasing electrical demand as the City and region work to achieve a Clean Energy Transition by adopting codes that support siting existing and new technologies. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Wind and Hybrid Wind (co-located wind and battery): A variable source of power representing approximately 30% of PSE's future electric resource need by 2030.

Solar and Hybrid Solar (co-located solar and battery): A variable source of power representing approximately 16% of PSE's future electric resource need by 2030.

Utility-Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS): A technology that will allow energy to be stored for future use representing about 22% of PSE's future electric resource need by 2030. Types of energy storage technology include:

- Chemical (e.g., Lithium-Ion Iron-Air)
- Thermal (e.g., carbon, molten salt)
- Gravity (e.g., water pumping, mechanical)

Variable generation sources (wind & solar) require large scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) to be fully utilized since the sun goes down when demand increases and wind often fades when most needed; such as during extremely cold weather. Batteries maximize electrical production from variable generation sources, help meet periods of peak demand, and provide greater reliability for the grid.

Policy 8 – Grid Infrastructure

Expedite the local permitting and approval process in order to maintain grid capacity and reliability. [Land Use Element]

PSE Programs

New regional transmission lines are needed to serve new utility scale clean energy resources, such as wind and solar.

New local transmission lines are needed to meet increasing local demand due to growth, EV's, and electrification of the heating sector (e.g., Sammamish to Juanita line in Kirkland).

Transmission upgrades are needed to meet increasing local demand (e.g., Energize Eastside line in Redmond, Bellevue, Newcastle, and Renton upgraded from 115kv to 230kv) due to growth, EVs, and electrification of the heating sector.

In order to assure continued capacity and reliability, new and larger substations will be needed to meet growing energy needs due to growth, EVs and electrification of the heating sector.

Additional 12.5kv distribution lines will be needed to meet growing energy needs due to growth, EVs and electrification of the heating sector.

Policy 9 – Grid Infrastructure

Promote and support the growth of customer owned distributed energy resources.
[Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Customer Connected Solar: PSE assists customers with information and resources for installing residential solar projects and how to apply for interconnection and net metering with PSE.

Battery Walls: PSE offers installation guidelines and a process whereby customers can report battery installations.

Host An Energy Project: Community partners can get paid to lease space to PSE to develop distributed solar and/or battery storage projects.

Distributed Renewables: PSE supports the development of commercial customer-owned renewable energy projects that generate between 100 kilowatts and 5 megawatts to interconnect to the PSE electrical distribution grid.

Policy 10 – Grid Infrastructure

Support ongoing vegetation management in order to maintain system reliability.
[Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Many cities are pursuing aggressive urban forestry programs in order to beautify their community, reduce heat islands, and to provide carbon offsets. Such policies should be balanced with the need to protect electrical system reliability around overhead lines.

Policy 11 – Grid Infrastructure

Pursue public-private partnership to seek funding sources to accelerate clean energy projects. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Recent state and federal legislation, including the IIJA and IRA, have unlocked public funding for climate and environmental benefit. PSE is aggressively pursuing all applicable funding opportunities to support lower customer bills, reduced power costs, and investments in the grid and clean energy. PSE is also supporting municipalities, tribes, and non-profits in their applications for public funding.

Policy 12 – Wildfire Management

Support PSE’s wildfire mitigation efforts including electric system upgrades, year-round vegetation management, and fire weather operational procedures. Work closely with utilities and local fire departments to lessen the risk and impact of wildfires. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Situational Awareness: PSE evaluates the condition of the electric system, as well as the environment around it, using real-time weather data, wildfire risk modeling and pre-wildfire season inspections.

Strengthening the electric system: PSE regularly maintains and updates the electric system to provide safe and reliable power to our customers. In areas of high wildfire risk, we identify maintenance and improvement activities that will further reduce the risk of wildfire, including vegetation management, equipment upgrades, and in some cases, moving power lines underground.

Operational Procedures: During wildfire season, PSE may change some device settings or implement operational procedures to reduce the risk of wildfire. In the future, PSE may proactively turn off power during high wildfire risk conditions to help prevent wildfires. This is called a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

Emergency Response: During an emergency, including an active wildfire, PSE will coordinate with local emergency officials and may implement emergency response procedures. This may include turning off power at the request of emergency officials for public and first responder safety.

Policy 13 – Gas Conservation and Decarbonization

Evaluate the potential for renewable, recoverable natural gas in existing systems. [Utilities Element]

PSE Programs

Renewable Natural Gas Production: Utilizing wastewater facility, landfill, or similar system.



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 4
 Region 4 information: 16018 Mill Creek Blvd, Mill Creek, WA 98012 | phone: (425)-775-1311

May 20, 2024

Ryan Harriman, Planning Manager
 City Hall 9611 SE 36th St
 Mercer Island, WA 98040
 ryan.harriman@mercerisland.gov

RE: WDFW comments regarding Mercer Island’s Comprehensive Plan draft language

Dear Mr. Harriman,

On behalf of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), thank you for the opportunity to formally comment on Mercer Island’s draft Comprehensive Plan language as part of the current periodic update. Within the State of Washington’s land use decision-making framework, WDFW’s role is that of technical advisor with respect to the habitat needs of fish and wildlife and the likely implications of various land use decisions on those resources over time. We provide these comments and recommendations in keeping with our legislative mandate to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish and wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of future generations – a mission we can only accomplish in partnership with local jurisdictions. We may decide to submit additional comments to you in the future.

Table 1. Recommended changes to proposed Comprehensive Plan language.

Policy Number	Policy Language (with WDFW suggestions in red)	WDFW Comment
Land Use		
GOAL 2 Suggested Policy Page 15	For all new development, require parks and open space retention or creation to promote connected, healthy, and climate-resilient communities locally and regionally.	Open spaces can act as climate-resilient assets that can serve as community spaces. All development within dense or populated areas should strive for open space retention and creation for the benefit of people and the environment. Additionally, parks and open spaces are often some of the only areas within highly built environments for wildlife habitat to persist. It is important to not only plan for these spaces, but plan for the connection and linkage of these spaces to provide multi-benefit options, such as recreational trail opportunities as well as habitat corridor linkages. For

		<p>information on implementing wildlife habitat attributes in all public spaces, see WDFW’s Habitat at Home resource as well as WDFW’s Landscape Planning for Washington’s Wildlife for further resources, especially “Chapter 6: Implementation through Comprehensive Plans, Development Regulations, and Incentive Programs,” page 6-1.</p> <p>Some additional resources include the Trust for Public Lands, the NRPA Safe Routes to Parks Action Framework (which provides professionals with a “how-to” guide to implement Safe Routes to Parks strategies), and the Sustainable Development Code website.</p>
<p>GOAL 3 Page 15</p>	<p>Have a mixture of building types, styles and ages that reflects the evolution of the Town Center over time, with human-scaled buildings, varied height, ‘green’ buildings, setbacks and step-backs and attractive facades.</p>	<p>We suggest this goal also include the intent for climate resiliency in building design. We suggest working towards sustainable development code that decreases building utility use and cost while simultaneously increasing the capacity for climate resiliency. For resources, see how the city of Boston is identifying priority blocks that could yield the greatest benefits to residents in pursuit of a “cool” roof goal. Similarly, "green" roofs covered with sedum, native flowers, and other low-maintenance vegetation help insulate buildings from solar heat and provide pollinator habitat. Such rooftops help reduce building cooling costs and heat-related illnesses and deaths. See also the Sustainable Development Code website for specific resources on removing code barriers, creating incentives, and filling regulatory gaps in pursuit of green building goals. The Georgetown Climate Center's Green Infrastructure Toolkit provides funding models and approaches from U.S. municipalities, including Los Angeles County's Safe Clean Water Program and Boulder, Colorado's Greenways Program. Additionally, it is mandatory that schools are built to meet green building standards, and with the help of Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol: Criteria for High-Performance Schools, additional public or private infrastructure can be modeled after this example. See the LEED rating system for further resources aimed at all building types.</p>
<p>Goal 8 Suggested Policy Page 18</p>	<p>Town Center streets should provide for safe and convenient pedestrian access and movement, with consideration for future climate-related heat</p>	<p>It is important to frame pedestrian access in a climate-related hazard context, especially in denser city center areas where exacerbated heat island effect may be present.</p>

	conditions, planning for ample street trees for cooling purposes.	
12.2 Page 19	Encourage the provision of on-site public open space in private developments. This can include incentives, allowing development agreements, and payment of a calculated amount of money as an alternative to dedication of land. In addition, encourage aggregation of smaller open spaces between parcels to create a more substantial open space.	See resources related to comments for Goal 2 page 15 above.
GOAL 13 Page 21	Town Center buildings should meet a high standard of energy efficiency and sustainable construction practices as well as exhibiting other innovative green features, above and beyond what is required by the existing Construction Code.	See resources related to comments for GOAL 3 Page 15 above for policy ideas, as this goal currently has no policies.
15.6. B Page 23	<p>Encourage the retention of landscaped areas and the retention and planting of trees</p> <p>Require protection of significant trees and avoid unnecessary disturbance of vegetation during all phases of development and require mitigation as needed, including replacement for trees removed during development. Measure progress towards City tree canopy goals by implementing a formal tree canopy plan.</p>	<p>We suggest changing the language of this policy to better reflect the importance of tree and vegetation retention. Additionally, we suggest Mercer Island develop a formal tree canopy management plan, informed by your Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2018, in order to track current conditions and benchmark progress towards tree canopy goals. This plan should also measure how well the City’s tree-related ordinances are functioning in retaining trees on the landscape. It may not be enough to rely on ordinances if there is not a system in place to track cumulative impacts over time.</p> <p>Some examples of tree management plans include the City of Tacoma, the City of Snoqualmie, the City of Redmond, and the City of Renton. The Puget Sound Urban Tree Canopy and Stormwater Management Handbook provides additional guidance.</p>

<p>18.6 Page 25</p>	<p>Encourage, and require in some circumstances, low impact development approaches for managing stormwater and protecting water quality and habitat.</p>	<p>We recommend requiring LID standards within municipal code for all developments, especially near waterways. As noted in the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan 10-year Update, Mercer Island’s shorelines are labeled as ‘Tier 1’ areas. This report states, “Tier 1 areas are the highest priority habitats for protection/restoration, and include primary spawning areas, as well as migratory and rearing corridors.”</p> <p>This underscores Mercer Island’s unique geographic location and distinctive obligation to preserve, rehabilitate, and re-establish salmon habitat. Additionally, utilizing LID techniques can help Mercer Island address Federal Policy Priorities, such as, “Chemicals from decaying tires, specifically 6PPD-quinone affect coho, Chinook, sockeye and steelhead. In particular, coho have been shown to be most sensitive and succumb to “urban runoff mortality syndrome” within hours of exposure. Federal funding is needed to support local governments in implementing critical stormwater retrofit projects to capture and treat toxic runoff.”</p> <p>Resources for LID include King County’s Regional Stormwater Action Goals (which includes Planning Stormwater Parks), the Sustainable Development Code website and the VISION 2050 Planning Resources Guidance on Integrating Stormwater Solutions into Comprehensive Plans.</p>
<p>18.7 Page 25</p>	<p>Services and programs provided by the City with regards to land use should encourage residents to minimize their own personal carbon footprint, especially with respect to energy consumption and waste reduction. The City shall also develop and maintain a fund to build green infrastructure projects.</p>	<p>See resources for this in comments to GOAL 3 Page 15 above.</p>
<p>GOAL 19</p>	<p>Protect and enhance habitat for native plants and animals</p>	<p>The importance of ecosystem monetary value cannot be overstated. Protecting and restoring natural assets and</p>

<p>Page 26</p>	<p>for their intrinsic value and for the benefit of human health, the ecosystem services they provide, and aesthetics. Regulatory, educational, incentive-based, programmatic, and other methods should be used to achieve this goal, as appropriate.</p>	<p>the services they provide is often more cost-effective than engineered solutions. For example, restored wetlands and floodplains can prevent flooding and reduce the need for other types of flood-control infrastructure. Implementation of this policy could include comparing lifetime cost-effectiveness of nature-based versus engineered options for climate response to help identify cost-effective adaptation options. This can help build capacity and support for the adoption of response strategies that help protect and restore ecosystem function and services at risk from climate change.</p> <p>For resources, see FEMA’s guide Building Community Resilience with Nature-based Solutions, as well as software to track these resources from Natural Capital Project. Additionally, see Kitsap County’s approach to this through their Kitsap Natural Resource Asset Management Project.</p>
<p>19.3 Page 26</p>	<p>Evaluate and enhance the quality of habitat to support the sustenance of native plants and animals with the appropriate balance of ground, mid-level, and tree canopy that provides cover, forage, nectar, nest sites, and other essential needs. In addition to parks and open spaces, preserve and enhance habitat in conjunction with residential, institutional, and commercial development and in road rights-of-way, prioritizing connection between these spaces for habitat corridor linkages and recreational trail linkages.</p>	<p>Outlined in Mercer Island’s PROS Plan 2022 is the need for trail connections. This plan’s community survey #2 asked, “What do you think are the most needed improvements to the current City of Mercer Island parks system?” 44.2% of respondents chose “Connect gaps in the trail system to create a complete trail network,” which was the highest selected response. 30.8% of respondents chose, “Expand maintenance and restoration of open space and natural areas.” Further in this survey, the second highest item selected as “very important” to residents was “Open space and natural areas,” second to “Walking / jogging trails.” Ranked highest priority for use of acquired land was, “Acquire land to preserve habitat and open space areas that can include walking / jogging trails.” Connecting open spaces, parks, and trails provides a unique, multi-benefit path towards addressing habitat connectivity and recreational needs specific to Mercer Island.</p>
<p>19.6 Page 26</p>	<p>Important wildlife habitats including forest, watercourses, wetlands, riparian areas, and shorelines should be connected via intentional infrastructure planning and natural area linkages, including walking</p>	<p>Riparian areas “are disproportionately important, relative to area, for aquatic species (e.g., salmon) and terrestrial wildlife,” as stated in WDFW’s Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 2: Management Recommendations and supported by WDFW’s BAS. As highlighted within these documents is the need for large tree retention along riparian and shoreline areas. In the context of</p>

	paths along forested road rights-of-way.	<p>Mercer Island, emphasis should be placed on retaining large trees along the shoreline of Lake Washington.</p> <p>For planning infrastructure with connectivity in mind, please see The Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group, WSDOT's Reducing the risk of wildlife collisions website as well as Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Consideration in Fish Barrier Removal Projects, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks' How to Build Fence with Wildlife in Mind, and WDFW's website.</p>
19.7 Page 26	View preservation actions should be balanced with the efforts-requirement to preserve the community's natural vegetation and tree cover along shorelines . [Relocated Policy 20.3]	We suggest strictly defining view preservation actions. As noted in the comment above, large trees are a crucial component of healthy shorelines. No net loss of habitat function can occur. Please review municipal code to ensure cumulative impacts are not resulting in a net loss.
19.8 Page 26	Community tree canopy goals should be adopted and implemented to protect human health and the natural environment and to promote aesthetics. Encourage the conversion of grass to forest and native vegetation. Promote the preservation of snags (dead trees) for forage and nesting by wildlife.	We recommend Mercer Island create a formal tree canopy management plan. See comments in response to 15.6. B Page 23 above.
19.10 Page 27	Support conservation on private property on Mercer Island through the use of conservation tools and programs including, but not limited to, the King County Public Benefit Rating System and Transfer of Development Rights programs.	We suggest the encouragement of homeowner and landlord involvement in WDFW's Habitat at Home program , with the intent to incentivize community involvement and recognition of wildlife habitat creation in small (and large) spaces. Neighbors may recognize an adjacent property with a Habitat at Home sign and be compelled to participate.
GOAL 28 Adapt to and mitigate local climate change impacts	Identify and implement strategies to increase the resilience of the shoreline environment climate-related hazards, while also protecting shoreline ecological	We recommend consideration for climate-related hazards when planning for shoreline access into the future. For assessing future conditions, see Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington , as well as FEMA's Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT) for resources in visualizing these hazard areas. For further

<p>Suggested Policy Page 31</p>	<p>functions, allowing water dependent uses, and providing public access. Establish regulations that require the location of new lots and structure outside of hazards areas. Address appropriate efforts to protect ecological values and functions, accommodate recreational opportunities, and retreat or redevelop flood-prone structures in floodplain and shoreline areas.</p>	<p>context, FEMA’s Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) modeling does not take climate change projections into consideration. We suggest Mercer Island supplement FIRM maps with best available science that incorporates climate change. For example, King County regulations place ‘Flood Protection Elevations’ three feet above base flood elevation for development within flood-prone areas.</p>
<p>Housing</p>		
<p>Goal 1 – Overall Housing Strategies Page 8</p>	<p>Organize and site housing and multi-family residential buildings to create usable and connected open spaces.</p>	<p>Outlined in Mercer Island’s PROS Plan 2022 is the need for trail connections. This plan’s community survey #2 asked, “What do you think are the most needed improvements to the current City of Mercer Island parks system?” 44.2% of respondents chose “Connect gaps in the trail system to create a complete trail network,” which was the highest selected response.</p> <p>With this in mind, we suggest incorporating the adjacent policy, emphasizing the necessity to not only preserve and safeguard these open spaces but also ensure their connectivity. We propose that, along with designating open space percentages based on development type, site plans should demonstrate active efforts to connect these open spaces with others in the surrounding area.</p>
<p>Goal 1 – Overall Housing Strategies Page 8</p>	<p>Adopt sustainable and climate-informed design guidelines for new development.</p>	<p>See comments and resources in relation to GOAL 28 page 31 above.</p>
<p>Goal 1 – Overall Housing Strategies Page 8</p>	<p>Encourage the development of a variety of housing typologies to suit the needs of various potential residents while also encouraging, and in some cases requiring, techniques such as Low Impact Design (LID) standards.</p>	<p>As discussed previously, LID is exceedingly important for development to consider, as all boundaries within Mercer Island lead directly into Tier 1 priority habitat areas for chinook salmon recovery.</p>

Capital Facilities		
<p>1.12 Page 31</p>	<p>The City will adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan. This Plan will be updated periodically and shall guide City efforts to maintain reliability of key infrastructure and address vulnerabilities and potential impacts associated with natural hazards and projected climate-related conditions.</p>	<p>Protecting essential public facilities and the services they provide from climate impacts helps ensure community resilience. It is vital to site these facilities outside of areas that will be impacted by climate-related stressors for the entire operational lifespan of the facility. We suggest updating zoning to allow essential or hazardous uses only in low-risk areas and assess risk when new facilities are proposed.</p>
<p>GOAL 1 Suggested Policy Page 32</p>	<p>Collaborate with WSDOT, King County, and neighboring jurisdictions to plan and prioritize public and private culvert upgrades to ensure fish passage barrier removal, adequate projected stormwater passage, and continued climate-related adaptations to handle water passage into the future.</p>	<p>It is important to plan and prioritize culvert upgrades to ensure not only fish passage benefits, but adequate projected stormwater passage. We suggest this element (and future amendments to the City of Mercer Island’s Capital Improvement Plan) include this goal and incorporate a prioritization list, especially in areas where terrestrial species connectivity can be restored simultaneously (i.e., replacing culverts with wider bridges). Current fish passage barrier locations can be found on WDFW’s website.</p> <p>Further resources include WDFW’s “Incorporating Climate Change into the Design of Water Crossing Structures: Final Project Report,” as well as WSDOT’s “Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Consideration in Fish Barrier Removal Projects.”</p> <p>Combining stormwater maintenance (or any maintenance) with multi-benefit goals (such as climate change resiliency or salmon recovery) opens up these projects for diverse funding opportunities (such as the Department of Commerce Salmon Recovery through Local Planning Grant, due June 3rd).</p>
<p>GOAL 1 Suggested Policy Page 32</p>	<p>Ensure that any future maintenance and repairs to conveyances of mixed stormwater/natural waters will not negatively impact fish life, fish passage, or aquatic habitat. Additionally, the City shall consult with WDFW as needed to correctly identify specific areas and needs for the protection and</p>	<p>We suggest the addition of the adjacent policy in order to track progress towards goals relating to water quality, especially as it related to aquatic habitats and species. This would also help Mercer Island address GMA requirements such as, “cities shall give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries,” outlined in RCW 36.70A.172.</p>

	preservation of aquatic habitats. The correct best management practices will also be employed.	
POLICIES FOR SITING PUBLIC FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES Page 35	Consider future climate conditions during siting and design of capital facilities, including changes to temperature, rainfall, and sea level, to help ensure they function as intended over their planned life cycle.	See comments above in relation to 1.12 page 31.
Shoreline Master Program element		
Goal (unspecified in document) Page 5	Increase and enhance public access to and along the Mercer Island Shoreline where appropriate and consistent with public interest, provided public safety, private property rights, and in alignment with no net loss principles unique or fragile areas are not adversely affected.	We recommend specifying no net loss principles, as outlined in WAC 365-196-830 .
(4) Page 5	In new developments on the shoreline, the water's edge should be kept free of buildings. Additionally, new development shall be prohibited from constructing shoreline stabilization that employs hard armoring techniques.	WAC 173-26-231 states, "(A) New development should be located and designed to avoid the need for future shoreline stabilization to the extent feasible. Subdivision of land must be regulated to assure that the lots created will not require shoreline stabilization in order for reasonable development to occur using geotechnical analysis of the site and shoreline characteristics..." This sentiment is exceedingly important for Mercer Island, as your unique geographic location places shorelines on all sides. Increased hard armoring is detrimental to salmonid recovery. We suggest Mercer Island establish a database that tracks hard armoring along your shorelines in order to monitor cumulative impacts and assess no net loss goals overtime.
1. (a) Page 6	Aquatic habitats, particularly spawning grounds, should be protected, improved and, if feasible, increased.	All aquatic habitats within the vicinity of Mercer Island are important in providing support for salmonid success. The importance of Mercer Island's role in salmon recovery cannot be overstated. Included in the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (2005) are

		<p>recommendations for specific restoration areas within Mercer Island, which includes, “Restoration efforts should begin with lake segments at the southern end of the lake...along the southern shore of Mercer Island and in Union Bay at the entrance to the Ship Canal.”</p> <p>In Chapter 10 page 4-6 of this report, a comprehensive list of policies and action items is given, specifically for South Lake Washington, including the recommendation, “Use WRIA 8 science foundation and Conservation Strategy as one of many “best available science” resources during CAO and SMP revisions. Increase riparian/shoreline buffers to extent practicable.”</p> <p>This chapter also outlines priority actions along the shoreline of Mercer Island, such as, “Explore daylighting and restoration of creek mouth in Clarke Beach Park,” “Explore options to restore small creek mouths on west and east side of Mercer Island,” and, “Explore shoreline restoration at Groveland Park.”</p> <p>This underscores Mercer Island’s unique geographic location and distinctive obligation to preserve, rehabilitate, and re-establish salmon habitat.</p>
<p>1. (c) Page 6</p>	<p>Critical area maps shall be routinely updated to reflect the most up-to-date information s have been mapped. Access and use should be restricted if necessary for the conservation of these areas. The type and degree of development to be allowed should be based upon such factors as: slope, soils, vegetation, geology and hydrology.</p>	<p>Best available science should be used when creating and updating critical area documents, as per Chapter 365-195 WAC.</p>
<p>2. Page 6</p>	<p>Existing and future activities on Lake Washington and its shoreline should be designed to minimize avoid adverse effects on the natural systems.</p>	<p>We suggest the use of mitigation sequencing (WAC 197-11-768) in this policy, which first states to “avoid.” Avoidance is key, as mitigation for impacts can be costly, hard to maintain, and often do not meet no net loss standards (WAC 365-196-830).</p>
<p>3. (d) Page 6</p>	<p>The destruction of natural watercourses feeding into</p>	<p>All natural waterways support aquatic habitats and species and provide vital ecosystem services. It is imperative to protect these critical areas.</p>

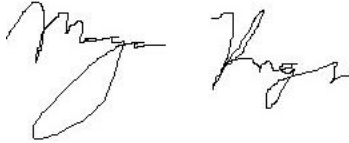
	Lake Washington should be discouraged prohibited .	
Policy (not specified in document) Page 8	Foster habitat and natural system enhancement projects that are consistent with the City's Shoreline Restoration Plan and whose primary purpose is restoration of the natural character and ecological functions of the shoreline.	See our recommendation in response to 1. (a) Page 6 above in specifying the need to consult WRIA specific salmon recovery plans, which outline specific sites for restoration consideration.
(2) Page 10	In single-family developments within the shoreline, the water's edge should be kept free of buildings and hard armoring .	See comments in relation to (4) Page 5 above.
Transportation		
7.9 Page 8	Coordinate with local and regional emergency services to develop priority transportation corridors and develop coordinated strategies to protect and recover from disaster and plan for future climate-related conditions .	We suggest highlighting the importance of taking future conditions into consideration as it relates to the development of transportation corridors.
11.2 Page 9	Maintain the current minimum parking requirements of three off-street spaces for single family residences, but may consider future code amendments that allow for the reduction of one of the spaces provided that the quality of the environment and the single family neighborhood is maintained.	<p>We suggest instating parking 'maximums' instead of minimums. For example, we recommend the policy:</p> <p>"Eliminate parking minimum requirements and establish parking maximums."</p> <p>This policy, which could be implemented in a development code, could help reduce impervious surfaces that exacerbate stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect. This policy also could encourage active-transportation (walking, biking, riding transit) alternatives to driving automobiles; this reduces emissions, improves community health, and supports other co-benefits.</p> <p>Does the city currently have a way to track total impervious surface area and cumulative impacts?</p>

12.2 Page 10	Implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan to meet existing and anticipated needs for nonmotorized transportation. This Plan should be coordinated with habitat connectivity and other transportation planning efforts and periodically updated.	See resources in comments related to 19.3 Page 26 and GOAL 2 Suggested Policy Page 15.
Utilities		
2.7 Page 4	Aggressively promote and support water conservation on Mercer Island and shall participate in regional water conservation activities.	Refer to resources in relation to our response to GOAL 3 Page 15 above.
3.4 Page 6	Actively work with regional and adjoining local jurisdictions to manage, regulate and maintain the regional sewer system, keeping future climate-related hazards in mind.	It is important to plan for sewer infrastructure that will be resistant to future flooding and climate-related conditions.
4.7 Page 9	Encourage and promote development that creates the least disruption of the natural water cycle, returning as much precipitation to groundwater as possible in order to extend the flow of seasonal streams into the dry season and to contribute cooling ground water to surface water features, thereby contributing to healthy fish and wildlife habitat.	We greatly appreciate the inclusion of this policy.

Thank you for taking time to consider our recommendations to better reflect the best available science for fish and wildlife habitat and ecosystems. We value the relationship we have with your jurisdiction and the opportunity to work collaboratively with you throughout this periodic update cycle. If you have any questions or need our technical assistance or resources at any

time during this process, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Morgan Krueger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Morgan Krueger
Regional Land Use Planner, WDFW Region 4
425-537-1354
Morgan.krueger@dfw.wa.gov

CC:

Kara Whittaker, Land Use Conservation and Policy Section Manager (Kara.Whittaker@dfw.wa.gov)
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Catherine McCoy, WA Dept. of Commerce (catherine.mccoy@commerce.wa.gov)

Adam Zack

From: David Dixon <DDixon@psrc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2024 5:12 PM
To: Alison Van Gorp
Cc: PlanReview; Adam Zack; catherine.mccoy@commerce.wa.gov
Subject: PSRC Comments on Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan
Attachments: PSRC_Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan_Comment Letter_June 2024.pdf

Hi Alison,

Thanks for taking the time to meet with us to discuss the Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan.

Our comments on the plan are included in the attached document, with links to relevant resources. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Best,

David Dixon (he/him)

Associate Planner

Puget Sound Regional Council

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Puget Sound Regional Council

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June 18, 2024

Alison Van Gorp, Deputy Director, Community Planning & Development
City of Mercer Island
9611 SE 36th Street
Mercer Island, WA 98040

Subject: PSRC Comments on City of Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan

Dear Ms. Van Gorp,

Thank you for providing an opportunity for the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) to review the City of Mercer Island draft comprehensive plan. We appreciate that the city has invested a substantial amount of time and effort in developing the draft plan and appreciate the chance to review while in draft form. This timely collaboration provides an opportunity to review plan elements for the 2024 comprehensive plan and prepares the city well for [certification](#) by PSRC once the full plan has been adopted.

The draft plan lays a strong foundation for the city's growth over the next twenty years, and we commend the work to incorporate affordable housing targets. Overall, we found few things to comment on. Importantly, though, the city should ensure that the final adopted plan documents sufficient capacity to accommodate its employment growth target. We suggest the city consider the following comments as further work is completed for the comprehensive plan update to align with [VISION 2050](#) and the Growth Management Act. We will look forward to continuing to work with you as you prepare the final draft of the comprehensive plan.

We reviewed the draft plan using the PSRC Plan Review Consistency Tool. Key sections of the consistency tool are listed below on the left along with relevant comments on the draft plan on the right:

PSRC Comments on City of Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan

June 18, 2024

Page 2

Growth Targets/Development Patterns

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Demonstrate sufficient zoned development capacity to accommodate targets (RCW 36.70A.115)</p>	<p>King County’s Urban Growth Capacity Analysis and the city’s Economic Analysis Appendix identify a shortage of capacity to accommodate the city’s employment target. The plan needs to demonstrate adequate capacity to accommodate planned employment growth through either rezoning or documenting sufficient existing capacity within its current zones.</p>
<p>Prioritize investments in centers, including regional centers, countywide centers, high-capacity transit areas with a station area plan, and other local centers (MPP-RC-8-9)</p> <p>Identify high-capacity station areas and plan for densities that maximize benefits of transit investments (MPP-DP-22, DP-Action-8)</p> <p>Support the adoption of subarea plans for light rail station areas (DP-Action-8)</p>	<p>The plan should include policies to support coordination between Town Center development and the light rail station, which could be accomplished, for example, by updating the Town Center Plan, providing additional policies associated with Land Use Goals 10 and 11, and/or including a Town Center/station area map.</p>

Transportation

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Provide travel demand forecasts and identify state and local system projects, programs, and management necessary to meet current and future demands and to improve safety and human health (RCW 36.70A.070, MPP-T-4-5)</p>	<p>The plan includes a transportation project list through 2044. The city is encouraged to provide more information of how the identified projects advance goals in the plan</p>

PSRC Comments on City of Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan

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Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Develop a comprehensive concurrency program that addresses level-of-service standards for multimodal types of transportation and include implementation strategies (RCW 36.70A.070, RCW 36.70A.108, MPP-DP-52-54)</p>	<p>VISION 2050 calls for multimodal level of service standards, and the Growth Management Act will also require these standards by 2029 (MPP-DP-52-53). The plan has a policy to establish bicycle, pedestrian, and transit levels of service.</p> <p>PSRC encourages the city to make progress in this area and adopt standards that will support development in the Town Center. Resources on multimodal LOS can be found in PSRC's Transportation Element guidance.</p>

Housing

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Demonstrate sufficient capacity for a variety of housing types (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c))</p>	<p>The draft comprehensive plan does not provide supporting documentation indicating sufficient land capacity for emergency housing and emergency shelter. RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c) states jurisdictions must ensure sufficient capacity for all housing types, including emergency housing and emergency shelter, are identified in the housing element. We recommend the city consider including this information in the final land capacity analysis.</p>
<p>Address affordable housing needs by developing a housing needs assessment and evaluating the effectiveness of existing housing policies, and documenting strategies to achieve housing targets and affordability goals. This includes</p>	<p>The city is encouraged to include an inventory of existing housing units affordable to each income band in the housing needs assessment. This information is available in Appendix 4, Table H-2 of the King County CPPs.</p>

PSRC Comments on City of Mercer Island Draft Comprehensive Plan

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Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations (H-Action-4)	

Environment/Climate Change

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
Support programs to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment and prioritize the reduction of impacts to vulnerable populations that have been disproportionately affected (MPP-En-3-4, En-7-8, En-21)	The plan should include policies to address disparate environmental impacts. The WA Environmental Health Disparities Map can be a useful resource for this work.

Economy

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
Focus retention and recruitment efforts and activities to foster a positive business climate and diversify employment opportunities by specifically targeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses that provide living wage jobs • Locally, women-, and minority-owned small businesses and start-up companies • Established and emerging industries, technologies, and services that promote environmental sustainability, especially those addressing climate change and 	The plan includes good policies for improving business climate and fostering entrepreneurship. Consider including policies that focus retention and recruitment on businesses that provide family wage jobs, industry clusters that export goods and services, and small/startup companies that are locally owned.

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Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
resilience (MPP-Ec-1, Ec-3, Ec-4, Ec-7, Ec-9, Ec-16)	
Support, recognize, and empower the contributions of the region’s culturally and ethnically diverse communities, institutions, and Native Tribes (MPP-Ec-15, Ec-17, Ec-20)	Consider including policies that support the economic contributions of the region’s diverse communities.

PSRC has resources available to assist the city in addressing these comments and inform development of the draft plan. We have provided links to online documents in this letter, and additional resources related to the plan review process can also be found at <https://www.psrc.org/planning-2050/vision/vision-2050-planning-resources>.

We appreciate all the work the city is doing and the opportunity to review and provide comments. We are happy to continue working with you as the draft progresses through the adoption process. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 206-464-6172 or ddixon@psrc.org.

Sincerely,



David Dixon, Growth Management Planning
Puget Sound Regional Council

cc: Review Team, Growth Management Services, Department of Commerce



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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July 25, 2024

City of Mercer Island City Council
C/o Adam Zack, Senior Planner
Office of Community Planning & Development
9611 SE 36th Street
Mercer Island, Washington 98040

Sent via electronic email to Adam.zack@mercerisland.gov

RE: Comment Letter for Submittal ID 2024-S-7050 – City of Mercer Island Proposed Draft Comprehensive Plan

Dear Councilmembers:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City of Mercer Island’s proposed draft 2024 comprehensive plan received on May 3, 2024. Growth Management Services processed the draft document with material identification number 2024-S-7050.

Your submission represents a great deal of work and substantial progress towards the 2024 periodic update of your comprehensive plan due December 31, 2024. We especially appreciate and applaud the extensive work conducted on the new locally-initiated elements of the plan, the Economic Development element and the Parks and Open Space element. Mercer Island has a long history of environmental awareness and action, which are reflected in the city’s progressive natural environment policies, and climate policies and associated Climate Action Plan. We are also excited to see additional comprehensive subtasks planned for the Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan 2024 update as evidenced in *Table 2. Comprehensive Plan Element-Specific Subtasks* identified in the periodic review *Scope of Work and Master Schedule*.

As part of our review we referenced the proposed draft comprehensive plan, including several technical reports, such as the *Racially Disparate Impacts Evaluation* and the *Land Capacity Analysis Supplement*. Below, you will find our comments and recommendations for the draft elements listed:

1. Land Use

- a. Based on our review of proposed Mercer Island Land Use Element Goal 16.4, the city’s goals for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) do not yet align with [RCW 36.70A.681\(1\)\(c\)](#), which explicitly states, “The city or county must allow at least two accessory dwelling units on all lots that are located *in all zoning districts within an urban growth area that allow for single-family homes...*”. The city’s proposed amendment to policy 16.4, shared via email on July 19, 2024, limits ADUs to single-family zones, which is not consistent with the statutory requirement that counties and cities must allow ADUs in all zones within an urban growth

area that allow for single-family homes. While Mercer Island is not required to implement [HB 1337](#) in its development regulations until June 30, 2025, Commerce recommends updating goals and policies in your proposed draft comprehensive plan, and incorporating into your development regulations, the full range of new ADU regulations, beginning with [RCW 36.70A.680](#) and [RCW 36.70A.681](#), during the periodic update process. Commerce has developed several tools to help local governments implement the current ADU requirements, including the [Guidance for Accessory Dwelling Units in Washington State](#), the [ADU Checklist](#), and the [ADU EZView](#) webpage with references and resources devoted to the topic.

- b. We appreciate the several goals and policies within the draft plan that address re-constructed and new public service facilities such as fire stations, fire flow protection and fire and emergency response that will increase service capacity and protect public safety on the island. However, the land use element must be expanded to include specific goals and policies that reduce and mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires pursuant to [RCW 36.70A.070](#)(1), amended in 2023. We recommend adding community wildfire preparedness and fire adaptation measures to your land use element and look forward to seeing these updates as required in your final comprehensive plan update. You may wish to reference the Wildland Urban Interface Code ([RCW 19.27.560](#)), developed and adopted by the Washington State Building Code Council, as an example of development regulations intended to separate human development from wildfire prone landscapes and protect existing residential development and infrastructure through community wildfire preparedness and fire adaptation measures.

2. Housing

- a. During our review of your draft housing element, we did not find supporting documentation indicating sufficient land capacity for emergency housing and emergency shelter as required by [RCW 36.70A.070](#)(2)(c). While Commerce guidance indicates jurisdictions do not need to complete a land capacity analysis (LCA) for emergency housing and emergency shelter *if they allow these uses in all zones that allow hotels*, [RCW 36.70A.070](#)(2)(c) expressly states jurisdictions must ensure sufficient capacity for all housing types, including emergency housing and emergency shelter, is identified in the housing element. Therefore, we recommend the city consider including this information in the city's final land capacity analysis.
- b. Thank you for evaluating barriers to housing development, *Table 2, Programs and Actions Needed to Achieve Housing Availability*. To strengthen this evaluation, we encourage you to expand and identify *specific* barriers in addition to the broad barrier categories listed in Table 2. For example, while citing recent state law in Table 2, please consider expanding on the specific actions the city will take to comply with statewide legislation and how these actions will address the associated barriers. Please refer to [Housing Element Book 2, Chapter 4 Adequate Provisions](#) and [Appendix B](#) for examples of specific barriers and actions.
- c. We appreciate the use of 'permanent supportive housing' in the definition of 'special needs group housing', and noting the interim amendment made through Ordinance 21C-23, which adds 'emergency housing' in the definition of 'social service transitional housing'. We recommend the use and adoption of 'emergency housing' as defined in [RCW 36.70A.030](#)(14)

rather than as defined in [RCW 84.36.043\(3\)\(b\)](#). Commerce offers review, technical assistance and land use tools, such as specific checklists, to help local governments develop regulations pertaining to the siting and development of shelter, transitional housing, emergency housing, and permanent supportive housing ([STEP](#)).

- d. New changes in [HB 1220](#) require jurisdictions to examine racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusion and displacement risk in housing policies and regulations and adopt policies to begin to undo the impacts ([RCW 36.70A.070\(e\)](#)). We appreciate your work on this, particularly the review of housing-related policies in *Racially Disparate Impacts Evaluation, Appendix A: Policy Evaluation*. We see that four policies were evaluated as ‘approaching’ because “the lack of defined terms in this policy can be problematic.” We recommend identifying any undefined and problematic terms in your policies and recommending specific changes, as the intent of the review of policies is to identify areas where changes could be made in your next comprehensive plan. Please see [Housing Element Book 3](#) Step 3: Evaluate policies (pg. 33) and Step 4: Revise policies (pg. 36) for more information on this process.

3. Transportation

- a. During our review we did not see multimodal level of service standards (MMLOS) present in the draft transportation element. While adoption of MMLOS are not required for 2024 jurisdictions until the 5-year implementation progress report per [RCW 36.70A.130\(9\)\(a\)](#), given the complex issues that will need to be addressed and the extent of coordination with regional partners, including King County and PSRC, we encourage jurisdictions to begin the work and not necessarily wait until during the five-year progress report process.
- b. The draft transportation element does not identify specific actions to bring transportation facilities and services to established MMLOS ([RCW 36.70A.070\(6\)\(a\)\(iii\)\(D\)](#) and [WAC 365-196-430](#)). We recommend the city consider including this information in the final comprehensive plan document to better align with statute.
- c. Thank you for including a transition plan as required by [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#). For improved clarity, we recommend adding a reference to the transition plan in your draft transportation element.
- d. [RCW 36.70A.070\(6\)\(a\)\(iv\)\(A\)](#) and [WAC 365.196-430\(2\)\(k\)\(iv\)](#) require an analysis of future funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources. We did not find specific language addressing this provision in your draft transportation element. While there is a funding section in the element, we recommend updating your transportation element or related appendices to include an analysis of future funding capability.
- e. During our review, we did not identify specific language addressing funding shortfall strategies in your draft transportation element. We recommend updating the draft finance subelement (within the transportation element) to include a discussion of how additional funding will be raised, or how land use assumptions will be reassessed to ensure that level of service standards will be met, if probable funding falls short of meeting the identified needs of the transportation system, including state transportation facilities ([RCW 36.70A.070\(6\)\(a\)\(iv\)\(c\)](#) and [WAC 365-196-430\(2\)\(l\)\(iii\)](#)).

Department of Commerce: Submittal ID 2024-S-7050

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to receiving and reviewing your draft development regulations in the near future. If you have any questions or concerns about this letter, or any other growth management issues, please feel free to contact me at (360) 280-3147 or catherine.mccoy@commerce.wa.gov. We extend our continued support to the City of Mercer Island in achieving the goals of the GMA.

Sincerely,



Catherine McCoy
Senior Planner
Growth Management Services

CM:lw

cc: David Andersen, AICP, Senior Managing Director, Growth Management Services
Valerie Smith, AICP, Deputy Managing Director, Growth Management Services
Benjamin Serr, AICP, Eastern Regional Manager, Growth Management Services
Carol Holman, MUP, Western Region Manager, Growth Management Services
Anne Fritzel, AICP, Housing Planning Manager, Growth Management Services
Adam Zack, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development, City of Mercer Island
Alison Van Gorp, Deputy Director, Community Planning and Development, City of Mercer Island
Morgan Krueger, Regional Land Use Planner, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife Region 4
David Dixon, Growth Management Planning, Puget Sound Regional Council

Agenda Bill 6519 Exhibit 3A – Non-Substantive City Council Comments.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-54	Ted Weinberg	Introduction	preamble	Comp Plan Introduction. Page 2. Overview section. The two new elements are not listed. Note the substitution of semicolons for commas in the list of elements to differentiate between the two occurrences of the word “and” – once in the title of the Parks and Open Space element and once preceding the final element in the list. Specific proposed change: The Comprehensive Plan is organized into <u>eight</u> six elements: Land Use,; Housing,; Transportation,; Utilities,; Capital Facilities,; <u>Economic Development</u> ; Parks and Open Space; and Shorelines.	Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-55	Ted Weinberg	Introduction	preamble	Comp Plan Introduction. Page 6. Population section. 1 st bullet point. 2 nd sentence. Replace the 2030 population projection with PSRC’s update, once we have it. Specific proposed change: Mercer Islanders can expect to see their population grow from 23,310 in 2014 to an estimated (PSRC, approximate) 25,243 <u>[Update from PSRC]</u> persons by 2030.	Staff is in the process of getting updated data from PSRC
CC-76	Criag Reynolds	Introduction	preamble	Introduction Page 3: The following Vision Statement is essentially the compilation of several long-standing policies embodied in several existing planning documents including the Land Use Plan, Town Center Plan, Park and Open Space Plan, and the Arts and Culture Plan. Reexamining these policies implies a reexamination of the City's overall policy base.	The proposed amendment is hard to see in the notation. The proposal is to strike the hyphen in longstanding. Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-77	Criag Reynolds	Introduction	preamble	Introduction Page 3: Mercer Island is not an island unto itself. The community is part of a regional complex that affords housing, human services, jobs, transportation, <u>utilities</u> , cultural and recreational opportunities. As a partner in the ever-changing world of environment, economics and politics, Mercer Island has and will continue to be an active player in regional issues. However, within this framework, Mercer Island will continue <u>to strive to</u> maintain local control of all significant policy issues. Likewise, active community participation and leadership are fundamental for protecting and enhancing the values and characteristics that have shaped the quality of life and livability of Mercer Island.	Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-78	Criag Reynolds	Introduction	preamble	Introduction Page 4: Education is the Key The community and its public and private institutions are committed to <u>providing</u> excellence in education.	Proposed change: amend “provide” to “providing” Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-80	Criag Reynolds	Introduction	preamble	Introduction Page 6: Mercer Island is principally a low density, single-family residential community. The community will continue to seek ways to enhance its image as <u>one of</u> Puget Sound's " most livable residential communities." Supporting these efforts, City leaders will maintain the integrity of existing approved land use policies.	Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-8	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	preamble	Section III. Table 4 should re relabeled as Table 6.	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-42	Salim Nice	Land Use	preamble	Land Use Element Introduction Within II. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS replace “Mercer Island has not been designated as an Urban Center <u>High Capacity Transit community</u> in the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 202050. <u>This designation recognizes the importance of the localities with high-capacity transit service as a place to focus new development due to the excellent access to employment centers, educational institutions and other opportunities.</u> ” with, “For land use and Planning purposes, Mercer Island is now designated as a High Capacity Transit Community (HCTC) in the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 2050 plan. This is a change from its previous designation as a Large Urban City. The new designation recognizes Mercer Island’s importance as a locality with high-capacity transit service, making it an ideal place to focus new development within walking distance of the high-capacity transit, walkable jobs, and in adherence with HB 1220 affordability and density guidelines. This is due to the excellent access it provides to employment centers, educational institutions, and other opportunities.”	
CC-56	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	preamble	Land Use Element. Section I. Page 2. 3 rd bullet point of 4. Fixing a scrivener’s error; the Town Center buildings have a maximum height, not a minimum. Specific proposed change: Requiring that new projects include additional public amenities in exchange for increased building height above the two-story <u>maximum</u> minimum; and	
CC-57	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	preamble	Land Use Element. Section I. Page 5. Last paragraph. First sentence. Update to reflect that the CAP has now been adopted. Specific proposed change: Beginning in 2022 <u>In 2023</u> , the City <u>Council</u> <u>adopted</u> began composing a Climate Action Plan.	
CC-58	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	preamble	Land Use Element. Section III. Page 9. Last paragraph. Last sentence. Fixing scrivener’s error; the word Island was missing in our city name. Specific proposed change: The City of Mercer <u>Island</u> does not have any zoned industrial lands.	
CC-59	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	preamble	Land Use Element. Section III. Page 11. Table 5. 3 rd column header. Fixing scrivener’s error; the column header was listed twice. Specific proposed change: Assumed Densities Assumed Densities (low/high units per acre)	
CC-65	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	3.6	3.6 Building facades should provide visual interest to pedestrians. Street level windows, minimum <u>reasonable</u> building set-backs, on-street entrances, landscaping, and articulated walls should be encouraged.	
CC-66	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	4	4 Create an active, pedestrian-friendly, <u>bicycle-friendly</u> , and accessible retail core.	
CC-9	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	4.2	Section V. Goal 4.2 references TC-1, but it seems like TC-1 is deleted?	Figure TC-1 is proposed to be struck from the Land Use Element. The reference in Policy 4.2 should be struck, too. The remaining text of Policy 4.2 would not be required to change. Note: the “pink lines map” is adopted in MICC 19.11.020(B)(1) and is not required to be adopted in the Comprehensive Plan as well.
CC-68	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	9.5	9.5 Develop long-range plans for the development of additional <u>to meet the commuter</u> parking to serve <u>needs of</u> Mercer Island residents.	
CC-69	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	9.6	9.6 Prioritize parking for Mercer Island residents <u>and business customers</u> within the Town Center.	
CC-45	Salim Nice	Land Use	12.2	12.2 Strike “payment of a calculated amount of money” and replace with “fee in lieu.”	
CC-15	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	15.4	Goal 15.4 delete “such as” replace with “including but not limited to”	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-48	Salim Nice	Land Use	16.1	16.1 Strike existing text and replace with: "Encourage using existing homes to meet changing population needs and help people age in place. Consider allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and shared housing. These options can provide affordable and accessible housing, reduce tax burdens, and keep neighborhoods stable."	
CC-16	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	18.11, 18.12	Goal 18.11 and 18.12 delete unless required by state law. If required amend 18.11 to delete "people in" and replace with "residents of"	
CC-62	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	27.5	Land Use Element. Section V. Page 30. Goal 27.5. Add explicit mention of charging infrastructure for vehicles. Specific proposed change: 27.5 Encourage the reduction of emissions from passenger vehicles through the development of zero- or low-greenhouse gas emitting transportation, <u>the development of vehicle charging infrastructure</u> , and by reducing <u>the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle trips</u> .	
CC-63	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	29.7	Land Use Element. Section VI. Page 31. Undo deletion of multi-modal transportation from the Action Plan. Specific proposed change: 29.7 <u>Create opportunities for multi-modal transportation.</u>	See also Agency Comment Log # AC-12
CC-44	Salim Nice	Land Use	Multiple	5: Strike five occurrences of "Encourage" and replace with "Allow."	
CC-31	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	1.7	Goal 1.7 Replace "equitably" with "fairly"	Policy 1.7 helps address PSRC MPP H-5 and King County CPPs H-20 and H-21.
CC-90	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element: Correct a typo on the first line of page 2 to insert "A"	
CC-91	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element: Strike the second to last paragraph on page 16 that begins with "The City manages a permit parking program [...]"	
CC-94	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element: add "Vancouver BC" to the final sentence of the second paragraph on page 21.	
CC-95	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element: amend the third paragraph on page 21 as follows: "Mercer Island does not have any air transportation facilities or services. Scheduled and chartered passenger and freight air services are provided at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in SeaTac, <u>Payne Field in Everett</u> , the King County International Airport in south Seattle, <u>and via float plane from Lake Union.</u> "	
CC-125	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	preamble	4 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT, I. INTRODUCTION page 2 "UPCOMING CHANGES" – recommend leaving the first paragraph as is – those statements will still be true for at least 1.5 years if not more.	
CC-126	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element Second paragraph recommend retaining the stricken language. No objection to the added text	
CC-132	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element Page 17 "PARKING". Recommend editing the second paragraph to reflect that the Council has directed that the permit parking for Town Center be eliminated.	See also Comment Log # CC-91
CC-133	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element Page 19 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION – the new second paragraph should be edited "Link light rail <u>is scheduled to run</u> through ..." and "The light rail <u>is scheduled to provide</u> provides frequent..."	See also Comment Log # CC-151 and # CC-153
CC-134	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element Page 23 "FUTURE TRAVEL DEMAND" Reject the edits to the second paragraph and change "2023" to "2025"	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-145	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 2. Light rail isn't open yet. Specific proposed change: <u>A</u> new light rail station located north of the Town Center, on the I-90 corridor between 77th Avenue SE and 80th Avenue SE, <u>will provide</u> provides access to destinations in Seattle, Bellevue and other cities that are part of the Sound Transit system.	
CC-146	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 3. Goal 1.3. Fixing scrivener's error. Specific proposed change: Employ transportation system management (TSM) techniques to improve the efficient operation of the transportation system including, but not limited to: <u>through</u> traffic through and turn lanes, management of street parking, signals and other traffic control measures.	
CC-151	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 18. Public Transportation section. 2 nd paragraph. Change the reference to light rail to be future tense. Specific proposed change: Link light rail, <u>when it opens, will run</u> runs through Mercer Island along the median of I-90 with a station located north of the Town Center, between 77th Avenue SE and 80th Avenue SE. The light rail <u>will</u> provides frequent connections to Seattle, Bellevue, and other regional destinations.	
CC-152	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 19. 2 nd to last paragraph. Metro suspended and then discontinued route 216. Specific proposed change: At the Mercer Island Park and Ride, Sound Transit routes 550 and 554 connect Mercer Island to Seattle, Bellevue, and Issaquah; and Metro route 216 provides service to Redmond and Seattle.	See also Comment Log # CC-92
CC-153	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 22. Paragraph 3. Need to change the reference to the light rail line to be future tense. Specific proposed change: The opening of the East Link light rail line <u>will</u> provides an additional travel option between the Town Center and regional destinations	
CC-154	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	preamble	Transportation Element. Page 26. Table 3. Project NM-5. Per City Council TIP vote, project has been extended to East Mercer Way. SE 40th St Sidewalk Improvement (Gallagher Hill Road – <u>East Mercer Way</u> 93rd Ave SE)	Changes to Table 3 will be confirmed with Public Works staff prior to first reading.
CC-117	Salim Nice	Transportation	4.10	Transportation Element Policy 4.10: Strike text and replace it with "Development programs to address the needs of people who do not drive (e.g., elderly, minor, income, and person with disabilities)."	
CC-118	Salim Nice	Transportation	5.4	Transportation Element Policy 5.4: Insert "transportation" after state and before policies.	
CC-120	Salim Nice	Transportation	7.3	Transportation Element Policy 7.3: Begin the sentence with "Seek to reduce..." Strike "to zero by 2030"	
CC-86	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	7.11	Amend Transportation Element Policy 7.11: " <u>Consider requiring that n</u> New or <u>materially</u> remodeled public institutions, commercial, mixed use, and multifamily facilities should have sufficient <u>secure</u> storage for bicycles and other active transportation modes.	
CC-148	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	9.4	Transportation Element. Page 8. Goal 9.4 Clarifies that Metro services need to adapt to the transportation needs of MI residents. We need to be thinking beyond scheduled bus service. Specific proposed change: 9.4 Work with King County Metro to provide public transit vehicles and services that are more in scale with the <u>transportation needs of the City's neighborhoods and the capacity of its local road network</u>	
CC-122	Salim Nice	Transportation	12.4	Transportation Element Policy 12.4: Strike the text "to expand" and replace it with "for."	Policy 12.4 would read: Study opportunities to expand <u>for</u> electric bicycle facilities that serve the Town Center, light rail station, and park and ride.
CC-89	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 12.7: "Coordinate with Mercer Island School District to plan for safe routes to schools."	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-108	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	preamble	Add the following two sentences to Utilities Element Section VI: "Approximately xxx homes on Mercer Island include solar energy facilities, generating approximately xxx KWH of electricity each calendar year."	If the City Council decides to make this proposed amendment, staff will need to research the proposed numbers.
CC-136	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Utilities	preamble	Utilities Element Page 16 "FUTURE NEEDS" Edit as follows to reflect the correct phrasing of the obligation to serve: As a telecommunications utility Lumen Technologies is required to provide services on demand <u>where facilities exist and to those applicants reasonably entitled thereto.</u>	
CC-155	Ted Weinberg	Utilities	preamble	Utilities Element. Page 2. 2 nd paragraph. Our main water line is 24 inches, not 30. Specific proposed change: The bulk of the Island's water supply originates in the Cedar River watershed and is delivered through the 13 Cedar Eastside supply line to Mercer Island's <u>2430</u> -inch supply line.	Changes to Table 3 will be confirmed with Public Works staff prior to first reading.
CC-156	Ted Weinberg	Utilities	preamble	Utilities Element. Page 3. 2 nd paragraph. Last sentence. Fix typo. Specific proposed change: Together, they strengthen the water <u>suppl</u> ysypply system and improve system operations for water quality control.	
CC-159	Ted Weinberg	Utilities	preamble	Utilities Element. Page 8. Future Needs section. 6 th paragraph. How the NPDES permit relates to the subject of the first sentence is unclear. I believe the change below will clarify the sentence. Specific proposed change: The City is in compliance with all applicable federal and state stormwater requirements, <u>according to the</u> Western Washington Phase II Municipal (NPDES) Permit issued by the Washington State Dept. of Ecology.	
CC-160	Ted Weinberg	Utilities	preamble	Utilities Element. Page 13. Future Needs section. 4 th paragraph. Last sentence. Fix grammar. Specific proposed change: There is a reoccurring issue <u>The unresolved recurring issue of system</u> unreliability is unresolved and needs to be addressed.	See also Comment Log # CC-109
CC-178	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	preamble	1. Utilities Element, Future Needs: "The City does not plan to implement an aquifer protection program because there are no known aquifers in the vicinity of Mercer Island that are utilized by the City or any other water supplier. Although aquifer protection is not a factor for future <u>non-emergency</u> needs, species..."	
CC-97	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	2.1	Correct a typo at the beginning of Utilities Element Policy 2.1.	The typo is that "TObtain" should be "To obtain"
CC-157	Ted Weinberg	Utilities	2.2	Utilities Element. Page 4. Goal 2.2. First sentence. Explicitly call out water system maintainability as a goal. Specific proposed change: Upgrade and maintain the water distribution and storage system as necessary to maximize the useful life <u>and maintainability</u> of the system.	
CC-99	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	6.3	Amend Utilities Element Policy 6.3 as follows: "Install all new electric transmission and distribution facilities in accordance with this Plan, the City's zoning code, the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries electrical code, and other applicable laws, and shall be consistent with rates and tariffs on file with the WUTC. The electricity provider will obtain the necessary permits for work in the public right-of-way, except in emergencies."	
CC-103	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	7.1	Amend Utilities Element Policy 7.1: "Promote and support conservation and emergency preparedness programs undertaken by PSE, or the current provider, and shall encourage PSE to inform residents about these programs."	
CC-110	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	preamble	Insert a sentence at the end of the second paragraph on page 1 of the Capital Facilities Element: " <u>The City will face significant challenges in the next few years as it searches for options to replace the asbestos-contaminated City Hall and deteriorating and overcrowded public works building.</u> "	See also Agency Comment Log # AC-14
CC-111	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element, amend the final sentence on Page 1 as follows: "The City has also been able to <u>increased</u> its tree canopy by 8% from 2007 to 2017."	
CC-112	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element: Please add column and row totals, and a grand total, to Table 3	Table 3 came from Finance and Public Works, CPD staff will need to coordinate with them to update the table if Council makes this change

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-113	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element: Please update Table 3 to include estimates for city hall and public works building acquisition / construction.	Table 3 came from Finance and Public Works, CPD staff will need to coordinate with them to update the table if Council makes this change
CC-138	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element Page 4 Table 1 needs additional updating to reflect current operations.	
CC-161	Ted Weinberg	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element. Page 1. 2 nd paragraph. 2 nd and 3 rd sentences. The City currently does not have a functioning City Hall. Although this is a temporary circumstance from the long-term perspective, as it will take several years for us to re-establish a new City Hall it is worth noting in the Comprehensive Plan that at present we do not have one. We should also explicitly list the public safety and public works buildings. Specific proposed change: As a result, the community largely has sufficient capacity in water and sewer systems, parks, schools, local streets and arterials, and public buildings (City Hall, library, fire stations, <u>public safety buildings</u> , <u>public works building</u> , and community center) to handle projected growth. However, additional investments may be considered for <u>building a new City Hall</u> , park improvements, as well as open space acquisition and trail development.	
CC-162	Ted Weinberg	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element. Page 2. Last sentence, which continues onto page 3. Update to reflect that the CAP plan has now been adopted. Also adjusting grammar of the 3 rd clause in the sentence. Specific proposed change: The City's first Climate Action Plan, <u>adopted in April 2023</u> , (due Q1 2023) quantifies and enumerates the various City and community actions needed to achieve the GHG reduction targets that <u>to which</u> successive City Councils have committed to, as part of the City's K4C membership.	
CC-163	Ted Weinberg	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element. Page 4. Table 1. City Hall row. Use column. Update to reflect the current unusable status of the City Hall building. Specific proposed change: <u>[Uses prior to City Hall closure in 2023]:</u> Police, Dispatch, & General Administration, Municipal Court, Facility Maintenance & Permitting Services.	
CC-164	Ted Weinberg	Capital Facilities	preamble	Capital Facilities Element. Page 9. Table 2. Rightmost column. Fixing scrivener's error. I think there's supposed to be a superscript 3 here referencing the 3 rd footnote at the bottom of the table. Specific proposed change: Annual Reinvestment Cost ³	
CC-143	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	1.21	Capital Facilities Element Goal 1.21 Add the following at the very start of the paragraph " <u>To the extent possible, where reasonable and consistent with fiscal sustainability</u> , City operations. . . ."	Policy 1.21 would read: <u>To the Extent possible, where reasonable and consistent with fiscal sustainability</u> , City operations should be optimized to minimize carbon footprint impacts, especially with respect to energy consumption, waste reduction, and procurement. New Capital Facilities should incorporate and encourage the sustainable stewardship of the natural environment, consider the benefit of creating cutting-edge, demonstration projects, and favor options that have the lowest feasible carbon footprint and greatest carbon sequestration potential. The City's commitment to adopted GHG emission reduction targets as part of its membership in the K4C should be considered.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-165	Ted Weinberg	Capital Facilities	1.21	Capital Facilities Element. Page 31. Goal 1.21. 1 st sentence. Expand the concept of energy consumption to include on-site energy generation. Specific proposed change: 1.21 City operations should be optimized to minimize carbon footprint impacts, especially with respect to energy consumption <u>and on-site generation</u> , and waste reduction, and procurement.	

Agenda Bill 6519 Exhibit 3B – Substantive City Council Comments.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-79	Criag Reynolds	Introduction	preamble	Introduction Page 4: <u>Stronger Together</u> Mercer Islanders recognize the benefits of an environment where everyone can survive and thrive. Through a variety of social programs and public services we strive to meet the needs of all Islanders. <u>Welcoming and Inclusive</u> Mercer Island is a place of acceptance where all are welcome, irrespective of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, financial resources, or age. We believe that a diverse community is a healthier community. <u>We respect and appreciate the benefits of diversity.</u>	Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-5	Salim Nice	Introduction	Multiple	Amend the Introduction as follows: 1.) Change “circulation” to “transportation” wherever it occurs. 2.) Replace “In 2018, the City Council committed to a continuous process of self-improvement and self-assessment by evaluating City’s policies and programs against the best practices established by the leading international analytic framework. Initially this was accomplished through the use of the STAR Community Rating System. As better analytic tools become available, the intention is to continue to identify and adopt the leading international analytic framework.” with “In 2015, the City convened a 42-member stakeholder group that made recommendations, which were picked up by the joint Planning and Design Commissions. These commissions then made recommendations to the Council, resulting in a rewrite of the Town Center code. The new code includes trading additional building height for affordable housing requirements, pedestrian-friendly street-level facades, greater setbacks, and mid-block connectors. It also implements daylight planning and façade modulation to reduce the canyon effect caused by developments from 2004 and 2014.” 3.) Replace this travel writer’s quote: “Islands can seem rather special, but then so can islanders ... most people who remove themselves to islands regard themselves as having entered paradise Classically, a person goes to an island in much the same spirit as a person heads into exile—seeking simplicity, glorying in a world that is still incomplete and therefore full of possibilities.” -Paul Theroux With: “Mercer Island: A thriving, predominantly single-family residential community that balances growth with tradition. We preserve our unique character and natural beauty while striving to maintain excellent municipal services with fiscal responsibility. We support local businesses and ensure outstanding educational and recreational opportunities, managing our limited resources wisely for generations to come.”	Note: the Planning Commission did not consider changes to the Introduction and Vision Statement during its public hearing and did not make a recommendation for any changes to the Vision.
CC-43	Salim Nice	Land Use	2.2	2.2 Strike text and replace with: “2.2 Establish a minimum commercial square footage standard in Town Center to preserve the existing quantity of commercial space in recent developments as new development occurs, with a specific focus on maintaining the current number of large grocery stores to ensure adequate access to food for residents.”	
CC-64	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	3.3	3.3 Calculate building height on sloping sites by measuring height on the lowest side of the building.	
CC-60	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	7.3	Land Use Element. Section V. Page 18. Goal 7.3. Adding SE 27 th Street as a primary pedestrian corridor. Also note the addition of an s at the end of the word corridor and the addition of an Oxford comma following the word landscaping. Specific proposed change: 7.3 <u>78th Avenue SE and SE 27th Street</u> should be the primary pedestrian corridors in the Town Center, with ample sidewalks, landscaping, and amenities.	Implementing this policy would likely require a review of Town Center development regulations to ensure they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
CC-67	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	9.1	9.1 Reduce the land area devoted to parking by encouraging structured and underground parking. If open-air, parking lots should be behind buildings. <u>Parking should be convenient and safe.</u>	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-70	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	10	10: Prioritize Town Center transportation investments that promote multi-model access to regional transit facilities.	Goal 10 is in a section of goals and policies specifically directed at Town Center. If the Council would like to make this a Citywide policy, it would probably fit better elsewhere, possibly under Goal 15.
CC-12	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	15	Goal 15 proposes to add "to moderate" after "low" in the goal statement. We propose deleting that added language.	
CC-71	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	15.1	15.1 Preserve the neighborhood character of <u>quality of life in</u> all residential zones.	See agency comment response Log # AC-9
CC-14	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	15.3	Goal 15.3 How will the city accomplish this goal? We would reject the new language. Whichever language is chosen please strike "Commercial Office" unless/until the code is changed, and at this point we would likely not support that change.	Proposed Land Use Element Policy 15.3 states: "Encourage multifamily and mixed-use housing within the existing boundaries of the Town Center, multifamily, and Commercial Office zones to accommodate moderate- to extremely low-income households." This proposed policy would be accomplished through implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The policies in the Housing Element are specifically focused on providing more detail about accommodating moderate- to extremely low-income households. See the policies under Goal 2 of the Housing Element for more detail.
CC-46	Salim Nice	Land Use	15.3	15.3 Strike paragraph. This text is located in a section titled "OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTER," yet it sets goals for Town Center.	
CC-47	Salim Nice	Land Use	15.4	15.4 Strike existing text and replace with: "Social and recreation clubs, schools, and religious institutions are predominantly located in single-family residential areas of the Island. The City Council may consider measures within the land use code to address the maintenance, updating, and renovation of these facilities, while ensuring compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. Such facilities contribute to the mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of Mercer Island residents. Land use decisions should balance the retention of these facilities with overall community planning and zoning regulations."	
CC-72	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	16.4	16.4 Promote accessory dwelling units in single-family zones subject to specific development and owner occupancy standards.	See agency comment response Log # AC-4
CC-49	Salim Nice	Land Use	16.6	16.6 Strike In the alternative to striking 16.6, replace it with, "Explore flexible residential development regulations and incentives to encourage the creation of permanent open spaces comparable to the countywide 4:1 program, homes meeting Universal Design standards for accessibility, and sustainable development achieving passive house efficiency standards." Link for reference: https://code.universaldesign.org If 16.6 remains, reconcile with Goal 21.	
CC-50	Salim Nice	Land Use	16.7, 16.8	16.7 and 16.8 Strike and replace with a single goal of 16.7: "Encourage the preservation and maintenance of naturally occurring affordable housing."	The Planning Commission proposed this policy to direct a review of whether land use, building, and fire codes were incentivizing the demo/rebuild pattern the City is currently seeing.
CC-51	Salim Nice	Land Use	17.3	17.3 Strike	See Comment Log # CC-25
CC-52	Salim Nice	Land Use	18.12	18.12 Strike. This is an unfunded liability. Presumably, people purchasing these assets are doing so at a discount that reflects previous impacts on the property.	See Comment Log # CC-16.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-19	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	21.3	Goal 21.3 – Unless these proposed changes are required under state law, the edits should be rejected.	
CC-61	Ted Weinberg	Land Use	21.5	Land Use Element. Section V. Page 29. Goal 21.5. Undo deletion of goal 21.5. Specific proposed change: <u>21.5 Conduct annual tracking of new, or significantly remodeled, structures verified under various green building programs on Mercer Island and incorporate statistics into the City's sustainability tracking system and performance measures.</u>	Administration of this type of tracking would require City staff resources.
CC-20	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	27.6.4	Goal 27.6.4 encouraging, smaller, single-family residential housing units, moderate density, housing (including duplexes, and triplex), and	
CC-53	Salim Nice	Land Use	27.6.4	27.6.4 Strike. The SMP overwater structures/docks change the Council made should be enough to remind us that this policy will not work. I suggest we let Washington State's energy code serve its intended purpose unincumbered by additional competing policies.	
CC-23	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	29.5, 29.6	Delete Goals 29.5 and 29.6 – we should not be discriminating against certain groups by favoring other groups.	Proposed Policy 29.5 was drafted to improve consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Multicounty Planning Policy (MPP) MPP-RC-2, which states: "Prioritize services and access to opportunity for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities to ensure all people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve quality of life and address past inequities." Proposed Policy 29.6 was drafted to improve consistency between the Comprehensive Plan, MPP-RC-4, and CPP DP-23. This amendment is also in response to House Bill (HB) 1717 passed by the WA Legislature in 2022. HB 1717 amended the GMA to require increased coordination between GMA planning jurisdictions and federally recognized tribes. From the Municipal Research Services Council (MRSC) website: "Under HB 1717, federally recognized tribes may voluntarily participate in a county or regional planning process under GMA. If a tribe wants to participate, it must present a resolution to the county, indicating its intent. Local governments then must enter into good faith negotiations with the tribe to develop a mutually agreeable memorandum of agreement outlining collaboration and participation in the planning process. If agreement cannot be reached, the parties may enter into a mediation process of 60 days or less using a suitable expert arranged for and paid by the Department of Commerce. Failure to reach an agreement does not prevent a tribe from attempting to participate in subsequent planning processes. A tribe may also request that Commerce provide facilitation services to resolve issues that it has with a local government concerning the local government's comprehensive plan."

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-21	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	30.6	VI. ACTION PLAN. Goal 30.6 is deleted but it still seems relevant and should be retained unless it is captured in the Housing Element.	Policy 30.6 could be challenging to implement given the changes in the state law regarding residential development. This policy would likely conflict with the required implementation of statewide legislation pertaining to middle housing and accessory dwelling units (RCW 36.70A.635, RCW 36.70A.680, and RCW 36.70A.681).
CC-25	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	preamble	HOUSING ELEMENT. Under the heading Capacity to Accommodate Housing Growth, Target and Housing Needs, there is a reference to an Appendix X. Ce cannot comment on this section until we see Appendix X. Further, please at a minimum make the following edit to the third paragraph. Second, the city allowed multifamily development in the Commercial Office (C- O) zone.	On January 16, 2024, the City Council made the following motion to provide direction to the Housing Work Group as it prepared the initial draft of the Housing Element: Add multifamily residential use to the CO zones not directly abutting a parcel in a single-family zone. This policy direction was incorporated throughout the draft Housing Element. If the City Council decides to change that policy direction, the Housing Element will need to be reviewed to amend other policies based on that direction. If the City Council wants to explore including that policy direction in the Housing Element but hold off on implementation at a later date, the referenced line of text can be amended to reflect that change in direction. The City Council can also consider making a finding to provide more clarification that this policy option is intended to be implemented later in the life of the Comprehensive Plan. A specific date does not need to be set in this finding. A sample finding could state: "Implementation of policies that consider allowing residential uses in the Commercial Office zone should be implemented no sooner than three years after the City has completed its 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic review."
CC-26	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	preamble	Table 2. This table is very difficult to edit as there is no easy way to reference the cells. Will give it a shot. Multi-family and Mixed use – delete all the language under Development Regulations/Action or Program. This type of housing should not receive preferential treatment. If we are going to simplify permit requirements, reduce review time, and consider other adjustments, it should apply to all housing. Delete the reference to multi-family in the C-O zone. Delete the reference to anti-displacement measures.	This table is included in the Housing Element, with specific actions for each housing type to satisfy a GMA requirement that the City document housing barriers (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)(ii)). Commerce also commented on this Table, recommending that the City elaborate further on the actions it will take to address barriers for housing, see Agency Comment Log # AC-13. The GMA requires that the Housing Element, "Establishes antidisplacement policies, with consideration given to the preservation of historical and cultural communities as well as investments in low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income housing; equitable development initiatives; inclusionary zoning; community planning requirements; tenant protections; land disposition policies; and consideration of land that may be used for affordable housing. (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(h))"

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-27	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	preamble	Table 2 - Income Restricted Units. Delete the reference to streamlining design review unless it applies to all housing types. Delete references to fee-in-lieu and incentives.	This table is included in the Housing Element, with specific actions for each housing type to satisfy a GMA requirement that the City document housing barriers (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)(ii)). Commerce also commented on this Table, recommending that the City elaborate further on the actions it will take to address barriers for housing, see Agency Comment Log # AC-7.
CC-28	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	preamble	RDI – Delete the paragraph and 5 bullet points that starts with "The following strategies detailed in this Housing Element are directed at addressing and beginning to undo the impacts identified in the RDI evaluation". Given that the entirety of Mercer Island has been identified as a low displacement risk this seems unnecessary	RCW 36.70A.070(2)(f) requires cities to adopt a Housing Element that "Identifies and implements policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions".
CC-29	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	1.3	Goal 1.3 Delete 1.3 B(2) and (3) and 1.3 C(1) and (3)	RCW 36.70A.070(2)(b) requires cities to adopt a Housing Element that "Includes a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences, and within an urban growth area boundary, moderate density housing options including, but not limited to, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes". Additionally, RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) requires cities to adopt a Housing Element that: "(d) Makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community, including: (i) Incorporating consideration for low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households; (ii) Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations; (iii) Consideration of housing locations in relation to employment location; and (iv) Consideration of the role of accessory dwelling units in meeting housing needs;" This policy also helps address PSRC MPPs H-2-6 and H-9 and King County CPPs H-12 and H-21.
CC-30	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	1.4	Goal 1.4 Replace "equitable" with "equal". Delete 1.4H, G and K – these are not city functions.	Policy 1.4 helps address PSRC MPPs H-1, H-6, H-Action-4, and King County CPPs H-16, H-17, H-18, and H-25.
CC-32	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	1.12	Goal 1.12 Delete the reference to the Commercial-Office zone.	See Comment Log # CC-25 Policy 1.12 helps address PSRC MPP H-7-8 and King County CPPs H-21.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-33	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	2.3, 2.4	Goal 2. Delete 2.3 and 2.4.	RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) requires the Comprehensive Plan include a housing element that "(d) Makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community, including: (i) Incorporating consideration for low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households; (ii) Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations; (iii) Consideration of housing locations in relation to employment location; and (iv) Consideration of the role of accessory dwelling units in meeting housing needs;". Policies 2.3 and 2.4 also helps address PSRC MPPs H-2-6 and H-9 and King County CPPs H-18 and H-19
CC-34	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	2.5.C	Goals 2.5.C – H should be deleted. We are especially concerned that the MFTE (2.5.D) has found its way into this plan given that that is contrary to the express direction of Council when we repealed it several years ago.	If these policies are struck, the City Council may want to consider replacing them with other strategies for producing affordable housing units. RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) requires cities to make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. Policy 2.5 also helps address PSRC MPPs H-2-6 and H-9 and King County CPPs H-10 and H-21.
CC-35	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	2.6, 2.7, 2.8	Delete Goals 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8. These measures favor certain groups and do not have a revenue source.	See Comment Log # CC-34. RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)(ii) requires the comprehensive plan to include a housing element that makes adequate provisions for housing including "Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations". Policies 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8 also help address King County CPPs H-10, H-13, H-14, and H-21.
CC-36	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	3.1	Goal 3.1 should be deleted for reasons detailed in other edits. In particular, there are no funds to increase the supply of affordable housing or to add incentives. Tenant protections in 3.1.B is a penalty to rental property owners without any showing of need for increased tenant protections. The WA Landlord-Tenant Act is and extremely tenant-friendly law and no additional protections are needed. In addition, this type of regulation can dis-incentivize in rental property, thereby decreasing supply.	RCW 36.70A.070(2)(b) requires cities to adopt a Housing Element that "Includes a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences, and within an urban growth area boundary, moderate density housing options including, but not limited to, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes".
CC-37	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	3.2	Goal 3.2 – delete	Policy 3.2 helps address PSRC MPP H-5 and King County CPP H-20.
CC-38	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	4.2	Goal 4.2 re tenant protections – delete per comments on 3.1 above.	The City is required to establish anti-displacement policies by RCW 36.70A.070(2)(h). Policy 4.2 also helps address King County CPPs H-21 and H-23.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-39	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	5.1	Goal 5.1 should only be adopted if applicable to all housing types, not only multi-family.	This policy proposes a review of the multifamily development standards specifically because the established development standards in the City's multifamily zones have not been updated in many years. If the Council would like to amend this to apply to residential development standards more generally, "multifamily" could be replaced by "residential" in the first sentence. That change would direct a broader and more-generalized review of the residential development standards in all zones. Policy 5.1 helps address PSRC MPP H-10 and King County CPP H-12.
CC-40	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Housing	5.2	Goal 5.2 -delete	The City is required to plan for the listed middle housing types by RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c). Policy 5.2 also helps address PSRC MPP H-9.
CC-4	Salim Nice	Housing	Multiple	Return the Housing Element to the version originally drafted by the Housing Work Group as presented to the Planning Commission in PCB 24-05, Exhibit 1.	
CC-128	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	3.4	Transportation Element Goal 3.4 – delete – I don't think this should be a city function. And the environmental benefits of electric vehicles are questionable at best.	
CC-81	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	4.1	Transportation Element Policy 4.1, add a bullet that states: "Explore the possibility of on-demand intra-Island shared EV shuttle services to connect neighborhoods to Town Center and Link Light rail."	
CC-129	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	4.9	Transportation Element Goal 4.9 -delete. Goal 4.10 covers this.	
CC-130	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	5.4	Transportation Element Goal 5.4 Delete "equity" and edit to delete references to regional growth, VISION and County Planning policies. We should be advocating for actions and programs that are consistent with this comp plan.	
CC-85	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	6.9	Amend Transportation Element Policy 6.9: "Require adequate parking and other automobile <u>and bicycle</u> facilities to meet anticipated demand generated by new development."	
CC-119	Salim Nice	Transportation	7.1	Transportation Element Policy 7.1: Strike the text and replace it with "Include safety accommodations for all travelers in the City's roadway design standards."	
CC-121	Salim Nice	Transportation	12.3	Transportation Element Policy 12.3: Strike the text and replace it with "Standardize treatments for pedestrian crossings within the City."	
CC-82	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 4.11: "Provide adequate facilities for secure bicycle storage in city parks and at customer-facing city buildings."	
CC-83	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 4.12: "Prioritize "complete street" concepts in all material roadway construction or expansion."	
CC-84	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 4.13: "Prioritize execution of the Mercer island ADA Transition Plan."	See agency comment response AC-11
CC-87	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 7.12: "Consistently enforce all traffic safety regulations, including speed limits."	
CC-88	Craig Reynolds	Transportation	new	Add a new Transportation Element Policy 11.4: "Explore the creation of policies to discourage residents of Town Center from using City streets and public parking facilities in place of building-provided parking facilities."	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-147	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	new	Transportation Element. Page 8. New goal. Specific proposed change: <u>8.5 Ensure that Mercer Island Parks used for inter-city sporting events provide public electric vehicle chargers.</u>	
CC-149	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	new	Transportation Element. Page 9. New goal defining LOS for EV chargers. <u>10.7 Levels of service for electric vehicle charging infrastructure should be established.</u>	
CC-96	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	1.1	Amend Utilities Element Policy 1.1: "Structure rates and fees for all City-operated utilities with the goal of recovering all costs, including overhead and debt service, related to the extension of services and the operation, and maintenance, and upgrade of those utilities.	
CC-123	Salim Nice	Utilities	1.6	Utilities Element Policy: Strike 1.6 and reference the CAP, if necessary. I found the following explanation of natural asset management: <i>Natural assessment management typically refers to the systematic evaluation and management of natural resources to ensure their sustainable use and conservation. This involves integrating scientific knowledge with planning and decision-making processes to maintain the health and productivity of ecosystems. Natural resource assessments are essential in understanding the current conditions and trends of resources such as water, forests, wildlife, and land. These assessments help in identifying threats like climate change, invasive species, and habitat fragmentation, and in developing strategies to mitigate these impacts. For example, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service incorporate climate change scenarios into their natural resource management plans to anticipate and adapt to future conditions. Key components of natural assessment management include: 1. Data Collection and Analysis: Gathering information on the status of natural resources, including biodiversity, water quality, and soil health. 2. Climate Change Integration: Considering the impacts of climate change on natural resources and developing adaptation strategies. 3. Stakeholder Involvement: Engaging local communities, scientists, and policymakers in the management process to ensure that decisions are well-informed and widely supported. 4. Sustainable Practices: Implementing management practices that preserve the ecological balance, such as protecting critical habitats, controlling invasive species, and promoting sustainable land use.</i>	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-124	Salim Nice	Utilities	4.5	Utilities Element Policy: Strike 4.5 and reference the stormwater plan, if necessary. I found the following explanation of nonpoint source pollution: <i>Nonpoint source pollution (NPS) refers to diffuse pollution that does not originate from a single, identifiable source. Instead, it comes from multiple, often widespread sources, making it more challenging to control and manage. This type of pollution is usually carried into water bodies through rainfall or snowmelt that moves over and through the ground, picking up natural and human-made pollutants along the way. Common examples of nonpoint source pollution include: - Agricultural runoff: Pesticides, fertilizers, and animal waste from farms can wash into rivers, lakes, and groundwater. - Urban runoff: Oil, grease, heavy metals, and chemicals from roads, parking lots, and industrial areas can be carried by stormwater into water bodies. - Sediment: Erosion from construction sites, deforested areas, and riverbanks can add sediment to waterways, affecting aquatic habitats. - Nutrients: Excess nutrients from fertilizers and animal waste can cause algal blooms and eutrophication in water bodies, leading to oxygen depletion and harm to aquatic life. - Pathogens: Bacteria and viruses from septic systems, pet waste, and agricultural operations can contaminate water sources, posing health risks to humans and animals. Because nonpoint source pollution comes from various dispersed activities and locations, it requires broad, coordinated efforts to manage and mitigate its impacts on the environment.</i>	
CC-135	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Utilities	7.2	Utilities Element Page 15 Retain 7.2	
CC-98	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	New	Add a new Utilities Element Policy 2.8: "Explore options for water system supply redundancy such as (a) Creating a backup supply line over the West Channel Bridge or (b) Installing necessary systems to make the emergency well water potable."	
CC-100	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	new	Add a new Utilities Element Policy 6.8: "Continue to encourage the installation of home solar, wind, and geothermal systems, as well as other energy conservation and renewable energy generation systems."	
CC-101	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	new	Add a new Utilities Element Policy 6.9: "Explore the installation of solar generation systems on city owned buildings."	
CC-102	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	new	Add a new Utilities Element Policy 6.10: "Explore the possibility of supporting or encouraging plans to create a Public Utility District to replace PSE."	
CC-104	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	new	Add a new Utilities Element Policy 8.10: "Explore the possibility of creating a publicly owned fiber optic network serving most or all Island homes."	
CC-142	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	1.4	Capital Facilities Element Delete Goal 1.4	
CC-144	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	2.7	Capital Facilities Element Delete Goal 2.7 as we do not appear to be headed in that direction.	
CC-114	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	new	Capital Facilities Element, add a policy 1.27: "Coordinate with the Mercer Island School District to the extent practical to seek economies of scale available through shared facilities."	

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Policy or Goal #	Proposed Amendment	Staff Comments
CC-170	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Parks and Open Space	1.3	Re Parks and Rec we recommend deleting 1.3. We are not aware that there are areas of higher racial and social inequities and so do not see the need for this language. The RDI map in the Land Use element supports this recommendation.	For reference, the proposed Parks and Open Space Policy 1.3 states: Prioritize access to and conservation of parks and open spaces in areas of the City with higher racial and social inequities. This policy was recommended by staff during the Planning Commission review to address a potential policy gap between the Parks and Open Space Element and Multicounty Planning Policy (MPP) EN-Action-4 and Countywide Planning Policy (CPP) EN-20. MPP EN-Action-4 states: In the next periodic update to the comprehensive plan, counties and cities will create goals and policies that address local open space conservation and access needs as identified in the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan, prioritizing areas with higher racial and social inequities and rural and resource land facing development pressure. Counties and cities should work together to develop a long-term funding strategy and action plan to accelerate open space protection and enhancement. More information about the Parks and Open Space Element, MPP EN-Action-4 and CPP EN-20 was provided in PCB 24-12, Exhibit 3.

Note: Log #s 1-14 were submitted in response to Agenda Bill 6510, prior to the July 16, 2024 City Council briefing. These questions and answers were already provided to the City Council in advance of July 16. Questions from Log # CC-6 were submitted during the comment period following the City Council briefing. These more recent questions have a different numbering system applied, which refers to the Council comment/amendment matrix that will be included with Agenda Bill 6519.

Table 1. City Council Questions and Staff Answers.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
1	Craig Reynolds		I believe there is a typo in page 9 of exhibit 1.A, as the density numbers for medium-low density and very low density show as the same.		This will be addressed prior to the City Council's first reading.
2	Craig Reynolds		The goals in Section 5 of land use element have some parallel structure issues . Most goals describe actions, e.g. "create...." Or "encourage..." . But some describe statuses, e.g., "be..." or "have...". I am not sure which is more appropriate for a comp plan goal, but I would think consistency would be better.		In general, staff agrees that goals should state an aspiration or objective and the policies should articulate how the City will go about achieving the goal. In the case of the Land Use Element, the Council direction provided when setting the scope of working was to limit amendments to those necessary to remain consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and changes made in other elements. With this narrow charge, some existing goals were left unchanged if they were consistent with GMA requirements or other amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.
3	Craig Reynolds		On a related note, I have always been under the impression that the subitems under each goal were supposed to be strategies to achieve those goals. True? It seems we are not consistently doing that in the land use element. Some "goals" read like strategies, and some "strategies" read like goals.		See Log # 2
4	Craig Reynolds		To what extent are we committed to executing a strategy if it does NOT use words like "consider", "explore", etc.		Policies should be regarded as the City committing to implement that policy with projects, programs, or development code provisions at some point during the life of the plan. The caveat that goes with this expectation is that the Comprehensive Plan considers a twenty-year timeframe, called a planning horizon. The City can plan to implement policies at any point during the planning horizon. The City Council decides whether or not to implement policies during the biennial budget process, assigning projects and programs to departmental work plans and allocating resources.
5	Craig Reynolds		Re 16.2 of land use element: Isn't this kind of like saying "follow the law"? Do we need to say this?		Land Use Element Policy 16.2 states: "Through zoning and land use regulations provide adequate development capacity to accommodate Mercer Island's projected share of the King County population growth over the next 20 years." The GMA requires that cities and counties allow sufficient capacity to accommodate its projected growth over a twenty-year time period (RCW 36.70A.115). The City is not explicitly required to have this policy. This policy comes from the existing Land Use Element and an amendment is not proposed in the Planning Commission recommended draft.
6	Craig Reynolds		Re 16.8 of land use element: Is this suggesting custom local fire codes? Can we do this?		Policy 16.8 states: "Evaluate locally adopted building and fire code regulations within existing discretion to encourage the preservation of existing homes." The City has some limited local discretion when adopting building and fire codes. This is why local jurisdictions adopt those building codes rather than having them set at the state or federal level. If desired, staff can provide more information to the City Council regarding the extent of that discretion and what provisions might further this strategy during implementation.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
7	Craig Reynolds		Re 19.1 of land use element: Do we have the power to designate “species of local concern”? What are the implications of this? When else have we done this, and for which species? What is the rationale for picking bald eagles?		Counties and cities can designate species of local concern when it establishes critical area regulations for protecting fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (FWHCAs). A process to designate species of local concern is usually established by the critical areas ordinance for FWHCAs. The City has established FWHCA regulations in Mercer Island City Code (MICC 19.07.170 – Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas). The City has not designated any species of local concern and the development code does not currently establish a process for designating a species of local concern.
8	Craig Reynolds		Re 26.1: Why would we need a climate element? Is this needed given that 26.2 incorporates the CAP? If we DO incorporate the CAP, can we update the CAP without it being considered a comp plan change?		The City is not required to adopt a climate element of the Comprehensive Plan during the current periodic review that must be completed by December 31, 2024. The legislature adopted House Bill 1181 during the 2023 legislative session. This bill requires counties and cities to adopt a climate change element in their comprehensive plans. This new element must be adopted by the Comprehensive Plan five year progress report required by GMA (RCW 36.70A.130(10)). The five-year progress report is a new GMA process and will take place in 2029. The required climate change element will be separate from the Climate Action Plan (CAP). As proposed, Policy 26.1 would set the stage for this climate element.
9	Craig Reynolds		More generally, do we need the climate change section at all other than 26.2 of land use element? Are things in this section consistent with the CAP?		See response to Log # 8. The entire Comprehensive Plan periodic review was reviewed for internal consistency to make sure that the proposed policies do not conflict. Identified gaps or inconsistencies were addressed by the Planning Commission during their deliberations from May 29 to June 12. Policies related to climate change were reviewed for consistency with the CAP (PCB 24-12).
10	Craig Reynolds		VII of land use element says CO will be primarily commercial office. Is this consistent with our plans to allow MF housing there?		The table in Section VII of the Land Use Element states: “The commercial office land use designation represents commercial areas within Mercer Island, located outside of the Town Center, where the land use will be predominantly commercial office. Complementary land uses (e.g., healthcare uses, schools, places of worship, etc.) are also generally supported within this land use designation.” In staff’s opinion, the statement in the table does not conflict with expanding the uses in the C-O zone to allow mixed-use or multifamily uses as proposed elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. The list of complementary land uses is nonexclusive and would not preclude multifamily or mixed-use land uses. In other words, the text only provides some examples but does not say these are the only complementary land uses.
11	Craig Reynolds		The “CIP Project Summary” on page 12 of exhibit 1A needs to be updated, doesn’t it?		Note: The CIP Project Summary is on page 12 of the Capital Facilities Element. The table was up to date at the time the Element was drafted, Public Works staff will be consulted to ensure that this table is current at the time the Plan is adopted.
12	Craig Reynolds		Similarly, do we need to update the “Mercer Island Employment by Industry 1 Sector, 2021.”?		Table 1 in the Economic Development Element is provided to add some context to the element and does not establish binding requirements, goals, or policies. The data in the table were the most recent available at the time the element was drafted. If desired, staff could update the table if there is a more recent data set available.
13	Craig Reynolds		Do you know why the PC decided to strike out goal 14.2 of the land use element?		This policy was struck from the Land Use Element because it is now addressed with more detail by several policies in the Economic Development Element. For example, Economic Development Element Policies 9.1, 9.2, 10.2, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, and 12.2.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
14	Craig Reynolds		Please provide a BRIEF overview of the King County Public Benefit Rating System and the Transfer of Development Rights program		<p>The Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) is a system of incentives whereby property taxes are reduced in exchange for property owners providing some kind of public benefit. From King County's website: "There are three current use taxation programs in King County that offer an incentive (a property tax reduction) to landowners to voluntarily preserve open space, farmland or forestland on their property. Once enrolled, a participating property is assessed at a "current use" value, which is lower than the "highest and best use" assessment value that would otherwise apply to the property. These programs encourage the conservation of natural resources in King County by conserving its land and water resources, which include important wildlife habitat, wetland and streams, working forests and productive farmlands."</p> <p>King County describes its Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program on its website as follows: "The TDR Program is a voluntary, incentive-based, and market-driven approach to preserve land and steer development growth away from rural and resource lands into King County's Urban Area. The Program is based on free-market principles and prices that would motivate landowner and developer participation. Rural landowners realize economic return through the sale of development rights to private developers who are able to build more compactly in designated unincorporated urban areas and partner cities." In the King County TDR program 'partner cities' are those cities that participate in the program and receive the purchased development rights in specific zones. The City of Mercer Island does not participate in this program.</p>
CC-6	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	LAND USE ELEMENT Section I Just a clarifying question – in the TOWN CENTER section, the last paragraph refers to "commercial uses" – is that what we said or did we say "retail"?	Question & Answer	The Town Center code section that was recently amended names specific commercial uses. The language in the Comprehensive Plan is more general. For reference, Mercer Island City Code (MICC) 19.11.020(B) – Land uses states: "Retail, restaurant, personal service, museum and art exhibition, theater, bar, financial and insurance service, recreation, and/or service station uses, as defined by Section 19.16.010, are required along ground floor street frontages as shown on Figure 2." Figure two is the "pink lines" map.
CC-7	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Section II. AREAS OUTSIDE OF TOWN CENTER – please clarify what the edits in the last two paragraphs do? Is there a change in meaning from the older version and if so what is that change?	Question & Answer	<p>[Referenced text is at the bottom of page 8]</p> <p>The amendments to this section of the Comprehensive Plan are proposed to update the introductory text to reflect changes in regional and countywide plans. For example, King County categorizes the City of Mercer Island as a "High Capacity Transit community" in its current Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) but it used to categorize the City as an "Urban Center". The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) regional plan <i>Vision 2050</i> uses the same nomenclature.</p> <p>The introductory text of the Land Use Element provides the context in which the Comprehensive Plan update was adopted. This text is not binding in the same way a goal or policy can be.</p>
CC-10	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goal 12.3 Figure TC-2 is now TC-1? Please explain the changes in the map from 2014 to current.	Question & Answer	Yes, TC-2 will become TC-1. The map change proposed would correct a scrivener's error. When the Comprehensive Plan was adopted previously, the wrong map was codified. This amendment would replace that map with the correct one that was initially adopted.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
CC-11	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goal 13 is proposed to be renamed from Sustainability to Green Building. Green Building is already Goal 21, so maybe delete this goal altogether? If not, we propose above and beyond what is required by the existing construction code. It is not clear how the city could impose requirements that are not contained in the code.	Question & Answer	<p>This goal is specific to the Town Center whereas Goal 21 is Citywide.</p> <p>There are green building standards above and beyond the construction code (Title 17 MICC) that are applied to new development in the Town Center by the development code in Title 19 MICC. Specifically, MICC 19.11.050 – Green building standards states:</p> <p>“Any major new construction [in the Town Center] shall meet the LEED Gold standard. Projects that are primarily residential (at least 50 percent of the gross floor area is composed of residential uses) may instead meet the Built Green 4 Star standard. The applicant shall provide proof of LEED or Built Green certification within 180 days of issuance of a final certificate of occupancy, or such later date as may be allowed by the code official for good cause, by submitting a report analyzing the extent credits were earned toward such rating. Failure to submit a timely report regarding LEED or Built Green ratings by the date required is a violation of this Code.”</p>
CC-13	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goal 15.2 delete “additional middle housing types” unless this change is required by state law.	Question & Answer	<p>The Growth Management Act (GMA) has recently been amended to require cities and counties to plan for middle housing (sometimes referred to in the GMA as moderate density). The amended requirements primarily apply to the Housing Element, which then require additional changes to the Land Use Element to remain consistent. That is the root of the proposed amendment for Land Use Policy 15.2.</p> <p>Some of the related GMA requirements:</p> <p>RCW 36.70A.070(2)(b), which states “[The comprehensive plan must include a housing element that] Includes a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences, and within an urban growth area boundary, moderate density housing options including, but not limited to, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes;”</p> <p>RCW 36.70A.635 – Minimum residential density, which is also referred to as House Bill 1110, establishes requirements for cities to plan for middle housing types and amend their code to allow those uses by within six months of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review due date. The City of Mercer Island will be required to amend its development code to comply with RCW 36.70A.635 by June 30, 2025. RCW 36.70.636(2) states, “(2)(a) The department shall publish model middle housing ordinances no later than six months following July 23, 2023.</p> <p>(b) In any city subject to RCW 36.70A.635 that has not passed ordinances, regulations, or other official controls within the time frames provided under RCW 36.70A.635(1), the model ordinance supersedes, preempts, and invalidates local development regulations until the city takes all actions necessary to implement RCW 36.70A.635.”</p>

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
CC-17	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goal 19.11 – Please explain the programs referred to in that goal, and what specific things are intended to be accomplished.	Question & Answer	<p>The Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) is a system of incentives whereby property taxes are reduced in exchange for property owners providing some kind of public benefit. From King County's website: "There are three current use taxation programs in King County that offer an incentive (a property tax reduction) to landowners to voluntarily preserve open space, farmland or forestland on their property. Once enrolled, a participating property is assessed at a "current use" value, which is lower than the "highest and best use" assessment value that would otherwise apply to the property. These programs encourage the conservation of natural resources in King County by conserving its land and water resources, which include important wildlife habitat, wetland and streams, working forests and productive farmlands."</p> <p>King County describes its Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program on its website as follows: "The TDR Program is a voluntary, incentive-based, and market-driven approach to preserve land and steer development growth away from rural and resource lands into King County's Urban Area. The Program is based on free-market principles and prices that would motivate landowner and developer participation. Rural landowners realize economic return through the sale of development rights to private developers who are able to build more compactly in designated unincorporated urban areas and partner cities." In the King County TDR program 'partner cities' are those cities that participate in the program and receive the purchased development rights in specific zones. The City of Mercer Island does not participate in this program.</p>
CC-18	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goal 20, Parks and Open Space Policies, is deleted in its entirety because the goals are either moved or addressed in the PROS plan. Are there any that are being deleted and not captured elsewhere? For example, where is Goal 20.9 going to be reflected?	Question & Answer	<p>In its review of the parks-related policies, staff found that the struck policies under Land Use Element Goal 20 were captured elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. Land Use Element Policy 20.9 is reflected in the Capital Facilities Element, which addresses funding for maintaining existing facilities, including parks. The Capital Facilities Element is linked with the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan to address the second half of Policy 20.9.</p>
CC-22	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Goals 29.2 – 29.4 need some explanation – I don't understand where these came from and why they're necessary.	Question & Answer	<p>Proposed policies 29.2 through 29.4 address the process by which the City will implement the Comprehensive Plan. Because the Comprehensive Plan spells out actions the City will take over the next 20 years, establishing an implementation process will help the City realize its plan. These policies formalize and slightly expand on the existing process for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Adapting the existing implementation process for the Transportation and Capital Facilities elements to work for the Land Use Element.</p> <p>The same implementation process policies are proposed for the Housing and Economic Development elements. As drafted, the policies will maintain Council discretion to add or remove projects from City work plans each time the budget is set.</p> <p>The proposed policies would also establish a process to track the implementation of the Land Use Element over time so the City Council will know how and when the plan is getting implemented.</p>
CC-24	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Land Use	Figure 1. Land Use – please provide a narrative summary of the changes and the rationale for those changes	Question & Answer	<p>The changes to Figure 1. Land Use are proposed to align the land use designations of open space on the land use map with PROS Plan maps. These changes also align with the proposed Open Space Zone code amendment the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on in September, including updates to the Zoning Map. These maps should be consistent to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is internally consistent.</p>

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
CC-73	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	It seems there is a lot of data that is yet to be updated. I hope we get another shot at this once that data is supplied.	Question & Answer	Staff is in the process of gathering updated data from PSRC
CC-74	Craig Reynolds	Land Use	I do not think using 99.16 units per acre for TC is reasonable, as this is based on recent developments, as these were all in sections of TC with more allowed height than the TC average height.	Question & Answer	Staff is in the process of gathering updated data from PSRC
CC-105	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	“The City does not plan to implement an aquifer protection program because there are no known aquifers in the vicinity of Mercer Island that are utilized by the City or any other water supplier.” Where does our well draw water from, if not from an aquifer?	Question & Answer	Groundwater does come from an aquifer. The emergency well discussed elsewhere in the Utilities Element would draw from groundwater but only in emergencies. The municipal water supply is sourced from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), which does not use groundwater.
CC-106	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	How is it that we have more water system customers (7,537) than sewer customers (7,403)? Hard to imagine one could have one but not the other. Septic systems?	Question & Answer	Some of the difference between water customers and sewer customers could be existing septic systems. It is also possible that some housing units (i.e., principal residence and ADU) have shared sewer connections and individual water connections.
CC-107	Craig Reynolds	Utilities	“To increase capacity, expansion of the existing Factoria Transfer Station began in late 2014 and is scheduled to open in late 2017.” Did it?	Question & Answer	Yes, construction of this station was completed in 2017. https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/facilities/factoria-replacement-project#project_schedule
CC-115	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element: Goal 1.12 references a “hazard mitigation plan”. May I see that please?	Question & Answer	The City adopted a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in 2018. In 2020, the City coordinated with King County to update the regional hazard mitigation plan. The regional hazard mitigation plan is posted on the King County website .
CC-116	Craig Reynolds	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element: Where does the capital facilities element end? Looking at the July 16 agenda bill, it appears that “AB 6510 Exhibit 1A Page 121” may be the beginning of the economic development element, but I see no header to confirm.	Question & Answer	The Capital Facilities Element ends at page 120 of AB 6510 Exhibit 1A and the Economic Development Element begins on the following page.
CC-127	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	Transportation Element Goal 3.1 What does “all communities” mean? We believe that MI is one community.	Question & Answer	All communities in this context means all communities within the larger Mercer Island community.
CC-131	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Transportation	III. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM – EXISTING CONDITIONS. Please provide the rationale for deleting the “Travel Patterns” section. It seems to still be relevant.	Question & Answer	The proposed amendments would strike out older data that is optional to include. The required information is the summary of the transportation system and existing conditions of those facilities.

Log #	Submitted By	Element	Question	Category	Staff Response
CC-137	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element Page 2 – First full paragraph is not accurate re “100% of govt operations are powered by clean renewable energy”. There is no way to track where the energy comes from or how it was generated.	Question & Answer	The City participates in Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) Green Direct program . In 2016, the City signed a 20-year power purchase agreement with PSE to help fund development of the Skookumchuck Wind Facility. Located on private timber land near Centralia, Washington, the facility went online in November 2020 and hosts 38 turbines that generate a total of 137 Megawatts. Now the City's electricity usage is offset under this program. Though the City's electricity comes from renewable sources, the City still uses natural gas for heating some buildings.
CC-139	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element Page 5 PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Please verify if this is current information on enrollment etc.	Question & Answer	Staff gathered this information from Mercer Island School District planning documents during the preparation of this draft.
CC-140	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element Page 8 – delete the 2014 map?	Question & Answer	Yes, the proposal is to replace the older map with an updated version (see the clean version of the Capital Facilities Element for the updated map).
CC-141	Lisa Anderl and Jake Jacobson	Capital Facilities	Capital Facilities Element CIP Project Summary pages 14-17 – is this information current? It is not showing as edited from the prior comp plan. . .	Question & Answer	The CIP Project Summary was updated by Public Works staff when the proposed draft was prepared.
CC-150	Ted Weinberg	Transportation	Transportation Element. Page 9. Goal 11.2. Is this goal, requiring 3 off-street spaces per SF residence, compatible with recent state legislation?	Question & Answer	<p>This policy may prove challenging to implement given the recent changes in state law. The City may need to revisit this policy as it implements those changes following the Comprehensive Plan update. For example, Senate Bill 6510 enacted in 2024 places limits on the number of parking spaces that can be required for some residential development.</p> <p>If the City Council would like to amend this policy during the Comprehensive Plan periodic review, staff recommends the following amendment:</p> <p>Maintain the current minimum parking requirements of three off-street spaces for single family residences <u>consistent with state law</u>, but may consider future code amendments that allow for the reduction of one of <u>may consider reducing</u> the spaces provided that the quality of the environment and the single family neighborhood is maintained.</p>